

Sycamore Township

NEWS

Winter 2020

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We're nearing the final weeks of 2020 and preparing to safely celebrate the holiday season. Due to COVID 19, the world as we know it was completely upended and we are all looking forward to the coming recovery. The township continues to operate daily but is open by appointment only. However, most items can be solved over the phone. This year we have our township meetings live streamed and on video, so with the COVID 19 restrictions it was an easy transition for us to Zoom our meetings over the internet. Residents are invited to participate remotely & live stream broadcasts of our meetings are available through our website at www.sycamoretownship.org. They are archived on YouTube. If you want to be even better informed, sign up for our email newsletter on the website.



Jim LaBarbara
Chairman
Board of Trustees

I want to share with you some of the good things that we are thankful for in Sycamore. First and most important I want to assure you; our township is very sound financially. Our property taxes are the lowest of any township in Hamilton County and with the assistance of our Administrator Ray Warrick we are working on ways to make them lower. Your safety and quality of life is a top priority. Chief Penny's EMS/FIRE Department has taken all precautions to keep our units sanitized as they serve our residents during the pandemic. Our Sheriff's Deputies led by Lt Mike Tarr have received a tremendous outpouring of support from the community.

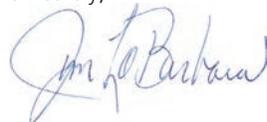
Road Superintendent Tracy Kellums and construction crews had a busy year completing a number of major projects including our new maintenance building & salt dome in the rear of our administration complex. You'll see our maintenance staff collecting the last of the fall leaves before we transition to snow removal if needed. We'll do everything we can to keep our roads safe and clear.

This year, the Planning & Zoning Department headed by Skylor Miller has improved its efforts to be more responsive to residents and businesses. Zoning Application review has been streamlined and the processing times have been drastically improved.

We now have two citizen input committees. Our Citizens Finance Committee was formed to analyze expenditures, revenues and make advisory recommendations. The Committee chaired by Christopher Virgulak unanimously voted on two recommendations. First, convert our accounting software to UAN (Uniform Accounting Network). UAN was created and is supported by the state auditor and 93% of Ohio townships use it. Secondly, move from Regulatory, the lowest and most basic allowed by the Ohio auditor, to the higher GASB34 financial reporting. We are committed to taking a close look at our finances and financial history. Our Parks Advisory Committee, led by Jason Petty, Parks Supervisor, is busy working on better ways to use our parks. Coming soon is a new playground for Bechtold Park. My suggestions include pickle ball courts and music.

If there is anything I can do to be of assistance, please call me at 513-477-9725. On behalf of my fellow Trustees Vice-Chairman Tom James and Tom Weidman, our Fiscal Officer Rob Porter, and the entire township staff, I want to wish you and your family a safe, healthy and happy holiday season and a prosperous New Year in 2021.

Sincerely,



Jim LaBarbara
Chairman, Board of Trustees





Police & Crime Prevention



Michael Tarr, Lieutenant
Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

January 18, 2021 will mark the end of my 20th year of service with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office. As that date approaches it has caused a lot of reflection on my part. As I look back on those years, one of the things I've been most proud of has been our agency's relationship with the people that live and work in the communities in which we serve. The Sheriff's Office has always strived to actively engage our communities to build working relationships and trust. As a result, I've almost always received positive feedback from the community throughout my career, wherever I've been assigned. I think this has been no more evident than here in Sycamore Township. Unfortunately, events of the past year have shown there are some people in the community who may not feel that same level of trust and engagement. For that reason, I would like to share with you just a few of the steps the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office has taken to ensure that our deputies are able to have positive and effective interactions with everyone in Sycamore Township; our participation in the Ohio Collaborative, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training and, most recently, Project ABLE.

The Ohio Collaborative was established by Governor John Kasich in 2015 to establish standards for police agencies throughout Ohio. It is a 12-person panel which is comprised of elected and appointed officials, representatives from law enforcement and community members. After a two-year review, which included policy submissions, checks on compliance and an on-site verification visit, the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office was certified in February of this year in the following standards: Community Engagement, Employee Recruitment and Hiring, Use of Force, Body-Worn Cameras, Bias-Free Policing and Investigations of Employee Misconduct. We are in the process of obtaining certification in Law Enforcement Vehicular Pursuit, a standard which was established this summer (our current policy already meets all of the criteria for certification).

Mental Health of America of Northern Kentucky & Southwest Ohio created CIT training which provides law enforcement officers with safe and effective strategies for dealing with persons who are mentally ill and in crisis. Additionally, they provide officers with contacts and resources throughout the county which can assist in times of crisis. Currently, approximately 1/3 of the uniformed deputies assigned to the Enforcement Division have completed the 40-hour training. It is the Division Commander's goal to put the rest through within the next year.

Project ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement) is a national hub for training, technical assistance, and research, with the aim of creating a police culture in which officers intervene as necessary to prevent misconduct, avoid police mistakes and promote officer health and wellness. Two deputies recently attended a 'train the trainer' course conducted by Project ABLE and four more are currently scheduled to attend. They will begin conducting in-house training for all of our personnel this fall.

Law enforcement, just like the needs of the communities in which we serve, is constantly changing. These are just a few of the steps the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office has taken recently to make sure we're providing the best service to every person within those communities.

IMPORTANT HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT PHONE NUMBERS:

- District Three Headquarters: 513-683-3444
- Vacation Watch: 513-825-1500
- Non-Emergency Dispatch: 513-825-2280
- Emergency: 911

Pedestrian Safety Tips

Walk facing traffic as far from vehicles as possible.	Avoid crossing the street mid-block. Cross at the corner.	Look for cars reversing in parking lots and driveways.	Keep your phone down and your head up. Stay alert.



EMS/Fire Department



Rob Penny, Fire Chief

quality emergency medical care, fire suppression and rescue, fire prevention and education, and community engagement to our residents, businesses, visitors and neighbors while maintaining a professional, well-trained and committed workforce” has remained the same. Today, Sycamore Township Fire and EMS personnel make 4,400 runs per year. This comes out to 12 per day. We now have two fire stations, Station 92 in the south district and Station 93 in the north, and 38 full time firefighters.

SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

October 1, 2020 marked the 25th anniversary of the Sycamore Township Fire Department! Prior to October 1, 1995, Sycamore Township contracted with two private fire departments: The Rossmoyne Community Fire Department and the Sycamore Fire & Rescue (formerly the Montgomery Community Fire Department which contracted with both the City of Montgomery and Sycamore Township.)

In 1995, Sycamore Township dissolved the contracts with both private companies and merged the two departments into the Sycamore Township Fire Department. I was one of the original employees who made that transition 25 years ago! It was the best decision the Township ever made. We have the full support of the Trustees who strive to give you, the residents, the best service possible. A lot has changed in 25 years, but the Department’s mission “to deliver



CARES ACT FUNDS

The Township has received CARES Act funds to help with the cost of our day to day operations during the pandemic. With these funds, we have provided our firefighters with the necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and sanitizing equipment they need to battle the COVID-19 crisis. We sanitize our vehicles after every run to assure a clean environment for our patients. Our paramedics take every precaution to make sure our patients and themselves are protected against contracting the virus. We hope you stay well through this COVID-19 crisis.



BECHTOLD PARK
SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

Parks & Recreation

DILLONVALE LUMINARIA 2020

The annual Dillonvale Luminaria will be held on Saturday, December 12, 2020, from 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. at the pavilion in Bechtold Park. This event, which has become a holiday tradition, is co-sponsored by Sycamore Township and Dillonvale IGA. Due to the pandemic, there will be some modifications to the event to ensure the safety of all participants. Pre-packaged treats will be provided, masks will be required when social distancing is not possible, and capacity on the hayrides to view the holiday decorations may be reduced. We encourage all Dillonvale residents to decorate the sidewalks in front of their homes with luminaria bags. The Luminaria kits are available at Ace Hardware in the Dillonvale Shopping Center. Prizes will be awarded to the three best decorated properties! Come join the fun, bring the kids to see Santa Claus, and get in the spirit of the season at the annual Dillonvale Luminaria!

CANCELLED DUE TO PANDEMIC RESTRICTIONS



SNOW REMOVAL

With trucks, salt machines, plows, and plenty of salt on hand in our two salt domes, the Maintenance Department is ready to go in the event of snow or icy conditions in the Township. As a reminder, residents should remove their vehicles from the streets when it snows so that our crews can effectively and safely clear the roads. Let's work together to have a safe winter season!



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Brush Chipping Program

Saturday, December 5
8AM – 4PM
Behind Administration Bldg.
8540 Kenwood Rd.

Christmas Tree Drop Off Sites

December 26 – January 18
Bechtold Park
4312 Sycamore Road
McDaniel Sports Complex
11797 Solzman Road

Dillonvale Luminaria

Saturday, December 12
6PM – 8PM
Bechtold Pavilion
4312 Sycamore Road

CANCELLED

Curbside Leaf Collection

Ends
December 14

* During this time of uncertainty, events are subject to change or cancellation. Please see our website calendar or call (513) 791-8447 for the most up to date information.



TOWNSHIP TIDBITS



Ray Warrick
Township Administrator

SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR RAY WARRICK

Sycamore Township Administrator Ray Warrick, who began his tenure with the Township in January, is an accomplished professional with over 25 years of demonstrated experience leading teams, improving systems, and driving growth in corporations, nonprofit agencies, and government entities. He has an open-government, customer-service-oriented governing philosophy, and an ability to cut through government inertia to get things done. Sycamore Township Trustees brought Ray in to provide greater accountability to residents and set us on a path toward even better, more open financial management, enabling us to maintain our great services and possibly lower taxes.

Ray came to the local government world six years ago after working as a private sector executive in manufacturing, distribution, and education. In recent years he has served as a township fiscal officer and a township administrator. Ray has served on the boards of private companies as well as non-profit organizations. Most recently he ran a project for the Department of Commerce U.S. Census Bureau as a Field Service Manager. Ray holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Cincinnati and a Master of Business Administration from Xavier University.

TRUSTEES PROCLAIM OCTOBER 11, 2020 HERBERT M. HEILBRUN DAY IN SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

At their October 1st meeting, the Board of Trustees issued a Proclamation Designating October 11th 2020 as Herbert M. Heilbrun Day in Sycamore Township. Mr. Heilbrun is a Township resident and true American hero who served our Country as a bomber pilot during World War II. The story of his friendship with John Lehr is the subject of the book "Black and White Airmen Their True Story" by John Fleischman. Mr. Heilbrun celebrated his 100th birthday on October 11th 2020!



Trustees Jim LaBarbara, Tom James, and Tom Weidman present Mr. Heilbrun's wife, Carol, with the Proclamation designating October 11th Herbert M. Heilbrun Day in Sycamore Township.

TRUSTEES PROCLAIM OCTOBER 30, 2020 WANDA WAGNER- TURIAK DAY IN SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP

The Board of Trustees, at their October 13th meeting, issued a Proclamation Designating October 30th 2020 as Wanda Wagner-Turiak Day in Sycamore Township. The Proclamation celebrates Ms. Wagner-Turiak as she retires from her position as General Manager of the Kenwood Towne Center after 22 years in that role. Ms. Wagner-Turiak was instrumental in the success of the Kenwood Towne Center which has grown into the premier shopping mall in the region. The Board wishes her well in her retirement.



Trustees Tom James, Jim LaBarbara, and Tom Weidman present Wanda Wagner-Turiak with the Proclamation designating October 30th Wanda Wagner-Turiak Day in Sycamore Township.





Planning & Zoning



Skylor R. Miller
Planning & Zoning Administrator

The Planning & Zoning Department is working diligently to keep up with new development and property maintenance complaints. Zoning Certificate applications have been impacted in all categories due to the pandemic, but new businesses continue to open within the Township.

This year, the Planning & Zoning Department has improved its efforts to be more responsive to residents and businesses. Zoning Application Review has been streamlined and the processing times have been drastically improved. New updates to the Land Use Plan and Zoning Resolution are being finalized for adoption. The Trustees will hold public hearings to review these documents in the coming months.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS ALTERNATE NEEDED

The Township is in need of an alternate to serve on the Board of Zoning Appeals. The Board of Zoning Appeals is made up of Township residents, five members and one alternate, appointed by the Trustees. The Board of Zoning Appeals reviews applications and submittals for residential and commercial variance and conditional use requests. Interested residents should send a resume or brief biography to Skylor Miller, smiller@sycamoretownship.org or 8540 Kenwood Road, Sycamore Township, OH 45236.

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.**

PLANNING & ZONING INFORMATION: ONLINE AND AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

The Sycamore Township website has a wealth of information for residents. From Maintenance Department services to Park and Recreation events, checking the website will keep you informed on what is happening in the Township. The Planning & Zoning Department continually updates the website with information about upcoming public hearings before the Board of Zoning Appeals, Zoning Commission, and the Board of Trustees. The dates and times for the meetings, as well as applications and submittal items for current zoning cases, may be found at <https://www.sycamoretownship.org/public-hearing-information/>.

You may also click on the Subscriptions link on the homepage of the website and sign up to have Zoning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals agendas sent directly to your email address. In addition, the Permitting and Inspections tab gives residents and businesses alike the tools to help guide them through any project.

The residential and commercial zoning certificate applications are available for downloading. You will also find detailed instructions and sample drawings to help you apply for permits for common residential projects such as fences, accessory structures (sheds/ detached garages), additions and more.

Finally, the homepage of the website includes a link to a Property Complaint Form which residents may use to inform the Planning & Zoning Department of any property maintenance issues or zoning violations in their neighborhoods. We encourage you to explore www.sycamoretownship.org and feel free to call us at 791-8447 for help navigating the website or for more information.



Maintenance Department

SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS UPDATE



Tracy Kellums, Superintendent

The Township maintenance crews, and outside contractors have been very busy throughout the Township this year. The following is an update on the status of projects in 2020, including how the Township funded them, and a look ahead to those coming up in 2021.

2020 CAPE SEAL PROJECT

Cape Seal is a two-step process that enhances and prolongs the life of the pavement. The first step is an application of emulsion that is covered by stone and the second step is a layer of micropavement on top. The Township has had great success with this process and has increased the life of the pavement in subdivisions from 12 years to 20 – 22 years, thus saving the taxpayers money. The following streets were included in the 2020 program: Longford Dr., Williams Ave., Pleasantwood Ct., Needlewood Ct., Smallwood Ct., Widhoff Ln., Kennedy Ln., Shadetree Dr., Timberknoll Dr., Chetburt Ln., Farwick Ct., and Findley Ln. The \$170,000.00 cost of this project was paid for with local funds generated by the JEDZ from the business districts.

2020 CURB PROJECT

The 2020 curb replacement program took place this summer on two main subdivision roads, Bayberry Drive and Marlette Drive. This completed curb replacement in the entire Heitmeier and Millwood Subdivisions. This was approximately a \$490,000.00 project paid for with local funds generated by the JEDZ from the business districts.

MONTGOMERY ROAD SIDEWALK PROJECT PHASE IV

The fourth and final phase of installation of new sidewalks on Montgomery Rd. is now complete. This phase started at Dearwester Drive and extended north tying into existing sidewalk at the Wellington Glen Condominiums. This phase was the last piece so that our residents have connectivity from the City of Montgomery extending all the way through Kenwood, and it is already getting a lot of use. This was approximately an \$812,000.00 project paid for by an 80% federal grant and 20% TIF funds generated by commercial development.

SYCAMORE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

The Sycamore Road project is now complete! The project included the construction of the new roundabout at Plainfield Road, which is working out great, as well as installation of new water main, new gas main, and new storm sewers along with sorely needed storm water detention, sidewalk installation and a completely reconstructed road. This was an approximately \$5,000,000.00 project. 78% of the cost was paid for with a Federal grant, 11% was paid with a State grant, and 11% was paid using local funds generated by the JEDZ from the business districts.

KUGLER MILL ROAD

The Kugler Mill Road project has been a long time in the making and is finally here. Sycamore Township, along with the Hamilton County Engineer's Office, are looking forward to this project getting started. All the engineering is completed and all of the easements that are required for construction have been obtained. By the time you read this, the project should have been awarded to a contractor. This project consists of reconstruction of the roadway from Blue Ash Road to Montgomery Road, which if you have driven it lately you know how badly it is needed! Installation of new curb, storm sewer and sidewalks on the north side, and the addition of a turn lane at Montgomery Road are also part of this project. Most of the utility relocation has been completed, the installation of new water main is scheduled for this winter, and road construction will begin in the with the goal to be finished by the end of the year. This is an approximately \$4,000,000.00 project with 50% paid for by a State grant, Hamilton County paying for the other 50% of the road work and the Township paying the other 50% of the storm sewer, curb and sidewalk installation using TIF funds generated from commercial development.

LARCHVIEW DRIVE AND PLAINFIELD ROAD PROJECT

The Larchview Drive and Plainfield Road Project is just now going to engineering. This project will include the total reconstruction of Larchview Drive, which is desperately needed, and repaving of Plainfield Road from the Blue Ash corp. line to the Deer Park corp. line. The Township has been successful in obtaining a State grant to pay for 50% of this project also, with Hamilton County paying for the balance of the improvements on Plainfield Road and the Township paying for the rest of the work on Larchview Drive. Our goal is to have this project completed by the end of the 2021 construction season.

These are the major projects for 2020 and 2021. There will be more projects on local roads coming also, the Township expects to have an extensive paving project in 2021 but the details have not yet been finalized. As you can see, the Township is able to get a lot of projects built by utilizing grants and money from the JEDZ and TIF accounts which are generated by the business districts, this allows the Township to keep your taxes low and not come to you, the tax payer, for levies every time a road project needs to be done.

If you have any questions about these or any other projects please contact me at 513-792-7257 or tkellums@sycamoretownship.org.





8540 Kenwood Road
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

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

Winter 2020

Jim LaBarbara, Chairman

Tom James, Vice-Chairman

Tom Weidman, Trustee

Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

Deepak K. Desai, Law Director

Ray Warrick, Administrator

792-7277 – Fax 792-8564

Tracy Kellums

Superintendent/Assistant Administrator

792-7257 – Fax 792-8564

Skylor R. Miller, Planning & Zoning Administrator

792-7252 – Fax 792-8564

Rob Penny, Fire Chief

792-8562 – Fax 792-8564

Michael Tarr, Lieutenant

District Three Commander

Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

774-6351 – Fax 774-6350

Fire and Police Emergency – **911**

Non-Emergency Dispatch – **825-2280**

Sycamore Township Administrative Office

791-8447

www.sycamoretownship.org

“There’s More in Sycamore”



Trustees Available to Better Serve You



Jim LaBarbara
Chairman



Tom James
Vice-Chairman



Tom Weidman
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.