



City Voice

October 2013

City of Caro
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Caro, Michigan 48723

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Volume 7, Issue 4

BY DICK POULIOT, MAYOR



As I write this newsletter, I can't help but think... what happened to summer, right? I was able to accomplish a few projects around the house that needed to be done so that we would be ready for fall; yes, you know what follows, but I would like to take this time and give you a rough update and overview of council work and actions in chronological order.

The city was successful in negotiating an agreement this spring with both the Police union and the AFSCME members. Department heads' salaries were also reviewed. We now have three-year agreements with the unions. This was the result of all parties working in good faith (thanks, everyone).

The council went on to review the Fireworks ordinance and brush chipping policy, resulting in TWO changes. Number one, in reference to the Fireworks ordinance 446 section 16-66 (b) (3), the change prohibits discharge of fireworks between the hours of 1 a.m. and 8 a.m. on the day before, the day after, and the day of all national holidays. The council and staff of the City received numerous comments in regard to fireworks going off at all times of the day. The second big issue is that brush has been placed at curbs for months on end (well in advance of chipping). The new policy, revised and adopted by Council in July, prohibits brush being placed at curbside before the ten (10) day period prior to pick up which may be considered blight, resulting in the land owner being notified and brush removed at the cost of the owner.

The Council and staff also completed a set of bid specifications which could be used for repairs and rebuilding of various street projects throughout the town

to expedite this work. The RFP (Request for Proposal) was sent out for Monroe Street, between Hooper and Bates, to mill and repave. It was bid out then rebid within a period of a few weeks. The council approved the work in the amount of \$43,320. This work is scheduled to be completed this fall. This will be the last update in regard to Sherman Street. The original completion estimate was \$796,997.75 - final cost \$706,736.45 - \$90,000 under budget. \$379,736.45 represents the City of Caro's share and \$327,000 represents the State's share. We are very happy with the end result.

The City will start work on Columbia Street in spring 2014. This is a major project that includes complete street rebuilding along with storm and sanitary sewer work. When this project is completed, it will have new curb for the length of the project. The estimated project cost is \$730,237 (\$355,237 represents the City of Caro's portion). These monies are in the water and sewer funds as well as the street fund. The remaining balance of \$375,000 will be funded by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

I would like to share a brief overview of the following opportunities for the City. Stormwater Asset Management (SAM) - a wastewater grant that would grant us dollars to identify areas that rainwater enters sewer pipes, resulting in our sewer plant treating it and costing more money for operations. Downtown Infrastructure Grant (DIG) - this grant would help us improve downtown streets, sidewalks and drains, as well as updating lighting. I will keep you apprised of these exciting opportunities for the City.

Lastly, in regard to the township annexing their cemetery into the City, the State Boundary Commission cancelled the hearing of 09/11, and we are waiting for a new hearing date. So, we wait.

I realize this was a lengthy letter, but we are fortunate and blessed to have these projects and resources available to us, considering we are working with less all the way around. Have a Great Fall, and see you at the Pumpkin Festival!

THE MANAGER'S CORNER BY JARED OLSON



As the summer begins to fade to fall, several projects and events within Caro are wrapping up and some are just beginning. Along with the projects throughout the community, one of the most anticipated events of the year is also quickly approaching.

The excitement for the 2013 Tuscola County Pumpkin Festival is beginning to ramp up and this year's event will be kicking off on October 2nd and will be in full swing all the way through the Grand Parade on Sunday October 6th. This year's Pumpkin Festival will be including several new events and activities aimed at people of all age groups so if you get a chance, come down and explore everything that the festival has to offer!

Along with the 2013 Pumpkin Festival, one of the largest undertakings that will begin this fall is the update of the current City of Caro Master Plan. The City Master Plan aims to serve as a guide for all future public and private decision-making regarding the future policy development, economic development and the physical development within the community. With these areas in mind, the goal of a master plan update is to outline and include any new vision or goals for the future of the city.

In the City of Caro, like most other communities, the master plan is the most important tool for future decision making which includes neighborhood planning, economic development goals, long term zoning and planning policy and other applicable areas to be addressed. The long term planning efforts that will be included in the update will help ensure the feel and character of Caro is preserved while also promoting smart growth and continued development.

The Master Plan update will be a very important project for the future planning of the Caro community and will hopefully involve as much possible input from residents, civic groups, and community organizations as possible. The more input that is received from the community during the process, the more accurate and fitting the final project will be. As the process for the update is so important, the overall timeline for the project will most likely be around twelve months from the first kick-off meeting till the adoption of final document.

The master plan update should be a very exciting project and in order to help get as much possible involvement, I will be doing newsletter updates and other community outreach sessions during the process. With that said, I maintain an open door policy here at City Hall and welcome you to call me or stop in with any issues or questions that you may have.

**Trick-or-Treat hours
October 31 from 6:00-7:30 p.m.**

A WORD FROM THE CLERK BY KAREN J SNIDER, CMC

One of the challenges of living in Michigan is the changing seasons. Some love them, some don't but all we can do is find a way to enjoy them all. I dislike being in the cold; but I love the leaves changing colors and the snow falling. I dislike extremely hot, but I love no coats, the outdoors and MICHIGAN.

The City of Caro will have an election on November 5 at the Caro Municipal Building (317 S. State Street). Precinct one will be in the fire hall training room and precinct two will be in the Council chambers. The polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. The last day to register for the election is October 7. The ballot will contain the Mayor and three Council members. The Mayor is a two-year term and the Council members are a four-year term. Sample ballots are available to view by going to www.tuscolacounty.org. Go to the home page, in the middle of the screen scroll down to Sample Election Ballots – click on View here. Click where it says 2013 November 5th Sample Ballot – View. Scroll down to City of Caro.

The City of Caro will also be mailing tax bills December 1, 2013. The City collects the taxes on the December bill for the following entities: Caro Area District Library, Caro Transit Authority, County Special voted millages, MCF renovation, Caro School – debt, Caro School – operating, and the Tuscola Intermediate School. If you have any questions, please call the City Treasurer at 673-7671.

**Please Remember to Vote
November 5, 2013**

CARO FIRE DEPARTMENT BY CHIEF RANDY HECKROTH



This week will mark the official start of the fall season in Michigan. With that comes the time for preparation for the coming winter.

This is a good time to check and change those smoke detector batteries. Also clean the detector by blowing out any dust inside the unit. Always test the detector before replacing it back in place.

With the upcoming cold weather and the start up of heating units, it's a good time to have them cleaned and inspected by a professional, to insure safe operation. All questions on installing wood or corn burners can be answered by contacting Building Codes at 672-3750.

October is fire prevention month. Have a plan of what to do in case of a fire. Go over the plan with all your family members to insure they all know what to do. The Fire Department can offer several pamphlets to help in being Fire Safe. Call or stop in to receive this free information.

Carbon monoxide is a silent killer. Installing a detector is greatly encouraged. The gas is colorless and odorless. A detector could provide your family the needed notice of such a potential threat.

Last, please note all in town burning ordinances for open burning, There is no burning of leaves. The City will pick up your leaves when put on the streets properly. Be safe and know the rules. Call the Fire Chief at 989-673-2002 for all your burning questions.

The fire department located at 317 South State Street will be handing out glow sticks to children prior to trick or treating on Thursday October 31, 2013. Be sure to bring your children.



**City offices will be closed on
Thursday November 28 &
Friday November 29, 2013**

**In observance of
Thanksgiving**

PUBLIC WORKS HIGHLIGHTS BY CHARLIE SUNDBLAD DPW SUPERINTENDENT

Well, summer is just about over and that means that leaf season is soon to be upon us. The leaf pickup schedule will be in the paper, on the radio, on the sign at city hall and on the front page of the city website at www.carocity.net. When putting your leaves in the street **PLEASE** do not put grass clippings or sticks in the piles as this will plug the equipment.

The last day for brush pickup will be October 7th. Remember there is a brush policy regarding how much we will pickup. If you need a copy of the policy you can get one from city hall or on the city web site. If you have more than the allotted amount you can take it to the Luder Road dump.

We will be flushing hydrants the week of October 21st.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT “THE INTERMISSION”



The Intermission has moved from W. Burnside Street to 157 N. State Street and due to the visibility and the business becoming a deli, coffee and bake shop, the business has more than doubled. The name has been changed from Intermission Deli to “The Intermission”. The menu has been revised to include a variety of new items including baked goods. A breakfast menu has also been added to include the breakfast burrito, breakfast sandwiches and other options. The Intermission is open Monday—Friday 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. They can also be found at www.theintermissioncaro.com.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT BY CURTIS WELLS, SUPT

This is usually where I'd say, I'm glad its October and for the cooler temps, but it has been nice since the End of July. We hope everyone had a great summer (even if it did fly by). The staff is happy to serve the residents of Caro whatever the time of year. School is back in session so please watch out for the children. We should have, by the time this newsletter comes out, our reissued operations permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality. The RV dump station will remain open until the first ice or snow on the roads. And as always, thank you for remembering disposable does not mean flushable.

CARO POLICE DEPARTMENT BY CHIEF NEWCOMB

The Officers of the Caro Police Department hope that everyone had a safe and enjoyable summer.

Unfortunately, there continues to be numerous scams and frauds that are perpetrated on our citizens. Primarily our senior citizens, although identity theft and fraud can happen to anyone at any time. I have included a helpful list of things to consider if you suspect you are a victim or know someone who is a victim of identity theft and/or fraud.

WHAT IS IDENTITY THEFT?

When someone uses your identifying information (Name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, Credit Card Numbers, etc) to obtain goods, services, credit, or open fraudulent bank accounts.

Every 79 seconds, a thief steals someone's identity, opens an account in the victim's name and goes on a spending spree. A victim can spend anywhere from six months to two years and \$1400 recovering from identity theft.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING ID THEFT:

Never give out identifying information in response to unsolicited offers by phone, mail, internet, or in person unless you initiate the contact.

Order and review your credit report yearly.

Review financial and credit card statements monthly for unauthorized activity.

Cross shred paperwork containing personal identifiers (i.e. receipts, insurance forms, bank & credit card statements, cash advance checks) before discarding.

Protect your mail by removing it from your mailbox as soon as possible. Place your mail delivery on hold at the post office while you're away on vacation.

Be aware of where your personal identification is kept and who has access to it – at work and at home.

Protect your wallet/purse and don't leave them unattended. Limit the number of credit cards carried, and don't carry your PIN or social security card in your wallet/purse.

Treat checkbooks, ATM cards, credit cards & credit card offers as if they were cash. Cancel unneeded credit cards. Don't put your social security number (SS#), phone number or date of birth on your checks.

When using the internet to make purchases, look for the "s" in the address (https) to ensure a secure site.

IF YOU'RE AN IDENTITY THEFT VICTIM, YOU SHOULD:

1. Contact the Credit Bureaus. Immediately call the fraud units of the three major credit reporting companies – **Experian (1-888-397-3742), Equifax (1-800-525-6285), and Trans Union (1-800-680-7289)**. Request that a "fraud alert" be placed on your account. Add a victim's statement to your report, i.e. "My ID has been used to apply for credit fraudulently. Contact me at (telephone number) to verify all applications." Ask how long the fraud alert will be posted on your account, and how to extend it if necessary. Be aware that these measures may not entirely stop new fraudulent accounts from being opened by the imposter. Request, in writing, to receive a free copy of your credit report every few months to monitor it. Request the names and phone numbers of credit grantors with whom fraudulent accounts have been opened. Ask that all inquiries that have been generated due to the fraudulent access be removed. Request the credit bureaus to notify those who have received your credit report in the last six months (two years for employers) to alert them of the disputed and erroneous information.

2. **Contact Creditors.** Immediately contact, by phone and in writing, all creditors with whom accounts were created or used fraudulently. Get replacement cards with new account numbers for existing accounts that you suspect were used fraudulently. Request that old accounts be processed as "account closed at consumer's request." This is better than "card lost or stolen" which can be interpreted as blaming you for the loss. Monitor your mail and credit card bills for evidence of new activity.

Fraud Affidavit: Banks and credit grantors may ask you to complete a notarized fraud affidavit, which could become costly. The law does not require you to provide a notarized affidavit to creditors. A written statement and supporting documentation should be enough. A police report or complaint number may also be necessary.

3. **File a Police Report.** Report the crime to your local law enforcement agency. Provide as much documentation as possible. Get a copy of your police report and keep the report number handy to give to creditors and others who require verification. Credit card companies and banks may require you to show the report to verify the crime.

Violations of the Identity Theft Protection Act may

be prosecuted in any one of the following jurisdictions:

- The jurisdiction in which the offense occurred
- The jurisdiction in which the information used to commit the violation was illegally used
- The jurisdiction in which the victim resides

4. File A Complaint With The Federal Trade Commission (FTC): Call 1-877-IDTHEFT (877-438-4338) or visit www.consumer.gov/idtheft. Consumer complaints help make the FTC database a better resource for law enforcement officers. You may download the comprehensive guide "Take Charge: Fighting Back Against Identity Theft" from the FTC website. The guide helps consumers guard against and recover from identity theft.

5. Contact Your Financial Institutions: Report stolen checks, stolen or compromised ATM cards or fraudulent bank accounts to the appropriate financial institution. Place a "stop payment" on outstanding checks. Close your checking and/or savings accounts and obtain new account numbers. Create new passwords avoiding common numbers and names; i.e. last 4 digits of social security number, telephone number, birth date or mother's maiden name.

6. Contact The Local Postal Inspector: Notify the local Postal Inspector if you suspect a change of address was filed with the post office or mail was used to commit fraud. Notify the local Postmaster, find out where mail is being fraudulently sent & forward all mail in your name from that address to your own address.

7. Contact The Social Security Administration(SSA): Call the Fraud Hotline at (800) 269-0271 to report the fraudulent use of your SS#. The SSA will only change your SS# as a last resort if you fit their fraud victim criteria. Order your Earnings and Benefits Statement and review it for accuracy.

8. Contact The Passport Office: Notify the Passport office in writing to watch for anyone ordering your passport fraudulently.

9. Contact Your Phone Company: Contact your phone company to report stolen calling cards, fraudulent charges and fraudulent accounts. Cancel the account and open a new one.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT CARO COMMUNITY HOSPITAL BY MARC AUGSBURGER, PRESIDENT AND CEO

Welcome to Caro Community Hospital



Caro Community Hospital is proud to be the major healthcare provider for the residents of Caro and the surrounding

communities. I am very excited to be "out and about" to meet and greet people as well as getting the opportunity to know more of the communities' residents.

We are working hard to provide the best and most up to date healthcare possible. In order to accomplish this, we are working on a number of current major projects:

- We are awaiting state conformation for our Certificate of Necessity (CON) for a new CT Scanner which will be the newest 64 slice CT with 40% less radiation per exam! We are hoping that it may be in place and operational by October.
- A new Bone DEXA Scanner (bone densitometer) has been ordered and its location in the hospital will change from our current system. This will allow for any patient to utilize the testing, no matter their disability.
- The front parking lot of the Hill Medical Center building has been replaced with new concrete, creating a much nicer and safer entrance to that building for our patients.
- We are working on plans for the Caro Medical Center (CMC) parking lot and front walk/entrance to be re-worked.
- We are working on mitigating the issue with the old building we own in Mayville.

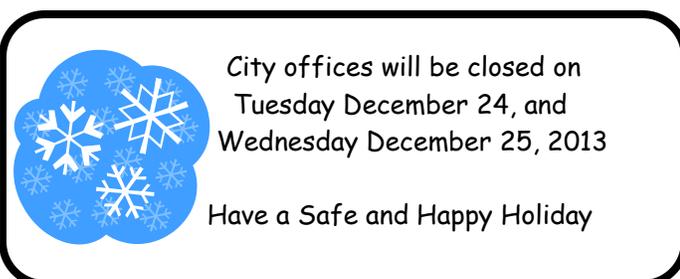
HOLIDAY GARBAGE SCHEDULE



Friday November 29, 2013

Friday December 27, 2013

Friday January 3, 2014



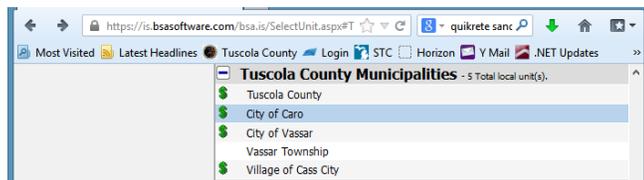
ASSESSING FOR THE CITY OF CARO

Assessing for the City of Caro is conducted by the Tuscola County Equalization Department. Staff includes Walt Schlichting, Assessor; Nancy Corey, Marianne Daily and Angie Daniels. The office is located here in Caro at 125 W. Lincoln St. Suite 200.

Field staff are currently in the process of visiting properties located within the city limits to verify records are accurate and up-to-date. If you wish to view your property's record card for the 2013 assessment year, visit bsasoftware.com click on



Move down to Tuscola County and choose City of Caro:



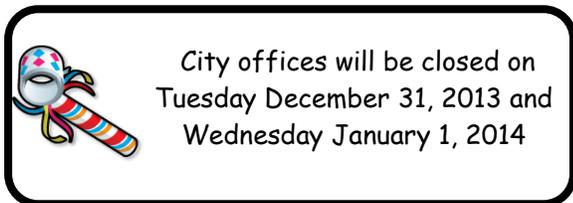
Then choose property and land search:



Property owners can view their record card for free.

You can also view your record card during normal business hours at the address previously mentioned. If you have any questions, please feel free to give the Assessing Department a call at 989-672-3830.

Other helpful information regarding property taxes can be found at: www.michigan.gov/taxes or you can check out the latest Michigan Taxpayer's Guide by visiting www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/Publications/TaxpayerGuide2013.pdf



BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT SWEET TOOTH BAKERY & CAFE

Sweet Tooth Bakery and Café opened on July 12, 2013 at 113 North State Street. It is owned by Tammy Gonzales who prepares a variety of breads, rolls, specialty cakes, cinnamon buns, cupcakes, and muffins. They also offer daily lunch specials consisting of an entrée, chips and salsa or salad, and drink.

Sweet Tooth Bakery and Café is open from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and closed on Sunday. They can be reached at 672-0126.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT BY JERRY THORP

Fall is in the air, bringing different considerations for the Ordinance Officers duties.

Leaves and the disposal of leaves, parking on the streets overnight, and keeping sidewalks cleared are just a few of those changes.

The new policy on brush chipping and the disposal of such waste brings new or changed activity by property owners, as the city only runs chipping operations 3 times per year.

Residents must now dispose of small twigs and branches in garbage cans or bags marked with an "X" for the disposal trucks through November 29 and haul larger branches to the Almer Township dump or other facility as there is a 10 day limit for those items to be left at the curb.

UPCOMING MEETINGS		
Council	Oct 7 & 21 Nov 4 & 18 Dec 2 & 16	7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.
Planning	Oct 8 & 22 Nov 12 & 26 Dec 17	7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.
DDA	Oct 9 Nov 13 Dec 11	Noon Noon Noon
Historical	Oct 23 Nov 27 Dec	6:30 p.m. 6:30 p.m. No Meeting
Parks & Rec	October 17 Nov 21 Dec 19	7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m.

