

Clinton Township
711 Saxonburg Blvd
Saxonburg, PA 16056

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SPRING VALLEY PARK HAPPENINGS

2021 was a banner year for rentals of our Spring Valley Park picnic shelter grounds. In 2022, the Township is off to a very strong start with rentals. The Park has become so popular that the Park Board was able to keep the Park open all winter for hikers desiring to use the hiking trails throughout the Park.

The Township is assisting the Park Board and will be constructing a gravel access off of South Noah Drive to "POD 4." It is the Park Board's intention to further work with the Township in early 2023 to apply for a grant through the County Parks and Recreation Board to construct a walking trail around the flat surface area of "POD 4." This walking trail would in turn connect to the hiking trail at Frog Pond.

STAY UTD ON FACEBOOK!!

Clinton Township Butler County



Clinton Township Butler County Pennsylvania

Spring/Summer 2022 Newsletter



"IN THE WORKS" WITH PUBLIC WORKS

As you may recall, the Township lost its Public Works garage, trucks, equipment, and tools in a tragic fire on February 21, 2021. It has been a little over a year since our loss, and we are pleased to report that the construction of our new garage is complete, with a final Occupancy Certificate to be issued by the end of the month. We have finally navigated the insurance settlement process to a successful conclusion and have replaced our fleet of trucks, equipment, and most of the tools. Again, many thanks to our neighbors at Winfield Township, Middlesex Township, and Cranberry Township for loaning us trucks and equipment while we waited for our replacements to come in. We do plan to schedule an open house for those interested to tour our new Public Works Garage in the near future.



MUNICIPAL OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Thursday
9:00am To 3:00pm
Friday
9:00am to 12:00pm
Except holidays

ADMIN. ASSISTANT/ NOTARY PUBLIC

Ashley Kohley

ROAD FOREMAN

Luke Brewer

PW EMPLOYEES

Gary McCall

Ernie Griel

Brian Hamilton

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Tom Hartwig

Board of Supervisors

Kathy B. Allen

Chairperson

William C. Duncan

Vice-chairperson

James H. Halstead

Supervisor



2022 TOWNSHIP ROAD PROJECTS

With the use of Liquid Fuels and Act 13 Marcellus Shale Impact Fees, the Township intends to undertake the following road projects in 2022. The Township intends to pave a portion of Brewer Road, Sandy Hill Road from Glade Mill to Monk, and Miller Road. Additionally, the Township is planning to chip seal Coal Hollow, Christy, Cannon Hill, Jack, Westminster Extension, and Timber Ridge Roads.

The Township is planning to do road work beginning in 2023 on Cherry Valley Road. We have met with PennDOT and reviewed the project and plan to initiate this project next year. We do get complaints, justified to be frank, about the condition of Cherry Valley and addressing this road will need to be done over a two to three year period. Drainage work will need to be done on several sections of this road in order to make the surfacing last AND other sections will need to have a formal berm established prior to paving.

2022 PLANNING COMMISSION

- Chairman –Kevin Corace
- Vice-Chair– Pat Hedba
- Secretary– Barb Bartley
- Member– Brian Snyder
- Member–Dave McRoberts
- Member– Marty Micko
- Member-Judy Wagner
- Liaison -Kathy Allen

2022 Zoning Hearing Board

- Chairman-Greg Fitzgerald
- Vice Chairman– Mark Duster
- Secretary– Kenneth Miller

2022 Elected Auditors

- Chairman-John Kardos
- Member-Mathew Cornetti



FALL CLEAN UP DAY

As of this newsletter, the Township is still planning to host a “Clean Up Day” in mid–October. Please check our website or FB page for updates as we approach the fall season.

Web: <http://www.myclintontwp.net> or

Facebook: Clinton Township Butler County

AGRICULTURAL SECURITY RENEWAL

Every 7 years, it is the Township’s responsibility to revisit its Agricultural Security Program and afford those already registered under this program to chance to stay enrolled or opt out, while opening the program up to other landowners who might want to enroll in the program.

This program secures the rights of farmers to farm their land without dealing with overly burdensome regulations. That is the role of Agricultural Security Areas, where agriculture is a primary activity in the municipality. This joint municipal-farmer partnership demonstrates that farming is a local priority.

The Agricultural Security Program is the first step in preserving a farm via the Farmland Preservation Program. Land must first be in a Agricultural Security Area before a farm can apply for the State/County Farmland Preservation Program. Being part of the Agricultural Security Program of Clinton Township ensures that local ordinances or laws cannot unreasonably restrict farm structures or practices with a registered area, unless the ordinances have a direct relationship to public health and safety.

Any landowner with at least 10 acres of land OR \$2000 in expected sales per year from agricultural

products, farming, or viable agricultural land that is zoned to permit agricultural uses, can participate.

TOWNSHIP RECIPIENT OF GENEROUS TOOL DONATION

CPERG, a division of Charah Solutions, has generously donated to Clinton Township, through the persistent efforts of Supervisor William Duncan, a double tool chest filled with hand tools, along with chain falls and slings to help replace what the Township lost in the fire last year. This donation was made from stock on hand at the former Cheswick Generating Station that CPERG/Charah Solutions is dismantling to turn the site into a renewable energy/battery storage operation. Their generous donation is much appreciated by the Township Public Works Department and will be put to good use in the months and years ahead.



Did you know...our Township Newsletter is available electronically? Visit our website myclintontwp.net to sign up for electronic newsletters

TOWNSHIP PROPERTY PURCHASE

In the fall of 2021, Clinton Township had the opportunity to acquire property adjacent to the current Township Municipal Building and, in compliance with the Pennsylvania Second Class Township Code along with the guidance of our Township Solicitor, purchased what was known as the Morrow Property from the Estate of Mrs. Morrow. The Board of Supervisors unanimously agreed on the purchase of this 7.328-acre parcel, as it is situated at the intersection of Saxonburg Boulevard and Glade Mill Road. The Township has proceeded thus far to demolish the abandoned house on the property at the direction of the County Board of Assessment and commence the cleanup of dead and diseased trees and vegetation. The property will serve as a nice buffer between the Township building and Route 228. With regular maintenance and mowing, it will serve as a beautiful green space at the crossroads Saxonburg Boulevard and Route 228.

With no immediate plans for the property established, ownership of the property does give the Township some much needed flexibility in the future when they need to evaluate the enhancement/expansion of current Township administrative office space and implementation of some aspects of their Emergency Operations Plan. The current Township Building also serves as a polling place, as well as meeting place for several Township boards. It is the desire of the Board of Supervisors to keep the polling place at the Township Building and maintain a very functional space for boards and the public to use when the need arises.

Hence, as the Township perhaps grows and changes in the future, it will be important for the elected Supervisors to be able to adapt to the changing demographics and needs of the residents in a positive way. In the long term, owning this property gives the Township several options when then need for enhancement and expansion of Township administrative offices presents itself, not to mention implementation of the Township's Emergency Operations Plan.

HOME SAFETY

Township officials care about your safety. Daylight is the prevalent time for residential burglaries because of the expectation that homeowners will be away at work or shopping. Residents are asked to call 911 to report suspicious activity.

Tips for safety that you can do are:

- Please be alert to suspicious activity and don't hesitate to call 911 to report it! This includes stranger walking or vehicles lingering in the area with occupants that are unfamiliar to you.
- Never leave your house or personal property unsecured. Always lock all doors and windows when you leave your home and remember to keep your garage secured and locked.
- If you do have an alarm system, activate it when you are not home.
- Alert your good neighbors and homeowners' association to any problem and be sure to watch out for each other. The majority of burglars who are caught in the act are caught because of a neighbor reporting something suspicious.

2022 BUDGET MESSAGE

The Township's financial position is strong and will allow Clinton Township to fund the current level of services being provided to our valued Township residents. Initiatives established by the Board of Supervisors and Manager, as well as additional services and projects proposed by the Township, will be provided without any change in the tax rate for 2022.



The Township's General Fund revenue budget for 2022 was set at \$1,729,803. The Township receives revenues from a variety of sources, with the largest being Earned Income Tax, Local Service Tax, and Act 13 Marcellus Shale Impact Fees. Local Real Estate Taxes, Leasing Royalties Payment, and ARPA Grant Money will also produce notable sums of revenue this year.

The General Fund expense budget for 2022 is also set at \$1,729,803, thus yielding a balanced budget for this fiscal year. Expenses attributed to the Township's public works functions comprise about 48 percent of the Township's General Fund Budget. Road maintenance and storm-water drainage maintenance are included in these expenses.

The Township did receive ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) grant money in 2021 and will use some of this for allowable operating expenses in 2022 at the advice of the Township Solicitor and Accountant. Use of this money is governed closely by the Federal Government. An additional ARPA grant is anticipated in 2022.

HIGHWAY AID – LIQUID FUELS

Each time Pennsylvania citizens, or folks visiting our State, purchase gasoline, they pay a liquid fuels tax that by law must be used for highway/road related expenditures. Every year the State of Pennsylvania returns a portion of this tax to each municipality. For 2022, Clinton Township just received its allocation of Liquid Fuels money, namely \$161,752. This money, in combination with some other funds, will be used to complete the Township's paving and chip sealing projects this year. The Liquid Fuels monies received this year are down from previous years due to decreased fuels tax money collected by the State over the past two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the Township will receive \$18,560 for state roads which the Township previously took over and maintains now for snow and ice removal and surface repairs.



TOWNSHIP REAL ESTATE TAXES

The Real Estate Tax Collector for the Township is now Linda Halstead. Linda ran for this office as former long time Township Real Estate Tax Collector Heather Snyder chose not to run for another 4-year term last year. Linda is responsible for the collection of the Clinton Township real estate taxes and operates separate from the Township administration.



Linda's contact information is:
Linda Halstead, Tax Collector
134 Glade Mill Road, Saxonburg, Pa. 16056

724-352-9135

clintontwptc@myclintontwp.net

Helpful Tax Collector Information

- ◆ The Real Estate Tax Collector does not determine the "Full Market Value" of your property. The Butler County Assessment Office does that.
- ◆ If you have refinanced your mortgage and have an escrow account with a different bank or mortgage company, please notify the Tax Collector so your tax statements can be redirected.
- ◆ If you do not have an escrow account, as the property owner you are responsible for paying the real estate taxes.
- ◆ If you do not receive a tax bill, you are responsible for calling or stopping at the Tax Collector's Office and obtaining one. Failure to receive a tax notice DOES NOT relieve any taxpayer from the liability for prompt payment of taxes.
- ◆ If the billing address on your real estate tax bill has changed after January 1 of this year, please notify the Tax Collector of the change. This applies if you have paid off your mortgage or did away with the escrow account via refinancing, etc.

CLINTON TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The Clinton Township Planning Commission members have commenced work on updating the Township's Comprehensive Plan. Last prepared in 2017, the Township's Comprehensive Plan was designed to present the Township vision and goals for the future, while identifying strategies to achieve this vision. While the life cycle of a Comprehensive Plan is generally 10 to 15 years, the Planning Commission Board felt that with the release of new 2020 census data coupled with PennDOT's release of improvement plans for the Route 228 corridor from Route 8 to Route 356, it was an opportune time to update the 2017 document and perhaps adjust its vision and goals for the future.

The Commission is developing a Citizen Survey Form to make available to residents who might wish to comment on the Plan update and express their opinion on the topics being addressed in the Plan Update. This survey form will be made available in hard copy at the Township Office, on line at the Township website, or by mail upon request. The survey will need to be returned by August 1st.

CODE ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

Code enforcement is our least favorite thing to deal with at the Township. Unfortunately, some folks ignore Ordinances, create nuisances, or attempt to construct primary or accessory structures without the proper permits or encroach on side/rear/front yard set-backs. Ordinances are in place for your protection and the protection of your neighbor and their property.

Frequently the Township receives complaints about nuisances in the form of junk accumulations, noise, and illegal dumping of tires and trash along Township roads. Responding to these complaints and enforcing Township Ordinances costs the Township money in the form of staff hours and attorney legal fees.

If you have any questions about Township Ordinance requirements or need help in navigating this on our website, please stop in the Township office or call us for help. Complaint forms are available for those wishing to register a formal complaint.

VARIANCE REQUESTS

The Township frequently receives resident requests for variances when they plan to build an accessory structure on their property. These variance requests take the form of the desire to encroach on a side yard, rear yard, or front yard set-back with an accessory structure or addition onto a primary structure. Our Township Zoning Hearing Board is set up to hear legitimate requests for variances. The Zoning Hearing Board is, in essence, a judicial board of the Township. However, you must realize that for them to hear such a request, it must be alleged by the applicant requesting the variance that the provisions of the zoning ordinance dealing with set backs, height requirements, etc. inflict unnecessary hardship upon the applicant. The Zoning Hearing Board may grant an applicant a variance provided all of the following findings (abridged version) are made where relevant in a given case:

- ◇ There are unique physical conditions or circumstances including irregularity, narrowness, or shallowness of the property that create unnecessary hardship on the property owner in administering their plans to build;
- ◇ Because of the physical circumstances or conditions such as topography, there is no possibility that the proposed structure can be built in conformance with the Zoning Ordinance.
- ◇ Such unnecessary hardship has not been created by the applicant.
- ◇ The variance, if in deed granted, would not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or district where the property is located nor substantially impair the appropriate use of adjacent property.
- ◇ The variance, if in deed granted, will represent the minimum variance that will afford relief and represent the least modification possible of the regulation in issue.

Emergency Management Coordinator– Adam Hartwig

Township/Planning Commission Solicitor– Sarah G. Hancher, Hancher Law Office

Accountant/Auditor–Maher Duessel

Dog Officer– Renee Harding 724-544-1708

Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor– Thomas May of DMKCG