

# Portland Township News

Fall 2019

773 East Grand River

P.O. Box 314

Portland, MI 48875

[www.portlandtownship.org](http://www.portlandtownship.org)

## Portland Area Fire Authority Purchases New Truck

by Chris Jensen, Township Supervisor

The Portland Area Fire Authority (Portland Township, Danby Township, and City of Portland) has purchased a new fire truck, which was delivered just in time for the Fourth of July parade. The new truck replaced the 1999 Pierce Engine, which was sold to a fire department in North Dakota.

The new engine has much equipment that is new to our fire department, including battery powered jaws of life, an LED light tower, air conditioned cab, heated front and side windows, top mount pump panel, LED head lights and all LED compartment lighting.

The cost of the new truck, which is shared by the three entities is:

- \$250,000 down payment
- \$343,816 financed for four years at 2.5%.
- Portland Township's share will be \$32,883 per year, and is a budgeted expense.



## Meet Travis and Jonny, Our ICRC Drivers

by Sue Vanlente, Township Trustee

Everyone sees the Ionia County Road Commission trucks on the township roads, but very few people actually know who the drivers are, or what their responsibilities are. Meet the two men who are responsible for maintaining the roads in Portland Township—and please note that they have a lot of other duties, as well.

### Travis Stemler



Travis is a scraper driver and has worked for the Road Commission for five years. In the summer months he is responsible for maintaining gravel roads in Portland and Orange Townships. In the winter he plows the east end of I96 (M66 to Clinton County line) and also plows roads in Orange Township. He has been working in the two townships for three years. He enjoys meeting the residents of the township, and making the roads safe and smooth. Before he was a scraper driver he was a grader operator for the southwest corner of the county. He likes maintaining the gravel roads in the summer and plowing snow in the winter. Travis is married and has two daughters.

### Jon Dalton

Jonny is a grader operator and has worked for the Road Commission for almost two years. He is responsible for maintaining roads in Portland, Orange, Danby and Sebawa Townships. In the winter he is a back-up driver for the east end of I96 and also plows roads in Portland Township. Before coming to the Road Commission Jon worked for a contractor that constructed new roads. Jon has been married for 22 years and has two children. He would like to remind residents to slow down and give workers plenty of room to do their jobs.

If you see either of these guys out doing their jobs, please treat them courteously and let them know how much you appreciate their hard work.

## Reminder: No receipts mailed

by Leanne Simon, Township Treasurer

As a reminder, the Township Board has decided to follow the lead of many other townships and no longer mail receipts to every tax payer. This is effective immediately and is a permanent change.

**If you want a receipt mailed to you, you MUST request it every time you make your tax payment.** If a mortgage company pays your property taxes and you would like a receipt, you will have to phone me or email me and leave a message. Be sure to give your address or parcel number, as well. Phone 517-647-2075 or email [twp\\_treas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:twp_treas@sbcglobal.net). You can also go to [ioniacounty.org/on-line-services/](http://ioniacounty.org/on-line-services/) to print your own receipt. Please allow one week for the payment to process and show up online.



# Explanation of Township Ordinances

by Jeanne VanderSloot, Portland Township Zoning Administrator

## JUNK/NOISE/NUISANCE ORDINANCES

Portland Township has ordinances regarding junk, scrap, trash, old building materials, unlicensed and non-running vehicles, noise, dangerous buildings, and similar nuisances. If complaints are received or nuisances observed, letters are sent requesting compliance. Continued noncompliance may result in a civil infraction ticket being issued. To keep property values up and to keep the Township an attractive place to live, please take care of nuisances similar to the above on your property.

## CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

Before construction of any buildings, including farm buildings, decks, signs, or in-ground pools, please contact me for a zoning permit application. Zoning construction application forms are available in a box at the west door of the Township Hall at the Emergency Services Building at 773 Grand river Avenue. All applications and other information are also available on the website at [www.portlandtownship.org](http://www.portlandtownship.org). Commercial or industrial building expansion or new businesses or new home developments must apply for a site plan review through the Planning commission.

## HOME BUSINESSES

There are two types of home business ordinances in Portland Township. You must be a resident at the property to apply for a home business permit.

- A home occupation within a dwelling and/or an accessory building reviewed and permitted by a zoning permit application and meeting the regulations. This type of business is the typical home occupation such as music lessons, typing, crafts, office work, sewing, accounting, and similar occupations.
- The second type is the a home-based business that is more commercial in nature such as a wood or machine shop or vehicle repair and is permitted by special use permit through the Planning Commission. Specific regulations must be met for approval.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

You can contact me for permits, applications, or with questions at [zoningadmin@msn.com](mailto:zoningadmin@msn.com) or at (616) 897-4242.



Owner Ted Platte worked with Zoning Administrator Jeanne VanderSloot on the new addition to his business Tri County Collision & Glass Masters.

## Portland Township's Only Cemetery

by Chris Jensen, Township Supervisor

Musser Cemetery, also known as Union Cemetery, is located on Keefer Highway, just south of the intersection of Peck Lake Road. The cemetery dates back to the 1800s and contains about 20 burial sites, including at least one Civil War veteran, Adam A. Lewis (1798-1864). It was originally a family cemetery but was deeded to Portland Township by Dean and Charlotte Gibbs in 1984. It has been maintained by volunteers since it was deeded to the Township in 1984.

We noticed in June 2019 that the cemetery had fallen into a temporary state of disrepair and immediately made plans to address the unfortunate situation. With the help of a great group of volunteers, the property was cleaned up and we have hired a lawn service company to maintain it for the rest of this year. We are looking into possibilities for ongoing maintenance for the future.

Portland Township will always make sure that this cemetery is kept up; if anyone is interested in helping with the maintenance on a volunteer basis, we welcome your help. Please contact us to let us know. The gravestones in the cemetery are extremely fragile and we want to make sure that all volunteers know that they should not handle them or attempt to move them.



**Portland Township Board  
Meets 2nd Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.**

**Supervisor, Chris Jensen**  
[portlandtscjensen@gmail.com](mailto:portlandtscjensen@gmail.com)  
(517) 647-2479

**Clerk, Charlene Keilen**  
[porttownship@att.net](mailto:porttownship@att.net)  
(517) 647-6643

**Treasurer, Leanne Simon**  
[twp\\_treas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:twp_treas@sbcglobal.net)  
(517) 647-2075

**Trustee, Sue Vanlente**  
[suevanlente@gmail.com](mailto:suevanlente@gmail.com)  
(517) 575-8000

**Trustee, Mark Simon**  
[mgsimon@wowway.com](mailto:mgsimon@wowway.com)  
(517) 647-4892

**Planning Commission  
Meets first Wednesday of March,  
June, September and December at  
7:00 pm**

Chair, Cindy Selden  
Secretary, Sue Vanlente  
Hope Partlow  
Tony Dixon  
Ross Schneider  
Marcy Lay  
Evelyn Walkington-Jensen

**Zoning Board of Appeals  
Annual Organizational Meeting  
second Wednesday of each January  
at 6:30 pm. Then as needed.**

Kris Bond  
Mark Simon  
Larry Pung  
Marcy Lay  
Tom Klein  
Alternate, Eileen Main

**Board of Review  
Meets in December, March, and  
July**

Chris Jensen  
Cindy Selden  
Nick Sandborn  
Matt Robertson  
Alternate, Russell Franke  
Alternate, Keith Baker

**Zoning Administrator**

Jeanne Vandersloot  
(616) 897-4242  
[zoningadmin@msn.com](mailto:zoningadmin@msn.com)

**Assessors**

Dean and Jason Kohagen  
(989) 383-0306  
[jkohagen@bsasoftware.com](mailto:jkohagen@bsasoftware.com)