

QUARTERLY

BATH TOWNSHIP
SPRING 1998
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 2

An official newsletter published by the Bath Township Board of Trustees
as a service to Bath Township residents under the authority of the Ohio Revised Code, Section 505.07.

Community Update on Annexation

Annexation Hearings Rescheduled

The last issue of the *Quarterly* reported that petitions had been filed with Summit County Council with the assistance of Akron, to annex to Fairlawn 234 acres of land in Bath Township including three motels. Bath residents were encouraged to attend the public hearings on the petitions scheduled for March 16 and April 6.

But, even as the *Quarterly* was being mailed to the community, things were changing. Rumors began to circulate that the petitions would be pulled and the hearings cancelled. That's exactly what happened on March 13. Unfortunately, there was little time for rejoicing. The petitions were refiled immediately adding another 58 acres and 4 property owners to the annexation total.

Public hearings on the petitions have been rescheduled for May 18 and June 1, following the 6:00 p.m. Regular Council Meetings. The hearings will take place in the 7th floor Council Chambers in the Ohio Building at 175 South Main Street. Bath residents are encouraged to participate in these hearings and voice their concerns.

Projected Loss of Revenue Grows

Of the two original petitions, the smaller parcel which begins at Akron General Medical Center's property on Crystal Lake Road and heads west to Harmony Hills, has not grown from 96.739 acres. The larger parcel, which now includes both sides of Springside Drive, has grown from 137.337 acres to 196.055 acres and has created more contiguity of property between Fairlawn and Bath. Increased contiguity exposes more of Bath's boundaries and makes the township more vulnerable to future annexations.

The projected loss of revenue for the township has also grown. According to figures compiled by the Bath Township Clerk's Office, the projected tax loss from annexations has grown from \$490,000 a year, or 9 percent of the township's annual budget, to \$619,000, or 14 percent of the budget.

The projected tax loss from current annexation petitions is \$619,000, or 14 percent of the township's annual budget.

Commercial Tax Base Depleted

The annexation petitions include less than 2 percent of Bath's total acreage, but amount to a whopping 62 percent of the total commercial/business tax valuation. This does not take into account future commercial/business development on the annexed property and the unrealized tax loss by the township.

Tax revenue from a commercial base helps the township pay its bills and keep property taxes down. Loss of this tax base may force residents to choose between higher property taxes or a reduction in needed township services such as police, fire, roads or emergency medical.

Had the Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) been approved, it would have allowed Bath to retain the land, all property tax revenue, and motel tax in exchange for an income tax paid only by individuals living or working in the JEDD. With annexation, the township loses everything – the land, property tax revenue, and motel tax.

JEDD Revisited?

Since the petitions have been filed, both Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic and Fairlawn Mayor William Roth have expressed a willingness to sit down at the table again and explore a JEDD. The Bath Trustees have stated that their first priority is to fight the annexations and secondly, they will consider the possibility of a JEDD with surrounding cities and villages. It is their intent to review the terms and conditions that might be available if Bath were to revisit a JEDD. At the March 23 Board of Trustees Meeting, attorney Robert Konstand was authorized to represent the township in any JEDD negotiations with surrounding communities.

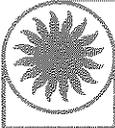
Community Action Urged

Understanding that Ohio's legislation today remains favorable to municipalities, what action can a community take to halt the annexation process?

Developing a broad base of community participation is a good beginning. Representation by the entire township can be achieved by working through Bath's voting precincts. Individuals willing to take a leadership role in their precinct should call the Board of Trustees Office at 666-4007 or 659-6639. The Bath Homeowners Association is developing a telephone communication network that will make it possible to reach every home in the township with timely updates on annexation. Community residents interested in being part of this network should call Paula Dubaniewicz at 666-0174.

It's time for all residents to step forward and get involved in the process. The future of Bath Township is at stake and the annexation clock is ticking.

(See **Annexation**, page 4)



BATH TOWNSHIP QUARTERLY

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Office Telephone

666-4007 or 659-6639

Office Hours

Monday - Friday - 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Township Board of Trustees

Meeting Dates and Times

| | |
|---------|-----------|
| May 11 | 7:00 p.m. |
| May 26 | 4:00 p.m. |
| June 8 | 7:00 p.m. |
| June 22 | 4:00 p.m. |
| July 6 | 7:00 p.m. |
| July 20 | 4:00 p.m. |

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Community Activity Center
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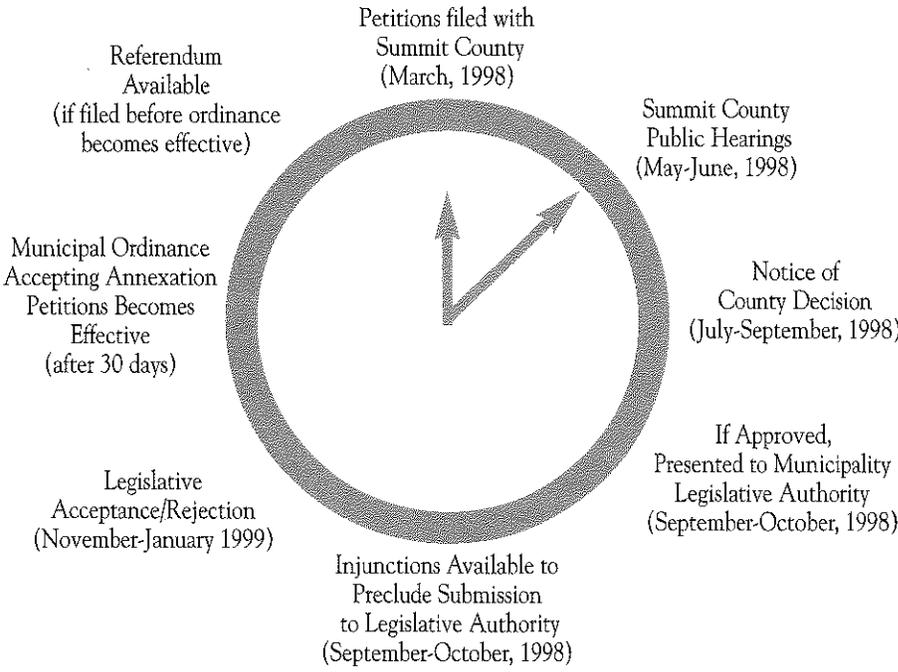
Nature Preserve Bond Sale

On March 19, 1996, voters approved a .98 mill levy for \$3.8 million dollars to acquire and improve 404 acres of the former Firestone Estate to be used as a nature preserve. Purchase of the land was subsequently made in two parts. On October 6, 1997, 370 acres were purchased and another 34 acres were purchased on January 28, 1998. Short term financing for the project was provided by a term note which allowed the township time to be rated by the bond rating agencies.

Long term financing was arranged through The Ohio Company after an extensive review of the township's finances. Preparing for the review was not an easy task since Bath Township, in its 180 year existence, had never sold bonds before.

The bonds were rated "A-1" by Moody's Investor Service and "A-1" by Standard & Poor's. On March 24, 1998, the long term bonds were sold between 9:00 a.m. and noon through the Ohio Company for an average rate of 5.14 percent. Settlement of the bond issue occurred on April 10, 1998.

The Annexation Clock is Ticking... Can it be Stopped?



NOTE: Expedited processing by the City of Fairlawn and Summit County would be necessary to be at the point of legislative acceptance by the City of Fairlawn in time for the November, 1998 General Election.