

Independence Township Times October, 2018



Road Improvement Proposal Follow-up

By Pat Kittle,
Supervisor

Still getting questions and hearing concerns about the proposed Road Improvement Millage that will be appearing on the November ballot. Thought I would share them and my responses with you. (Some of these issues have been addressed in prior Township Times articles. Apologize for the redundancy.)



Pat Kittle
Supervisor

ROAD IMPROVEMENT MILLAGE PROPOSALS: 2015 VS 2018

<u>PLAN SPECIFICS</u>	<u>2015 PLAN</u>	<u>2018 PLAN</u>
Life Expectancy of Repair	10 Years	10 Years
Township Contribution	\$12 Million	\$12 Million
Roads to be Fixed	22 Miles	28 Miles
RCOC Contribution	No Commitment	\$4.5 Million
Maintenance Plan	No Commitment	Yearly Maintenance
Funds for Neighborhoods	\$0 Funds	Estimated Pool of \$500K
Funding Responsibility	Township Only	Township & RCOC

THE QUESTION: “Who you kidding? This road thing is a done deal! The Township is just jamming another tax down my throat!”

MY RESPONSE: This Road Improvement proposal is not a “done deal.” The Township Board only approved putting the Road Improvement language on the November ballot. The Township residents are the ones who will decide if this millage proposal gets approved / denied by voting YES or NO.

THE QUESTION: “Roads are not the responsibility of the Township. Let somebody else pay for the repairs! Why the Township?”

MY RESPONSE: The lousy condition of the roads in the entire State of Michigan has been a concern for decades. And, I can tell you first-hand based on the numbers of calls from frustrated residents, our roads in Independence Township have been getting progressively worse in the 6 years I have been Supervisor.

Michigan ranks near the bottom in

the country in terms of per capita funding for road and infrastructure repairs. Even with the recent increases in the gas tax and vehicle registration fees, once those funds are spread out statewide, we are told by the County Road Association of Michigan, the Michigan Township’s Association and others that there will still not be nearly enough funding to get the roads up to a satisfactory condition.

Our phones continue to get blown up from residents complaining about the lousy roads in the Township asking what we are going to do about fixing them, even though we have ZERO jurisdiction over controlling improvements to the roads. To address this issue, the Township Board has determined that jointly working with the Road Commission makes a lot more sense than trying to do this on our own. \$16.5M is a ton of money to fix over 28 miles of roads in the Township. So, the proposal is to have the Township contribute \$12M with a 2 MIL tax over 4 years and have the Road Commission contribute \$4.5M for

design, engineering, culvert repair and maintenance. But this is a decision that will be made by the Independence voters on the November ballot, not the Township Board.

THE QUESTION: “Didn’t you dream this road millage up a few years ago and chickened out putting it on the ballot? You said then the Township was going to get stiffed. What changed?”

MY RESPONSE: You are correct. I did chicken-out back in 2015 because I was not comfortable with the answers from the RCOC to move the original Road Improvement Proposal forward. Things have changed at the RCOC and the Road Improvement Millage being proposed this year is substantially different than what was discussed in 2015 with: 27% more miles of roadway to be repaired, the same \$12M Township contribution, the addition of a \$4.5M RCOC contribution, needed culvert repairs, the addition of a yearly RCOC maintenance plan and an anticipated \$500,000 in co-op funding available for

neighborhood public road repairs at project completion.

The chart above highlights the differences between the original 2015 plan and the proposed 2018 plan.

THE QUESTION: “Why don’t you guys put all this road stuff on your website for anyone to see? Why are you hiding it in the paper?”

MY RESPONSE: Not trying to hide anything! *The Clarkston News*, which includes the Township Times, gets delivered to almost every address in the Township. But because you asked, the Township just added a link on our website that offers more details on this entire project, including RCOC road quality maps, roads to be repaved, construction specifics and more.

Visit INDTWP.COM and click on the link under *Township News* ROAD IMPROVEMENT MILLAGE. We even included a survey for you to voice your opinion.

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Road millage followup

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THE QUESTION: “Why the November ballot? What are you trying to hide? Why wasn’t this on the August ballot with the other millage proposals?”

MY RESPONSE: Presidential and Mid-Term elections in November traditionally have a higher turn-out than Primary elections held in August. It was my opinion that because of the sensitivity of an additional millage, putting the proposal on the November ballot would allow more folks to voice their opinion on this matter with either a YES or NO vote. Sorry ... no conspiracy. Just trying to do the right thing.

In closing, this proposed Road Improvement Millage is not a perfect solution. A perfect solution would be if the RCOC was footing the entire bill. Perfect indeed ... just not a very realistic solution with RCOC’s limited resources and amount of work needing to get done.

This Road Improvement solution being offered is one that has the Road Commission contributing a significant portion towards the total cost, it allows for an additional six miles of roads to be paved, it has a maintenance plan to ensure the designed life expectancy of the roads are maximized and has a provision for unspent funds to be available to help neighborhoods repair public residential streets.

As I have said before ... I hate taxes as much as the next guy. But I also hate seeing residents getting their cars busted up on potholes. And I really hate getting yelled at about roads that I have ZERO control over. Residents keep telling the Township we need to do something to get our roads fixed. This Road Improvement Millage and cooperative agreement with the RCOC will provide a solution for our community, but it will be up to the Township residents to decide if they want us to proceed with it.

No matter what your stance on this topic ... please make sure you get out and vote. The decision to get our roads fixed is yours to make. If you have any questions, please call me at 248-922-6213. I will get back to you!

Election news from Township Clerk Barb Pallotta

Straight-party Voting Eliminated

Straight-ticket voting or straight-party voting is the practice of voting for every candidate that a political party has on a general election ballot. On Sept. 5, federal appellate judges in the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals banned straight-ticket voting for the upcoming November election in a 2-1 ruling arguing that doing so would encourage Michigan voters to become more informed about the candidates they are voting for. Many supporters of the ban have argued that Michigan should be like other states, the 40 that never had straight-ticket voting or have banned it altogether. Due to the ban on straight-ticket voting and ballot issues such as legalizing recreational marijuana, a proposed constitutional amendment to establish a commission of citizens with exclusive authority to adopt district boundaries for the Michigan Senate, Michigan House of Representatives and U.S. Congress every 10 years, and a proposal to authorize automatic and Election Day Voter registration, no-reason absentee voting and straight ticket voting, November’s election will likely draw large crowds, giving us our first opportunity to witness what all this will mean for Michigan voters.



Township Clerk Barb Pallotta

How To Make Sure Your Vote Counts

Read The Ballot Marking Instructions inserted on the secrecy sleeve **BEFORE** marking your ballot. The **BIGGEST** mistake made by a precinct voter is attempting to correct OR erase a marking mistake on a ballot. If you make an error your ballot can be spoiled and a replacement ballot issued.

TO VOTE: Completely darken the box next to each choice as shown:

- Use only a black or blue ink pen; Do Not Use Any Other Ink Color!
- Do Not Vote For More Candidates than indicated under each office title.
- **ARRIVE NO LATER** than 8 PM at your polling location on Election Day!

Are You Eligible To Vote An Absentee Ballot?

If you are properly registered to vote

and meet ONE of the following requirements you are eligible for absentee voting:

- Age 60 years old or older,
- Unable to vote without assistance at the polls,
- Expecting to be out of town on election day,
- In jail awaiting arraignment or trial,
- Unable to attend the polls due to religious reasons, or
- Appointed to work as an election inspector in a precinct outside of your precinct of residence.

Voter Registration Deadline

Voter registration deadline for November 9 Election: Tuesday, October 9. If you missed this deadline, you *may* be eligible to vote in your old jurisdiction. Contact the Clerk’s Office of your former jurisdiction for confirmation!

Attention Students: First time voters/students that may be away at college must have registered to vote **in-person** at the Clerk’s Office or a Secretary of State office to be able to request an absent voter ballot. Those persons that have registered to vote by mail are not eligible to vote by absentee unless they personally stop by the Clerk’s Office with proper identification.

BALLOT PROPOSALS - NOVEMBER 6, 2018

LOCAL (INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP): ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT MILLAGE

Shall the Charter Township of Independence be authorized to levy a new additional millage of up to 2.0 mills (a tax limitation increase of up to \$2.00 per \$1,000 of taxable value on all taxable property in the Township) for a limited period of four (4) years, starting with the December 2018 levy, for purposes of funding the improvement, rehabilitation and repair of County public roads including, but not limited to, parts of Sashabaw, Clintonville, Waldon, Maybee, Clarkston, White Lake, Andersonville, Holcomb, Flemings Lake, Walters, and Eston Roads (amounting to an estimated 28 miles of roadway) in the Charter Township of Independence?

If approved and levied, it is estimated that this proposal will result in the

authorization to collect an estimated \$3,167,648 in the first year. It is estimated that 99.13% of the annual millage revenue will be disbursed to the Charter Township of Independence for public road improvements and, as required by law, 0.87% (8.7 tenths of one percent) will be disbursed to the Sashabaw Road Corridor Improvement Authority collected solely from properties located in the Sashabaw Road Corridor Improvement Authority District.

IMPORTANT: ALL questions related to the **ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT MILLAGE** are to be directed to the Township Supervisor’s Office at (248) 625-5111; Ext. 525. Questions related to the Sashabaw Corridor Improvement Authority disbursement are to be directed to the Independence Township Assessing Office at (248) 625-5111; Ext. 219.

SCHOOL (LAKE ORION COMMUNITY SCHOOLS): SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BOND PROPOSITION

Shall the Lake Orion Community Schools, County of Oakland, State of Michigan, borrow the sum of not to exceed One Hundred Sixty Million Dollars (\$160,000,000) and issue its general obligation unlimited tax bonds, in one or more series, for the purpose of paying for the cost of the following projects:

- Remodeling, equipping, re-equipping, furnishing, re-furnishing school buildings, athletic fields, playgrounds and other facilities for safety and security, energy conservation and other purposes;
- Erecting, completing, equipping and furnishing a replacement elementary school, a new early childhood center facility and security entrance additions and other additions to existing school buildings;
- Acquiring and installing instructional technology infrastructure and equipment in school buildings and other facilities; and
- Preparing, developing and improving sites at school buildings, playgrounds, athletic fields and other facilities for traffic control, safety and security and other purposes and the purchase of school buses?

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