

Rose Dillon: 28 Years of Quiet Strength, Service, and Grace, A Daughter's Tribute

by Alecia Dillon

My name is Alecia Dillon, and I am writing not as a policy advocate or a concerned citizen — but as a daughter. A daughter who has watched her mother, Rosemary J. Dillon, give nearly three decades of her life to the people of Fruitport Charter Township with a level of dedication, professionalism, and quiet dignity that I believe this community deserves to know.

My mother began her service to Fruitport Township in the late 1990s, when the community was home to just over 12,000 residents. Over the 28 years that followed, she helped steward this township through economic cycles, shifting state funding structures, and the growing complexity of modern municipal finance — all while the community she served grew to more than 14,500 people. Through it all, she never sought the spotlight. She sought results.

The results speak for themselves. Fruitport Township today carries general fund balances exceeding \$4.2 million, sewer fund balances exceeding \$7.1 million, and water fund balances exceeding \$10.4 million — more than \$20 million in combined financial reserves and operating assets. Behind those numbers is a woman who understood that public finance is not simply about collecting taxes and paying bills. It is about protecting taxpayer dollars, preserving fund integrity, managing interfund transfers, ensuring statutory compliance, and planning for the long-term obligations that communities cannot afford to ignore. My mother did all of that, single handily, year after year, with no fanfare and no expectation of recognition.

But her service was never confined to the treasurer's office. Beyond her official duties, my mother served faithfully at her church, where her commitment to her faith community mirrored everything she brought to her public role — reliability, generosity, and a servant's heart. She volunteered for years providing free tax preparation services to seniors on fixed incomes, ensuring that some of the township's most vulnerable residents were not left behind. She served on the local library board, supporting education and literacy. She was a proud member of the Lioness Club, contributing to charitable initiatives that strengthened the fabric of this community. These were not resume entries. They were the natural expression of who she is at her core.

Growing up as her daughter, I had a front-row seat to something that no financial statement can capture. I watched my mother face criticism, political pressure, and moments of profound unfairness — and I watched her respond with the same quality every single time: grace. Not the performative kind. The deep, steady, earned kind that comes from knowing exactly who you are and what you stand for. When others chose

noise, she chose discipline. When others reached for confrontation, she reached for the work. She taught our family, through her example rather than her words, that how you carry yourself in difficult moments says more about your character than anything you accomplish in the easy ones.

As my mother steps into a well-earned retirement, the final chapter of her career stands as perhaps the most defining testament to her character. In ways that few public servants ever face, she was subjected to pressures and circumstances that would have driven many people to retaliate or retreat. She did neither. Through it all, she remained fixed on the residents she was elected to serve, on the statutory responsibilities of her office, and on the standards of integrity she has upheld without exception for 28 years. She did not allow the conduct of others — however disappointing — to become an excuse to lower her own. She met every challenge the way she met every budget cycle, every audit, and every difficult decision across nearly three decades of public life: with professionalism, with composure, and with her head held high. That is a lesson I will carry for the rest of my life.

Fruitport Township is losing more than a Treasurer. It is losing decades of institutional knowledge, a disciplined financial steward, and a trusted public servant who understood that the job was never about her — it was always about the community. That kind of service is not easily replaced, and it is not easily repaid.



Mom — there are not enough words, and there never will be. What I can say is this: thank you for showing all of us — your family, your community, and every person who ever watched you work — what it truly looks like to serve with integrity for a lifetime. You did not just do a job. You built something so special. A legacy of trust, of discipline, of quiet and unshakeable strength that will outlast any title or term of office. Fruitport is stronger because of you. Our family is stronger because of you. And I — your daughter, who had the privilege of watching you up close for all of it — I am who I am because of you. That is the greatest gift you have ever given me, and I will spend the rest of my life trying to be worthy of it.

With pride and gratitude,
Alecia R. Dillon, CPA, EMBA
Daughter of Rosemary J. Dillon
Fruitport, Michigan

The views expressed in this letter are my own personal reflections as a family member and do not represent any organization or employer.

New Local Business Solid Home Brings Expanded Services to Fruitport Area

A familiar local company has reintroduced itself to the community with a new name and an expanded focus. Many residents know Matthew Cohoon from his years with WOW 1 Day Painting. Today, Solid Home is a family-owned general contracting business serving Fruitport and the surrounding area. Solid Home was founded by longtime local residents Matthew Cohoon and Owen Timmerman, who formed the company as a family business with the goal of providing reliable, high-quality home improvement services while maintaining strong community connections.

While the company continues to offer professional interior and exterior painting, Solid Home also provides a broader range of services including flooring installation, kitchen and bathroom updates, and other general home improvement projects designed to help homeowners improve and maintain their living spaces. Owen Timmerman recently earned his builder's license, and Solid Home is fully licensed and insured, giving homeowners

added confidence that their projects are being handled properly from start to finish.

Asahometownbusiness, Solid Home's mission is simple: do quality work, treat people well, and do projects we're proud of. The company takes pride in offering customized solutions and hands-on service throughout each project. Residents interested in learning more about Solid Home's services can visit solidhomemi.com or call 616-899-9935 to request a free, no-obligation quote.



Solid Home business owners Owen Timmerman and Matthew Cohoon



COMPASSION

Women experiencing unexpected pregnancies often feel overwhelmed and unsure where to turn. But when they discover **compassionate** support is available, everything can **change!**

With encouragement, information, and practical help, more women are likely to choose to carry their babies! Improving **outcomes** for LIFE!

231-726-2677

MuskegonPregnancyServices.org
1775 Wells Ave. | Muskegon, MI 49442



Five Tips For a Healthier Baby

The March of Dimes recommends that all pregnant women follow these five key steps:

- 1. Get early and regular pre-natal care.** It reduces your risk of having a low birthweight baby.
- 2. Eat nutritious foods.** Make sure that you and your baby get all the protein and nutrients you need through a varied diet.
- 3. Don't smoke!** Women who smoke increase their chances of having a miscarriage or a low birthweight baby.
- 4. Don't take drugs.** Taking drugs, except those approved by a doctor who knows you're pregnant, can cause severe disabilities - or even result in the death of your baby.
- 5. Don't drink.** Hard liquor, wine and beer can all cause birth defects.

For current information about our programs and services, March of Dimes news, and important health information, visit us online anytime at marchofdimes.com

TRI-CITIES HISTORICAL

MUSEUM

EST. 1959

Open Tuesday through Friday from

10a.m. to 5p.m., and 12-5 p.m.

Saturdays and Sundays.

Free Admission!

Fruitport Lions Eyeglasses Collection Sites

Fruitport

Township Hall
Fruitport Library
Meijer Optical Shop
Village Pharmacy
Shelby State Bank
Anything and Everything

Muskegon

Hackley Library
Walmart Optical Shop
Sam's Club Optical Shop
Eyemart Express
Muskegon Eagles
Hearing Wellness Center
Shoreline Vision

Grand Haven

Love in Action (all locations)
McLeod Insurance
Rx Optical
Shoreline Vision
First Vision Care
Harborview Eyecare
Loutit Library

Spring Lake

Eye Care One
Shoreline Vision
Eye Vision
Love In Action