Township Faces Police, Fire and EMS Layoffs

Bloomfield Township voters will be asked to approve a 2.5 mill increase in Bloomfield Township's public safety millage on November 5 in order to preserve the Township's current level of Police, Fire and EMS service.

Township Supervisor Dave Payne said the increase, which can be used only to fund Police, Fire and EMS operations, is needed to wipe out a nearly $5 million annual deficit in the public safety budget and prevent significant Police, Fire and EMS layoffs.

"I want to emphasize that the money to be raised by this millage can, and will, be used only for Police, Fire and EMS services," Payne said. "The ballot language very clearly specifies it can be used for the preservation of public safety services only. Anyone who tells you differently is not telling the truth.

"Without these funds, we will have no choice but to lay off one-third of our 70 Police officers and one-third of our 68 Fire Fighters and EMS personnel, immediately impacting our current two minute 911 emergency call response time."

"Services would be hurt in other ways as well," he said, "including the inability of the Township to adequately maintain its four fire stations to keep them at a state-of-the-art level. We would also be unable to provide the proper training and equipment absolutely needed over time to maintain the current level of emergency services.

"The decision of the Township Trustees to ask for this millage increase was not made lightly," Payne said. "Bloomfield Township historically has kept taxes as low as possible while still providing an unsurpassed level of service our fellow residents have come to expect."

The quality of service available to Bloomfield Township residents today is exemplified by these facts:

- The average response time for a 911 emergency call is two minutes, one of the best anywhere.
- Patrol cars in every patrol district are equipped with an Automatic External Defibrillator to immediately assist individuals suffering from sudden cardiac arrest.
- Every Township Firefighter is trained in Emergency Medicine and is licensed by the State of Michigan.
- Each Bloomfield Township EMS Unit has Advanced Life Support Systems on board.
- Bloomfield Township Police officers must have a minimum of a four-year college degree to be hired, the highest level of training required anywhere in Michigan.
- Bloomfield Township Firefighters must have a Fire Science Certificate, State of Michigan Fire Fighter I and II Certification, EMT licensure and at least 60 college credits to be hired, also the highest level of training required anywhere in Michigan.
Township Faces Police, Fire and EMS Layoffs (continued from page 1)

Payne said even with the 2.5 mill increase, the Township’s public safety millage will be almost 1 mill lower than it was in 1980, when it was 7.4 mills.

On two separate occasions in the 1980s, he said, the Township allowed public safety millages to expire without attempting to renew them. At that time there were sufficient reserve funds and adequate interest income to pay for Police, Fire and EMS services even with the reduced public safety millage.

Today interest income has bottomed. The Township’s reserve funds are depleted, having been spent on public safety services over the years. State revenue sharing has become questionable at best as the state struggles with its own budget problems.

“That means if we are to maintain our current level of Police, Fire and EMS service – with a level of training and professionalism unsurpassed anywhere in Michigan – we must have the additional 2.5 mill authorization that is on the November ballot,” he said.

Even with the increase, Bloomfield Township’s public safety tax rate would still compare favorably to any of our surrounding communities. The new rate would still be only 6.5 mills, compared to the 7.4 mills levied in 1980.

Payne said the quality of service available to Bloomfield Township residents today is exemplified by the facts highlighted on page 1.

“Public safety is the most important service Bloomfield Township, or any unit of local government, provides to the citizens it serves,” Payne said.

“...The new rate would be only 6.5 mills, compared to the 7.4 mills levied in 1980...”

Open House for Police, Fire and EMS Services

Several years ago, an elementary aged youngster was awakened by the smell of smoke in his Bloomfield Township bedroom. Quickly and without panicking, he dropped out of bed and onto the floor, crawled to his parents’ room and woke them up. Together, they safely escaped before the flames from an electrical fire spread throughout their house.

He learned to “Stay Low and Go” from a Bloomfield Township firefighter who visited his classroom during Fire Safety Week. As part of this annual program, firefighters visit private and public elementary schools in the Township and give children an “up-close” look at the equipment and fire trucks, as well as teach them the fundamentals of fire prevention and safety.

Fire Safety Week culminates this year with the Bloomfield Township Open House, an afternoon of displays, demonstrations and activities. Children of all ages (and even their parents and grandparents!) will have a chance to create their own escape plan, practice their “Stop, Drop & Roll” technique, participate in a smoke room simulation, watch a car fire demonstration and see a medical helicopter land on the grounds.

The Police Department will join in the event for the third year. Kids will be able to ride in a patrol car and watch Briscoe, the K-9 officer, demonstrate his skills.

If the family is considering a pet, they can visit the animal shelter where animal adoption agencies will be showcasing everything from ferrets to exotic birds.

To top things off, the Water Department will continue its participation in the Open House this year. The theme for this year’s display will include drinking water and watershed topics.
Infected Ash Trees are Quarantined

Ash trees that are infected by the Emerald Ash Borer have been quarantined by the Michigan Department of Agriculture in an attempt to stop the spread of the insect which has been killing ash trees in Oakland, Livingston, Macomb, Washtenaw and Wayne counties. Do not transport ash trees out of these counties.

If you have an ash tree that displays the symptoms listed below, call a professional tree service.

If your tree is more than 40% affected, it probably cannot be saved. It must be removed and destroyed.

Trees up to 8 inches can be chipped; trees larger than that can be hauled away by an arborist. If saved for firewood, the wood must be debarked or split immediately to dry it out so the borer cannot feed on the pieces.

For more information, see http://www.msue.msu.edu/reg_se/roberts/ash/.

Emerald Ash Borer Symptoms

✓ leaves turning yellow
✓ foliage thinning out
✓ suckers on trunk or among its major branches
✓ excessive injury from woodpeckers
✓ “D”-shaped holes made by the borer

FALL

into a routine that protects our water resources!

Protecting local waterways requires your interest and involvement.

Many activities that take place during the fall months affect water quality. Each one of us can make a difference!

✓ Keep leaves, litter and debris out of the street and storm drains. Storm drains let out directly into streams and rivers. Whatever gets in the storm sewers washes directly into watercourses and is a source of pollution.

✓ Properly manage yard waste by composting the material or disposing it into paper yard waste bags or a properly labeled yard waste container.

✓ Grass clippings contain valuable nutrients and can provide up to 25 percent of your lawn’s fertilizer needs. Leave them on the lawn; do not allow them to go into the street.

✓ When applying fertilizer to lawns, avoid getting it on sidewalks where it can wash directly into storm sewers. Sweep the product back onto the lawn where it can be of benefit. Rivers and streams don’t need any more nutrients! Remember to follow recommendations outlined in the Township’s fertilizer regulations.

✓ Use a low-phosphorus and slow-release nitrogen formula of fertilizer. Some examples include: corn gluten meal, Ferrtrel Lawn Fertilizer, Pursell’s Sta-Green, Ringer Lawn Restore, TruGreen Scenic Green and Vigoro Lawn Fertilizer.

✓ The autumn months bring fall landscaping, construction projects and rain. Bare soil that is exposed to the erosive forces of rain can run off into ditches and streets, and ultimately into streams and rivers. Cover bare ground around vegetation with mulch and seed bare ground as soon as possible to prevent erosion.

✓ If autumn is the garage-cleaning season for you, take care to properly dispose of any materials you no longer need. Do not dump into storm drains. Take paints, solvents, cleaners and pesticides to the next Household Hazardous Waste Day scheduled for Saturday, October 5, 2002 at the Township.

✓ Clean up animal waste in your yard regularly, especially before it rains. Throw the waste in the garbage or down the toilet. Make sure you pick up after your pet during walks!
Bloomfield Township Board of Trustees

Front Row (L - R) Wilma Cotton - Clerk; Dave Payne - Supervisor; Dan Devine - Treasurer
Back Row (L - R) Trustees - William Yaw Jr., Janet Roncelli, Sherry Stefanes; Jerry Tobias

Dave Payne      Wilma S. Cotton      Dan Devine
Supervisor      Clerk                  Treasurer

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Check the Bloomfield Township website, www.bloomfieldtwp.org for the latest Township news!