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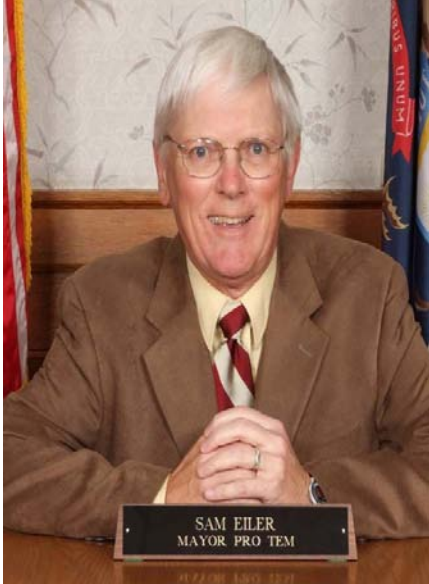
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City of Alpena Official• Visit Bay City



On September 30, some Alpena city officials visited Bay City, completing a Mayor's Exchange that began August 13th when Bay City officials visited Alpena. In the process, we experienced each other's pride and joys and discussed how we do things and why.

Like Alpena, Bay City devotes much time and money on downtown renewal. Our Bay City tour included a renovated downtown building on the east bank of the Saginaw River, now filled with high end condos. We got a great tour and Bay City has a lot to like.

Still, the Exchange deepened my appreciation of home. Perhaps as a non-native, I see Alpena with new eyes. When Bay City visited, we showed them our bricks & mortar including Thunder Bay Recreational Center and Northern Lights Arena. We also showed them our lakefront, the winding Thunder Bay River and our parks, both island and pocket.

But for me, the most impressive part of the Alpena Tour was when we were able to slow down and visit A-C-C, with its World Center for Concrete Technology; the Combat Readiness Training Center near the airport, and the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Center on Fletcher Street. There are many amazing things at those places. But it is also the people who work there – and all over Alpena -- who help make their places the gems that they are.

Times are tough, revenues scarce. But let's remember that we live where we chose to be. There is so much to do here, including things that cost little or nothing. We should never be bored. And even in our "down" moments, remember that the recession is everywhere. Where would you rather be? Why not rediscover what the Alpena area has to offer?

Sam Eiler,
Mayor Pro Tem

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ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN 2010



For 2010, there are currently two elections scheduled; the Primary election on August 3rd and the general election on November 2nd. The August 3rd primary requires a straight party vote on the partisan candidates. On the ballot will be candidates running for Governor, Congress, Legislature, and Judicial positions. While there will be no City officials up for election, there may be County positions or local proposals.

At the November 2nd election, you will vote for Governor, State Senator and State Representative. At this election, you do not have to vote a straight party ballot. There will also be non-partisan candidates for State Boards of Education, Judicial Seats. There may also be State and Local proposals.

If you need to register to vote, please do so at your local government office or a Secretary of State office. Our office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We can also be reached by phone at 354-1720. A great internet resource for election information is the Secretary of State's website at www.michigan.gov

Karen Hebert
City Clerk

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Welcome to Alpena Matt Miller



We are proud to announce our newest addition to the City Fire Department, Fire Fighter/ Paramedic Matthew Miller. Matt started with the City on June 16th 2009. Matt is originally from the Warren Michigan area and has 6 years experience working as a Paramedic for Alliance Mobile Health Ambulance service. Matt spent the last two years of his career there in management as

an Operations Supervisor in addition to working in the field. Matt also served 5 years as a Firefighter for the City of Center Line, Michigan. Matt is currently single and enjoys living up north and spending time with family.

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Alpena City Fire Department - 2010



Back Row (L to R): Dave Robbins, Bill LaMarre, Rob Edmonds, Brian Caldwell, Harry Knopp, Chief Ken Hubbard, Mike Manchester, John Morrow, Bob Adrian, Andy Williams, Jason Rouse, Jim Stachlewitz, Doug Krueger.

Front Row (L to R): Brett Miller, Jeff King, Andy Marceau, Mike Slosser, Dean Rivard, Matt Miller, Mike Sanders, Chris Morrison, Mike Torok.

Photo by: David Miller Photography

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Area Law Enforcement Distributing Child Safety Seat Brochures to Local Agencies

Alpena, MI – In an effort to increase awareness of Child Passenger Safety in motor vehicles, the Alpena Police Department and Alpena County Sheriff's Office have combined their resources and are now providing NEW informative brochures for current or expectant parents. Both departments are working in

conjunction to offer FREE child car seat inspections to area residents.

The brochures are available at both the Alpena Police Department and Alpena County Sheriff's Office. Brochures have also been distributed to area health care agencies; such as the ARMC Women's Health Unit, Alcona Health Center OB practitioners and the Department of Human Services. Officers have provided brochures to area clinics, preschools, and elementary schools. Day care providers are asked to contact the Alpena Police Department or Alpena County Sheriff's Office for the brochures.

Because of officer's schedules and repeated calls for service, it is appreciated that an appointment be made with the officers prior to stopping into the agency. Both agencies now have certified technicians available to provide on-site child safety seat inspections and education during their scheduled appointments. To schedule an appointment with Officer Tim Marquardt, please call 354-1800. To schedule an appointment with Sheriff Kieliszewski, Deputy Joe Smith, Deputy Eric Smith, Deputy Mike Lash and Deputy Cash Kroll, please call 354-9830.

ADDITIONAL IF ROOM PERMITS:

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children age 3 to 6 and 8 to 14. In 2007, 6,532 passenger vehicle occupants 14 and younger were involved in fatal crashes. That's why the Alpena Police Department and Alpena County Sheriff's Office are urging all parents and caregivers to pick up a brochure and call and schedule a car seat inspection.

"It's the responsibility of every parent and caregiver out there to make sure their children are safely restrained – every trip, every time," said Officer Marquardt. "We are urging everyone to get their child safety seats inspected. When it comes to the safety of a child, there is no room for mistakes." "This program is meant for 'saving children, one car seat at a time'."

In 2007, among children under 5, an estimated 358 lives were saved from the use of child safety seats and booster seats. If all children under the age of 5 were restrained, an additional 71 children would have been saved.

For maximum child passenger safety, Officer Marquardt said parents and caregivers should refer to the following "4 Steps for Kids" guidelines for determining which restraint system is best suited to protect children based on age and size:

1. For the best possible protection keep infants in the back seat, in rear-facing child safety seats, as long as possible up to the height or weight limit of the particular seat. At a minimum, keep infants rear-facing until at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds.
2. When children outgrow their rear-facing seats (at least age 1 and at least 20 pounds) they should ride in forward-facing child safety seats, in the back seat, until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the particular seat (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds).

3. Once children outgrow their forward-facing seats (usually around age 4 and 40 pounds), they should ride in booster seats, in the back seat, until the vehicle seat belts fit properly. Seat belts fit properly when the lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall). IN MICHIGAN, AGES 4 -7 AND LESS THAN 4'-9" TALL ARE REQUIRED TO BE IN A CHILD RESTRAINT (USUALLY A BOOSTER).

4. When children outgrow their booster seats, (usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall) they can use the adult seat belts in the back seat, if they fit properly (lap belt lays across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest).

Remember: All children younger than 13 should ride in the back seat.

For more information on Child Passenger Safety, please visit www.nhtsa.gov/cps , www.car-seat.org or www.safekids.org.

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Assessor Studies Property Sales to Set 2010 Assessments



Each year the City Assessor analyzes each sale of property in the City to help determine if assessments need to be increased or decreased, and by how much. The Michigan State Tax Commission (STC) prescribes which sales are to be used and what time frame of sales should be used to give the best indication of fair market value.

The STC says that only good arms length transactions should be used. A good arms length transaction is defined as "A transfer of property ownership between a willing seller not under compulsion to sell and a willing buyer not under compulsion to buy." So a sale from a financial institution that has foreclosed on a property is not considered an arm's length transaction because the seller is under compulsion to sell. The assessor sends out real property statements to each buyer asking questions about the purchase to determine if it was a good sale.

The time frame dictated by the STC varies depending on whether the real estate market is rising or declining. For the years 2000 through 2007 the property values were rising so the STC said to use a 2-year time frame starting April 1 of 3 years ago and ending March 31 of the prior year. In other words, to determine the 2005 assessments sales from April 1, 2002 through March 31, 2004 were used. When analysis of those sales indicates that property values may be dropping, the STC says to use a 1-year sales study starting October 1 of the previous year and going through September 30 of the current year. Or in other words, to establish the 2010 assessments, sales from October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2009 will be used. This way in a rising market there is a buffer built into the system so assessments are always a little behind the market, using sales up to 2 ½ years old. However, in a declining market the 1-year study is used to get the most recent data to establish the coming year assessments. The assessed values are still a little behind what the market is doing, but closer than with the 2-year sale study.

In analyzing the sales this year for the upcoming 2010 assessed values, it was found that there were 65 good arms length transactions in the residential class in the City of Alpena. What these sales showed is that on average residential parcels in the City of Alpena were assessed at 52.81% of their fair market value. State law says that assessments shall be set at 50% of fair market value. So the assessor will try to measure which neighborhoods in the City are selling for less or more and spread the reduction where it is appropriate.

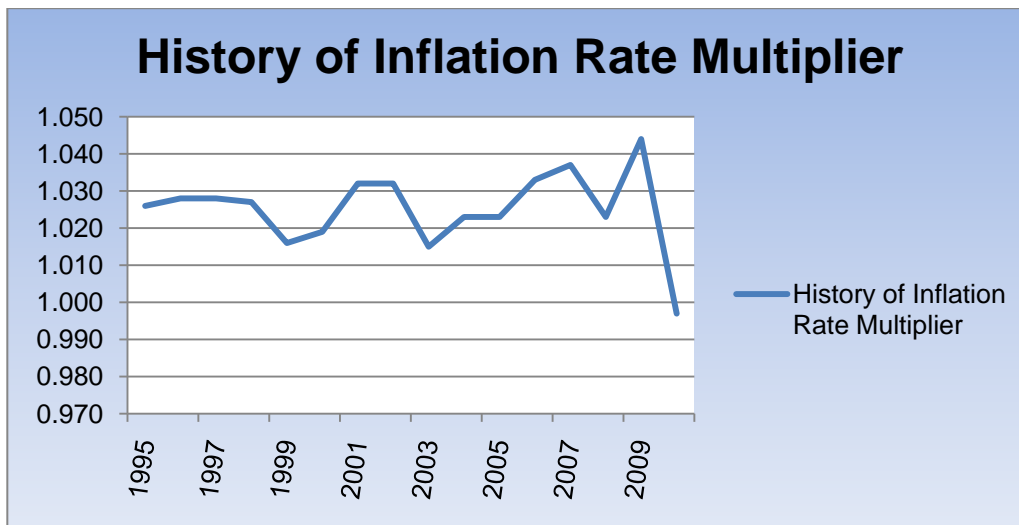
Most of the sale data and information used to set the assessed values for the City of Alpena are public information and can be obtained by calling the City Assessor's Office at 354-1700. A one dollar per page copy fee will apply unless the data is for property you own.

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Proposal A Rate of Inflation Drops

The Proposal A rate of inflation used to calculate taxable values for 2010 will be 0.997. Proposal A of 1994 amended the State Constitution and drastically changed the property tax system in Michigan. Prior to Proposal A, taxes were levied by using the same millage rate for all properties based on the assessed value which represented 50% of market value. After Proposal A, there is different tax rates used for homestead property versus non-homestead property and the increase in the value which the tax rate is applied to is limited by the rate of inflation. This new value that is limited by the rate of inflation increase is called taxable value. So to figure the property tax amount, it's tax rate, or millage rate, x taxable value. To figure the current taxable value a formula is used to ensure it does not increase more than the rate of inflation. That formula is: Last year's taxable value, less losses (ie building removed), x the inflation rate multiplier (Consumer Price Index for current year), plus additions (new construction), equals current year taxable value.

Historically since 1994 the inflation rate multiplier has averaged around 1.027. So on average, barring new construction and demolition, property taxes have risen 2.70% per year. From 1995 through 2009 the inflation rate multiplier has ranged from a low of 1.015 in 2003, to a high of 1.044 in 2009. However, for 2010 taxable values the inflation rate multiplier is at its all time low of 0.997. What does that mean for property tax bills? It means that when the multiplier is plugged into the taxable value formula it will result in a decrease in taxable value over the previous year. So one of the factors used to compute property taxes, the taxable value, will go down. The other factor, the millage rate, is controlled by the voters and the Headlee amendment. While the millage rate in the City of Alpena for 2008 for a homestead property was 38.6737 dollars per thousand dollars of taxable value, the 2009 rate is 37.8379 dollars per thousand dollars of taxable value, and should remain very close to that for 2010. The chart below shows the history of the inflation rate multiplier since Proposal A began in 1995.



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TOBACCO WARNING!!!



During this first semester DARE lessons, I have spoken to our 5th graders about the facts surrounding tobacco products. I thought it would be a good time to share some of these very facts with you.

Hopefully by now, most of us know that using cigarettes, cigars or chewing tobacco is a very expensive and unhealthy habit. Here are just a few reasons why you should give it up:

*Smoking is the leading form of lung cancer in the United States.

*Cigarette tobacco contains 200 *known* poisons.

*Tobacco contributes to approximately 400,000 deaths in America each year.

*Smoking alone is the leading PREVENTABLE cause of death in the USA each year.

*Approximately 3,000 Americans die each year from breathing in other people's smoke! (Second-hand smoke)

The fact, which states that 400,000 people die each year, is one that really grabs the attention of my DARE students. I tell them that 400,000 people would be like all of the people in Alpena, ABOUT 40 TIMES OVER. You can imagine their faces!

Smoking cigars increases the chances (by 200% to 600%) of contracting a disease of the mouth, throat and/or lungs. Cigar smoke contains approximately 30 times more carbon monoxide than cigarettes.

Chewing tobacco is not a safe alternative! This is "unfiltered" tobacco that makes direct contact with your body and causes cancers in your mouth, tongue, gums or throat. It could cause obvious deformities in these areas. As your City's Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) officer, I thought this would illustrate how we can make healthier decisions. This is a reminder of how we should be taking care of our loved ones, especially our children and ourselves. Think about it!

GUN LOCKS STILL AVAILABLE!!!!



I would also like to remind everyone that we still have plenty of free gunlocks at the front desk of the Public Safety Facility. We live in an area where we're often in the midst of various hunting seasons. Now would be a good time to stop in and pick up free guns locks. These locks were provided to us by the N.S.S.F. (National Shooting Sports Foundation) and they are an excellent way to secure your firearms at home. Please stop into the Alpena Police Department and ask for your free

gunlocks. Someone will be happy to help you!

Officer Tim Marquardt, DARE/Community Services
DARE/Community Services

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DRINKING WATER IS ASBESTOS FREE

Mike Glowinski, Utility Manger



Asbestos is a fibrous mineral that occurs in natural deposits. Because asbestos fibers are resistant to heat and chemical corrosion, they have been mined for use in over 3,000 different products, including roofing materials, brake pads, and cement pipe often used in distributing water to communities. Cement/asbestos (AC) pipe was originally marketed as a strong, lightweight, non-corrosive alternative to cast iron or steel pipe. It offered superior flow properties due to its smooth interior walls and its exceptional corrosion resistance from the fibers in the matrix. It also simplified construction due to its light weight. Because of these factors, AC pipe was extensively used for new construction from 1940 to 1970. The City of Alpena has 35 blocks of AC water

main which is about 4% of the total pipe in the system.

In 1973 the National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants (NESHAP) was created by the EPA under the Clean Air Act in response to studies that found that asbestos was a leading contributor to asbestosis and certain forms of cancer when airborne fibers are inhaled. Current regulations are primarily directed at limiting human exposure through breathing.

The EPA has also recognized the potential for asbestos exposure from drinking water transported through A/C pipe. As a result, the State of Michigan is required to evaluate the risk of this type of exposure every five years. The risk assessment has involved sampling communities in Michigan that have corrosive water and a high percentage of A/C pipe in their distribution system. More than 60 community water systems have been sampled to date, and none have shown detectable concentrations of asbestos. Based on these results, the State has issued a blanket asbestos monitoring exemption for all water systems in the state for the last ten years.

Concerns about asbestos exposure from A/C water main have been expressed by a number of Alpena residents over the years. Even though the city is not required to sample for asbestos for compliance, the municipal council concluded that sampling should be done to confirm the safety of the public water supply. Consequently, four water samples were collected and the sampling was structured so that about 35% of the total A/C pipe in the system was assessed. The samples were analyzed by an EPA certified lab using the approved method of Transmission Electron Microscope scanning. Zero asbestos fibers were detected in any of the samples and the safety of Alpena drinking water supply was confirmed.

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ALPENA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION 2010 Meeting & Filing Schedule

Regular meetings of the Planning Commission are held the Second Tuesday of each month, unless otherwise indicated.

Meeting Date Filing Date

January 12 Wed., Dec. 16, 2009

February 9 Fri., Jan. 15

March 9 Fri., Feb. 12

April 13 Fri., Mar. 19

May 11 Fri., April 16

June 8 Fri., May 14

July 13 Fri., June 18

August 10 Fri., July 16

September 14 Fri., Aug. 20

October 12 Fri., Sept. 17

November 9 Fri., Oct. 15

December 14 Thurs., Nov. 18

January 11, 2011 Wed., Dec. 15, 2010

Regular meetings begin at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Approved by the Alpena City Planning Commission at its regular meeting on Tuesday, December 8, 2009.

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2010 Second Avenue Bridge Opening

The Second Avenue Bridge will be open on the following dates for maintenance.

May 5	May 19
June 2	June 16
July 7	July 21
Aug 4	Aug 18
Sept 1	Sept 15

A reminder press release will precede each opening. Any adjustments to this schedule will be published in the City of Alpena Website.

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