

Michigan Township **INSIGHTS**

July 28, 2023

Solar PILT option now law

Local units now have the **option** to enter into a solar payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) agreement for a commercial solar energy facility **or** assess personal property taxes. Public Acts [108](#) and [109](#) of 2023 became effective on July 27 after being signed into law by the governor. The new law permits a township, city or village the **option** to grant a 20-year property tax exemption to a “qualified solar energy facility” and establish a specific tax based on the electricity-generating capacity of the facility. This requires the establishment of solar energy district and exempts “qualified solar energy facilities” from ad valorem property taxes. The PILT agreement also requires State Tax Commission (STC) approval. The STC issued a bulletin this week indicating it will be working to develop the necessary forms and guidance related to the solar PILT with the intent to have items on the October 2023 STC meeting agenda for review and approval.



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REMINDER: Notification of error in LCSA payments

Townships that receive funding under the Metropolitan Extension Telecommunications Right-of-Way Oversight (METRO) Act may have received or will soon receive a [notice of error regarding the 2023 METRO Act distribution](#), along with the corrective plan. 2023 METRO Act payments were distributed to 1,754 municipalities on May 31, 2023. After the distribution, the Local Community Stabilization Authority (LCSA) identified an error that was unique to the May 31, 2023, distribution only that resulted in some municipalities receiving an overpayment and some receiving an underpayment for 2023 distributions. **Any municipality that received an over- or underpayment will receive a corrective**

Upcoming MTA Training

Now You Know webinars

**Aug. 9: [Spending Public Money](#)

August Workshops

**Aug. 1: [Fundamentals of Assessment & Taxation](#)

**Aug. 2: [At Your Service: Meeting Township Needs](#)

Emerging Issues in Emergency Services

**Sept. 12: [Bavarian Inn Lodge - Frankenmuth](#)

2023 Professional Development Retreats

**Sept. 26-27: [Clerks' Retreat](#)

**Oct. 3-4: [Trustees' Retreat](#)

**Oct. 3-4: [Planning & Zoning Team Retreat](#)

**Oct. 5-6: [Supervisors' Retreat](#)

**Oct. 5-6: [Strategy & Innovation Retreat](#)

action letter from LCSA regarding their distribution. For 95% of impacted municipalities, the LCSA will correct the error in next year's payment (May 2024) with an over- or underpayment equal to the error in the May 2023 payment. If a municipality would like to request consideration of another resolution, instructions are included in the letter to contact LCSA. For the 91 (5%) municipalities that received a large overpayment relative to their correct distribution, LCSA is requesting that the overpayment be repaid to the LCSA as soon as possible. An invoice and instructions for repayment (**by Aug. 31, 2023**) are provided in the corrective action letter along with contact information for questions. MTA encourages affected townships to watch for the LCSA notice.

Additional bills signed into law this week

- Public Acts [106](#) and [107](#) of 2023 expand the eligibility of properties and projects for Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) financing. C-PACE is a program that allows local units of government to work with building owners and contractors on energy efficient and climate resilient projects. Local governments can now use C-PACE to include agricultural property—in addition to current commercial and industrial property—and contract and finance for an environmental hazard. Environmental hazard projects would generally include the installation of equipment or materials intended to mitigate environmental hazards like contaminants, floods or severe weather. Additionally, the reporting requirements are modified to specify that, for all new construction energy projects, a report would have to include a requirement that the building or other structure exceed applicable Construction Code, Uniform Energy Code and Administrative Code requirements. The changes will take effect 91 days after the end of the 2023 session.
- [PA 105 of 2023](#) removes the sunset on the Michigan Energy Assistance Program (MEAP), which helps low-income households with energy assistance for electricity, natural gas and heating bills. The program also helps participants become more energy efficient. The change took effect on July 27.
- [PA 104 of 2023](#) repeals the requirement that state regulations be no stricter than federal rules

****Oct. 10-11: [Treasurers' Retreat](#)**

MTA QUICK LINKS

[MTA COVID Relief Webpage](#)
[Answer Center](#)
[Training](#)
[Advocacy](#)
[Classifieds](#)
[Community Connection](#)
[Webcasts](#)
[Store](#)
[Township Governance](#)
[Academy](#)
[Allied Service Providers](#)
[NATaT](#)

ALLIED SERVICE PROVIDERS



* [Asphalt Materials, Inc.](#)

* [Bauckham, Thall, Seeber Kaufman & Koches PC](#)

* [Consumers Energy](#)

* [Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC](#)

relative to protecting natural resources, responding to environmental crises, and the cleanup of contaminants. The changes will take effect 91 days after the end of the 2023 session.

- [PA 115 of 2023](#) amends the Public Employment Relations Act (PERA) by deleting the prohibitions against certain subjects being included in a collective bargaining agreement. Currently, PERA prohibits decisions of a public employer to enter into an intergovernmental agreement from being subject to collective bargaining, allowing it at the sole discretion of the public employer. The new law deletes this language and now will allow a decision as to whether the public employer will enter into an intergovernmental agreement to consolidate one or more functions or services to be subject to bargaining. The bill did not receive immediate effect and cannot take effect until 91 days after the Legislature adjourns for 2023.

Grant funding to help communities bring shovel-ready projects to rural Michigan

Townships can seek grant funds to help invest in underserved rural areas and populations for reimbursement for planning, capacity building activities, development readiness initiatives, and building collaboration and partnerships across communities and sectors. The second round of requests for proposal competitive grants through the state Office of Rural Development's Rural Readiness Grant Program will provide funding up to \$50,000 to support collaborative planning and capacity initiatives in Michigan's rural communities. [Round two grant guidelines and eligibility](#) mirror round one, but with an expanded definition of eligible rural communities. Interested communities and organizations must submit a Letter of Intent outlining a summary of the proposed project, how it meets the parameters of the program goals and include the total estimated project cost to witalam@michigan.gov by **3 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 31, 2023**.

STC accepting applications for MAAO and MMAO programs

The State Tax Commission (STC) is accepting applications for the [October Michigan Advanced Assessing Officer \(MAAO\) program](#), to be held in Meridian Chtr. Twp. (Ingham Co.), and the [Michigan](#)

* [Foster, Swift, Collins & Smith, P.C.](#)

* [Hartleb Agency](#)

* [ITC Holdings Corp.](#)

* [Rosati, Schultz, Joppich & Amsbuechler, P.C.](#)

* [Mika Meyers, PLC](#)



[Master Assessing Officer \(MMAO\) program](#). Applications for both programs must be received by STC by Sept. 1, 2023. Program summaries are available on the [STC website](#).

Reminder: Submit feedback on state's internet access and connectivity plans

To ensure the universal availability of high-speed internet throughout the state and support digital inclusion efforts, the Michigan High-Speed Internet Office (MIHI) has engaged with and listened to hundreds of stakeholders across the state to draft a [five-year action plan](#) and [digital equity plan](#)—and they are now seeking feedback. The plans will set the priorities, strategies and activities through which MIHI will implement the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, as well as highlight the state's vision, goals, objectives, barriers, needs and strategies to help ensure that all Michiganders can connect to affordable high-speed internet and have the devices and digital skills they need to be successful. Feedback on the five-year action plan can be submitted to LEO-MIHighSpeedInternet@michigan.gov by Aug. 4 and comments on the digital equity plan can be submitted [here](#) by Aug. 15.

Bureau of Elections updates

- **Early voting webpage.** The Michigan Department of State has published a new [Early in-person voting](#) webpage that provides answers to many frequently asked questions regarding early voting and early voting sites. The page is designed to inform clerks, partners, stakeholders and the public. It will be updated on an ongoing basis to answer additional questions. Clerks should feel free to provide links to this page on their website, share through social media, or provide in other ways to their voters.
- **Drop box ordering.** The state Bureau of Elections (BOE) is currently placing drop box orders with the vendors with priority given to jurisdictions with August and November elections. Clerks can order drop boxes (that will be paid for by the state) by using the order form available in the [eLearning Center](#). Clerks may order one drop box per jurisdiction and an additional drop box for every 15,000 voters in their jurisdiction. A drop box

webpage is available for clerks to view the vendors and available drop boxes—including pictures of the different types. Drop boxes will be delivered directly to the jurisdiction to an address provided by the clerk. BOE will provide reimbursement to jurisdictions with a May or August election that needed to purchase and install a drop box prior to the finalization of our ordering processing. Be certain to read the additional information in the latest BOE Update. The drop box reimbursement form and webpage are also available in the [eLearning Center](#).

- **Drop box collection requirements.** As of July 24, clerks with an August election must collect election materials from each drop box in their jurisdiction every day that the clerk’s office is open for business. All ballots collected from a drop box must be transported in an approved ballot container and must be immediately returned to the clerk’s office, unless the person collecting the ballots is travelling to another drop box. Ballots collected from a drop box that is not located on the grounds of the clerk’s office must be documented in a collection log that includes the name of the individual collecting ballots, date and time, drop box location, and number of ballots collected. A drop box collection and inspection form template can be obtained in the [eLearning Center](#). If you choose to create your own log, you need to ensure it captures the required information. Clerks should also take this opportunity to confirm that their drop box locations in Qualified Voter File are up to date.

Register for Complete Streets webinar

Join the state Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy for an upcoming

webinar, [How to Incorporate Non-Motorized Transportation/Complete Streets into Planning](#), from 11 a.m. to noon **Wednesday, Aug. 23**. [Complete Streets](#), including the integration of non-motorized transportation infrastructure, offers



an approach to planning that accommodates safe and functional mobility for all types of users, including drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists and public transportation riders. By increasing options for non-motorized and shared transportation options, communities can improve safety and reduce harmful environmental impacts. This webinar will highlight how communities can incorporate non-motorized transportation elements and a Complete Streets framework into their planning processes to promote sustainable mobility systems. For program questions, contact crawfordj15@michigan.gov or stavelandj@michigan.com; for registration questions, contact bertholda@michigan.gov or roseberryj@michigan.com.

Member input sought for 2024 MTA legislative policy platform

MTA is seeking review and input from members on its legislative policy platform. Reviewed and updated annually, the legislative policy objectives guide MTA's government relations efforts and reflect emerging issues and goals. MTA members are encouraged to review the current [MTA 2023-24 Policy Platform](#) and share any proposed revisions and suggested additions by **Monday, Nov. 27**. Member-proposed policy changes will be reviewed by MTA committees for word selection and legality, and to ensure they conform with the Association's overall goals and objectives. The proposed policies will be presented at the 2024 MTA Annual Meeting in conjunction with our Annual Educational Conference in April. Contact the MTA Government Relations Department at (517) 321-6467 or legislation@michigantownships.org with questions, comments or suggestions.

Get a handle on the hot topics facing your township fire department

Join MTA on Sept. 12 in Frankenmuth for a full-day event exploring [Emerging Issues in Emergency Services](#). You'll hear from a variety of experts—including State Fire Marshal Kevin Sehlmeier—on hot topics like the new mandatory minimum training for fire chiefs, policy updates required by MIOSHA, keeping pace with the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) and more. Plus, get an update from the state Bureau of Emergency Preparedness, EMS, and Systems of Care on agency and vehicle inspections, equipment list changes and new education grants. Don't delay, register today! [Get a registration form here](#) or [register online now](#).

Federal update for week of July 24

Check out the National Association of Towns and Townships' *Weekly Legislative Update* [newsletter](#) for an update of federal actions impacting townships.
