

November 2009

Within a few days it will be December 1<sup>st</sup> and the City of Roosevelt Park will begin the 2010 fiscal year. It is almost unbelievable that we are about to end the first decade of the new century. Where did the time go? What has changed in our small community since 2000? What will 2010 bring us in these current challenging times? What will the Roosevelt Park of ten years in the future look like? Will it be the same community in 2019 as it is in 2009?

Almost all the recent news about local governments in Michigan is very grim. Revenues are declining. Hours are being cut at city halls and township offices. Police and fire staff are being laid off or other vacant positions are not being filled. All communities are uncertain as to their ability to continue to meet the public's expectations for services in 2010 and 2011. Local governments are looking at all options, ranging from reducing staff, contracting services or targeting fees and charges. Some are even planning on rationing snowplowing this winter.

In Roosevelt Park in many ways we've been a victim of our own success. We continue to march forward as if it were 1979 and not 2009. We've tweaked certain services to reduce costs and still receive phone calls about such things as "why we don't chip brush every day instead of just Mondays" etc. But, we still provide all those city services as we always have, that continue to make Roosevelt Park a special place. And yet, when we prepare the City's annual budget and hold a public hearing on this yearly spending plan we get no feedback from our residents/stockholders. We are not certain that there is much understanding or appreciation of what it takes to run this public corporation known as the "City of Roosevelt Park". Or recognition of what we've experienced in costs and changes over this past decade. These changes have been dramatic and for the most part do not give much comfort as to how difficult the next decade will be for this one square mile city of 4,000 residents.

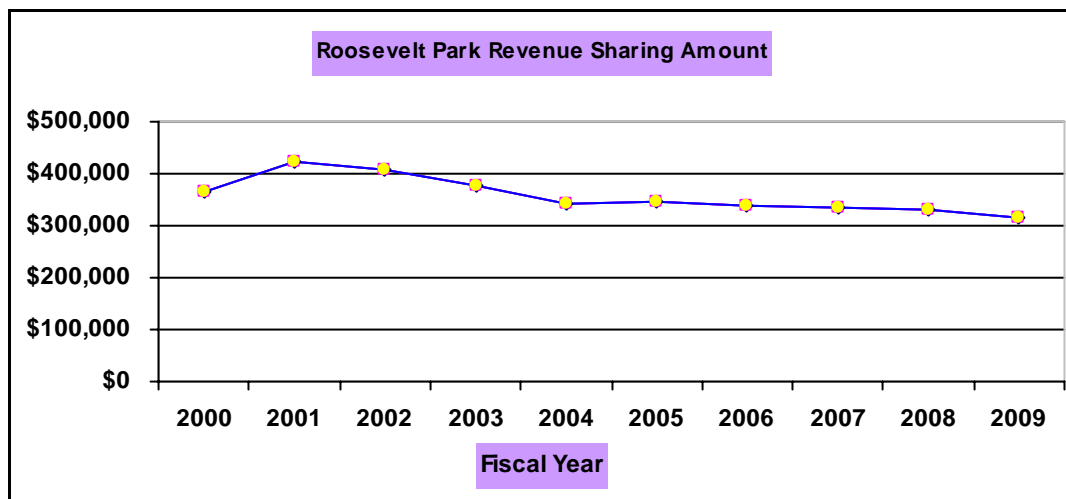
The intent of this brief newsletter...and future newsletters...will be to focus on some of these details of just what it takes to maintain the fiscal health of this city.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- In 2000 the City of Roosevelt Park had 33 full-time, part-time and seasonal employees on the City payroll. In 2009 we have 23 full-time, part-time and seasonal employees.
- Total City payroll from 2000 to 2008 increased by less than 1% on an annual basis.

- That 25% of all water used in Roosevelt Park goes to 10 customers.
- It cost the City \$238,000 for fire protection in 2000. For 2009 we will pay just over \$293,000.
- In 2000 the City paid \$.65 per 1,000 gallons for wastewater treatment. Currently that rate is about \$1.89 per 1,000 gallons.
- Why your water and sewer bill seems to be high...here's another reason....
  - Unfortunately the weather during this past October was not that pleasant. We had several stretches of cold, rainy days. One such rainy time period was the last week of October.
  - The following table indicates the amount of water purchased by all customers in Roosevelt Park on these dates AND it shows the amount of sewage that was sent on to the County Wastewater System. The days of cheap sewage treatment are long gone and with the amount of storm water inflow coming from Roosevelt Park...its no longer "pay me now or pay me later"...its "pay me now".

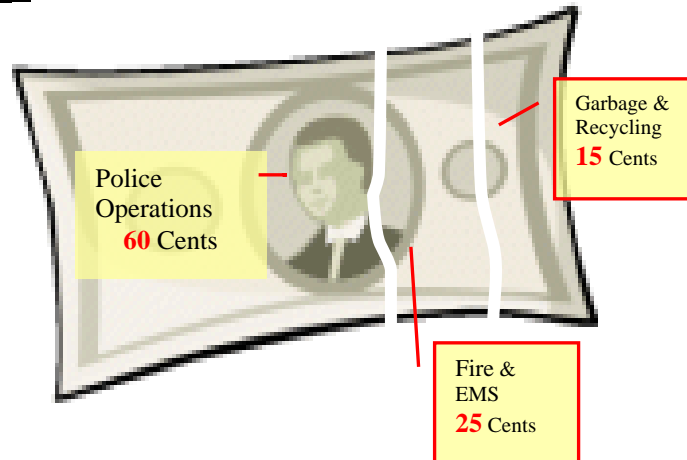
	Gallons of Water	Gallons of Sewer
October 29, 2009	341,088	543,000
October 30, 2009	342,584	593,000
October 31, 2009	279,004	732,000
November 2, 2009	279,752	732,000



## **REVENUE SHARING:**

- Based upon the average of Revenue Sharing received during the 1990's, Roosevelt Park has lost more than \$400,000 due to State cuts in Revenue Sharing over the past decade. The \$400,000 we didn't receive would run the City's Public Works department for an entire year.
- Health insurance for City retirees cost a total of \$34,104 in 2002. By 2009 this cost has increased to over \$78,000 per year.

## **PROPERTY TAXES:** How each tax dollar we collect is utilized.



- Anyone that works in local government knows one important phrase which is often heard in city halls across this state. "I pay my taxes and so...."! What is typically not well understood is just what is paid in property taxes and what services are provided that are not paid for by property taxes.
- In Roosevelt Park the total for all property taxes paid is slightly less than \$1.2 million. (This does not include the tax capture from commercial or industrial properties in the DDA District.) Obviously \$1.2 million is a "big" number, until you dig further into the details.
- As the diagram above indicates, all residential, commercial and industrial property taxes paid on an annual basis by Roosevelt Park properties will only cover the annual cost to maintain police services, provide fire protection and provide weekly pick-up of garbage and recyclables. Under this scenario, all other City services are funded by fees, permits, state revenue sharing, interest earnings, fines, investments and charge-backs. Also under this scenario, property taxes are insufficient to fund park maintenance, brush chipping, building inspections, code enforcement and all City Hall operations. This has traditionally been a tough issue for the average taxpayer to fully grasp.

An item that's even more difficult for the average taxpayer to comprehend is how no local property taxes are spent on road repairs, tree trimming, snow plowing or sidewalk plowing in Roosevelt Park. But that is a topic for a future newsletter.

### **VOLUNTEER MUSKEGON:**

- Volunteer Muskegon will again be preparing income tax forms at no cost to the residents of Muskegon County. Low income families and individuals can contact Volunteer Muskegon the last week in January 2010 at phone 722-6600 or [www.volunteermuskegon.org](http://www.volunteermuskegon.org).
- If you are interested in volunteering to assist with preparing income tax forms, Volunteer Muskegon will be providing training during the month of January. Other volunteer opportunities are available including office/clerical help, tutoring or mentoring, work in local food pantries, drivers to transport meals or clients and maintenance or repair activities. Call 722-6600, ext. 14 and ask for Rhona.

### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

Water Bills Due: January 5, 2010

Property Taxes Due: February 15, 1010

City Hall Closed: December 24, 2009 – Christmas Eve  
December 25, 2009 – Christmas  
December 31, 2009 – New Years Eve  
January 1, 2010 – New Years Day

### **CITY OF ROOSEVELT PARK**

City Hall 755-3721  
Police Department 755-3721, ext. 111

City Manager – David Boehm 755-3721, ext. 105  
Treasurer/Clerk – Tammera Harmsen 755-3721, ext. 104  
Building Inspector – Tim Villanueva 755-3721, ext. 109  
Police Chief – Bill Regan 755-3721, ext. 114