

Ordinance Compliance Department Annual Report

February 21, 2017

Brief overview / introduction:

The Bath Charter Township Ordinance Compliance Department was established in February 2008 following the Board of Trustee discussions in mid-2007 regarding concerns that AGS (*a month to month contracted service*) was not able to spend enough time doing ordinance enforcement and was falling behind. The Police Department had also done “code enforcement” in the past.

The following ideologies were created by the Department and continue today:

Mission.

The mission of the Ordinance Compliance Department is to treat all equally and fairly while implementing the Township's goal of promoting and protecting public health, safety and the general welfare of others while achieving compliance.

Vision.

To maintain healthful surroundings in the agricultural, residential and non-residential areas, which is attainable through the joint efforts of the entire community.

Values.

Assist citizens in noncompliance to a resolution of compliance.
Provide interpretations of Township Ordinances, County and State Laws.
Assist citizens in finding answers to their questions.

Affiliations:

International Code Council
American Association of Code Enforcement
Code Officials Conference of Michigan
Mid-Michigan Code Officials Association
Michigan Association of Housing Officials
Michigan Association of Code Enforcement Officers

What does the Department do?

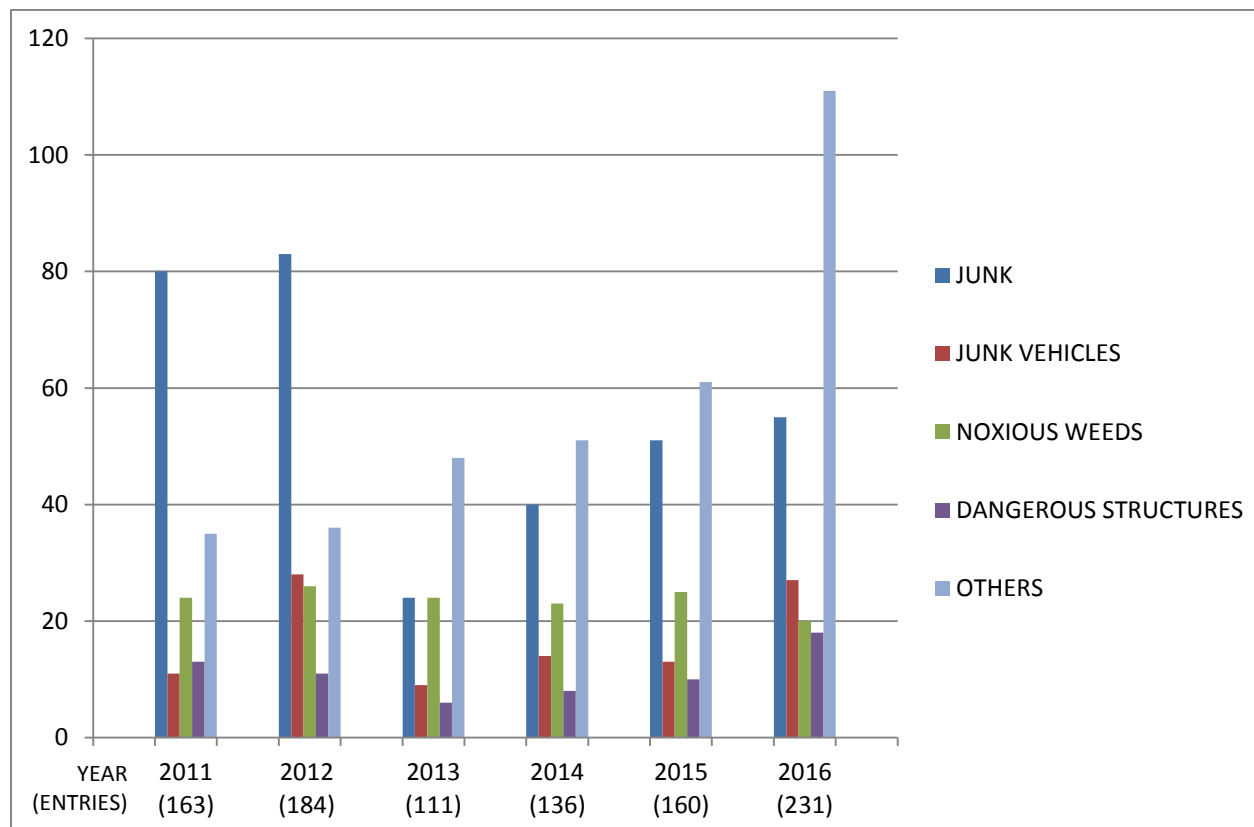
An Ordinance Compliance Department provides many valuable and necessary services for the community such as communicating, educating, being a mediator, solving problems, researching and maintaining compliance.

The Department addresses ordinance concerns relevant to junk, junk vehicles, trash & rubbish, building materials, keeping of livestock, keeping of poultry, animals at large, animal confinement, animal cruelty, animal nuisances, animal injury, dangerous buildings, dangerous structures, dust, smoke, fly ash, noxious odors, glaring lights, noise, litter, sidewalk obstructions and noxious weeds.

Other ordinance concerns include general zoning ordinance violations, rental housing regulations, soil erosion, site plans, special use permits, sewer permits, public safety, public health, doing work without permits, unpaid permit fees, parking concerns, mining operation concerns, illegal signs, building grades, home occupations and home businesses.

On some occasions different agencies are called upon to assist with gaining compliance such as the Police, Fire Department, Assessing, Planning, Building & Zoning, Dangerous Building & Structure Hearing Officer, Township Attorney, the Courts, Road Commission, Health Department, County Waste Management, County Building Department, Animal Control, Drain Office, Humane Society, Adult Protective Services, Consumers Energy, DEQ, Secretary of State, State Treasury Department, Mowing Contractor and Demolition Contractors all of which have specific attributes that have been helpful to the Department.

Some numbers:



Note: The above noted violations are a representation of the larger numbers of violations either through complaint or discovery during those time periods. Those violations as well as the others not mentioned

are either in compliance or in different stages of achieving compliance. Some entries that were entered as a concern were either “no violation” or those that the Code of Ordinances could not address.

Recent history / news:

Since 2011 DeWitt Charter Township has contracted with the Township for shared services, performing duties of an Ordinance Officer. Occasionally the Department is called upon to do Building inspections on an as needed basis. DeWitt Township is billed for the hourly cost of wages including benefits and ½ the cost of training. Initially the shared service was for 1 day a week. As time progressed with the transitioning of their Building Department and their adoption of a property maintenance code, it turned into 2 – 3 days a week depending on the need and availability in each community.

The joint shared services agreement between the two neighboring Townships allows for the flexibility of time and consistency with enforcement which can benefit both communities.

Accomplishments:

2010: Initiated the purchase of BS&A Permitting software allowing for more centralized and accessible record keeping.

2010: Initiated the expansion of a Home Occupation allowing for one employee and a New Business Ordinance using the Special Use Permit process for parcels of two acres or more.

2010: Initiated Rental Housing Regulations to establish guidelines for tenants and landlords.

2012: Initiated the expansion of the Junk Ordinance allowing for a “parts” vehicle and the storage of.

2012: Initiated the decriminalization of Building Code violations allowing the Township to write Municipal Civil Infractions to gain compliance rather than having the Attorney and Courts involved.

2015: Initiated the decriminalization of Zoning Ordinance violations allowing the Township to write Municipal Civil Infractions to gain compliance rather than having the Attorney and Courts involved.

Any current issues / challenges:

Sometimes finding that there is not a means to address a citizen’s concern with the use of an Ordinance. *(Explaining that their concern may have to be pursued as a civil matter.)*

The Department can only do the job with the “tools” that the Board of Trustees provide. A property maintenance code that would encompass the entire community providing minimum requirements and standards for all premises (residential, commercial and vacant properties), structures, equipment and facilities for light, ventilation, space, heating, sanitation, protection from the elements, life safety, safety from fire and other hazards, and for safe and sanitary maintenance; the responsibility of owners, operators, and occupants; the occupancy of existing structures and premises, and for administration, enforcement and penalties would be an asset to the Township.

The Township Attorney has stated that even without adopting a property maintenance code separately, the Township can enforce those provisions of the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) that are incorporated through the Michigan Building Code. The Board also has the option to adopt the IPMC with amendments as DeWitt Township, Meridian Township and the City of DeWitt have done to better suit their community.

Goals:

Continue to provide the services that the citizenry of the Township are entitled.

Continue to maintain a Department that has implemented policies and procedures that are fair and equitable in gaining compliance.

Continue shared services with DeWitt Charter Township and potentially with other municipalities.

Maintain the continued support of the Board of Trustees for allowing the Department to address the Ordinances as adopted.

Have the PZE (Planning, Zoning and Engineering) module purchase and implemented within the BS&A Permitting software for record keeping and tracking of new projects within the community.

Submitted by Gary Cypher February 21, 2017