

Muskegon County receives new, improved voting machines

This year, the State of Michigan is making a massive effort to update voting equipment in every county so that voters may exercise their right to vote with as much ease and as few barriers as possible. The new machines are in place for the November election.

In Muskegon County, the Verity Voting system with digital scan voting equipment ensures election integrity. The machines, Verity Scan for digital ballot scanning and Verity Touch Writer, are secure, accurate, and easy-to-use. The ballot marking devices offer voters with disabilities to cast a ballot with greater independence.



The touchscreen system uses step-by-step instructions on the scanning machine and the ballot marking device touchscreens to walk citizens

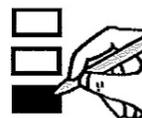
through the entire voting process. The machines are ADA-compliant, using features such as tactile buttons, audio ballots, and compatibility with common adaptive devices.

The scanning machine also provides onscreen instructions for voters.



To cast a ballot in the polling place, fill in the box next to your choices on the ballot; then insert the ballot into the scanning device. The voter will know their ballot has been successfully cast when they see an image of the waving

flag on the voting system's touchscreen. The new system allows all voters the ability to mark their ballots securely, privately and independently.



Qualifications to Register to Vote:

- Citizen of the United States
- At least 18 years of age on or before Election Day
- A resident of Michigan and the city or township where you are applying to register to vote for at least 30 days prior to the election.

Registering to Vote:

Any qualified elector who is not already registered, may register to vote at the office of the City Clerk, Township Clerk, County Clerk, Secretary of State or at a designated state agency during their regular business hours.

2017 Election Dates and Voter Registration Deadlines

General Election

Tuesday, November 7, 2017

The last day to register with your city or township clerk's office for the November General Election is Tuesday, Oct. 10, 2017.

This newsletter is presented as a public service from the office of

Nancy A. Waters,
Muskegon
County Clerk,
Vital Records and
Elections Office
990 Terrace Street,
1st floor
Muskegon, MI 49442

Phone:

(231) 724-6316

Fax: (231) 724-6262

Office hours:

8 a.m.- 5 p.m.

Monday-Friday

Clerk of the Court
Circuit Court Records
Michael E. Kobza Hall
of Justice
990 Terrace St.,
6th floor
Muskegon, MI 49442

Phone:

(231) 724-6251

Fax: (231) 724-6695

Office hours:

8:00 a.m.-5 p.m.

Monday-Friday.

If you have questions or comments for the next newsletter, please call, write or e-mail.

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E-mail:

clerk@co.muskegon.mi.us

Web site:

www.co.muskegon.mi.us/
clerk

New voting machines means accessibility for all

The new voter assist terminals are special ballot marking devices with accommodations for hearing, visual, physical and other disabilities.

With the use of these terminals, ballots may be cast in complete privacy.

The assistive terminal will mark the voter's selections on the paper ballot.

Using a touch screen, voters may make their selections.

Adaptive devices such as foot pedals, a puff-sip device, stylus or Braille coded-key pad may also be used to assist voters in making their selections.

The complete ballot is fed into a tabulator, which scans and records the votes.

Any voter with any ability may use these machines upon request.

County officials hope that the new equipment will reduce any and all barriers that would keep citizens from voting.

Some people choose not to vote because they don't think their voice will be heard, nor do they think that their vote counts.

Muskegon County Clerk Nancy A. Waters hopes the new terminals will bring some assurance to all citizens.

"The great thing about this new equipment is that everyone will be able to see their vote counted," Waters said. "This equipment will indicate your vote has been counted when a little flag goes up. This is confirmation for the voter, right then and there, that your vote has been counted."

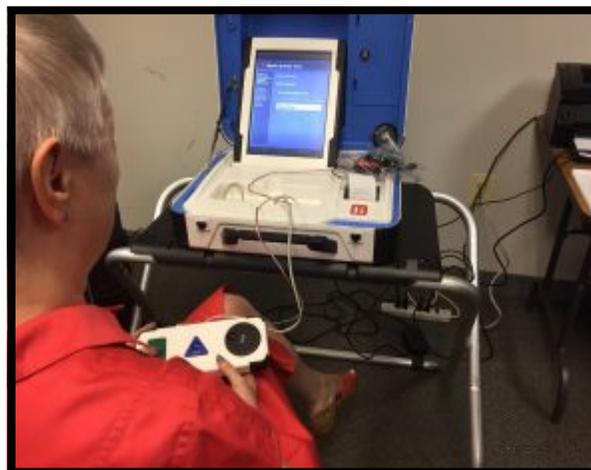


Photo: Alexandrianews.org

Muskegon County Elections

This November, all Muskegon County citizens will have the opportunity to vote for a countywide millage proposal to improve existing programs and services for youth, such as prevention and treatment programs for at-risk youth, foster care, and employment services. At 1.5 mills, the money generated from this millage will not be added to the general fund, meaning it must be used as laid out by the ballot language.

For example, for a house worth \$100,000, it will cost an additional \$75 dollars a year for 10 years, or \$6.25 a month.

In Muskegon Charter Township and Whitehall Township, voters will be asked to approve two millages. Both include road repairs, and also asks citizens to cast their vote to approve maintenance and improvements to roads. Specific ballot language is to the right of this page.

Each city in Muskegon County will also hold its own election for which voters may decide the following:

City of Montague:

Electing one 2-year Mayoral seat; three 4-year city council seats.

City of Muskegon:

Electing one 4-year Mayoral seat; two 4-year at-large commissioner seats.

City of Muskegon Heights:

Electing three 4-year city council seats.

City of North Muskegon:

Electing two three-year city council seats.

City of Norton Shores:

Electing one 4-year Mayoral seat; four 4-year city council seats.

City of Roosevelt Park:

Electing three 3-year city council seats.

City of Whitehall:

Electing five city council seats with terms of three 4-years and two 2-years.

Voters in Muskegon Charter Township will consider the following:

ROAD REPAIR, MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS

Shall the Charter Township of Muskegon levy against all real and personal property a tax not to exceed 1.50 mills (\$1.50 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of five (5) years, 2017-2021 inclusive, for the purpose of Road Repair, Maintenance and Improvements, and such levy shall increase the tax limitation under Article IX, Section 6 of the Michigan Constitution; and if this millage is approved and levied in its entirety, the Township would collect an estimated \$519,000 in the first year of such levy?

Voters in Whitehall Township will consider the following:

ROAD REPAIR

Shall the Township of Whitehall levy against all real and personal property a tax not to exceed 1.50 mills (\$1.50 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of ten (10) years, 2017-2026 inclusive, for the purpose of Road Repair, Maintenance and Improvements, and such levy shall increase the tax limitation under Article IX, Section 6 of the Michigan Constitution; and if this millage is approved and levied in its entirety, the Township would collect an estimated \$91,729.00 in the first year of such levy?

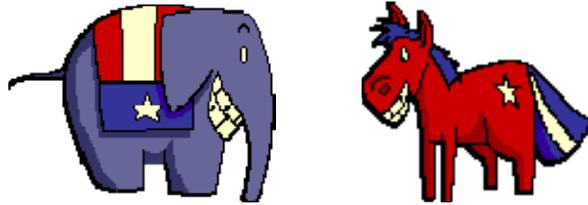


The following millage proposal is to be considered by all Muskegon County voters:

COUNTY OF MUSKEGON
YOUTH, FAMILY & COMMUNITY MILLAGE QUESTION

For the purpose of funding Muskegon County’s enhancement of existing youth programs and for the development of proven youth prevention and treatment programs; family based programs; school based services; increasing the number of foster care and therapeutic foster care homes; respite care; crisis housing; transitional and community aftercare; psychosocial activities; residential treatment; employment services; and assessment and stabilization treatment programming, and/or other youth services and operations pursuant to or authorized by Public Act 179 of 1967, shall the constitutional limitation on the total amount of taxes which may be assessed in one (1) year upon all property within the County of Muskegon, Michigan, be increased and the County of Muskegon authorized to levy a new tax of up to 1.5 mills (\$1.50 per \$1,000 of taxable value) for a period of ten (10) years, from 2017 to 2026 inclusive? The cost per \$100,000 home is \$75.00 per year. If approved and levied in full, this millage will raise an estimated \$6.2 million in the first calendar year of the levy based on taxable value.

Absentee Voting



Absent voter ballots are available to registered voters for all elections. They provide a convenient method for casting a ballot when a voter is unable to attend the polls on election day.

Who is eligible for an Absent Voter Ballot? A registered voter may obtain an absent voter ballot if they are:

- 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.

Your request for an absent voter ballot must be in writing and can be submitted to your city or township clerk. Your request must include one of the six statutory reasons stated above and your signature. You must request an absent voter ballot by mailing the application, a letter, a postcard, or a pre-printed application form obtained from your local clerk's office. Requests to have an absent voter ballot mailed to you must be received by your clerk no later than 2 p.m. the Saturday before the election. After receiving your absent voter ballot, you have until 8 p.m. on election day to complete the ballot and return it to the clerk's office. Your ballot will not be counted unless your signature is on the return envelope and matches your signature on file.



Muskegon County Juvenile Transition Center

The Muskegon County Juvenile Transition Center is a secure institution functioning under the auspices of the Muskegon County Department of Community Corrections.

Youngsters are referred to the Center by Family Court or one of its designates. Only youth who are accused of or adjudicated for law violations are placed in detention.

The facility assures that all legal rights of the youth are protected while in custody, and that the youth who are confined there live free from fear of assault or intimidation by staff or other juveniles.

Detention Center personnel are responsible for the care, guidance, and control of youth placed in their custody.

Youth are released only upon authorization of the Court or its designates.



Photo courtesy of Goldberg Group Architects