



The Solebury Messenger

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May 2020

A Message from the Board of Supervisors

These are unimaginable times. We're pretty sure that this will be looked back upon as an incredibly difficult and unique period in American, and world, history. Until the last few months, who would have thought that anyone other than statisticians and medical experts would have devoted their lives to "flattening the curve." And that is what we all are doing – devoting our lives to protecting each other by reducing the spread of this novel coronavirus.

As we keep in touch with neighbors and residents across the Township, the once merely polite "how are you?" is now a heartfelt question, and "about the same" is now a good and reassuring response.

That's a frustrating dilemma for so many of us, to live for weeks on end just "killing time" instead of "living our lives." It is as necessary as it is difficult, and it's what we've all been asked to do to ride out this pandemic. And it's the right thing to do.

At a time like this, it's worth remembering what brought us to Solebury in the first place, and how fortunate we all are to call the Township home. We have a beautiful environment and plenty of room to take advantage of it while still keeping our "social distance." Given the choice, nobody would opt to do so by remaining six feet from our friends and neighbors, or by wearing a mask. But that's been our appointed task, and the task is a bit less heavy

while sheltering-in-place in our historic villages and social-distancing along our country roads.

While we all look on with sadness as we see the daily tally of deaths and confirmed cases, we should remember that these figures certainly could have been far worse without the actions taken relating to social distancing and temporarily shuttering "non-essential" services. If we don't stay strong and continue following the guidance of public health officials, we risk squandering all of the sacrifices we've made so far.

At Solebury Township, we recognized the seriousness of the pandemic early on, closing down non-essential functions on March 12. We held meetings by Zoom

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The Solebury Township Board of Supervisors (l to r): John Francis, Robert A. McEwan, Chair Mark Baum Baicker, Vice-Chair Kevin Morrissey, and Noel Barret.

COVID-19 Response:

Solebury Township's Policies and Procedures During the Pandemic

Solebury Township administrative staff returned to full-time operations in the Township Building on May 4, with an enhanced work schedule, new procedures for permits, and guidelines to maintain social distancing while carrying out the Township's business. At the same time, advisory committees are following the Board of Supervisors' lead and meeting virtually, using the Zoom video conferencing platform.

The new administrative office schedule adds an extra hour, opening at 8 a.m. and closing at 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Friday will be a teleworking day for the staff, which proved productive during the seven weeks that the building was closed to all but senior staff.

Residents with essential business can call ahead to make an appointment; otherwise, the building is closed to the general public. All visitors must wear a mask or face covering and gloves.

The new hours are in place on a trial basis, with the goal of reducing the carbon footprint of Township operations. With the building powered-down for three days each week, along with reduced gasoline usage and auto emissions resulting from keeping roughly 15 cars from commuting to the Township Building one day each week, the move is expected to make Solebury even more green.

"What we're trying to accomplish," explained Board

of Supervisors Chair Mark Baum Baicker, "is to maintain or even improve our level of service, increase our hours of availability to our residents, and do so on an environmentally-friendly basis."

Meetings

For at least as long as Gov. Tom Wolf's Stay-at-Home Order is in effect, the Board of Supervisors and all advisory boards will conduct meetings using the Zoom platform.

We've outlined this virtual meeting process and how residents can participate on the back page.

Permits

The Township is accepting permit applications and related paperwork by email and through a secure dropbox, located at the Township Building's small porch nearest the Public Works Building.

Please note that the Township's inspection contractors have only recently been cleared to resume operations under new social distancing guidelines, which may delay final approval of the permit. Check the Township website for details on the new permit process and to download forms.

Local Taxes

Due to the coronavirus emergency, Keystone Collections Group, along with all other tax collectors in the Commonwealth, have extended the Earned Income Tax final return filing deadline to July 15, following Federal and state filing extensions. You can contact Keystone with any questions at 866-539-1100.

Their Business Hotline is 724-978-0328, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Parks & Recreation

Solebury Township Parks & Recreation ended all sports activities and group use of Township parks, athletic fields, playgrounds, pavillions, restrooms, and facilities through June 4, 2020, after which time the situation will be re-evaluated for appropriate action.

Solebury Township trails, including those that are located in or cross through our parks, are open for use following social distancing guidelines, but the playgrounds at all Township parks are closed to the public.

Police

Solebury Township Police officers are patrolling their regular shifts, while police administration staff are following the Township's new work schedule.

To file non-emergency police reports (fraud complaints, minor property damage, ID theft, lost property, etc.) residents may call our 24/7 non-emergency line at 215-328-8511 and ask for an officer to call you. You can also send an email to police@soleburypd.org.

The Department is strongly encouraging the use of phone and or email reporting for non-emergency matters. Also, all fingerprinting, tours of the police department and special community policing events are suspended.

As always, dial 9-1-1 in an emergency.

COVID-19 Response:

The Governor's Plan for Pennsylvania; Bucks County Mitigation Efforts

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf's plan to reopen non-life-sustaining businesses in the state is designed to be cautious, deliberate and driven by data. Region by region, counties will be allowed to gradually shift from the Stay-at-Home Order to a new normal where customers maintain social distancing and businesses adhere to public health guidelines.

The criteria for reopening – some specific, others not yet fully-defined – include the average number of new coronavirus cases, hospital capacity, and the ability to test, trace and contain any new COVID-19 hotspots. The first phase loosens restrictions on workplaces and limited retail stores, the second would expand in-person retail and businesses that involve closer contact with customers, such as restaurants and hair salons.

As of May 15, 37 counties in Central, North Central and Western Pennsylvania have moved from the "red" phase to the "yellow" phase, lifting the Stay-at-Home Order and resuming limited operations at some businesses.

Bucks County, along with all of Southeastern Pennsylvania, remains in the "red" phase. The County Commissioners, after meeting with the governor's staff, expect to hear from Wolf before then end of May on a timetable to move Bucks County into "yellow."

The full reopening plan can be found on Gov. Wolf's official website, www.governor.pa.gov/process-to-reopen-pennsylvania/.

Bucks County Mitigation

While we remain in the "red" phase, a number of mitigation efforts are in place to help curb the spread of the novel coronavirus and fully implement the Stay-at-Home Order.

Public access to Bucks County facilities is by appointment only. To schedule an appointment with a county office, call 215-348-6000, and you will be directed to the appropriate department.

Bucks County Park System trails are open, but all park facilities, playgrounds, the dog

park and park offices remain closed. Those using the trails are asked to maintain a six-foot distance, and wearing masks is recommended.

County Courts are closed to the public through at least May 31, except for certain emergency matters. There will be no jury trials prior to Aug. 3, and no jurors should report prior to Aug. 3, 2020.

Bucks County Commissioners voted to push the due date on county property taxes back from July 1 to July 31. That applies only to county property taxes. A 10 percent penalty will kick in on July, 31 2020. Solebury Township was one of many municipalities urging the postponement.

A message from the Board of Supervisors

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videoconference, at first only for essential business, and now are using the technology to resume regular committee work. The Township administrative staff developed a teleworking schedule until we found a safe way to begin resuming operations in the Township building.

We've used this time to take a new look at our operations, and ways we might reduce our carbon footprint and expand service hours. Our new schedule, in place for now on a trial basis, has the Township Building open an extra hour Monday through Thursday, with Friday as a teleworking day. It will not only extend our hours of service but will enable us to reduce our energy usage

in the Township building and helping our environment with one less commuting day for Township staff.

The Board of Supervisors recognizes the hardships this situation has caused to our residents and is appreciative of your cooperation and understanding. As this crisis begins to subside over the coming weeks and months, there are sure to be more sacrifices required as we all adapt to the "new normal." Please keep in touch with us by attending a Zoom meeting, calling the Township offices or emailing us with any comments or suggestions. The Township phone number is 215-297-5656, our email is soleburymanager@soleburytwp.org.

What's in Your Inbox?

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

It's Atlantic Hurricane Season

Prepare yourself, your family and your home for severe weather. The long-term forecast calls for a very busy hurricane season, so be sure to keep the pantry stocked with non-perishable items. Did you dig into the cupboard during the Stay-at-Home Order? Time to restock!

What to do before the storm...

- ☁ Fill your car with gas (and fill an appropriately sized gas can if using a generator).
- ☁ Withdraw cash in case ATMs are not working after the storm.
- ☁ Fill any prescriptions you may need if you are running low.
- ☁ Plug in a standard non-cordless phone to receive and make emergency calls. Charge your cellphone, smart phone, and/or tablet and locate your car chargers.
- ☁ Place flashlights or battery-operated lanterns, plus fresh batteries, on each floor of your home.
- ☁ Store water for cooking and cleaning. Fill bathtubs with water for flushing.
- ☁ Set up a battery-powered clock and radio.
- ☁ Locate your supply of bottled water and easy-to-prepare, non-perishable foods, including pet food.
- ☁ Protect sensitive electronic appliances, like microwave ovens, TVs, and computers with surge suppressors, which can prevent damage from surges related to lightning, fallen poles, and other accidents. Alternatively, unplug them before a storm.
- ☁ Freeze and refrigerate bottles of water to occupy more space. (A partially full freezer can keep meat frozen for up to 24 hours - completely full, up to 48 hours.)
- ☁ Place your "go" bags and pet supplies in the car, and pet carriers near the door.
- ☁ If you plan to use a generator, set it up outside, close windows to prevent exhaust entering your home, and test any battery-operated CO detectors you installed.
- ☁ Secure lawn furniture, trash cans, and other light objects in case of high winds.

During the storm...

- ⚡ Avoid using candles but if you do, never leave them unattended.
- ⚡ Check the fuse or circuit breaker box to see if a fuse tripped inside the home.
Check with the neighbors to see if their power is out, too.
- ⚡ If you see downed lines and the ground is wet or has standing water, do not go outside. Keep children and pets away from the area.
- ⚡ Call PECO at the number above and report the outage through their automated, interactive system. Outages can also be reported online. Ask to speak with a PECO customer service representative to report downed poles or wires, but don't approach or look for these. Energized power lines are extremely dangerous.
- ⚡ Stay away from windows, where flying debris can cause injury.
- ⚡ Do not use a landline phone or run water during lightning storms.
- ⚡ Turn off and unplug appliances - including your furnace, water heater, and water pump - to prevent an electrical overload when power is restored, but keep a couple of lights turned on so you'll know when service is back.
- ⚡ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. Move meats, cheese, milk, and other perishables into the freezer compartment where it will stay colder longer.

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

Aquetong Spring Park Progress

Aquetong Spring Park development is moving forward, as work is under way to stabilize the bed and banks of the newly-established stream. The warmer-than-average winter, spring modifications to the governor's essential businesses list, and the diligence of contractor Land-Tech Enterprises have kept the project mostly on schedule through the pandemic.

C. Robert Wynn Associates and Princeton Hydro, the engineers on the project, have carefully monitored the stream from Aquetong Spring as it winds its way back to a natural path, and determined that some skilled intervention was needed to help the stream along.

The restoration project involves bracing sections of the stream to prevent erosion and reduce sediment in the water and along the stream bed. Plantings along the banks will help stabilize the riparian buffer.

Step pools are being constructed along four stream locations, using large logs assembled in stacks and wrapped with geotextiles (pictured at right). Additional grading along the stream will help expand the floodway. The project is focused on four major areas: two along the tributary from Fox Run and two larger areas along the main stream.

Native trees and shrubs will be added to provide shade and help maintain the water temperature at a level suitable for local brook trout. The project includes building underwater structures from logs and root balls to enhance the natural fish habitat. All together these measures will provide overhead cover and resting areas for the trout while helping to stabilize the bank.

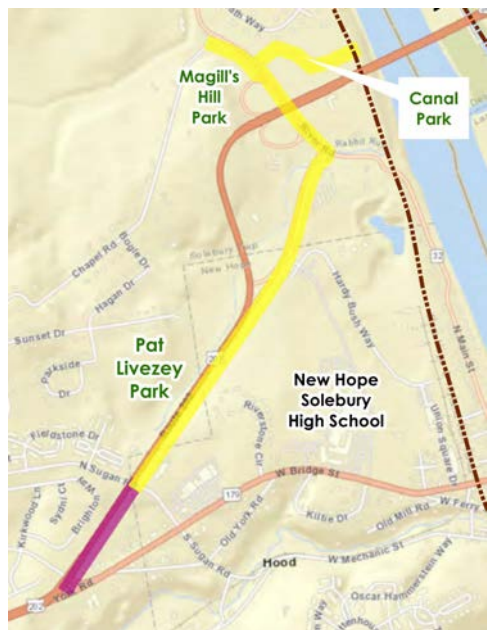
The stream restoration project has secured all necessary approvals from the Pa. Department of Environmental Protection and



Step pools, constructed of large logs wrapped with geotextiles, help calm the stream flow.

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The project is funded by a \$250,000 grant from the Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, with an equal match from the Township. Additional grants for the project are provided by the Pa. Department of Community and Economic Development and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Funding Sought for Last Piece of Solebury Gateway Trail



Solebury Township has applied for grant funding to complete the missing link of the Gateway Trail project—a 1,500 foot stretch along the PECO power lines, between Sугan Road and Kitchens Lane (the purple line on the map at left).

The new section of trail would connect the existing shared-use path (yellow on the map) extending from Canal Park with the 202 Cross-Country Trail extension in Aquetong Spring Park.

The proposed 10-foot-wide, shared-use path includes ADA compliant curb ramps and stormwater management best practices. Supported by the Bucks County Planning Commission and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, the Township is seeking a \$500,000 grant from the Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and \$250,000 from the Pa. Department of Community and Economic Development.

Attending Virtual Committee Meetings: How to Zoom

With the Board of Supervisors and the Township's advisory committees holding meetings via video conference for the foreseeable future, public participation is also making the switch to digital. There are several ways to join in, none of them too complicated.

In advance of every meeting, participation instructions are posted on the Township website, along with the meeting agenda and relevant documents. Just click on the board or committee you're interested in under the Government tab and scroll down to Agendas.

To join the meeting on the

Zoom platform, you can download the app for your iPhone or Android device, or go to zoom.us from any web browser. Using the meeting ID and password from the meeting notice, you can watch, listen, and participate in public comment sessions.

If you know your way around Zoom, the easiest way to make a comment is to use the "hands up" icon and wait for the meeting monitor to recognize you. Or you can sign up in advance with an email to soleburytownship@soleburytpw.org before the deadline listed in the notice.

If you don't want to Zoom, you can still send your

comments. Either email them to the address above, or send them by USPS to Solebury Township Building, PO Box 139, Solebury, PA 18963. Your comments will be read into the record, either by the board or committee chair or by the meeting monitor.

Just like an in-person meeting, you'll need to give your name and address along with any comments submitted via Zoom or in writing.

Additional details, like any time limit for comments and when comments will be allowed in the meeting, will be posted on the meeting notice on the Township website.

Township Directory

Police:

Emergency? Dial: 9-1-1. Nonemergency? Call: 215-297-8201.
General Inquiries: Police2@soleburytpd.org

Administration:

Township Number: 215-297-5656
General Inquiries: soleburytownship@soleburytpw.org

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

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

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

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

Right-To-Know Officers

Administrative Records: Jean Weiss,
soleburymanager@soleburytpw.org
Police Records: Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie,
police@soleburytpd.org

Board of Supervisors

Chair Mark Baum Baicker mbaumbaicker@soleburytpw.org | **Vice-Chair Kevin Morrissey** kmorrissey@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Noel Barrett nbarrett@soleburytpw.org | **Supervisor John Francis** jfrancis@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Robert A. McEwan
rmcewan@soleburytpw.org

Township Calendar

Calendar information is subject to changes.

Confirm all dates and times with the Township office.

All meetings will be held via video conference while Bucks County is under the Stay-at-Home Order.

Instructions on joining the meeting are posted on the Township website.

Meetings begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

May

5/18 Agricultural Security Area Advisory Committee
5/19 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
5/21 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
5/28 Parks & Recreation Board

June

6/1 Historical Architectural Review Board
6/8 Planning Commission
6/9 Environmental Advisory Council
6/10 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
6/16 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
6/18 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
6/25 Parks & Recreation Board

July

7/8 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
7/13 Historical Architectural Review Board
7/13 Planning Commission
7/14 Environmental Advisory Council
7/16 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
7/21 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
7/27 Aquetong Spring Advisory Committee
7/28 Solebury Farm Committee

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