



The Solebury Messenger

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Winter Issue

March 2018

Board of Supervisors sets priorities and objectives for 2018

The Solebury Township Board of Supervisors held a January work session to set objectives and priorities for the coming year. The process is designed to address immediate needs and keep long-term goals on track.

Major ongoing priorities identified for the year are deer management, land preservation, quarry reclamation and the management of flood-prone areas. Other priorities include the continued development of Aquetong Spring Park and addressing the cost of shared services with New Hope Borough.

Supervisors identified deer management as a critical issue. (See story on page 5.) Deer overpopulation reached a serious level in 2008, when the township contracted with the federal Department of Agriculture to reduce the herd size to a level that could be effectively managed by sport hunting.

The current program matches property owners with licensed hunters to hold the number of deer at a sustainable level. To be successful, many more properties need to sign up, and improvements are needed to ensure continuous, active hunting on participating properties. A red tag program, which would allow hunting out of season, is also in the works.

Continuation of Solebury's award-winning land preservation program is also a priority item. The

Board expressed its support for a package of ongoing projects, including the review of current easements and evaluating natural landscapes for conservation.

The deadline for New Hope Crushed Stone to finish reclamation of the quarry and restoration of Primrose Creek is March 2019, pending the outcome of court appeals. The Board agreed that planning for future use of the site for recreation or as open space needs to begin early this year. Four Township committees are involved in the process, which involves negotiations with the quarry operator.

Another multi-committee program getting attention this year is the management and care of flood-prone areas. Recent storms have damaged the riparian buffers which help contain stormwater runoff. The trees, understory and plantings along rivers and streams play a crucial role in increasing water quality, reducing pollution and protecting against flash flooding.

The development of Aquetong Spring Park continues, with the formal opening of the first completed stage of the project set for this summer. The park is the culmination of more than a decade's work to reclaim the land around historic Aquetong Spring and restore it to its natural beauty.

The four services shared between Solebury and New Hope, and the associated cost burden, have received increasing attention over the past year. Two of the services, the library and volunteer fire companies, are paid out of their respective funds in the annual budget. After voters overwhelmingly approved funding for 24/7 ambulance service, the Township negotiated a separate agreement with Central Bucks EMS to cover their costs.

The fourth shared service, recreation programs, remains unresolved (see story on page 4) while the Board awaits a response from New Hope Borough.



Board members Kevin Morrissey and Noel Barrett, Chair Helen Tai and Vice Chair Mark Baum Baicker, and newly-elected board member Robert McEwan.

What's in Your Inbox?

Meeting agendas, police alerts, weather bulletins and more are available by email. Visit SoleburyTwp.org and click "Email Notices."

File your local tax return online with e-file

Tax Day, April 17, is fast approaching. Solebury's local tax administrator, Keystone Collections Group, offers e-file, a way to file your local taxes online using your desktop computer or any mobile device.

With e-file, you enter only the most basic information necessary to file your local return. You can easily transfer overpayments to your spouse's balance due using the "Married Filing Jointly" option. You can file multiple returns from one e-file account, and you can view the status of your returns on the Home Page.

Even if you work outside of Pennsylvania, you can now file online. If you moved during the year, e-file makes it easy to file your part-year returns for each of your home locations if Keystone is the tax administrator.

You can file your return today and schedule your payment for April 17 or before. You will get an online receipt for the payment. If you are due a

refund, you'll receive an online confirmation that your refund was deposited into your bank account.

Solebury residents file and pay the 1 percent Earned Income Tax and the \$52 Local Services Tax through Keystone.

The 1% EIT is assessed by Solebury Township (0.5%) and the New Hope-Solebury School District (0.5%) on the earned income of Solebury residents, as well as on that of individuals who live outside the Township but work in Solebury.

Earned income and net profits from all sources for a specific calendar year that total less than \$5,000 are exempt from the EIT.

State law requires Pennsylvania residents with earned income to file a local tax return even if your employer withholds the tax from payroll or even if you are not due a refund. If you don't have payroll withholding, work in Philadelphia and/or have net profits, you are required to file a local earned income tax return.

Township Directory

Emergency? Dial: 9-1-1. Nonemergency? Call: 215-297-5656.
General Inquiries: soleburytownship@soleburytwp.org

Township Manager Dennis H. Carney:
soleburymanager@soleburytwp.org

HARB Administrator, Environmental Advisory Council Secretary
Christine Terranova: cterranova@soleburytwp.org

LPC Administrator, Planning Commission Administrator
Jean Weiss: jweiss@soleburytwp.org

Parks & Recreation Director Dudley Rice:
soleburyparks@soleburytwp.org

Right-To-Know Officers

Administrative Records:
soleburymanager@soleburytwp.org

Police Records: Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie,
police@soleburypd.org

Board of Supervisors

Chair Helen Tai | **Vice-Chair Mark Baum Baicker**
htai@soleburytwp.org | mbaumbaicker@soleburytwp.org

Supervisor Noel Barrett | **Supervisor Robert A. McEwan**
nbarrett@soleburytwp.org | rmcewan@soleburytwp.org

Supervisor Kevin Morrissey
kmorrissey@soleburytwp.org

Township Calendar

*Calendar information is subject to changes.
Confirm all dates and times with the Township office.
All meetings are held at Solebury Township Hall.*

March

- 3/5 Historic Architectural Review Board
- 3/6 Board of Supervisors
- 3/12 Solebury Township Planning Commission
- 3/13 Environmental Advisory Council
- 3/15 Land Preservation Committee
- 3/20 Board of Supervisors
- 3/22 Parks and Recreation Board
- 3/26 Aquetong Spring Advisory Committee

April

- 4/2 Historic Architectural Review Board
- 4/3 Board of Supervisors
- 4/9 Solebury Township Planning Commission
- 4/10 Environmental Advisory Council
- 4/17 Board of Supervisors
- 4/19 Land Preservation Committee
- 4/26 Parks and Recreation Board
- 4/30 Aquetong Spring Advisory Committee

May

- 5/1 Board of Supervisors
- 5/7 Historic Architectural Review Board
- 5/8 Environmental Advisory Council
- 5/14 Planning Commission

*Stay on top of meeting times with email alerts!
Visit: SoleburyTwp.org, click "Email Notices"
and enter your email address.*

Four Solebury Police officers receive commendations

Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie presented Official Commendations to several officers of the Solebury Township Police Department this February.

Officer Matthew Rice received an Official Commendation of Merit for administering live saving measures to a drug overdose victim, where Officer Rice administered Narcan to the unconscious victim saving her life.

Officer Gary Forrester received an Official Commendation of Merit in regards to a missing person's investigation, where Officer Forrester through this investigation provided a major break in the search for four men who were reported missing.



Solebury Township Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie presents an Official Commendation of Merit to Officer Megan Klosterman on Feb. 6.

Officer Megan Klosterman received an Official Commendation of Merit for life savings measures on a suicidal adult male. Officer Klosterman located that person who was found in a vehicle containing poisonous exhaust fumes. Officer Klosterman secured the hazards and administered first aid saving the man's life.

Detective/Corporal Jonathan Koretzky received a Commendatory Citation related to the investigation of a series of burglaries, resulting in the arrest of a male subject who was charged with multiple counts of burglary, theft and related charges.

In addition, Detective/Corporal Koretzky

received an Official Commendation of Merit for a sexual assault investigation resulting in the arrests of two persons who were charged with numerous felonies, an Official Commendation of Merit for a sexual assault investigation resulting in felony charges of institutional sexual assault and related charges, and an Official Commendation of Merit for a homicide investigation resulting in the recovery of four bodies and the arrest of two defendants who were charged with multiple counts of homicide and related charges.

Know who to call to report potholes and help speed road repairs

We've seen some extreme temperature swings so far this winter, and the repeated thawing and refreezing means we're likely to have a busy pothole season.

To help our road crews fix these potholes quickly, we need your help in reporting them as soon as they pop up.

PennDOT is responsible for the state roads in the township. To report potholes and other

maintenance issues to PennDOT, call 1-800-FIX-ROAD (1-800-349-7623) or file an electronic report at <https://customercare.pennDOT.gov>.

To report a pothole on any other road in Solebury, call the township at 215-297-5656 or use the "Contact

Us" button on the township website.

State Roads in Solebury:

Aquetong Road ~ Carversville Road
Fleecydale Road ~ Green Hill Road
Lower York Road ~ Mechanicsville Road
Phillips Mill Road ~ River Road ~ Stoney Hill Road
Sugan Road (Paxson Road to Upper York Road)
Upper York Road ~ Windy Bush Road

Storm Outage Contacts

PECO 1-800-841-4141 or www.peco.com/Outages/CheckOutageStatus/Pages/OutageMap.aspx

Verizon 1-800-837-4966 or www.verizon.com/support/residential/service-outage

XFINITY (Comcast) 1-800-934-6489 or www.xfinity.com/support/status

Solebury Township's commitment to environmental sustainability

Throughout 2018 and with support from the Environmental Advisory Council, Solebury Township is committed to reducing the use of harmful pesticides.

The township worked with its consultant to identify safer and more effective alternatives to glyphosate, the chemical used in Roundup®, to control the invasive plants at Aquetong Spring Park.

Additionally, the township

assumed responsibility for maintaining the right of way under the high tension lines along 202 and adjacent to the trail by the Eagle Firehouse that was previously sprayed by PECO. By mowing these areas, the township is able to control the weeds without spraying.

On state roads that are maintained by PennDot, homeowners may submit a Vegetative Management Permit

(M-688 Permit) to PennDot which would allow the homeowner to maintain the roadside for the state. The township has had success using a citrus based spray in the few areas where spraying is necessary (along curbs in some neighborhoods and around bridges.)

These actions demonstrate the township's ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability.

Solebury endorses 9/11 memorial trail

The Solebury Township Board of Supervisors passed a resolution offering support to the Sept. 11 National Memorial Trail, a 1,300-mile trail linking memorials of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The memorial trail is a multipurpose trail system that provides cyclists, hikers and walkers a valued public resource and an opportunity to experience breathtaking landscapes, explore new towns and engage in this unique historic trail.

Starting at the World Trade Center, the trail travels into New Jersey and follows a large portion of the Delaware & Raritan Canal before crossing into Morrisville on the Calhoun Street Bridge.

Our portion includes the existing trail system, through Washington Crossing Historic Park, along River Road and onto the multi-purpose trail along the Route 202 bypass.

Several surrounding municipalities and the Bucks County Commissioners have endorsed the project. You can read more about the project at www.911trail.org.

Recreation fees for out-of-town participants *Supervisors seek new shared services agreement*

An impasse over a long-lapsed compensation agreement for the use of Solebury's Parks and Recreation programs has led the Board of Supervisors to collect an annual usage fee from out-of-town participants. Board members say the fee is meant to balance the responsible operation of taxpayer-funded facilities with the desire to keep local sports programs engaging and competitive.

The fee for service issue came to a head last year after New Hope Borough Council refused repeated requests from Solebury to renegotiate a payment agreement that expired in 2011. Under the old agreement, negotiated in 2006 for a term of five years, the Borough paid the Township \$1,500 per year to cover their share of the costs of New Hope-Solebury sports programs.

Until a new agreement is reached with the Borough, Solebury will charge all non-

resident participants a \$50 fee per sport for each child, capped at \$150 per family. The Board of Supervisors and the teams have agreed to consider a hardship waiver.

Solebury taxpayers bear direct and indirect costs for the Parks and Recreation programs, including land acquisition, field landscaping and maintenance, lighting, scoreboards, benches and other equipment. Last year, administration and operations alone cost \$188,000, with Solebury taxpayers covering \$127,500 of that expense. Program revenues contributed \$59,000 and New Hope taxpayers were paying \$1,500.

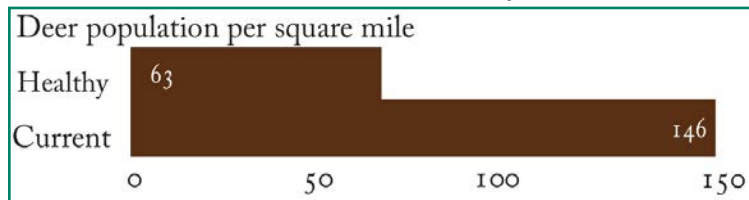
Per taxpayer, a Solebury resident pays \$131 while a New Hope resident pays \$6 to use the same facilities.

New Hope Borough Council says it is studying the matter but has canceled several scheduled meetings and has yet to begin negotiations with Solebury's supervisors.

Landowner involvement is critical

The Solebury Township Deer Management Program

Based on the 2017 deer count by USDA, the estimated deer population in Solebury Township is 146 per square mile – almost two and a half times greater than what is considered to be environmentally sustainable.



The Consequences

1. Deer-Vehicle Collisions. 10% of all claims filed in the United States are in Pennsylvania. Overall Pennsylvania is fourth in the nation for deer-vehicle collisions and Bucks County is the number two county in the state.



2. Disease. Deer ticks commonly feed on white-tailed deer and are transmitters of a host of diseases including ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, babesiosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever and, most commonly, Lyme. Pennsylvania has led the nation in confirmed cases of Lyme disease for three straight years.



3. Agricultural Losses. A USDA / Pennsylvania Game Commission report issued January 2015 estimates that in Pennsylvania alone deer cause \$100 million in damage to agricultural productivity. Damage to landscaping and ornamental plants, while not quantified, is significant.

4. Environmental Degradation. Overbrowsing by deer is a key cause of the depletion of our local woodland understory. With abundant food sources in the summer, deer proliferate; during winter deer feeding decimates native plants and saplings. Plant life plays an essential role in storm water management, facilitating the absorption of ground water. Studies have shown that overbrowsing by deer decreases tree reproduction, understory vegetation, plant density and

diversity, with subsequent declines in birdlife. Our forests are losing the ability to regenerate; when current tree growth dies back due to age there will be no new growth to replace it.

The Solution

Study after study has shown that a managed program is the only method demonstrated to affect significant and sustained deer population reduction.

Solebury has adopted a community-wide approach to reducing deer damage. The program's long-term success depends on the active involvement of more Solebury landowners who are willing to allow sport hunting on their properties.

If you are a landowner, we will match you up with hunter(s) who have been screened, licensed, trained, and committed to the legal and humane harvest of deer. If you already allow hunting, by enrolling your property in the program and registering your hunters, they will have access to additional doe tags available through the Township.

Positive relationships among hunters and landowners foster an environment in which deer are harvested free of charge as well as in a manner that is mutually beneficial to both hunters and landowner.

For more information about how you can become involved in the program please contact the Township at 215-297-5656 or deercommittee@soleburytwp.org or complete



State warns public to be on the look out for Spotted Lanternfly

The Spotted Lanternfly, a pest that poses a significant threat to the grape, apple, and stone fruit industries, has spread throughout southeastern Pennsylvania and led the state to place 13 counties under quarantine, including Bucks County.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is enlisting the help of all residents to help it track the spread of this insect and take steps to eradicate any infestation.

How to identify the pest

The spotted lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*, is an invasive plant hopper. Adult lanternflies are about an inch long and a half-inch wide at rest. The lanternfly's forewing is gray with black spots, and the wingtips have a net-like appearance in black and gray. The hind wings have contrasting patches of red and black with a white band between them. The legs and head are black, and the abdomen is yellow with broad black bands. Immature stages, called nymphs, are first black with white spots and then develop red patches as they grow.



Lanternflies prefer the plant called Tree of Heaven, *Ailanthus altissima* — another invasive species in Pennsylvania — as their primary food source and mating and egg-laying location.

However, any smooth surface, from trees to vehicles, campers, yard furniture, farm equipment, and other items stored outside can act as sites for egg laying. Adult lanternflies begin laying eggs in late September and continue through late November or early December.

The warning signs

Beginning in late April to mid-May, nymphs may be found on smaller plants and vines and any new growth on trees and shrubs. As the year progresses, older nymphs and adults will migrate to the Tree of Heaven, if



Tree-of-heaven is often confused with sumac, black walnut, and butternut. The leaf edges of all of these native trees have small teeth while those of tree-of-heaven are smooth. The foul odor produced by the crushed foliage and the scraped bark is also unique to tree-of-heaven.

available, and may be observed feeding on the trunk and branches.

Trees may have weeping wounds of sap on the trunks, and heavy lanternfly populations will cause honey-like secretions to build up at the base of the tree, blackening it and the surrounding soil with sooty mold. Wasps, hornets, bees, and ants may be attracted to the secretions and tree wounds.

In areas with large populations of lanternflies, adults may also feed on other trees, including willows, maples, poplars, tulip poplars, birch, and ash.

The Department of Agriculture says that egg masses can be scraped off the trees, double bagged, and disposed of. You can also drop the egg masses into alcohol or hand sanitizer to kill them.

The department is asking anyone who sees spotted lanternflies, especially outside the quarantined counties, to do the following:

- Collect a specimen and submit it to the department's entomology lab for verification, using the entomology program sample submission form at <http://www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly>.
- Take a picture of any life stage of the spotted lanternfly, including egg masses, and email it to badbug@pa.gov.
- If you can't collect a specimen or take a photo, report a sighting by calling the automated invasive species report line toll-free at (866) 253-7189. Leave a message, making sure to include details about where you saw it and your contact information.

What to do

Anyone who observes spotted lanternflies beyond the quarantined counties should try to destroy them.

Because insecticides may kill beneficial insects, including pollinators, on infected trees, property owners should consider using the integrated pest management strategy that the state is using. It involves locating Tree of Heaven plants, killing all but a few to act as "trap trees" to attract the lanternflies, and then treating those with a systemic insecticide to eradicate the pests.

To learn more about these pests, go to the Department of Agriculture's website, <http://www.agriculture.pa.gov/spottedlanternfly>, and check out information available from the Penn State Extension at <https://extension.psu.edu/shopby/spotted-lanternfly>.



Winter Festival 2018



Jamaican Jam music with John Beacher on guitar and Zack Romano on bongos



Flambé! Taste of Winter Festival



Snowfolk Art Competition



Impression Sips



Still the One Winter Festival Concert with John Hall and Orleans Band Members



Taste of Winter Festival at the Riverside Ballroom



Revolution Pub Crawl