



COUNTY OF NEWAYGO QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER SPRING 2006

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April 1, 2006

We hope you find this new County newsletter informative. It will be published four times a year, at the beginning of each quarter. To save money, it will be produced by the Administration Office and available on the web @ countyofnewaygo.com and in limited print around the County.
-Tobi Lake, County Administrator

CMH Building Expansion Planned

The Board of Commissioners, at the request of the Community Mental Health (CMH), has agreed to construct an addition onto the Mental Health Building. The County's growing population, an increase in the demand for services, and recent federal regulations have made the confines of the current facility inadequate. While the current building has served County residents for over twenty-five years, an expanded facility will allow CMH to provide services to County residents for years to come.

Although plans are not complete, rough drafts involve a nearly 12,000 sq. ft. addition to the west side of the existing structure. Preliminary plans show the area split between a first floor and a finished basement.

The project and CMH's need for more space has been discussed for several years and

nearly two years ago the County had an expansion preliminary design completed. That plan has changed some, but the overall theme has remained the same. CMH is bursting at the seams.

Financing for the project will likely involve the County selling bonds and paying them off through a long-term lease with CMH. Repayment plans, such as these, are common and actually funded the existing CMH building, as well as the State DHS Building and the NCRESA Building in Fremont.

The County and CMH have already signed an intent to lease and many believe the arrangement creates a win-win scenario. CMH gets the space they need and the County gets an expansion to their building at no cost to the taxpayers.

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Is Your Dog Licensed?



Don't forget to check to make sure your dog license is up-to-date! Newaygo County made a change beginning in 2004, and dog licenses now expire on the anniversary of the dog's rabies vaccination. For example, if a dog's rabies vaccination was given in April, you may purchase the license anytime in April without a late fee.

Dog owners should check their rabies vaccination certificate to be sure their dog's vaccine is current, and anyone needing to purchase or renew a license, can mail their completed application and proof of vaccination to the County Treasurer's Office or stop by their office to purchase a license.

License Fees:

- Male/Female (sexed)
 - 1-yr. License: \$15
 - 3-yr. License: \$40
- Male/Female (unsexed)
 - 1-yr. License: \$ 6
 - 3-yr. License: \$15

****If dog owners are late in purchasing their licenses, a \$3 late fee must be charged.***

Dog owners are encouraged to schedule regular check-ups with their veterinarian for the well-being and health of their animals and to obtain vaccinations. Anyone with questions or in need of a dog license application, should visit the County Treasurer's website www.countyofnewaygo.com or call their office at 689-7230.

Recycling for Newaygo County (RNC), a non-profit organization, provides drop-off recycling services free of charge for County residents, collecting paper, plastic, glass, and metal. RNC maintains a collection/processing center in Fremont and drop-off locations in Grant, Newaygo, and White Cloud. The Fremont Center, at 113 E. Cherry St., is open Mondays, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Thursdays 4:00-8:00 p.m., and Saturdays 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Fremont Center also accepts used cell phones, computer ink cartridges, household batteries for \$1/lb., and electronic waste (computers, tvs, radios, etc) for \$.50/lb.

Drop-off sites are in Grant at the Elementary School on State St, in Newaygo at Brooks Township Hall on Quarterline Road, and in White Cloud at the Old Mill Square on Newell Street. The drop-off sites are open 24/7. For a free recycling guide or more information, contact Bob Pinder at (231) 924-5822 or recycle4nc@comcast.net.

Spotlight: Jim Maike, Board of Commissioners Chairperson



Although I have been Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners for only a short period, it has been an exciting time.

Two of the areas I am most proud of involve a collaborative effort to refine our county maps and improvements to our parks.

There are currently at least seven dif-

ferent versions of Newaygo County road maps produced by various organizations.

With the goal of saving on production costs and working together to foster common interests, I requested a meeting to look at developing a new, updated County map that incorporated aspects important to the various entities.

Represented at the meeting were the Parks Department, Tourist Council, Road Commission, Central Dispatch, Building Safety and Permits/House Numbering, and various local units including the City of Grant and Fremont Area Chamber. The consensus of the gathering was the need for a new map and that the Road Commission explore

avenues to develop one.

I have been working with the Parks Department for several years and I believe that parks are one of the best assets a county can have.

In recent years upgrades have been made to Henning Park's electrical system and a new handicap accessible bath house has been added to Sandy Beach Campground and efforts are now underway to make improvements to the dock system, including the option of a new maintenance-free vinyl seawall and board walk.

If you get a chance this summer, please stop by our parks and enjoy all that Newaygo County has to offer!

Jim Maike, BOC Chairperson

County Applies for Brownfields Assessment Grant

In December Newaygo County applied for a \$400,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

“What are Brownfields?” you may ask.....

Brownfields are abandoned, idle or under-used industrial and/or commercial properties where expansion or redevelopment is problematic because of real or perceived environmental contamination. They can include empty gas stations and dry cleaners or they may be vacated industrial sites or landfills. It is important that these areas are identified and remediated, since Newaygo County has precious natural resources that are being affected by rapid growth and development.

There are two aspects to the Brownfields Assessment Grant. One area concentrates on sites contaminated by petroleum; the other focuses on those contaminated by hazardous substances. Properties with petroleum contamination are generally sites that once housed service stations or garages. Sites with hazardous contamination are typically properties that once housed industrial or commercial facilities or may have been used as a dump or landfill.

A large portion of Newaygo County's economy is based on agriculture and tourism and the grant funds would be essential in addressing major issues geared towards preserving agricultural and forest land, as well as over 450 lakes and 350 miles of streams.

Initially, the grant would help identify, profile, inventory, and prioritize



approximately 40 properties throughout the County. Then, an aggressive outreach and community education effort would inform the public and target potential developers who would be eligible to utilize numerous federal and state programs geared towards the redevelopment of these properties.

County hopes to reopen Camp Swampy

Newaygo County has encountered an extraordinary, one time opportunity. Steelcase Inc. plans to sell its remaining 151 acres in Newaygo County. Formerly operated privately for its employee's as the Camp Swampy Campground on Diamond Lake, it is a 52-site campground with picnic tables, water, electric, and sewage hook-ups. The campground includes: 2 bath houses (1 barrier-free), a maintenance/equipment barn, a small recreation lodge for interpretive and rainy day activities, a small "snack-shed", paved roads, a swimming beach, marked hiking trails, playground equipment, and a sanitation dump station.

The Newaygo County Parks Commission, in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy, have worked for the past two years to acquire the campground. In an effort to keep the door open and not let this opportunity escape the County, the Parks Commission approached the Fremont Area Community Foundation to request start up funds to open and operate the facility. The Parks Commission believed this

would demonstrate to Steelcase that the County of Newaygo is dedicated to acquiring and maintaining Camp Swampy for public use.

This facility has the potential to serve as a significant economic development tool that would enhance other recreation opportunities. Through new jobs and improvements to public recreational facilities, it is hoped the quality of life for County residents will improve. This project provides many opportunities for partnerships with nonprofit and environmental organizations; local businesses; other governmental entities; and individuals.

It is our hope that we will be able to open the campground later this spring or early summer. We certainly have our work cut out for us. A large portion of the plumbing is in need of major repair. Vandalism, such as window breaking, has occurred during the two years that the campground has been vacant and unused. Buildings are in need of major repairs, and campsites and trails are overgrown from lack of use. Recent high winds have caused



Newaygo County Parks Commission hopes to reopen Camp Swampy with the support of the Fremont Area Community Foundation

several trees to be uprooted and they need to be removed. Several of the remaining trees need trimming for safety purposes. If you and/or your organization are interested in volunteering to make this project a success please contact Laurie Gracik, Parks Director at 231-689-7383 or via email at laurieg@co.newaygo.mi.us

**If you haven't heard.....
County campgrounds will be open longer this year.
Henning will close Nov. 19th
and
Sandy Beach Sept. 24th**

The COUNTY OF NEWAYGO launched a discount drug card program to help consumers cope with the high price of prescription drugs. The County is making free prescription drug discount cards available under a program sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) that offers average savings of 20 percent off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs.

Cards are available at the Information Desk of the Newaygo County Administration Building, White Cloud, Michigan and/or participating cities and townships. County residents can call 231-689-7302 or visit <https://naco.advancerx.com> or www.countyofnewaygo.com/discountdrugcard.htm for assistance.

New Emergency Services Director Appointed

The Newaygo County Board of Commissioners has appointed Russ Kolski to the Newaygo County Emergency Services Director position. Russ replaces Donald Betts who resigned after serving the County for nearly 20 years.

"Russ's background makes him an excellent choice for this position. He has been a licensed paramedic for over 20 years and a registered nurse for more than 15 years," said Commissioner Nieboer, Chairperson of the Public Safety/Judicial Committee. Formerly, Russ worked for Gerber Memorial Health Services as Director of the Emergency Department and as Safety Director. He has also

served for a time as a firefighter in the Ann Arbor area and as a Newaygo First Responder.

Russ has worked in Newaygo County for the past 10 years and lived here with his wife and daughter for the past 8 years. He is a life long member of the Boy Scouts of America and is the current director for Camp Midicha, a two week camp for children with Diabetes sponsored by the American Diabetes Association.

We welcome Russ and know that his professionalism and passion for emergency services will be beneficial in serving and educating the residents of our County.

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The Newaygo County Board of Commissioners

Chairperson James Maike District 4 (231) 689-6224
 Vice-Chair Dan Powell District 7 (231) 834-0957
 Finance Chair Adam Wright District 5 (231) 652-1589
 Finance Vice-Chair Ron Sanders District 1 (231) 689-1866
 Commissioner Ross Fulton District 2 (231) 745-4428
 Commissioner Stan Nieboer District 3 (231) 924-0594
 Commissioner Tim Purcell District 6 (231) 652-3180

Regular sessions of the Board are held the second and the fourth Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the Board of Commissioners Room located in the Administration Building.



Many buildings on the County campus have colored facades to help the public identify them. The Admin Building is red.

Spotlight: The County Administration Building

The Board of Commissioner’s Administrative offices are located in the County Administration Building along with the following:

County Clerk’s Office	County Register of Deed’s Office
Residents can request certified copies of birth and death records and apply for marriage licenses, concealed weapon permits, assumed business names, and passports at this office. Veterans’ discharge forms are filed with this office and residents can also register to vote and request election results. Office hours are 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. The office telephone number is (231) 689-7235 .	The Register of Deed’s Office officially records legal papers and instruments (deeds, mortgages, and plats) pertaining to the transfer and encumbrance of all lands and properties in the County. Residents are able to research the office’s records. The office also sells Newaygo County Plat Books for the 4-H Association. Office hours are 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Monday through Friday. The office telephone number is (231) 689-7246 .
County Treasurer’s Office	County Equalization Department
Delinquent taxes are paid at the County Treasurer’s Office. All dog licenses are sold at this office. The Treasurer also sells foreclosed properties at auction annually. Office hours are 8:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on Monday and 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Tuesday through Friday. The office telephone number is (231) 689-7230 .	Newaygo County property tax descriptions, tax payer information, and maps are available at the Equalization Office. Residents can also change mailing addresses for property taxes and assessment notices at this office. Office hours are 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. The office telephone number is (231) 689-7244 .
Department of Community Development	Veterans’ Affairs Office
This Department administers programs designed to improve and preserve existing housing. It is responsible for the Homeowner Rehab Program, the Property Improvement Program, Senior Citizen/ Handicap Home Repair, and the Emergency Home Repair Grant. For more information about these programs, please contact Housing Coordinator Luann Cruzan at (231) 689-7091 .	This office administers short-term financial assistance for food, utilities, clothing, and housing expenses to qualified veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces and their dependants as well as claims for burial assistance and grave markers for veterans. For these services and for filings of compensation and pension claim counseling for veteran’s benefits contact Marilyn Beaudry at (231) 689-7030 .