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# THE COUNTY COMMUNICATOR

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## VETERANS RESOURCE DEPLOYMENT JOB FAIR AND STAND DOWN

On Wednesday September 27, 2023 the Muskegon County Marquette Campus hosted the Veterans Resource Deployment Job Fair and Stand Down. The event was attended by 120 Veterans and their families. There were over 40 community resources and 12 employers providing resources and information. Attendees were also given food, backpacks, and military surplus.

A Veterans who attending the event stated, "when leaving active duty from the Army several years ago, the benefits were not always communicated to the soldiers that were living a life in the civilian world. This event assists our veterans and family members in areas of needs that they might need without knowing exactly how to start the process. It was an amazing experience to know that this event helped our veterans in not only ways that they needed, but also ways that they deserve. Thank you for everyone for all the hard work and the sponsors that donated."

This event would not have been possible without the following amazing volunteers and sponsors: JCI Greater Muskegon, WINC, Veterans Affairs, Muskegon County Clerk's Office, Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, United Way of the Lakeshore, Andy O'Riley, Pastor Wes and Lillian Spyke, Director Adam Hollier Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency, Assistant Director Dotts Battle Creek VA, Deputy Director Terry Sabo Michigan Department of Military Veterans Affairs, Kayla Hadley, Fatty Lumpkins, VFW Post 8846 Honor Guard, 5 local hair stylists, and the community support.

"A positive outlook starts a chain reaction of good ideas, experiences, and results." said Dee Hatcher, Veterans Resource Analyst for the Muskegon County Department of Veterans Affairs. "This was the most successful Veterans Resource Event in the last five years. It would not have been possible without our volunteers, community partners, and sponsors. Thank you for your time and dedication to this event."

The Muskegon County Department of Veterans Affairs team went above and beyond to make this event such a huge success! We are thankful for the community engagement, support and outreach they continually do.

"I want to send a big shout out to Mike Bauuw and Dee Hatcher for conducting this years' Veterans Job Fair at the Marquette Campus! It was great to be able to take part in such a collaborative event" said Charles Nash, Chair of the Muskegon County Board of Commissioners. "There were so many employers, community service providers and Veteran Resource Agencies in attendance. It was awesome to see our community giving back to those who have sacrificed so much for all of us."

# MUSKEGON COUNTY RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTER (MCRRRC) 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

On September 30, 2023 the Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center hosted the 50th Anniversary Celebration. The festivities were in full swing with tons of family-friendly fun, including food trucks, ambassador animals, tours, and club events. With approximately 200 attendees, it was a true display of community spirit and support for this half-century-old institution. Thank you all who attended and celebrated with us!



## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS MONTH

Cybersecurity Awareness Month is designed to engage and educate public and private sector partners through events and initiatives with the goal of raising awareness about cybersecurity to increase the resiliency of the nation in the event of a cyber incident. Since the Presidential proclamation establishing Cybersecurity Awareness Month in 2004, the initiative has been formally recognized by Congress, federal, state, and local governments and leaders from industry and academia. This united effort is necessary to maintain a cyberspace that is safer and more resilient and remains a source of tremendous opportunity and growth for years to come.

“The citizens of Muskegon County can rest assured that our Muskegon County IT are working diligently to ensure the security and integrity of the information that flows throughout our systems,” said Dan Aull from the Muskegon County IT Department. “As part of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, we have increased our efforts to ensure that Muskegon County Employees are trained to recognize cyber threats through various Security Awareness Trainings and Simulations. With a united front, we can stop cybercriminals in their tracks and send a message that Muskegon County stands strong against cybercrime.”

From mobile to connected home devices, technology is deeply intertwined with our lives. And while the evolution of technology accelerates, cybercriminals are working just as hard to find ways to compromise technology and disrupt personal and business life. Cybersecurity Awareness Month aims to highlight some of the emerging challenges that exist in the world of cybersecurity today and provide straightforward actionable guidance that anyone can follow to create a safe and secure digital world for themselves and their loved ones.

Starting this year, the new theme of Cybersecurity Awareness Month is Secure Our World, with the main messaging revolving around four key cybersecurity best practices which are:

Create Strong Passwords and Use A Password Manager  
Turn On Multifactor Authentication  
Recognize and Report Phishing  
Update Your Software

Cybersecurity Awareness Month continues to build momentum and impact with the goal of providing everyone with the information they need to stay safer and more secure online.

For more information about Cybersecurity Awareness Month 2023 and how to participate in a wide variety of activities, visit [cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month](https://cisa.gov/cybersecurity-awareness-month) and [staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/](https://staysafeonline.org/cybersecurity-awareness-month/).

# MUSKEGON COUNTY DEPARTMENT SPOTLIGHT

Appreciating the Unsung Heroes of Technology in the County

It's time to give a shoutout to the dedicated technology professionals working in various IT departments throughout Muskegon County. Muskegon County has IT staff stationed at several locations such as the Hall of Justice, HealthWest, South Campus, and Marquette Campus.

“These internal service departments often go unnoticed, quietly ensuring the safe and reliable delivery of essential services,” said Matthew Kelliher, Director of Muskegon County IT. “While their hard work may not always be acknowledged, it's important to recognize their contribution, particularly in an era of growing threats to our infrastructure. Our team is proud to have such capable and committed individuals ready to meet whatever challenges come our way.”



**Muskegon County IT, Muskegon County Hall of Justice IT, Muskegon County GIS, HealthWest IT & HealthWest Data Analytics**



**HealthWest IT & Data Analytics:**  
Lisa Vanderlee, Natalie Walther, Nate Kennert, Nate Cosier, Chris Yeager, Dave Eder, Jonathon Reek, Ben Burkholder, Kristina Baas, Michael Raaymakers & Calvin Davis  
Not Pictured: Mike Kimble & Randi Bennett



**Muskegon County IT:**  
Matt Kelliher, Cody Zok, Mark Hansen, Matt Wolff, Dave Majeski, Michelle Taylor & Dan Aull



**Muskegon County GIS:**  
Tom VanBruggen & Nate Hollenbeck



**Muskegon County Hall of Justice:**  
Julia Buthler-Ehle, Kashara German, Dan Aull, Ryan Foster & Sean Summerville

## PUMP STATION W FORCE MAIN REPLACEMENT

The Muskegon County Resource Recovery Center is working with project engineer Prein&Newhof to improve regional wastewater system reliability by replacing around 7,000 feet of aging sanitary sewer pipeline. This project's major construction is taking place along Peterson Road and within Colby Street and Holton Whitehall Road, where the replacement pipeline is being installed. Last week, contractors Kamminga & Roodvoets, Inc. and Midwest Trenchless Services worked to complete a challenging connection near the intersection of Colby Street and Whitehall Road.

We look forward to celebrating the completion of these crucial infrastructure improvements in November! For more information about this project and current detours, check out Prein&Newhof Construction Updates by visiting [https://www.preinnewhof.com/construction\\_projects/muskegon-pump-station-w/](https://www.preinnewhof.com/construction_projects/muskegon-pump-station-w/)

Photo Credit: Prein&Newhof



# MUSKEGON COUNTY MICHAEL E. KOBZA HALL OF JUSTICE

## 990 TERRACE STREET MUSKEGON, MI 49442

### RENOVATION UPDATES

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#### Curtain Wall & Courtroom Renovation Updates:

- Glass panel & trim installation finished for the year with 10 of 11 bays complete. A temporary materials hoist for 6th floor work will be mounted across from the only uncompleted bay.
- Patching & painting of interior walls post-curtain wall installation and installation of new window sills in progress.
- Wood panel installation in the courtroom nearing completion.
- Carpet installed in all areas.
- Courtroom audio/visual system installation in progress.
- Furniture delivery & installation in courtroom starts week of 10/23
- On track for opening of courtroom the week of 11/6.



Contractor: Erhardt Construction  
Architect: DLZ

## MUSKEGON COUNTY EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION & AWARDS

During the 30th Annual Statewide Recipient Rights conference, former HealthWest Recipient Rights Officer Larry Spataro was recognized for his many years of service actively seeking to enhance the lives of individuals receiving behavioral health services in the State of Michigan.



Lawrence O. "Larry" Spataro, age 59, passed away Sunday, August 27, 2023, at Trinity Health Muskegon, after a sixth month battle with pancreatic cancer. Larry was employed at Muskegon County where he worked for over 32 years, 27 of which as a Recipients Rights Officer for HealthWest. A true servant leader, Larry dedicated his life to advocating for those who could not advocate for themselves. He was also passionate about his hometown and served for 16 years as a Commissioner for the City of Muskegon. Recently he served on the City of Muskegon Planning Commission. He was past president of the Nelson Neighborhood of Muskegon and served as Chair of the City of Muskegon Neighborhoods' Association.



Each year the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce & The Chamber - Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg present the Lakeshore Athena Awards which recognize outstanding lakeshore women who excel in their professions, give back to their communities, and help to raise other women leaders.



Join Muskegon County as we celebrate the Athena 2023 Award Recipient Kathy Moore, Public Health - Muskegon County Director. The ATHENA leadership model identifies eight attributes that are reflective of women's contributions to leadership: living authentically, learning constantly, advocating fiercely, acting courageously, fostering collaboration, building relationships, giving back and celebrating.

## SEPTEMBER BUSINESS FOR BREAKFAST: MICHIGAN'S BEST BEACH TOWNS

On September 29, 2023 over 250 business and community leaders gathered for the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce September Business for Breakfast hosted by Maranatha Bible & Missionary Conference. Panelists from Michigan's Best Beach Towns discussed current marketing strategies, strengths and challenges for our local beaches, and how local business leaders can support this effort.

Bob Lukens, Community Development Director from Visit Muskegon County Convention and Visitors Bureau wrapped up the panelists Q&A session with a presentation of Muskegon County's 2023 Summer Tourism Season Highlights.



Linda Hart, Executive Director Holland Area CVB  
Jennifer Sistrunk, Executive Director South Haven/VanBuren County CVB  
Lisa Mize, Executive Director Saugatuck/Douglas Area CVB



Bob Lukens,  
Community Development  
Director Muskegon County  
CVB - Visit Muskegon

Some of the Muskegon County's 2023 Summer Tourism Season Highlights Included:

- In FY2022 Muskegon County collected \$1,946,481.96 in taxes and assessments
- As of October 17, 2023 the county has collected \$1,662,053.22 in accommodation taxes and hotel assessment towards FY2023
- Muskegon County had over 1 Million visitors from more than 100 miles away
- The average visitor returned to Muskegon more than 4 times which resulted in 4.7 Million visits to Muskegon County between October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023
- The average length of stay was 12.2 hours
- The top visitor journey locations are the Muskegon State Park, Meijer, L.C. Walker Arena and Event Center, Delta Hotels by Marriott Muskegon Convention Center, Pere Marquette Beach, and Shoreline Inn & Suites

**MUSKEGON COUNTY DEPARTMENT UPDATES:**



MUSKEGON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

During the month of September, over 400 Veterans and/or their family members received services to include assistance in the forms of: Soldiers/Sailors Relief, Burial, Service Officers, Food Bank, Housing, and other forms of assistance.



MUSKEGON COUNTY HUMAN RESOURCES

During the month of September, Human Resources' staff screened 738 employment applications, onboarded 9 new hires and separated 18 employees. Additionally, 2 Written Exams and 22 Oral Exams were conducted for City of Muskegon positions.



MUSKEGON COUNTY EQUALIZATION

The Muskegon County Board of Commissioners approved the adoption of the 2023 Apportionment Report for Muskegon County. The report consists of analysis of Muskegon County millage rates as they relate to the county, townships, villages, cities, public school districts, intermediate school districts, community colleges, and authorities. The report is subject to amendments as authorized by statute.



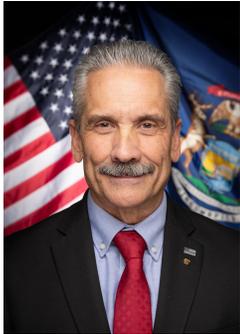
MUSKEGON COUNTY JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER

Muskegon County Board of Commissioners approved a \$1,000 sign-on bonus for any open-competitive, full-time new hire with the Juvenile Detention Center (JDC) paid out in two installments. The first \$500 to be paid out when the employee meets at least a 3.0 score at the mid-probation performance evaluation, and another \$500 to be paid out at the successful completion of their six-month probationary period with the JDC. A \$500 stipend to any County employee who refers an applicant, paid out upon the new hire's successful completion of their probationary period at the JDC, was also approved at the October 17, 2023 Full Board Meeting.

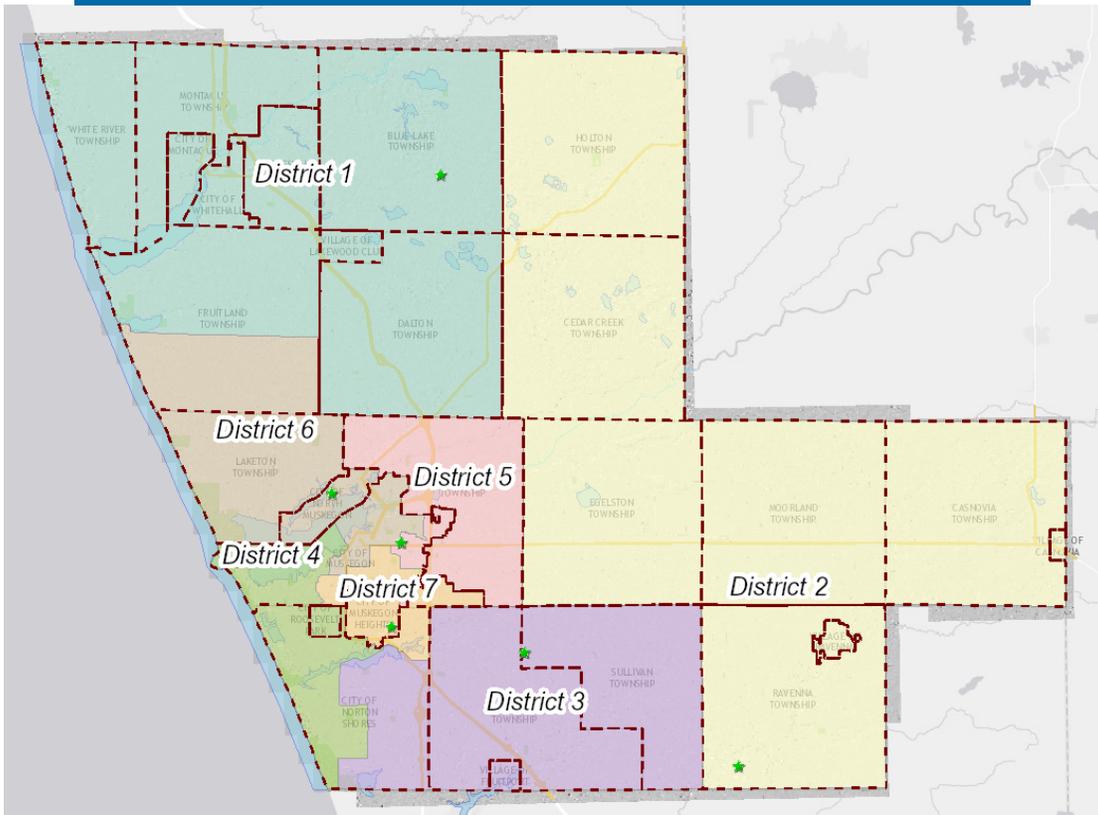


**Muskegon County Board of Commissioners:**

- Chair Charles Nash (D) - District 5
- Vice Chair Marcia Hovey-Wright (D) - District 4
- Kim Cyr (R) - District 1
- Zach Lahring (R) - District 2
- Michelle Hazekamp (R) - District 3
- Jessica Cook (D) - District 6
- Darrell Paige (D) - District 7



**My County Commissioner District - Effective January 2023**



For Agendas, Minutes, Live Meetings and Recordings Please Visit:  
<https://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/129/Agendas-Minutes>

**November & December 2023 Committee Meetings, Board Meetings & Work Sessions**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**November 2023 Committee & Board Meetings    December 2023 Committee & Board Meetings**

Thursday, November 2, 2023  
Public Works

Tuesday, November 7, 2023  
Human Services  
Ways & Means

Thursday, November 9, 2023  
Transportation  
Courts & Public Safety  
Community Development & Strategic Planning

Tuesday, November 14, 2023  
Full Board

Thursday, December 7, 2023  
Public Works

Tuesday, December 12, 2023  
Human Services  
Ways & Means

Thursday, December 14, 2023  
Transportation  
Courts & Public Safety  
Community Development & Strategic Planning

Tuesday, December 19, 2023  
Full Board

**November 2023 Work Sessions**

No Work Sessions scheduled for November 2023 as of 9/25/2023

**December 2023 Work Sessions**

No Work Sessions scheduled for December 2023 as of 9/25/2023

All Committee Meetings, Board Meetings & Work Sessions will begin at 4:00 pm and will be held at the Muskegon County Marquette Campus 1903 Marquette Avenue, Muskegon, MI 49442

For Agendas, Minutes, Live Meetings and Recordings Please Visit:  
<https://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/129/Agendas-Minutes>

## **COMMUNICATION FROM ADMINISTRATION**

The Muskegon County Board of Commissioners annually seeks (beginning in August) residents interested in serving the community through appointments to its boards and committees. Interested residents may view all current vacancies and apply online for consideration. The Muskegon County Board of Commissioners will accept applications throughout the year and will remain on file for one year. If a position you selected becomes vacant, your application will be sent to the Board Chair for review.

Interested residents may submit applications for open appointments by the November 1, 2023, deadline for terms expiring on December 31, 2023.

For more information please visit

<https://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/1045/Citizen-Appointments>

OR call 231-724-8883



### **STAY INFORMED: FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA**



Muskegon County



@muskegoncountymi

## **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Do you have information you would like to share with others in Muskegon County, Newsletter Feedback, Ideas?

If so, please email Sara Cooper, Community Relations Coordinator/Executive Assistant Administration, at [coopersa@co.muskegon.mi.us](mailto:coopersa@co.muskegon.mi.us)

with the subject line **MCFI News Article**

The information provided will be reviewed. If your submission is chosen you will be contacted via email.

Submission Deadline is the 1st of each month.

\*If submission guidelines are not followed your article will not be reviewed.

Visit the Muskegon County Website and Social Media Accounts for the latest updates  
<https://www.co.muskegon.mi.us>