

Sycamore Township

NEWS

Spring 2019

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After a winter we thought might never end, the flowers and trees are blooming and spring appears to have finally arrived. And as always, the Township is offering a couple of services that will help you with your "Spring Cleaning."

On April 12th and 13th we will be holding our North Trash Bash at McDaniel Park. On April 26th and 27th we will be holding our South Trash Bash at Bechtold Park, where hazardous material disposal will be included. Also at the South Trash Bash, we will once again provide a document shredding service which will allow you to safely and confidentially shred all the documents that you no longer need to retain. The document shredding service is free to all residents and will be available only on Saturday, April 27th between 10:00am and 2:00pm.

Many of you have been following the proposed Duke high pressure natural gas pipeline and the upcoming public hearings on the proposed project. It is important that you know that your Trustees have taken very strong opposition to the proposed pipeline. We have officially filed to intervene in the court case in opposition to the pipeline, and we will continue to keep you posted on all of the developments on the Sycamore Township website.

The Sycamore Road construction project has already commenced. This project is the largest and most complex road project we have ever undertaken in Sycamore Township, and it includes all new utility lines and the addition of curbs and sidewalks as well as widening of the road. There will also be a roundabout at the intersection of Sycamore Road and Plainfield Road to help move traffic through that intersection more efficiently. They have already started to take down trees, and Duke is beginning to move utility poles. Work will begin in the road at the end of April, when they begin the water main replacement. We anticipate that this project will not be concluded until the end of 2020, so if you normally travel that road, please begin to think about alternate routes.

You probably heard on the news in December that Cincinnati Water Works (CWW) attempted to impose an 18% increase in water rates for ONLY Hamilton County Townships. As the President of the Hamilton County Township Association, I spearheaded a suit with the Hamilton County Commissioners for a temporary restraining order (TRO) against CWW, and we were successful in getting a TRO to prevent the arbitrary increase by CWW. We are now in the middle of a suit against CWW for a permanent injunction to keep the price at the same rate as we have been paying for the last 20 years. We are also negotiating with the City of Cincinnati to attempt to settle this case. We will keep you updated on our website as new information becomes available.

Finally, we will be celebrating our 27th annual Festival in Sycamore at Bechtold Park on July 12th and 13th with the Fabulous Thunderbirds on Friday night and Jefferson Starship on Saturday night. We will continue to have rides for the children on both nights of the festival. One single price allows your children to access the rides the entire night. Check the website for a complete list of all the festival events during this great fun-filled family weekend.

On behalf of Vice Chairman Denny Connor and Trustee Jim LaBarbara, and our Fiscal Officer Rob Porter, I want to thank you for continuing to support Township government, and I look forward to seeing you at one of the many Township activities scheduled in the coming months.

Sincerely,



Tom Weidman
Chairman, Board of Trustees



Tom Weidman
Chairman





Police & Crime Prevention

DEALING WITH ROBOCALLS

A couple of weeks ago, in the middle of a normal afternoon, I received three unsolicited phone calls (in rapid succession) on my personal cell phone. The calls came from numbers that I did not recognize. The caller I.D. indicated that the first call was coming from Salt Lake City, Utah. The second and third were from Tallahassee and Miami, Florida, respectively. The problem is I don't know anyone from any of these locations! I quickly realized that I had become yet another victim of annoying "robocalls."

A robo call is an automated telephone call that is placed by a computerized auto-dialer for the purposes of delivering a pre-recorded message. Often times the call is designed to deliver a political message or used to advertise some sort of product or service. The calls are relatively harmless, but they can be very annoying at times. The general subject of robo calls seems petty or pedestrian; hardly newsletter-worthy. However, we are frequently asked by citizens if there is something law enforcement can do to stop or prevent them.

Unfortunately, the short answer is "no." While there are clear-cut laws governing telecommunications harassment on the books, pursuing or taking action against the source of a robo call is virtually impossible for local law enforcement. Individuals and companies alike can legally obtain "spoof" phone numbers that appear to be legitimate local numbers, using local area codes and commonly used prefixes from cellphone providers such as "266" or "477." Furthermore, the vast majority of these calls are legitimate and legal, and they simply do not meet the elements of telecommunications harassment. Lastly, each time you purchase something from Amazon or a similar website, or give the clerk at a local store your phone number and email at the point of purchase, that information is being purchased, sold or shared with a myriad of companies and organizations. The fact is, many of these robo calls, while annoying, are perfectly legal and practically impossible to stop.

The nuisance created by these robo calls can be mitigated (somewhat) by taking a few proactive steps. The problem will not be completely eliminated, but in my experience the volume and frequency of calls can be greatly reduced.

- First, activity of this nature is monitored and regulated by the Federal Trade Commission. You can be placed on the Federal Trade Commission's "National Do Not Call Registry" by calling 1-888-382-1222. A key point to remember is that you must call from the phone number you wish to have protected. Visit www.donotcall.gov for more detailed information.
- If you believe the call(s) is/are a scam coming from a truly nefarious source and not simply an advertisement, or if you believe the legitimate business that has contacted you is operating illegally or inappropriately, you can visit the Ohio Attorney General's website at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov. There is an online complaint form found under the "Consumer" tab that you can file pertaining to telephone scams or solicitations.



Tory L. Smith, Lieutenant
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office





EMS/Fire Department



Rob Penny, Fire Chief

SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY TIPS FROM HAMILTON COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT/HOMELAND SECURITY

Did You Know: Severe weather can happen anytime, in any part of the country? Hamilton County experiences many different types of severe weather, from severe winter storms to flooding, flash flooding, and even tornadoes! It is important to know how to stay aware, be prepared, and take action when severe weather is predicted.



FLOODS

As snow melts and spring rains begin, be prepared for flooding and flash flooding. If you live in an area that is prone to flooding, be weather aware! Sign up for Alert HC to receive severe weather & emergency information regarding evacuations at www.alerthc.org. Be sure your family has a plan in place for where you will meet and where you will evacuate if a flood threatens your area. It is essential to remember to never drive through flood waters. If you approach a flooded street, always remember to **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.**

TORNADO

Before severe weather strikes, know how you will learn of severe weather & where you will go to take shelter indoors! Sign up for Alert HC to get Tornado Watch & Warning alerts sent to your phone & email. When a Tornado Watch is issued, go indoors – find the lowest level possible, or to an interior room with no windows.

UNDERSTAND TORNADO ALERTS

A Tornado Watch means BE PREPARED, as tornados are possible. A Tornado Warning means TAKE ACTION, as a tornado has been spotted or indicated by weather radar.

SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS

Remember, if you can hear thunder, you are close enough to the storm to be struck by lightning. When thunder roars, go indoors! The best way to stay safe during a severe thunderstorm is to stay indoors, away from windows, and avoid electrical equipment and plumbing. Don't forget to bring your pets inside during severe weather. If you are caught outdoors during a storm, and cannot seek shelter indoors, immediately take shelter in an enclosed building or hard-top vehicle. Stay safe from lightning strikes by avoiding high ground, isolated objects, water, and metallic objects.

Be sure you are always aware, prepared and notified, so that you will not be caught off guard by severe weather. Sign up for Alert Hamilton County to receive weather updates and emergency information via text, call & email. By signing up for Alert Hamilton County, you will also be signed up for Smart911, a life-saving technology that allows you to give vital information to 9-1-1 call takers BEFORE an emergency.



Sign up today: www.alerthc.org.



BECHTOLD PARK SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

Parks & Recreation



Mike McKeown,
Parks & Rec. Director

NATIONAL ACTS ANNOUNCED FOR 2019 FESTIVAL IN SYCAMORE

We're happy to announce that two top selling classic rock bands will appear at the 27th Annual Festival in Sycamore, to be held on July 12 and 13 from 6:00 PM until midnight at Bechtold Park, 4312 Sycamore Rd. **THE FABULOUS THUNDERBIRDS**, with number 1 hits including *Tuff Enuff* and *Wrap It Up*, will perform Friday night, July 12. Legendary classic rockers **JEFFERSON STARSHIP**, whose hits include *Miracles* and *Count on Me*, will appear on Saturday, July 13. Admission is free!

Mark those dates on your calendar now and plan to join us for a weekend full of fantastic music, fabulous food from area restaurants, rides for the kids and more! Watch our website, www.sycamoretownship.org, Facebook page, and the Summer Newsletter for complete line-up announcements and Festival details!



SPRING EVENTS

Chipping Program

April 6, May 4, & June 1
8AM – 4PM
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

North Trash Bash

Friday, April 12
Noon – 4PM
Saturday, April 13
8AM – 4PM
McDaniel Park
7841 School Rd.

South Trash Bash

Friday, April 26
Noon – 4PM
Saturday, April 27
8AM – 4PM
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Rd.

Document Shredding

Saturday, April 27
10AM – 2PM
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Rd.

National Day of Prayer

May 2 | 12:00PM
Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

Compost Giveaway

May 11
8AM – 4PM
Hartzell Methodist Church
8999 Applewood Dr.

Festival in Sycamore

July 12–13
6PM – Midnight
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore



TOWNSHIP TIDBITS

OFFICER SPOTLIGHT

Sergeant Brian C. Sovern is a 24-year veteran of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office and is currently assigned to Patrol District 3 as a day shift squad supervisor. Sergeant Sovern began his career with the Sheriff's Office in early 1995. After serving as a Corrections Officer for approximately three years, Brian was promoted to the Patrol Division in the spring of 1998. Since that time, Brian has spent seventeen of his last twenty years of service working in and around the Sycamore Township area. Brian is also a veteran of the United States Army.

One aspect of Sergeant Sovern's service that deserves special recognition is that he has established himself as the subject matter expert in Patrol District 3 for all things relating to Active Shooter awareness, training, and education. Few things in civilian law enforcement are more jolting than the thought of being confronted by an active shooter or the tremendously heavy responsibility of responding to a mass-casualty incident. Recent, local events in Clermont County and on Fountain Square serve as sharp reminders of the harsh reality potentially facing all of our Sheriff's Deputies and Firefighters. However, despite this trend and its emergence as the "new normal" in our society, Sergeant Sovern has embraced the challenges involved and vigorously pushed forward in terms of being the conduit between citizens, students, business owners, and important Sheriff's Office resources. His leadership in this area has been invaluable.



During 2018, Sergeant Sovern coordinated more than fifteen programs and events in Sycamore Township, bringing his message to over 350 participants. Brian has facilitated drills and reviewed safety plans at local schools such as St. Vincent Ferrer, All Saints, Rockwern Academy, and The Schilling School. He has worked with notable members of the business community like Duke Energy, The Kenwood Collection, and the Kenwood Towne Center. He has spent significant amounts of time in our local retirement facilities and with the security staff at Jewish Hospital-Kenwood. Most recently, Brian coordinated a full-scale active shooter drill at Moeller High School. It's important to note that all of this activity has been conducted in addition to his normal duties as a squad supervisor. Currently, Brian is concentrating on policy development and planning for an upcoming active shooter drill in neighboring Symmes Township.

In summary, Sergeant Brian Sovern is a seasoned veteran supervisor who has developed a body of knowledge and related skill set that is undeniably necessary in today's day and age, but hopefully never drawn upon. He is an industrious, duty-bound Sheriff's Deputy that the citizens of Sycamore Township can rely on.



Jerry Cooper, shown with Fire Chief Rob Penny and Trustees Jim LaBarbara, Tom Weidman and Denny Connor, was recently promoted to Assistant Fire Chief and was sworn in by Board of Trustees Chairman Tom Weidman on January 17th. Assistant Chief Cooper has been with the Sycamore Township Fire Department for 22 years.



Fire Chief Rob Penny and Trustees Jim LaBarbara, Tom Weidman and Denny Connor with Thomas Swimeley after he was sworn in as Sycamore Township's newest fulltime Firefighter.





Planning & Zoning



Harry Holbert,
Planning & Zoning Administrator

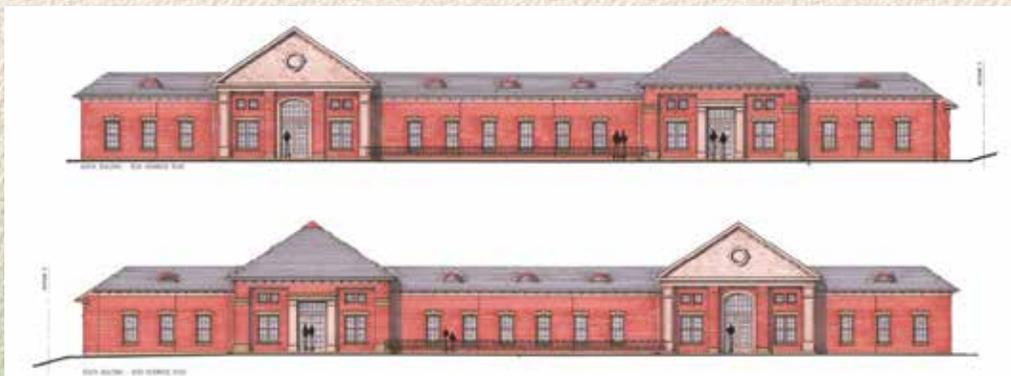
LAND USE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ZONING COMMISSION ALTERNATE NEEDED

Wow, we have a lot going on, and we need your help! Are you a dynamic and positive person who has an interest in how your community will be developed? Have you worked as an architect, engineer, urban planner, surveyor, real estate agent, broker or attorney with experience in land use or development? If so, we would like your help in shaping our community as a member of our Land Use Steering Committee. As you may have guessed by the title, the Land Use Steering Committee will work with Township staff and our consultant to review the existing Land Use Plan and help make recommendations for updating it. This committee will consist of three volunteer members, in addition to Township representatives.

In addition, the Township is in need of an alternate to serve on the Zoning Commission. The Zoning Commission is a commission of Township residents, five members and one alternate, appointed by the Trustees. The Zoning Commission reviews applications and submittals for Zone Changes, Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), PUD Amendments and Localized Area Sign Regulations. The commission also provides feedback on text amendments to the Zoning Resolution, Township corridor studies, the Land Use Plan and specific public interest areas.

Please refer to our website, www.sycamoretownship.org, for a complete list of qualifications to be considered for either of these positions. Interested candidates may submit letters of interest and resumes to the Township by mail or hand delivery to the Sycamore Township Administration Building at 8540 Kenwood Road, Sycamore Township, OH 45236 or via email to info@sycamoretownship.org.

Trustees Denny Connor, Jim LaBarbara and Tom Weidman joined representatives from the Myers Y. Cooper Co. for the groundbreaking of the new Sycamore Executive Center Development on Kenwood Road.



Sycamore Executive Center Rendering

TOWNSHIP OFFICE:

- 513-791-8447

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE:

- Call 513-792-7250 or 7249 (staff member)
- Call 513-792-7279 (hotline)
- Visit our website (online Services, Property Complaint Form)

****We do take anonymous complaints.***



Maintenance Department



Tracy Kellums, Superintendent

2019 TRASH BASH & DOCUMENT SHREDDING

Sycamore Township Maintenance staff will be on hand to offer assistance to residents at the Trash Bash events in April. (See the Spring Events Calendar on page 4 for dates and times.) Trash, junk, debris, old tires, used motor oil, construction materials, furniture, lawnmowers, appliances of all kinds and electronics will be accepted. Mattresses and box springs will also be accepted provided they are wrapped in plastic or in a plastic mattress bag. **Oil based paint, household chemicals and pesticides will be accepted at the SOUTH TRASH BASH ONLY.** Be prepared to show proof of residency. Please note that latex paint and yard waste, including brush and leaves, will not be accepted. Latex paint may be taken to Matthew 25 Ministries at 11060 Kenwood Road.

STREAM & CREEK DEBRIS AND OBSTRUCTION REMOVAL

The Township has had an increase in the amount of calls lately about stream and creek blockage and flooding. Unknown to most people is the fact that most creeks and streams in the Township are on private property. So with spring showers coming, the following is a guide to help you with this issue.

One of the most common concerns raised by private landowners involves the situation in which trees and other debris accumulate in stream channels and obstruct stream flow through their property. These obstructions, sometimes referred to as logjams, may become large enough to disrupt existing drainage patterns and contribute to flooding. In-stream debris often gets lodged behind culvert openings, which can cause higher flood levels and result in additional land inundation and property damage.

Do logjams contribute to flooding? Yes, especially during small-scale floods. Since a logjam and the backwater pool created behind it take up volume in the stream channel or floodplain, less natural storage is available when a flood event occurs. This can elevate the level of small-scale flood events, those that occur several times a year. Such impacts can be significant to residences in or near the floodplain and to particularly low-lying, flood-prone areas. High intensity rain events can create, relocate, or enlarge logjams, by carrying debris from the stream banks into the stream channel and blocking bridge and culvert openings, resulting in localized impacts.

Why should logjams be removed? A logjam may negatively impact the stream. A stream's energy is naturally channeled toward the route of least resistance, which is often around the obstruction. As the stream's flow is directed around an obstruction, it scours away the stream bank until a new channel is created. As the stream flows in its new channel around the logjam, it is redirected toward the opposite bank. This begins a process in which the stream's energy is directed from one bank to the other as the water flows downstream, eroding the stream banks and undercutting vegetation as it creates a series of meanders.

Is there a governmental agency responsible for removing logjams in order to keep streams free flowing? No, no governmental entity at any level has been assigned by statute the responsibility for logjam removal. Successful logjam removal projects have been undertaken in Ohio on many streams, some by volunteers and others using state and local appropriations and/or landowner assessments.

How should it be determined what activities are need on a stream? The easiest way to deal with logjams is to remove them before significant sediment and debris has been deposited. Landowners should conduct routine inspections to identify fallen trees, branches, logs, and other debris on their property that need to be removed from the stream or bank. A volunteer organization or neighborhood committee could be formed to undertake annual stream walks to identify obstructions that need to be removed, develop a work plan and perhaps even assist landowners in obstruction removal.

How should obstructions be removed? Fallen trees, logs, branches and other debris on the stream banks should be removed or secured as soon as possible. Fallen trees, logs, branches and other debris within the stream banks should be removed at the earliest appropriate time. Debris removal should only be conducted only during low flow periods. Small debris can be removed from the channel without any tools or equipment. Larger logs or trees across the channel will need to be cut into manageable pieces and dragged out of the stream. Accumulated sediment can be raked and grubbed to remove vegetation. The use of expensive equipment is often not necessary when landowners take the time to perform routine maintenance and upkeep on their property.





Contacts

Spring 2019

Tom Weidman, Chairman
Denny Connor, Vice-Chairman
Jim LaBarbara, Trustee
Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer
R. Douglas Miller, Law Director
Greg Bickford, AICP, Administrator
791-8447 – Fax 792-8564
Tracy Kellums, Superintendent
792-7257 – Fax 792-8564
Mike McKeown, Parks & Rec. Director
792-7270 – Fax 792-8564
Rob Penny, Fire Chief
792-8565 – Fax 792-8564
Harry L. Holbert, Jr., Zoning Administrator
792-7252 – Fax 792-8564
Tory L. Smith, Lieutenant
District Three Commander
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office
774-6351 – Fax 774-6350
Fire and Police Emergency – **911**
Sycamore Township Administrative Office
791-8447
www.sycamoretownship.org



8540 Kenwood Road
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
CINCINNATI, OH
PERMIT NO. 1693

“There’s More in Sycamore”



Trustees available to better serve you



Tom Weidman
Chairman



Denny Connor
Vice-Chairman



Jim LaBarbara
Trustee



Robert C. Porter III
Fiscal Officer

You can leave messages for your elected officials by calling the Sycamore Township Administration Office at 791-8447.