



The Solebury Messenger

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Spring Issue

March 2023

Supervisors Set 2023 Priorities

Trails and parks, sustainability and long-term planning will get a lot of attention from the Township in 2023, along with ongoing ordinance review and many long-term projects.

With the award of two significant state grants (see story at right), Solebury is ready to begin work to complete the Gateway Trail and knit together our trails and parks into a cohesive system, as long envisioned by decades of planning in the Township.

There will be a significant focus on the Route 202 corridor this year. The 202 Property Advisory Committee has begun its work to help develop an overall plan for the Township-owned property along Route 202 at Reeder Road. The Committee is tasked with studying and evaluating options for the property that are consistent with the findings of last year's Township-wide survey, which received community input from more than a third of Solebury residents.

Fresh from last fall's well-attended Climate and Energy Forum, the Environmental Advisory Council has established a subcommittee to follow-up on the many

community suggestions from the forum. On the administrative side, the Township has brought on board a sustainability specialist to help coordinate a growing number of projects, including the Township's own efforts to reduce its carbon footprint at public buildings and other facilities.

Programs to manage the deer population, ensure the natural reclamation of the former quarry site, and monitoring the Tuscarora Oil site are all ongoing sustainability action items for the Board.

Solebury continually strives to find grant funding from state and federal sources to cover much of the cost of major projects, and this year brings a new focus on qualifying the Township's major creeks for congressional designation in the National Parks Service's Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic Rivers program. The Paunacussing Creek already enjoys this designation; the Township seeks to add the Pidcock, Aquetong, Cuttalossa and Primrose creeks to this special designation.

Every decade, Solebury Township undertakes two major planning reviews: the Township Comprehensive Plan and the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. 2024 will be

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Solebury Awarded State Grants for Parks, Trails

The award of two state grants to the Township will help fund the completion of Solebury's Gateway Trail and the design of traffic safety improvements near Aquetong Spring Park.

The largest of the grants, \$464,758 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority's Multimodal Transportation Fund, will help pay for trail construction and intersection improvements on the Gateway Trail, between Sagan Road and Kitchens Lane.

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Supervisors Honor Michael Warden



At the Feb. 21, 2023, Board of Supervisors meeting, Chairman Mark Baum Baicker presented Michael Warden with a plaque for his outstanding service and dedication to the community for over two decades.

What's in Your Inbox?

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

Solebury Wins Grant Funding for Trail Completion, Intersection Redesign

Continued from page one...

The current trail runs from Canal Park south to the Eagle

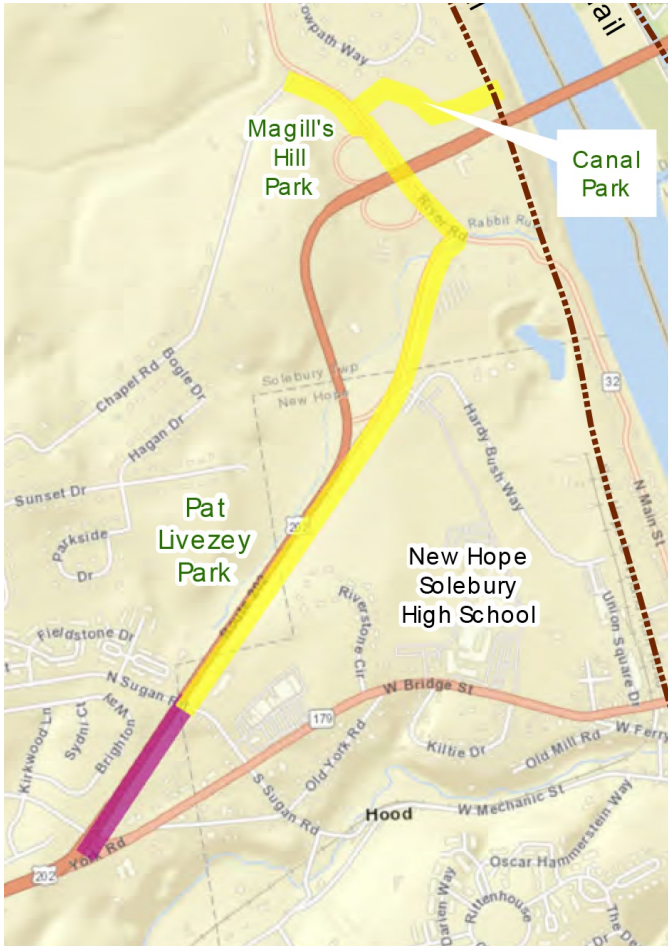
Fire Station at Suga Road. The extension will carry the trail under the PECO right-of-way to Kitchens Lane near Route 202. Several pedestrian-friendly improvements to traffic signals and intersections are planned for this completed stretch of the trail.

"Until we were notified that we would be receiving these funds, we were not certain we could turn this vision into a reality," Board of Supervisors Chair Mark Baum Baicker said. "We are incredibly grateful to state Sen. Steve

Santarsiero and state Rep. Tim Brennan for their efforts to help us win this grant."

The second grant will help pay for the design work to make critical improvements to the intersection of Route 202 and Lower Mountain Road, adjacent to Aquetong Spring Park. The upgrades include widening Route 202 to three lanes and creating a left-turn median lane, to provide safer access to the park while reducing traffic delays and improving connectivity in the area.

These funds, administered by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, come from the distribution of gaming revenues to support community projects that serve the public interest and improve the quality of life for members of the community.



Board of Supervisors Sets Priorities for 2023

Continued from page one...

the ten-year-renewal mark for both plans, and preparation for these projects will begin in earnest this year.

Both projects will undertake a community-wide survey to assess residents' goals and vision for their Township.

The Comprehensive Plan project will require the formation of a committee to oversee the work. Supervisors say they are determined to see a diversity of representation on this committee, with all of the Township boards and committees having a seat at

the table to avoid future conflicts and duplication of effort. The committee traditionally works closely with the Bucks County Planning Commission, which provides its expertise in developing the final plan document.

As supervisors have stressed many times over the past years, the development of ordinances and regulations is a work in progress, and legislation should continually be reviewed to be sure it fits the community's needs.

Ordinance review can be a complicated task. Community needs are occasionally in competition with each other, and state laws limit how far the Township can go in addressing community concerns.

Priorities this year include reviewing and revising the Township's "AirBnB" ordinance. The Board also hopes to find consensus on a Burning Ordinance, address storm water issues in the building code, and encourage the use of alternative energy.

Know Who to Call to Report Potholes

Spring has sprung, and that means potholes are bound to pop up along with the daffodils. To help our road crew fix these potholes quickly, we need your help in reporting them as soon as they appear.

PennDOT is responsible for the state roads in the Township. Call 1-800-FIX-ROAD (1-800-349-7623) or file an electronic report at <https://customer-care.penndot.gov>.

To report a pothole on any other road in Solebury, call 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

Paunacussing Watershed Association Helps Protect Our Wild & Scenic Environment

The Paunacussing Watershed Association was formed in 1972 by Bill Tinsman, Sr. and Ned Harrington among others, in response to a large development planned for a site along Carversville Road.

Since then, it has been instrumental in protecting the Paunacussing, one of only five streams in Bucks County to receive a High Quality Stream rating from the PA DEP and since the year 2000, designated by the U.S. Congress as a free-flowing tributary worthy of preservation under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act due to its outstanding recreational value.

The PWA has been quiet lately, but flooding from Hurricane Ida and other recent storms, ongoing stream bank erosion and development pressure have highlighted the importance of continuing to protect the Paunacussing. Whether you walk, bike, run, drive or live along the creek, if you are interested in learning more and pitching in, please contact Kurt Leasure at kgleasure@gmail.com



DRIVE ELECTRIC EARTHDAY

New Hope-Solebury Environmental Club and DEED Presents:

Earth Day Festival and Electric Car Show

APRIL 29, 2023: 10 AM - 2 PM

180 WEST BRIDGE STREET, NEW HOPE, PA 18938

VARIOUS TABLE AND SPONSOR OPPORTUNITIES
 \$20 PER CAR IN SHOW
 SPECTATORS FREE
 FOOD TRUCKS @ 12 PM

JUDGING @ 1 PM: EFFICIENCY, MILEAGE, AESTHETICS (INT&EXT) ETC

IG: @nhsdenvironmentalclub
 email: lmacdonald@nhsd.org

IN ACCORDANCE WITH:

Plug In America, Electric Vehicle, SIERRA CLUB, EVHYBRIDNOIRE, Normal Now, EDISON



AQUETONG WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

LITTER CLEANUP

LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER!

EARTH DAY SATURDAY

APRIL 22

9am

RAIN DATE: 4/23

MEET AT BUCKS COUNTY AUDUBON SOCIETY
 2877 Creamery Rd. New Hope, PA 18938

ALL SUPPLIES PROVIDED

WWW.AQUETONGWATERSHED.ORG

REGISTER HERE



SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION

ANNUAL EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, APRIL 1st at 10:00 A.M.

Pat Livezey Park - Rain or Shine

Board of Supervisors Notes 2022 Township Accomplishments

During 2022, the Solebury Board of Supervisors addressed over 174 issues. Many of these topics required extensive additional meetings and analysis. The Board of Supervisors met a minimum of 39 times during the year. In addition, all Supervisors are liaison to multiple Township Committees which in total, met at least 71 times this year. Additionally, Supervisors and Township staff participated in many community and individual resident meetings. Lastly, the Township Administration continued to provide the valuable service of addressing many community matters daily as well as coordinating the decisions made by the Board of Supervisors. The Zoom video interface continues to be an important meeting tool that supports this activity.

The price of goods, materials and services has risen sharply. Throughout this time the Township continued to make adjustments as has been done since the inception of the

pandemic. Regardless of the difficulties presented to them, Solebury Township staff, resident committee members, consultants and Board of Supervisors worked as best and as flexibly as could be done to provide the support the community has expected from their local government.

Special mention should be made of the resident volunteer committees, Environmental Advisory Council, Historical Architectural Review Board, Human Relations Commission, Land Preservation Committee, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, Solebury Farm Committee, and Zoning Hearing Board. They continued to provide the foundation of many Township activities and decisions.

Although this report should be much longer to accurately describe all the achievements of those associated with Solebury Township, for readability sake, the following descriptions are a brief summary of accomplishments.

Financial Overview/Bond Rating

- Moody's again has rated the Township at Aa1 due to its strong financial position that consistently has been improving in recent years.

- The pandemic created an uncertain economic situation. Consequently, Township expenditures were reduced, eliminated, or deferred to sustain balanced budgets for 2022 and 2023.

- Sought proposals for audit services resulting in approximately \$20,000 in savings.

Township Administration

- Solebury Township appointed a new Township Manager in place of retired Dennis Carney, and a new Public Works Director.

- The Township completed the installation of an additional monitor in the main meeting room as an enhancement to the viewing of presentations and documents at meetings.

- The Township is paying more vendors electronically to eliminate paper checks. Of roughly 275

regularly-used vendors, 130 have been signed up for electronic-type payments.

- Submitted approximately \$1 million worth of grant applications for four projects: The Gateway Trail/Kitchens Lane Extension; design grant for Route 202/Lower Mountain Road; an update to the Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan, and partial funding for an electric vehicle.

- The Township joined a successful Countywide effort to argue against the proposal for BCW&SA to sell the County's Water system.

Land Preservation

- The Land Preservation Committee has had discussions concerning five Solebury properties, one of these properties was preserved in 2022 adding an additional 43.09 acres.

Police Department

- Reaccredited for the third consecutive three-year period by the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Accreditation. It is a means to

evaluate and improve the SPD's overall performance. Approximately 10% of all PA police agencies have such an accreditation.

- The department's recruitment for two open positions resulted in over 45 applications, which resulted in the hiring of two excellent officers to fill current vacancies.

- National Night Out was very successful with 500+ residents and families attending.

- Obtained a grant in the amount of \$38,000 to outfit, a special service, high-water vehicle.

- Purchased two additional portable radar speed display signs.

- Started participating in the Bucks County Police Assisting In Recovery (BPAIR)/Supporting Treatment and Recovery (STAR) program aimed toward assisting individuals seeking substance use disorder treatment by connecting them with resources, support, and services.

- Received a \$59,000 grant for a much more efficient records management system.

Continued on page 5...

Board Notes 2022 Accomplishments

...continued from page 4

Roads, Bridges & Trails

- Paving / surface treatment on 11 roads. Several bridges were repaired.
- Ida Cleanup & Restoration - 500 tons of rock & stone placed in washed out areas as well as realignment of Cuttalossa Stream after it left its banks.
- Through the office of state Sen. Steve Santarsiero, a grant for culvert repair and cleaning in Carversville; an agreement with the National Park Service for "no-cost technical support to address impacts from Hurricane Ida including erosion and deposition" in the Paunacussing Creek.

Park & Recreation Department

- Completed analysis of the Township Route 202 community survey. The Board of Supervisors formed a committee to use the survey to guide the development of the property starting in 2023.
 - Completed construction of a new softball scoreboard at Laurel Park softball field.
 - Completion of a successful five-week Summer Camp program at Pat Livezey Park.
 - Completed a travel and recreation basketball program in the face of significant restrictions on indoor gym use and masking as the result of COVID-19.
 - Participated, coordinated or sponsored over 10 major community events.
 - Completed improvement of the T-Ball/ Robo-Ball/ Minor League baseball fields at Laurel Park.
- ## **Aquetong Spring Park**
- Completion of stone grit and wood chips over the non-paved trails.
 - Implementation of a celebration bench program resulting in the sale and installation of 18 benches and

continued installation of educational park signs.

- Completion of tree planting, supported by Lower Delaware Wild & Scenic River Management Council grant.

Deer Management

- As of November 2022, there were 974 deer harvested by USDA staff for the 2021-2022 season. Over 20,000 pounds of venison was donated to local food banks through a partnership with Hunters Sharing the Harvest of Pa., which reimbursed 50% of processing costs back to Solebury Township.

Route 202 Corridor

- Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission has added a future roundabout at the Kitchens Road / Route 179 / Route 202 intersection. Preliminary engineering has begun. However, final design and construction is several years in the future.

Development

- The Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board have devoted an extensive amount of time and energy with numerous applications, including Heritage Senior Care/New Cartwheel Development site, the Carversville Inn, Riverview Land Development Plan and Solebury School.
 - Additional note should be given to the Planning Commission for the focused and extensive time given to the issue of alternative energy usage regulation in the Township.
- ## **New Hope Crushed Stone Quarry**
- The former quarry pit is almost completely filled and is now an approximately 71 acre lake.
 - The Township is continuing to meet with the DEP regarding water outflow structure development, revegetation of quarry area and Primrose Creek restoration.

Sustainability

- Adopted the Energy Transition Plan.
- Held a Climate Action Forum in October which was well attended.
- The Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance that bans single use plastic.
- The Planning Commission provided a proposal to the Board of Supervisors and a draft ordinance which will address the use of alternate energy in the Township.
- Water web site pages were consolidated and enhanced, bringing greater educational impact to the many water issues the Township deals with on a regular basis.

Historical review

- The HARB accomplished 20 application reviews, 14 full review applications, 6 RRIK applications (Repair and Replacement In-Kind).
- Average HARB response time for review and approval of RRIK applications was less than one day.

Zoning/Permitting

- On average, the Department issued permits in approximately six business days.
- Approximately 50 old permits (2020 or prior) were inspected and received a certificate of occupancy.
- The Township responded to 40 property complaints.
- The Township issued 585 permits (as of 11/29/22).
- The Township issued 274 Certificates of Occupancy (as of 11/29/22).

Farming

- The Solebury Farm Committee initiated a work plan with Land Trust of Bucks County to provide a "Land Owner - New Farmer" match application on the Land Trust's server.

Winter Bird Watching—Birds of Prey in Bucks County

By Hope Blaythorne, Solebury Township EAC

We are very fortunate to have several raptors flying around our area. Raptors are carnivorous medium to large birds (such as a hawk, eagle, owl, or vulture) that have a hooked beak and large sharp talons. They feed wholly or chiefly on meat taken by hunting or on carrion. They are also known as “birds of prey.”

How can you see these birds? First, simply look up. They are easy to see in the winter with the leaves off the trees and they are very much creatures of habit in their day to day lives. Early morning and before dusk is when they are most busy, as they are hunters and the way they survive is to find prey.

Which raptors might you find soaring in our skies? We are lucky to have many: Bald Eagles, Turkey Vultures, Black Vultures, Red Tailed Hawks, Red Shouldered Hawks, Cooper’s Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, Kestrels, Great Horned Owls, Screech Owls, and more.

The Cornell Merlin app is a great tool to help identify the raptor that you are seeing and even hearing, I highly recommend this tool to support your bird watching.

The largest raptor in our region is the Bald Eagle, while the smallest one is the Kestrel. These birds are around us year round. Some migrate, but many stay through the winter.

These birds might seem invulnerable since they are fierce hunters, but in reality there are risks that threaten their population. Raptors have

a high mortality rate with 1 in 9 dying before they turn one year old. The bad news is, we are responsible for most of these threats. The good news is, we can actually do something to help mitigate the problems we’ve created.

How can you help? You can play a part in helping all birds, not just raptors with the suggestions below.

Keep your Cats Indoors. Free roaming cats are a huge cause of death in the bird population. Cats are not native species and have been known to kill over 1.4 billion birds a year. Responsible cat owners need to keep their cat(s) indoors, or build a “catio” for them to be able to enjoy the outdoors without killing any more of our vulnerable bird species.

Address your Windows. Window strikes kill a large number of birds each year. Birds do not see glass, they only see the reflection of the landscape around them. To reduce window strikes, you can put up window coverings on windows susceptible to bird activity. Put decals on the windows and even rub wet soap on the outside of windows during migration season.

Toss Food in Trash, not out the car window. Car collisions are another issue as we lose over 60,000 birds of prey each year to bird collisions. Tossing food out of our vehicles attracts the prey that raptors feed on. So when you throw food out on the side of the road you are putting animals and birds of prey at

risk. Simply dispose of food properly in a trash can.

Use organic pest control. The endless list of pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and toxic chemicals that we use has a very direct consequence on our insect populations, and the birds that feed on them. The overuse of pesticides is believed to be the main reason why American Kestrels have been declining over the past decades. Using organic farming methods to grow native plant species will create a strong, healthy and sustainable local ecosystem that does not require the use of pesticides.

Do not use Rat Poison. When we use rat poison on our property, we not only kill rodents, we actually kill every single creature that feeds on rodents: foxes, raccoons, coyotes, skunks, snakes, hawks, owls, etc. We must consider the consequences for all the members of the food chain, and understand that rat poison kills them all indiscriminately. There are many alternatives to rat poison.

If you find a hurt or sick bird please contact AARK Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center at www.aark.org.

Additional bird resources are available on the web from PA Birdtown:

Bird Window Collisions: birdtownpa.org/bird-window-collisions/

Cats: birdtownpa.org/cats-and-birds/

New Hope-Solebury School District Touts Latest Achievements

New Hope-Solebury School District has earned prestigious recognitions in recent years. The Middle School was awarded the National Blue Ribbon Award for Educational Excellence, a highly-selective honor reserved for only 300 schools in the United States. In the latest reports from *U.S. News and World Report*, New Hope-Solebury schools continue to earn top ranks with the Middle School earning Best in Bucks and #15 in the State and the High School earning #10 in the State.

These acclamations for the schools are supported by an exceptional faculty and staff. For the second consecutive year, New Hope-Solebury educators were selected among the twelve finalists for Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year, including Caitlin Keiper for 2022 and Jacqueline Miller for 2023. Maria Bennett, an instructional assistant, was awarded the Pennsylvania Education Support Professional of the Year.

New Hope-Solebury students continue to shine

both academically and in their extracurricular endeavors. In 2022, five New Hope-Solebury seniors earned recognitions in the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Three New Hope-Solebury athletic teams, Field Hockey, Girls Volleyball, and Girls Basketball, earned District championship titles. A senior track and field athlete, Marco DeMeo, competed at the state level after also breaking the school's high-jump record. Junior Alexandria Elias, whose artwork was recently displayed in the Phillips' Mill Youth Art Show, also earned three Scholastic Key Awards for her art portfolio.

To enhance our students' college and career readiness, the school's former woodshop and printmaking studio has been renovated into a state-of-the-art STEAM (Science,

Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) wing with a multimedia studio, an engineering design space, an industry-grade manufacturing lab, robotics arena, and high-speed computer lab. The district will host a grand opening of its new facility with



STEAM Wing Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony From Left to Right: Board Facilities Committee Chair Deirdre Alderfer, Director of Education Dr. Amanda Benolken, Senator Steve Santarsiero, Board Curriculum Committee Chair Dr. Andrew Ordovery, Superintendent Dr. Charles Lentz, New Hope Mayor Larry Keller, K-12 STEAM Coordinator Richard Curtis, and Director of District Operations Scott Radaszkiewicz

a Community STEAM Night on May 4, 2023. The school is also finishing a capital fundraising campaign for its first stadium, with the intention to break ground in June 2023. Philanthropic support from the community, totaling \$1.1 Million, has positioned the district to make extensive improvements to its new turf field, including the addition of a fieldhouse with team rooms, a concession stand, restrooms, and a breezeway pavilion. For the first time, New Hope-Solebury students will compete in facilities comparable to their competitors, the school can host playoff games, and the community will have a welcoming space to gather and cheer for the New Hope-Solebury Lions.



Students in the Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary schools hosted a special send-off for teacher Jacqueline Miller as she headed to the Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year awards ceremony.

Bucks County Household Waste Recycling Events for 2023

Bucks County is hosting five household hazardous waste recycling events this year.

Pesticides, paints, weed killer—toxic chemicals are found in many household products, and when they are no longer needed they need to be disposed of safely. Every year the county sponsors recycling events for residents to responsibly discard these hazardous materials.

April 1, 2023

Lower Bucks

Bucks County Community College
275 Swamp Road, Newtown
Newtown Township

May 13, 2023

Upper Bucks

Upper Bucks Area Vocational Technical School
3115 Ridge Road, Perkasié
Bedminster Township

August 12, 2023

Lower Bucks

Bucks County Technical High School
610 Wistar Road, Fairless Hills
Bristol Township

June 24, 2023

Central Bucks

Central Bucks South High School
1100 Folly Road, Warrington
Warrington Township

October 28, 2023

Upper Bucks

Strayer Middle School
1200 Ronald Reagan Drive, Quakertown
Richland Township

Please note that no electronics, including televisions and computers, will be accepted this year due to a change in state law. This program is available to Bucks County residents only; no material will be accepted from businesses, industry or institutions.

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 Christopher Garges:

soleburymanager@soleburytpw.org

EAC Administrator Debra McFadden:

dmcfadden@soleburytpw.org

HARB Administrator Zachary Zubris:

zzubris@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 Bellizzi,
police@soleburytpd.org

Board of Supervisors

Chair Mark Baum Baicker

mbaumbaicker@soleburytpw.org

Vice-Chair Hanna Howe

hhowe@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor John Francis

jfrancis@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Robert A. McEwan

rmcewan@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Kevin Morrissey

kmorrissey@soleburytpw.org

Township Calendar

*Calendar information is subject to changes.
Confirm all dates and times with the Township office.
Meetings begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.*

April

4/3 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
4/4 9:30 a.m. Board of Supervisors
4/10 Planning Commission
4/11 Environmental Advisory Council
4/12 Zoning Hearing Board
4/18 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
4/20 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
4/26 202 Property Advisory Committee
4/27 Parks & Recreation Board

May

5/1 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
5/2 9:30 a.m. Board of Supervisors
4/4 6 p.m. Human Relations Commission
5/8 Planning Commission
5/9 Environmental Advisory Council
5/10 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
5/16 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
5/18 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
5/24 202 Property Advisory Committee
5/25 Parks & Recreation Board
5/30 Solebury Farm Committee

June

6/1 6 p.m. Human Relations Commission
6/5 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
6/12 Planning Commission
6/13 Environmental Advisory Commission
6/14 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
6/15 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
6/20 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
6/22 Parks & Recreation Board
6/28 202 Property Advisory Committee

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