

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF KALAMAZOO  
ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM  
TREASURY, ASSESSING, PLANNING & ZONING, ORDINANCE  
AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

## **TREASURY**

### **When are property tax payments due?**

Summer property tax payments are sent at the beginning of July and are payable without interest or penalty through September 14. Winter tax payments are sent the beginning of December and are payable without interest or penalty through February 14.

### **What are my payment options?**

Kalamazoo Township accepts full or partial payment between July 1<sup>st</sup> and September 14<sup>th</sup> and full or partial payments between December 1<sup>st</sup> and February 14<sup>th</sup> by check or cash. Kalamazoo Township accepts credit card payments online or at the front counter. Credit Card payments are charged a 3% convenience fee which is charged to the credit card user. Payments dropped in our drop box located in the wall near the Riverview side entrance before 8 a.m. will be accepted for prior business day. Mail postmarks are accepted. Interest and penalties will be added after their due dates. If not paid by the end of February, taxes will become delinquent and will be collected by the Kalamazoo County Treasurer 381-8124. Interest and penalties will be added by Kalamazoo County to the tax amount due.

### **Why didn't I receive a stamped paid tax receipt in the mail?**

Due to the high cost of postage, tax receipts are not automatically mailed to taxpayers. If you would like a stamped paid tax receipt mailed to you, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and both top and bottom portion of your bill along with your payment. Our web site [kalamazootownship.org](http://kalamazootownship.org) can also provide proof of payment. Our website is updated as soon as payments are posted.

### **What should I do if I don't receive a tax bill?**

Tax bills are mailed out twice per year, July 1 and December 1. Failure to receive your tax bill does not exempt taxes from penalties. If you do not receive a tax bill, please contact the Treasurer's Office immediately at (269) 381-8080.

### **How are my taxes calculated?**

To estimate what your property tax will be for the year, multiply the current taxable value by the millage rate for your school district. Divide the sum total by 1,000. If you do not know what your current taxable value is, call the Treasurers Office at (269) 381-8080.

### **Should my mortgage company receive the tax bill?**

If your taxes are escrowed, your mortgage company will receive a tax bill instead of the property owner. The amount of your taxes is printable from our free web site [kalamazootownship.org](http://kalamazootownship.org).

### **Can I defer my summer taxes until February 14?**

Deferring your summer taxes means you can pay your summer taxes by February 14, instead of September 14, without interest. To be eligible for summer deferment, your total household income for the preceding calendar year must be less than \$40,000 and you must meet at least one of the following requirements:

- Senior citizen (Age 62 by December 1 of the current year)
- Paraplegic, quadriplegic, blind
- Eligible serviceman, eligible veteran or eligible widow
- Totally and permanently disabled

If you are eligible, you must complete an application for deferment of summer taxes, available from the Treasurer's Office and must returned it by September 14th.

We hope this has answered some of your questions. If not feel free to call 381-8080 extension 114 or email [treasurer@ktpw.org](mailto:treasurer@ktpw.org).

## **ASSESSING DEPARTMENT**

### **What is my square footage, lot size, age of house?**

All this information is available in the Assessing Department. Many prospective home buyers will call to get correct information regarding a home for sale.

### **Who owns a house?**

This office can tell you the current titleholder for any property in the Township.

### **Why are my taxes so high?**

This office can tell you how the taxable value was determined, but we do not set the millage rates. The Treasurer's department can give you the amount of taxes paid and an estimated future tax bill.

### **What is the difference between the assessed value and the taxable value?**

The assessed value is theoretically half of the true cash value. The taxable value is what your taxes are based on. In prior years these two numbers could be very far apart, but in a declining market, they are getting closer together, if not already the same. Your assessed value can increase or decrease as much or as little as needed to be equitably assessed in your neighborhood. The taxable value is limited by law to 5% or the CPI, whichever is lower. The CPI or Consumers Price Index is determined by the State of Michigan every year.

### **Why is my assessed value higher (or lower) than the price I just paid for the house?**

There are many factors the assessing office must look at when arriving at assessed values for a home. We cannot, by law, automatically change an assessed value to half of the sale price. This office looks at the entire neighborhood to be sure you are assessed equitably. We review all sales in the Township to determine if the homes are all being assessed fairly.

### **How can I appeal my assessed value?**

All Township property owners have the opportunity to appeal their values at the March Board of Review. Assessment change notices are mailed every year in February. When you receive your change notice, please review the information. If you have any questions, call the assessing department to discuss your notice. If you still feel the value is incorrect you can make an appointment to talk to the Board of Review. You can also make appeal by mail if you are unable to come to a meeting.

If your questions aren't answered here please call the Assessing Department at 381-8083.

## **PLANNING AND ZONING QUESTIONS**

### **How can I find out the zoning of my property?**

A copy of the Township Zoning Map is available on the Township website – [www.ktwp.org](http://www.ktwp.org). On the home page, a link to the map can be found under "Quicklinks" in the bottom left hand corner under the title "Zoning Map". If you have further questions, contact the Zoning Administrator at (269) 381-8080.

### **What are the requirements for a fence on residential property in the Township?**

If you are interested in building a fence around your home, no permit is required. However, the fence must satisfy the following requirements:

- Within 10 feet of an adjoining street right of way line, the height limit is three (3) feet.
- Beyond 10 feet from the adjoining street right of way line, the height limit is six (6) feet.
- No fence shall be located in the public right of way.
- Fences shall be constructed with the finished side facing out to the adjoining property.

### **May I have a temporary sign at my business?**

Temporary signs are permitted for commercial and multi-family developments. One such sign may be used for a maximum of 15 days per six (6) month period. The maximum size of the temporary sign is 32 square feet. A permit is required and may be obtained from the Township Hall or the Township website.

## **I would like to have a shed / pole barn / new garage on my property. Are there any requirements?**

A residence is permitted to have accessory buildings or garages subject to the following requirements:

- Cannot be constructed or located on a parcel without a principle structure / home on the property.
- The building cannot exceed 768 sq. ft. (24' x 32' for example). Larger structures may be approved through the special exception use process with approval of the Planning Commission.
- All structures on the property – home, garage, shed, etc. – cannot exceed 15% total lot coverage.
  - Regardless of the total lot coverage, each parcel is permitted at least 576 sq. ft. (24' x 24' for example) of accessory structure / garage space.
- No more than two accessory structures and/or garages are permitted
- Maximum height is 14 feet, which is measured to the mid-point between the peak and the eaves on a pitched roof.
- Shall be compatible in appearance to the principle structure on the property

## **Can we raise chickens on our property?**

Raising chickens or any other farm animals is not permitted within platted portions of the Township or on property within 132 feet of platted property. (Platted properties are lots that were created through the subdivision or site condominium process and includes most of the smaller, more densely developed lots in the Township.) On unplatted property, chickens may be raised in a manner that does not create noise or odor issues for neighbors.

## **ORDINANCE**

### **How Can I Get My Neighbor to Cut Their Grass?**

If a yard has grass and weeds 12 inches or higher over a large portion of their yard you can call the Township. Please do your best to get a specific address or a good description of the location so the Township can identify the party responsible for the property. The township will mail a letter to the responsible party notifying them of the violation. After a minimum of 10 days from sending the letter the ordinance officer will check to see if the responsible party has mowed the property. If they have not the Township will have the property mowed and bill the responsible party for the cost plus fines.

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

### **Can I burn leaves and brush in the Township?**

Yes you can. Kalamazoo Township Ordinance 560 is available on the Township web page and specifies the requirements to obtain a burn permit.

### **How do I obtain a copy of a fire response report?**

Contact the Kalamazoo township offices at (269) 381-8080 and provide them with your contact information and the date and location of the emergency.