

# Sycamore Township

# NEWS

Spring/Summer 2012

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Summer is the time for students out on school break and family vacations.

Cautious optimism is certainly the mood of the Trustees as summer comes to Sycamore Township.

As you have heard in the news or viewed on our website, your Trustees have been working very hard to shore up budgets in light of the elimination of the Ohio Tangible Personal Property Tax and the Estate Tax, as well as significant reductions in the Local Government Fund and property tax revenue, due to reductions in valuations. These cuts were all adopted in the State Budget last year, and during a recent trip to Cincinnati, Governor Kasich reiterated in an interview with the editorial staff at the Enquirer, that the State would not be replacing any of the lost revenue to local governments.

All told, we are estimating that these reductions will amount to \$3.6 million in lost revenue for 2013. On top of that, we will have a shortfall of \$1.5 million dollars in our EMS/Fire Department budget which brings our total projected deficit for 2013 to approximately \$5.1 million dollars.

These shortfalls have forced us to make changes in the way we deliver Safety Services to our residents. However, if there is one message we hope you receive from this

newsletter, it is that WE WILL NOT COMPROMISE THE SAFETY SERVICES OUR RESIDENTS HAVE COME TO EXPECT AND APPRECIATE.



Tom Weidman,  
President

We want to give you an update with the most current information we have as of now. As announced at a Trustees meeting in April, our requests for proposals to contract operation of the EMS and Fire Services were not successful. None of the proposals were acceptable to achieve a high level of EMS and fire service to our residents. Since then, we have met with fire union representatives and reviewed proposals from them. None of their proposals met the financial budget for the Department of \$3.3 million dollars, nor did they include the necessary staffing levels required.

We have reached some tough decisions about what needs to be done immediately to ensure a balanced budget for the remainder of this year, as well as setting us on the proper fiscal path for years to come:



Cont. on pg 2

*Letter from the President, cont. from pg. 1*

1. At this point, we will not recommend a levy. It is not the time to go to our residents seeking a tax increase when we know there are other ways to balance our budget.
2. We will continue to try to make cuts across the board. As we have told you, in the last 12 months we have already made over \$2 million dollars in cuts, outsourced work, not filled vacant positions and laid off a number of employees.
3. Fire Chief Jetter presented a budget proposal to the Trustees that lives within our \$3.3 million dollar budget and still staffs at 12, but requires that 13 existing full time firefighters be laid off to meet budget obligations. The Trustees voted on the proposal and unanimously agreed to move forward with it. Per our current Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Union, we will lay off all of our part time firefighters and 13 of our 26 full time staff of fire personnel. The layoffs of full time personnel are based on Seniority. The full time firefighters that are being laid off will have the first opportunity to fill the part time positions in the Department. After the laid off full time firefighters have filled the top part time positions, we will recall all of the part time firefighters that were laid off and offer them shifts on an as-needed basis.

It is important to note that we are not compromising the staffing level that we currently have. WE PRESENTLY STAFF AT 12 FIREFIGHTERS IN 2 HOUSES AND AFTER WE HAVE EXECUTED THE CHIEF'S PROPOSAL, WE WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE WITH A STAFF OF 12 ON DUTY IN 2 FIREHOUSES. THIS LEVEL OF PERSONNEL ACTUALLY EXCEEDS WHAT ALL OF OUR NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES STAFF AT THEIR FIRE STATIONS.

Over the last couple of months while we were deciding on a course of action, in meetings, in printed materials and in statements to the press, advocates of no change in the fire services have tried to scare residents by saying safety will be jeopardized by changes in Sycamore Township's EMS and Fire Services.

STATEMENTS LIKE THAT ARE COMPLETELY UNTRUE AND ARE NOTHING MORE THAN SCARE TACTICS.

All we have to do is look around us. Our neighbors operate safe, high quality and well respected EMS and Fire Services at staffing levels well below ours. Lower staffing levels of full time personnel mean significantly lower costs.

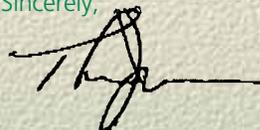
Sycamore Township will have an EMS and Fire Department that provides quality, superbly trained service to the people of Sycamore Township. We know we can save money and still provide quality service.

Please let us know if you have any questions on this or other matters. Also, please continue to check out our website at [www.sycamoretownship.org](http://www.sycamoretownship.org) for updates on the EMS/Fire Department and other news around the Township. Or, for the fastest way to receive all the breaking news in Sycamore Township, please go to our website and click on the 'Click here to sign up for e-news' button on the right to register to receive updates by mail.

Finally, it is summer and we hope that you will enjoy the excitement we have ready for you at our annual Festival in Sycamore. This year we have the Rusty Griswolds performing on Friday night and legendary "Guess Who" performing on Saturday night. AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT THE COST OF THE BANDS FOR THIS EVENT IS ALL BEING PAID FOR BY CORPORATE SPONSORS AND NOT OUT OF OUR PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET.

On behalf of Trustees Cliff Bishop and Denny Connor and our Fiscal Officer Rob Porter, I hope you have a great summer season with your family, and please be assured that we are working hard to keep Sycamore Township a safe community in which to live and work.

Sincerely,



Tom Weidman,  
President

*F.A.Q. Cont. on pg 7*



# Police and Crime Prevention

## VEHICLE SECURITY

### *You can prevent vehicle theft!*

Most cars are taken by amateurs who can be stopped fairly easily. You can increase your protection against this type of crime by taking the following sensible precautions.

#### Lock up

- An unlocked car is an open invitation to a car thief. Lock up when you leave your car, and take the keys with you.
- Lock the trunk or tailgate.
- Close all windows – professional thieves have tools that unlock cars through the smallest openings.
- Be sure vent or wind-wing windows are shut tight.
- When you park the car, remove cellular phones, I-Pads, I-Pods, GPS devices and other valuable possessions. Lock all valuables in your trunk or take them with you.
- Lock your car even if you are making a quick stop at the gas station or convenience store.

#### Park carefully

- Don't leave an auto in unattended public parking lots for an extended period. A car is five times more likely to be stolen from an unattended lot than from the street or attended lot.
- If possible, park your car in a lot where you don't have to leave your keys.
- Never attach a tag with your name and address to your key ring. If the keys are lost or stolen, the tag will lead the thief directly to your car and your home. If you have to leave your keys with a parking attendant leave only the ignition key.
- At night, park in well-lit areas with lots of people around.
- Turn wheels sharply toward the curb when parking, this makes it extra difficult for thieves to tow your car.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MONTHLY CHIPPING

**8:00 AM-4:00 PM**

Sycamore Township Adm Bldg  
8540 Kenwood Road  
Sycamore Township, OH 45236  
July 7, August 4, Sept 1, October 6

### TWILIGHT CONCERT JUMP 'N' JIVE

Saturday, June 30  
6:00 PM-8:00 PM  
Bechtold Park  
4312 Sycamore Road  
Sycamore Township, OH 45236

### FESTIVAL IN SYCAMORE

Friday, July 13 and  
Saturday, July 14  
6:00 PM – Midnight  
Bechtold Park  
4312 Sycamore Road  
Sycamore Township, OH 45236

### SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP CAR SHOW

Saturday, August 11  
Registration: 9:00 AM-noon  
Show: noon-3:30 PM  
Robert L. Schuler Sports Complex  
11532 Deerfield Road  
Sycamore Township, OH 45242

### SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP GOLF OUTING

Saturday, August 25  
9:00 AM Shotgun Start  
MAJESTIC SPRINGS  
1631 Todds Fork Road  
Wilmington, OH 45277

### TRASH BASH NORTH

Clete McDaniel Sports Complex  
School Road Entrance  
7841 School Road  
Sycamore Township, OH 45249  
September 14 12:00 PM-4:00 PM  
September 15 8:00 AM-4:00 PM  
September 16 12:00 PM-4:00 PM

# Parks and Recreation



Mike McKeown  
Parks & Recreation  
Director

## THE GUESS WHO TO HEADLINE AT THE FESTIVAL IN SYCAMORE

This year marks the **20th Annual Festival in Sycamore**, to be held **July 13 and 14 from 6:00 PM - Midnight, at Bechtold Park, 4312 Sycamore Rd.**, and it looks like the 20th year will be very special. Legendary rockers **THE GUESS WHO** will headline a fantastic lineup

of national, local, and regional acts. The Festival will also feature the return of **The Rusty Griswolds** to the Festival in Sycamore. The Festival will again feature a great variety of delicious foods from many area restaurants, all reasonably priced. There will be games and rides for the kids. We're bringing back the **"RIDE FOR FIVE \$"** again this year. Buy a bracelet for \$5 each day and your child can ride as much as he or she wants.



The Guess Who

**THE GUESS WHO**, with many platinum and gold recordings including *Shakin' All Over*, *These Eyes*, *Laughing, Undun*, *American Woman*, *No Sugar Tonight*, *Share the Land*, and *Hand Me Down World*, still tours extensively and puts on a fabulous show. It promises to be a great performance. Regional favorites **THE RUSTY GRISWOLDS** and **BLUESTONE IVORY** will

make return appearances. Local favorites **DV8** makes its first Festival in Sycamore appearance and two great up and coming area bands, **HOTT STUFF** and **The ACOUSTIC EDGE**, will also perform.

Free onsite parking will be available (weather permitting). Shuttle lots will be at the Township Building, Bethel Baptist Church, St. Saviour Church, and Deer Park High School. Bring a blanket or lawn chair, but please do not bring any bottles, cans, coolers, or animals.

Call the Township office (791-8447) for more information.

### ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

#### July 13

6:00 – Hott Stuff  
7:30 – Bluestone Ivory  
9:30 - Rusty Griswolds

#### July 14

6:00 – The Acoustic Edge  
7:30 – DV8  
9:30 – THE GUESS WHO



**Thanks to GOLD sponsors** Jewish Hospital and Doubletree Guest Suites, JS Gold & Coin, **SILVER sponsors** Adleta Construction, 5/3 Bank Securities, Kenwood Towne Center, Kroger Co., Integrys Energy Services, Kids First Sports Center, Luckies Pony Keg, Sign Tech, and Sycamore Township Republican Club,

and **MAJOR sponsors** Midland Atlantic, Silverton Hardware, the Neyer Properties, Besl Transfer, Prus Construction, Alleen Co., and Rumpke. Without their support, the Festival in Sycamore would not be possible.

## SYCAMORE TOWNSHIP 2ND ANNUAL CAR SHOW

We're very pleased to announce the 2nd annual car show for Sycamore Township!! Save the date – Saturday, August 11, at the Robert L. Schuler Sports Complex, 11532 Deerfield Road. This special event will combine classic and custom cars and hot rods. Registration will be from 9:00 AM til noon. The cost for entry of a car is \$15.00. The car show will be held from noon til 3:00 PM with free admission to the public. At 3:30 PM the award presentation will take place which includes 40 Best, Trustee's Choice, 9 Specialty Awards (Best GM, Ford, Mopar, Import, Truck, Street Rod, Engine, Paint, Best of Show, 1998 and up). The first 100 registrants will receive a free dash plaque. On the Air Entertainment will provide a live DJ during the car show. Of course, plenty of food and refreshments will be available.

Thanks to the Cincy Custom Street Machines Car Club for assistance with the car show. We're looking forward to making this another wonderful annual family event for our residents and neighbors. Call Mike McKeown (792-7270) for more information.

Also, a special thanks to our Gold Sponsors - The Jewish Hospital and Double Tree by Hilton, JS Gold & Coin and our Silver Sponsors – The Kroger Company, Adleta Construction, Green Bay Packaging, Kenwood Towne Center, Kids First Sports Center, 5/3rd Securities, Integrys Energy Services, Luckies Pony Keg, Sign Tech, and Sycamore Township Republican Club.



*Weldon Haynes, winner of the 2011 'Best in Show' Award, for his 1952 orange 2-Door Mercury.*

## TWILIGHT CONCERT ANNOUNCED

We are pleased to announce that Sycamore Township will hold one Twilight Concert this year. The Twilight Concert will be held on Saturday, June 30 from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at Bechtold Park, 4312 Sycamore Rd. Come and listen to the great big band and swing sounds of the **Jump 'n' Jive Show Band**.

**Jump 'n' Jive  
Show Band**



Admission is free. Bring a blanket or lawn chair. Coolers and picnic dinners are permitted at the Twilight Concerts. Food and drinks will also be available for purchase. Call 791-8447 for more information.

## THE 10TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING



The 10th Annual Sycamore Township Golf Outing will be held at Majestic Springs Golf Club located at 1631 Todds Fork Road, Wilmington, OH 45277 – phone 1-937-383-1474 - on Saturday, August 25. The 18-hole

links style course features fairway shaped from rolling meadows bordered by menacing roughs and woodlands.

The \$80 price includes golf, food, prizes, dinner and beverages after the golf outing at Healy Memorial Lodge, 7640 Plainfield Road at Chamberlain Park in Deer Park. The proceeds will benefit help for the cure of cystic fibrosis. 9:00 AM shotgun start, up to 144 golfers—SELLS OUT FAST! For more details, contact Rick Wietmarschen at 509-6690 or visit our website, [www.sycamoretownship.org](http://www.sycamoretownship.org).



# Planning and Zoning

## I DIDN'T KNOW I NEEDED A PERMIT!

We in the Planning and Zoning Department hear this statement quite often. A zoning permit is required for the following residential projects:

- |                                |                                       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>New Single Family Homes</b> | <b>Sheds/Accessory Use Structures</b> |
| <b>Room Additions</b>          | <b>Fences/Retaining Walls</b>         |
| <b>Garages</b>                 | <b>Front Porches</b>                  |
| <b>Decks</b>                   | <b>PODs (Movable Storage Units)</b>   |
| <b>Pools</b>                   | <b>In-Home Occupations</b>            |

A zoning permit ensures that the project is compliant with the current zoning resolution. For most residential projects, with the exception of fences and sheds under 200 sq. ft.

in area, the zoning permit is the first step in the process and a building permit through Hamilton County Building Department will also be required.

The current zoning fee schedule reflects changes made by the Trustees in February, 2011 lowering several permit fees for Sycamore Township residents. Some residential permits, including fences, decks and sheds under 200 sq. ft., have no zoning permit application fee.

Zoning permit applications, submittal requirements and fee information are available on our website at [www.sycamoretownship.org](http://www.sycamoretownship.org). If you have any questions or are unsure if a permit is necessary, please call the Planning and Zoning office at 513-792-7250 before starting your project.

## WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES!

New stores now open in the Kenwood Towne Centre include Madewell and Michael Kors, selling women's apparel; Fossil, featuring apparel for men and women; and Gold Guys, buyers of your unwanted gold and silver. Rent-A-Center has opened for business at 4000 E. Galbraith Road in the Dillonvale Shopping Center. Tap House Grill is now open and serving lunch and dinner at 8740 Montgomery Road. This locally-owned restaurant features build-your-own burgers. Sycamore Township's two most recent businesses are Mercedes Benz of Cincinnati – AMP of Cincinnati, 8727 Montgomery Road, 45236 and Massage Envy Spa located across from Kenwood Towne Center at 7865 Kenwood Road, 45236 in Kenwood Place.



## TOWNSHIP EVENTS



On June 7, 2012 the Federal Bureau of Investigation held a ribbon cutting ceremony and program to officially open the new FBI Cincinnati Field Office in Kenwood. FBI Assistant Director Patrick G. Findlay, Special Agent in Charge Edward J. Hanko, General Services Administration Ohio Service Center Director Michael Springer, Sycamore Township Board of Trustees President Tom Weidman and project developer The Molasky Group of Companies' Chairman Irwin S. Molasky spoke at a ceremony for invited guests and the media. The new field office building is next to northbound I-71 at Montgomery Road on the new street Ronald Reagan Drive.



The Kenwood Banking Center ribbon cutting event took place on April 19th with Justin Bifro, Banking Center Manager; Doug Lefferson, Chief Banking Officer and Tom Weidman, Sycamore Township Trustee President.



The 61st Annual Observance of the National Day of Prayer was held at the Sycamore Township Administration Building on Thursday, May 3rd.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Q. How can you lay off half of our full time firefighters and claim this is still a safe community?**

A. We staff at a level of 12 now and we will continue to staff at a level of 12 after the layoffs. The only difference is that more of the firefighters will be part time instead of full time. This staffing level actually significantly exceeds the staffing level of our neighboring communities. They all provide a high level of service and are recognized as highly safe and highly effective fire departments.

### **Q. Why didn't you consider a levy as a funding option?**

A. A levy to cover the deficit would have to be nearly three (3) Mills. In these tough economic times, that is a tax burden we want to prevent our residents from facing.

Although changes will take place in our EMS and Fire Services, we will continue to provide quality service with superbly trained personnel.

### **Q. Why are the EMS and Fire Service staff the scapegoats for your budget shortfall?**

A. The EMS and Fire Service staff are not scapegoats. We have already not filled positions or laid off people in other areas of Township services. We have already cut over \$2 million dollars from the budget in the last 12 months in areas other than EMS and Fire Services.

The Fire Department operated at a \$1.5 million dollar deficit last year. It cost that much more to run the Department than the levy generated. We made up the difference from the General Fund because we received significant revenue from the Ohio Estate Tax. The Ohio Legislature eliminated the Estate Tax beginning January 1, 2013. That means that the money we used to subsidize the EMS and Fire Department in the past instead of increasing the Fire Levy and burden on all of our residents, will not be there in the future.

### **Q. Why didn't the residents of Sycamore Township know about the budget crisis sooner?**

A. We told the residents as soon as we had all of the information to know exactly how the loss of State revenue would impact our deficit. However, don't forget that the Trustees anticipated a problem last year and we did cut over \$1.5 million dollars from the Township's 2011 budget.

### **Q. Firemen and some others tell us that you're putting the residents of Sycamore Township at risk if you reduce staff levels. How do you respond?**

A. Those comments are not true. They are scare tactics. Look around. Our neighboring communities operate well below our staffing levels. They have well trained people. Quality fire service is provided. And, mutual aid from other communities is excellent. If there is a fire dispatch call, other departments are also there quickly and efficiently.



# Contacts

## Spring/Summer 2012

Tom Weidman, President

Cliff Bishop, Vice President

Denny Connor, Trustee

Robert C. Porter III, Fiscal Officer

R. Douglas Miller, Law Director

Bruce Raabe, Administrator

Tracy Kellums, Superintendent

Mike McKeown, Parks & Recreation Director

**791-8447 – Fax 792-8564**

Greg Bickford, AICP, Planning Zoning Director

Assistant Township Administrator

**792-7250 – Fax 792-8571**

EMS & Fire Department/Fire Chief

William "BJ" Jetter, PH.D., MIFireE, CHSIII

**792-8565 – Fax 792-8564**

Thomas E. Butler, Lieutenant

District Three Commander

Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

**774-6351– Fax 774-6350**

Fire and Police Emergency – 911

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



8540 Kenwood Road  
Sycamore Twp., Ohio 45236

PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CINCINNATI, OH  
PERMIT NO. 1693

*"There's More in Sycamore"*



## Trustees available to better serve you



**Tom Weidman**  
President



**Cliff Bishop**  
Vice President



**Denny Connor**  
Trustee



**Robert C. Porter III**  
Fiscal  
Officer

You can reach your elected officials by calling the Sycamore Township Administration Office at 791-8447.