

## **FOCUS ON DANBURY TOWNSHIP - 2022 YEAR-END REVIEW**

By Dianne Rozak, Danbury Township Trustee

[www.danburytownship.com](http://www.danburytownship.com)

February 16, 2023

The past year was exceptionally full with several projects underway and many more completed in Danbury Township. Road Superintendent Brett Waldron and his staff perform exemplary work in maintaining parks, roads and other township property. The department has one part-time and four full-time employees with the recent addition of Jason Gdovicak. They attended to 24 funeral services and mowed and trimmed Sackett Cemetery forty times. Residential "free mulch days" were held, brush and leaf drop-off was well-received and one professional brush grinding was completed. Two township residential clean-up weeks were highly successful and will be held again in June and September. Township employees will assist staff from Cyclone Services during these Tuesday through Saturday clean-ups.

Dike repair at Meadowbrook Marsh was completed and vegetation control applied to the phragmite. The department spent 478 hours mowing township properties exclusive of many hours of trimming. Dead or hazardous trees as well as brush in the township road rights of way and parks were removed and ditches were monitored and cleaned as needed and as a preventative maintenance measure. Ebert Court, Parkview Court and Rockport Drive were paved. Reclamite was applied to Mystic Bay Point and Meter Road. A township stimulus grant was applied for and delivery was taken on a new salt hopper as well as a new Holland backhoe. Crack sealing was applied where needed. 300 tons of salt was obtained through the ODOT state purchasing program and added to the 300 tons remaining from 2021. The new salt and material storage building at the rear of the police and maintenance facility on Bridge Road is now fully functional. Two standby generators were installed, one for the police station and one for township hall. PMBA Architects were hired to conduct a feasibility study for the future maintenance facility and to design a new fuel depot at 419 Bridge road. The township hall meeting room floor was repaired and included structural reconstruction along with floor refinishing. The dog park received upgrades including two shelter house and trees. A new roundabout, the first in Ottawa County, was quickly and successfully constructed at the State Route 163 intersection of N. Shore Blvd. and Englebeck Road.

The Police Department, managed by Chief Michael Meisler, consisted of eight full-time officers and one part-time officer for the majority of the year. K-9 Kalahan conducted five drug searches. Our officers provide protection 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with nine marked and two unmarked vehicles. The officers drove 160,320 miles patrolling during 2022. Total incidents were 3,840 which was up by 144 incidents from the previous year. The department handled 1 incident inside the Village of Marblehead and 194 within Lakeside. Police incidents with high amounts of attention included alarm calls, traffic warnings, lockouts, suspicious persons or vehicles, house watch requests, traffic complaints and warnings, animal complaints, assisting other agencies in the county and assisting Danbury Fire and EMS. The department has a regular presence at Danbury Schools where a patrolman is available at certain times in an office provided by the school. The DARE program is taught by Officer LaMarca who conducts the classes with elementary students throughout the year. The department is located at 419 S. Bridge Road. They offer secure document shredding and unwanted prescription disposal services as well as house watch and senior watch. Call (419) 732-2549 to make arrangements

for these free services. The township's recycling bins are located on the south side of the police department property.

The Danbury Township Fire Department led by Chief Keith Kahler reported 1,093 incidents in 2022, up 113 incidents from 2021. They were detailed as 947 EMS calls, 30 fire calls, 32 motor vehicle accidents, 76 fire alarm activations, 5 carbon monoxide activations and 3 mutual aid calls. The department roster hovers around 40. Fire and EMS staff meet Monday evenings for training, department updates and continuing education sessions. Our new fire station on East Harbor Road just west of North Shore Blvd. was successfully completed and a well-attended open house was held October 15. The department is always in need of additional part-time staff. Township residency is preferred, but not required. Full training and all equipment is provided and no experience is necessary. Contact the station at (419) 798-5219 for more information.

The Danbury Township Zoning Department, singularly overseen by Kathryn Dale, AICP, continues to be the center for residential and business growth and expansion. 301 permits were issued resulting in 13 more than 2021. Between 2018 – 2022, the average number of permits issued per year has been 277. This past year most permits were issued April through August although permits remained strong in September and October. Single family home permits totaled 32 which was 2 less than the prior year. Commercial activity compared to 2021 was comparable in numbers but higher in square footage. Permit fees totaling \$29,267 were up by \$1,200 from 2021. Residential improvements continued in large numbers (155) comparable with 2021 and included additions, fences, porches, decks, docks and accessory buildings and pools. This seemingly never-ending trend continually points to relocation and retirement to our area with improvements versus starting anew. The Board of Zoning Appeals heard 41 cases (6 more than 2021) and the Zoning Commission heard 7 cases, four more than in 2021. Mrs. Dale responded to 7,735 calls, emails and in-person inquiries, went on 1,022 site visits and sent 58 violation letters. Mrs. Dale assists businesses seeking to locate or expand in the township and works closely with commercial and residential developers, business owners and residential property owners to design projects that will add to the township's economic, environmental and social well-being. In addition, she is in regular contact with the trustees to recommend and research the abatement of abandoned and dilapidated structures as the general fund budget allows. A critical goal accomplished was the review of accessory building height and size ratio to lot size. Trustees adopted these amendments in December and changes were effective January 2023. In March 2022, at the request of the trustees, Mrs. Dale testified before the Ohio House State and Local Government Committee in opposition to House Bill 563 regarding short-term rentals. The bill was voted out of the House of Representatives and never progressed further.

Township newsletters are published twice each year in late spring and late summer. They are mailed several weeks in advance of township clean-ups and are available for viewing on the website after they are produced. Current news and pertinent information along with all contact information is on our website [www.danburytownship.com](http://www.danburytownship.com). Elected officials and department heads are available to the public via phone or email.

Our staff continues to review all expenditures closely to provide the best service at the most reasonable cost to our residents. Applying for grants to various organizations is an ongoing process here at the township. We were fortunate to receive funds from the Ottawa County Parks District for improvements to Meadowbrook Marsh including an ADA concrete pathway to the Rainbow Ridge memorial, a new information sign, park benches, asphalt repair and a soon-to-be installed shelter house. We are applying again for additional grants from this organization for extended paved trails at Meadowbrook. Funding from the American Rescue

Plan Act was utilized for repairs at township hall, reconfiguration of the dike at Meadowbrook, upgrades to the dog park and as matching funds for grants. Our Fiscal Officer Carolyn Adams and Assistant Fiscal Officer Lynne James continue to work diligently to keep the financial side of township business up to speed and in compliance. John Paul Dress, Dave Hirt and I work very hard to meet the continual growing needs of your township. Please do not hesitate to call any of us with your questions, concerns and ideas.

##