

Village of Three Oaks

14 Maple Street
Three Oaks, MI 49128

July 12, 2010

I hope everyone is having a great summer! I can tell you that the Village employees and elected officials are continuing to work hard every day to get us back to where we all want to be. We have made great progress in the last 20 months, but we still have a ways to go.

During the election campaign in 2008 I told you that I thought it may take five years to get us back to solid economic shape and to see major improvement in the streets and sidewalks. As you all know by now, we started the reconstruction of our streets early this summer with Paw Paw Street and Locust Street. In addition to our plan to rebuild the worst streets we plan on sealcoating streets that are starting to crack, but which do not have major pothole problems. Linden Street and the Hickory Street Bridge are examples of the sealcoating process. Sealcoating does not make the street smoother, but does help prevent water from getting into the cracks and freezing during the winter, thereby increasing the size of the crack and causing significant deterioration. This process can add years to the life of the street while we rebuild the worst streets in town.

Our financial condition continues to improve thanks to "watching the basket like a hawk". However, our reserves still are not where we would like them, so we continue to be very diligent in building up those savings accounts. We are uncomfortably dependent on the State of Michigan providing revenue sharing funds. Those funds are not guaranteed and depend somewhat on the financial condition of the State. Like every other municipality in the state, additional cuts in revenue sharing would most likely mean cutting back some services. We are hopeful that our representatives take that into consideration when drafting this year's State budget.

We are planning some major water and street upgrades in 2011. Please plan on attending the Town Hall Meeting on July 28, 2010 at the Elementary School. We will be discussing the details of both the water system upgrades and the street improvement programs for the next couple of years. This is your chance to have input into those improvements.

We recently completed a Water Reliability Study mandated by the Department of Environmental Quality. The Study pointed out some glaring deficiencies in our water system. Those deficiencies must be rectified. Apparently the DEQ has been notifying the Village of the need to do just that since 1997, but nothing has been done. We will review the report in detail and have excerpts available at the meeting. In conjunction with making the badly needed improvements we will be upgrading a major portion of the water lines in the Village, some of which are well over 50 years old. Along with replacing the water lines, improvements to each of those streets will be made. In some cases, the entire street will be rebuilt. Yes, North AND South Elm Street will see major improvements beginning in the spring of 2011.

Thanks again for all your patience and cooperation the past year and a half. It is very gratifying to see everyone work together to ensure that Three Oaks remains the greatest place on the face of the earth to live and raise a family!