



## Solebury Township Achievement Summary – 2022

### Introduction

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.

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### 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, documents at meetings.
- The Township is paying more vendors electronically to eliminate paper checks. Of approx. 275 regularly used vendors, 130 (47%) have been signed up for electronic type payments.
- Submitted approx. \$1 mil. worth of grant applications for four projects; (1) the Gateway Trail / Kitchens Lane Extension, (2) design grant for Route 202 / Lower Mountain Roads, (3) an update to the Park, Recreation & Open Space Plan, and (4) partial funding for an electric vehicle.
- The Township joined a successful County wide effort to argue against the proposal for BCW&SA to sell the County's Water system.

## **Land Preservation**

- The Land Preservation Committee (LPC) has had discussions concerning 5 Solebury properties, 1 of these properties was preserved in 2022 adding an additional 43.09 acres.

## **Police Dept.**

- Reaccredited for the third consecutive 3-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 forty-five (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 \$38,000.00 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 \$59,000.00 grant for a much more efficient records management system .

## **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.
- From a grant, through the office of Senator Steve Santarsiero, to do culvert repair and cleaning in Carversville and has entered into 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 Dept.**

- Completed analysis of the Township Rt. 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 5-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 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 11/2022, there were 974 deer harvested by USDA staff for the 2021-2022 season. Over 20,000 lbs 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 (DVRPC) 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 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 approx. 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 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 6 business days.
- Approx. 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.