



STATE OF THE VILLAGE

OCTOBER 2015

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Postal Customer
Three Oaks, MI 49128

Dear Fellow Oakers,

I'm a little late with this update, but it just seems like last week was Flag Day! Where does the summer go? Maybe winter will fly by this year. Well, we can hope, can't we?

If you haven't stopped by your Village Hall, please come by and take a look. We like to think it is decorated nicely with historical pictures and some background that you may not be aware of. The icing on the cake is a beautiful mural painted by Cathy Zeiger that includes all kinds of references to Three Oaks over the past 150 years. It's a "must see".

Maple Street and the first block of Cherry Street were completed during the summer. I am sure if you have been downtown that is not news. We were able to completely reconstruct both streets and replace aging water lines with some savings we have accumulated in the water and street funds. With a new base, drainage and pavement, those streets should be in good shape for a long time. The bids came in under our initial budget, allowing us to replace a good portion of the sidewalks along the streets as well. Complete reconstructions are very expensive – this one was in excess of \$450,000 – so unfortunately it will be a while before we can do another. However, we do intend to do some repaving and preventive crack sealing on a regular basis.

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has installed new way finding signs at the intersection of Ash and Elm Streets and several intersections downtown. Not only are the signs very attractive and informative, but they will eliminate the need for all the sandwich boards in the downtown area.

I have mentioned in several recent updates about the interest developers continue to have in Three Oaks. The obvious question is "where are they?". The answer is that when we are talking about an investment of \$10 million plus the process is often not a smooth one, let alone one that leads to a quick decision. But we continue to be optimistic that we will find the right match. We have been in communications on a regular basis with serious investors. Just as investors have to be comfortable spending that much money, as your representatives we have to be diligent in approving a development(s) that are compatible with Three Oaks.

We have been mindful of the need to build reserves for the inevitable unexpected expenses and to take advantage of grant opportunities. That is becoming increasingly difficult given that our income does not keep up with inflation. None the less, we have been able to find more efficient means of providing services and will continue to look for cost savings.

You may have noticed the construction of an impressive pavilion in Carver Park. The pavilion is the centerpiece of the refurbishing of the park. Funding for the project is coming from The Pokagon Fund, Village taxpayers and a generous contribution from Three Oaks Township. Village residents are also residents of the Township and the Township Board has been mindful of that, making contributions to various Village projects. We should all be thankful that we have such a cooperative working relationship. We are planning on having a re-dedication of the park November 11 at 2:00. We hope you all can come for a brief ceremony and snacks in the pavilion.

Everyone privileged enough to serve in our Village government will tell you that the best part of this job is hearing from residents, business owners and especially our neighbors =) what a great turnaround Three Oaks has made. The turnaround has happened because of the character of the people that live in this town. It couldn't have been done solely by a handful of part time elected officials. It is my hope we continue to grow in a sensible way so that one day soon, people will stop mentioning what "was", and just realize that Three Oaks is what we all know it to be - the greatest place on earth to live and raise a family.


The Village Council meets the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 at Village Hall 21 North Elm Street. We have openings on our three appointed boards – Parks and Recreation, Downtown Development Authority and Planning. All three boards contribute immensely to the success we talked about earlier and participation has been very satisfying for the dedicated members that have volunteered. Please consider joining your friends and neighbors in serving.

Feel free to contact me or any member of the Village Council with questions or suggestions. My normal disclaimer is that Village Manager Adam Umbrasas will probably get you a faster answer. He's done a terrific job for all of us and is on top of everything going on in the Village.

On behalf of the Three Oaks Village Council

Council Members:

Cheryl Capiak, President Pro Tem
Steve Graziano
John Kramer
John Pappa
Troy Zebell
Darlene Heemstra



David G Grosse, Village President
10/22/15