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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We Are More Alike Than Different

STATES THAT HAVE TOWNSHIPS ARE MORE ALIKE THAN DIFFERENT.

Last month, we explored how Illinois shares our common concerns about forced consolidations and mergers. This month we “travel” to Wisconsin, which, in addition to finding local government under attack, is also facing huge challenges with transportation issues. Sound familiar?

While June is most known for graduations, weddings, and Flag Day, it also is budget month in our state capital. Much of the discussion for the commonwealth focuses on taxes and spending. The good news this year is that Pennsylvania has a budget surplus of more than $800 million due to the robust economy and limited spending.

State government will get to have the same discussions that you will have in your budget workshops later this year. Spending priorities are dictated by balancing available revenue with the needs of taxpayers, rather than the wants of special interest groups.

You can't talk about spending priorities without talking about public safety as well as transportation safety. Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are both facing critical shortages of volunteers to fight fires as well as huge concerns about highway and bridge safety. Both states have a robust network of municipal roads that are maintained locally with minimal state support.

Here in Pennsylvania, PSATS has the Grassroots Advocacy Network to help educate state and federal leaders on local government issues. In Wisconsin, the Red Light Legislative Alert System works similarly.

In both instances, the respective state association has a lobbying/advocacy team that regularly patrols the halls of the capitol to speak with lawmakers. Efforts often reach a point, however, where members must engage directly with their elected state and federal leaders.

While the lobby team’s voice is important and gets heard, it pales in comparison to the voice of a constituent. Direct action by local leaders to state officials can make all the difference in the world.

Key issues like broadband access, fire/emergency services staffing, and transportation funding are top priorities in both states — and many others, for that matter. Just as there is strength in numbers within our communities, that same strength can be mustered across municipal and state boundaries to present a unified national message.

Local control — a bedrock foundation that was designed by the Founding Fathers 250-plus years ago — is every bit as important today. Municipal rights of way, zoning, open records, and community safety are all shared concerns that make townships truly great places to live, work, and raise families.

As we enter the summer months, I want to pause and thank you for all the efforts you make year-round to improve the quality of life for your kids, grandkids, and generations to come. Working together, we can ensure that local democracy remains strong and vital into the future.

DAVID M. SANKO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
# The Conference Issue

*On the cover: Scenes from the 2019 PSATS Conference.*

## 10 Speakers
Attorney General Josh Shapiro offered a warning about community bills of rights, while other Harrisburg leaders and PSATS officials explored how local and state governments can work together to better serve communities.

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Heather “Lucky” Penney, one of two pilots protecting the airspace over Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, revealed how that tragic day taught her that ordinary people can do extraordinary things.

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Dates/Locations:

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Oct. 7 & 8  Union Co. — Best Western Plus Country Cupboard Inn
Oct. 10 & 11  Washington Co. — Hilton Garden Inn Southpointe
Oct. 24 & 25  Crawford Co. — Crawford County Country Club
Oct. 30 & 31  Adams Co. — Liberty Mountain Resort

Nov. 15 & 16  Monroe Co. — Kalahari Resort
Nov. 18 & 19  Chester Co. — Hilton Garden Inn

Stay tuned for more details and look for more information in the Township News magazine in the coming months or at psats.org. Click on the Connect button on the left side of the home page.
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Credits:
Each session is eligible for 2 PSATS Municipal Government Academy credits and/or 2 Society for Human Resource Management professional development credits.

For descriptions and pricing, see page 102. For more information, contact Scott Coburn at 717-763-0930, ext. 171, or scoburn@psats.org.

Dates/Locations

Session 1:
February 5 — Butler Co.
February 12 — Cumberland Co.
February 13 — Montgomery Co.

Session 2:
March 13 — Washington Co.
March 22 — Bucks Co.
April 14 — Dauphin Co.

Session 3:
May 6 — Allegheny Co.
May 9 — Luzerne Co.
June 4 — Lancaster Co.

Session 4:
July 10 — Mercer Co.
July 17 — Chester Co.
August 1 — Cumberland Co.

Session 5:
September 5 — Butler Co.
September 18 — Monroe Co.
October 2 — Tioga Co.

Session 6:
November 7 — Erie Co.
November 14 — Berks/Lehigh Co.
December 10 — Cumberland Co.

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Townships CELEBRATE SUCCESSES, TAKE AIM AT CHALLENGES During Annual Conference
FOUR DAYS OF LEARNING AND NETWORKING — that’s what the 97th Annual PSATS Educational Conference and Exhibit Show was all about. Township officials heard from an informative line-up of speakers, urged lawmakers to address local challenges, including the firefighter and EMS shortage, the lack of high-speed internet, and unfunded mandates, and celebrated the accomplishments of fellow local leaders. This issue, our annual conference edition, commemorates this very special event with a look back at its most memorable moments.
GOV. TOM WOLF

Governor Touts Proposal to Borrow Billions to Fund Local Communities

Gov. Tom Wolf explained his Restore Pennsylvania initiative to invest in local communities during his address to township officials at the Annual Conference in Hershey.

BY BRENTA WILT / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Township officials have something in common with Gov. Tom Wolf. They both want Pennsylvania to be a great place to live, raise a family, and build a career or business, not to mention well-maintained infrastructure.

The state, however, has not been investing in local government at the level it should be, the governor told township officials during PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show in April.

“We haven’t been there for you in the past,” Wolf said. “We have almost a million people in Pennsylvania without access to broadband. We have communities that are struggling with problems of blight. We have flooding. We have emergency services that can’t attract volunteers. That’s why I propose Restore Pennsylvania.”

‘I’m not touching the impact fee’

Restore Pennsylvania is the governor’s proposed initiative to make major
infrastructure investments funded by a severance tax on natural gas extraction. It would include funding for local government-related needs such as high-speed internet access, storm preparedness and disaster recovery, including flood control and stormwater infrastructure, blight remediation and brownfield cleanup, and repair and maintenance of local paved and dirt and gravel roads.

“Im trying to do something… to actually put money behind programs that you all know you need to serve your people,” Wolf said.

Pennsylvania communities have the “bones for greatness,” he said, but the state needs to invest in them. Restore Pennsylvania would put $4.5 billion toward that goal.

A severance tax would simply put Pennsylvania on the same playing field as Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Alaska, and every other state that imposes such a tax on drillers, Wolf said. Big oil-producing countries, such as Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, also have severance taxes.

The governor was quick to assure township officials that his proposed severance tax would not eliminate the fees they already receive from natural gas production.

“I’m talking about a reasonable severance tax on top of an impact fee. I’m not touching the impact fee,” he said. “The combination of the two would actually provide funding for the programs that you want.”

**Focusing on local communities**

Gov. Wolf told township officials that addressing these infrastructure problems is not a partisan issue. “When you have flooding in Bradford County, that’s not a Republican or Democrat issue,” he says. “It’s an issue that affects human beings.

“The lack of access to broadband, wherever it occurs, is not a Republican or Democrat problem,” he continued. “It’s a problem for you and the people you serve.”

Likewise, blight knows no political boundaries, he said. “I’ve tried to do this in a way that takes partisanship out of this,” he said. “I’ve separated Restore Pennsylvania from the budget. I said let’s take this money and raise it separately and focus it just on the needs of local communities.”

Acknowledging township officials’ disdain for unfunded mandates, Gov. Wolf said his proposal is a “funded non-mandate” that provides revenue for the things that communities need.

Lack of broadband, for example, makes economic development more difficult and things like telemedicine, cyber snow days, and autonomous vehicles nearly impossible, Wolf said.

“If we don’t do something now,” he said, “we’re going to keep coming back year after year saying, ‘I wish somebody would do something.’ Here is something we can do: Four-and-a-half billion dollars to be used as you see fit to make sure your communities address the issues that affect your citizens the most.

“I don’t have a backup plan,” he continued. “We don’t have any other opportunities than this that I know of.”

The governor reminded township officials that no one wants to have to comfort people whose lives have been devastated by flooding, or go places without cellphone service, or see communities affected by blight.

“You don’t want these things, and neither do I,” he said. “This is a chance we all have to get something done, and I hope you’ll support this.”

---

Gov. Tom Wolf promoted his Restore Pennsylvania initiative, which would use a natural gas severance tax to fund local infrastructure projects.
LT. GOV. JOHN FETTERMAN

Restore Pennsylvania Called a ‘Wish-List Dream Program’ for Local Elected Officials

At PSATS’ Conference, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman picked up on his boss’s message from the previous day and advocated for Restore Pennsylvania, the governor’s proposal to invest in the state’s infrastructure. He called the plan a non-partisan solution to problems that every community faces.

BY AMY BOBB / ASSISTANT EDITOR

As the mayor of Braddock Borough in Allegheny County for four terms, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman understands how tough it is to govern and make a difference in a financially struggling community.

This perspective as a community leader has him excited about Restore Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf’s plan to invest $4.5 billion over the next four years in high-impact projects that prevent flooding, eliminate blight, and expand broadband.

“As a local official, if I could have a wish-list dream program, this is what I would have asked for,” he told township officials at PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference in April.

In his first appearance before Association members, Fetterman threw his support behind Wolf’s infrastructure initiative, which hinges on the state levying a severance tax on natural gas production. Under the proposal, the tax revenue would be used to expand high-speed internet, tackle storm preparedness and disaster recovery, upgrade local roads, and invest in community revitalization across the commonwealth.

Fetterman called Restore Pennsylvania “a game-changing solution” that benefits all Pennsylvanians.

“Communities deserve to be reinvested in,” he said. “They need things; they deserve things.”
Not a red or blue issue

Throughout his speech, the lieutenant governor stressed that Restore Pennsylvania is not a partisan proposal, and he urged township officials to reach out to their legislators in support of it.

“This is about a solution we can all come together and work with friends across the aisle to deliver billions of dollars to communities like yours for projects you need,” he said.

Look past the fact that the proposal is coming from a Democrat, Fetterman said, and focus instead on the benefits it would bring to communities across the state.

“This isn’t a Democrat or Republican program,” he said. “This is about taxing a resource that belongs to all of you.”

Pennsylvania is the only state that doesn’t impose a severance tax on natural gas resources, he said. A severance tax, by definition, is a state tax imposed on the extraction of non-renewable natural resources intended for consumption in other states.

Although Pennsylvania does not currently have such a tax, it does levy a per-well impact fee, which has generated more than $1.4 billion for communities. In his speech the day before, Gov. Wolf reassured local officials that his proposal would not affect the impact fee revenue that has benefited many municipalities with gas wells in their area. (For more on the governor’s speech, see the article on page 10.)

“What we are proposing is what I call red- and blue-county solutions,” Fetterman said, “and Restore Pennsylvania is exactly that.”

Projects that make a difference

Over the past 16 months, Fetterman said, he has traveled three times to all 67 counties in the state and observed local needs and wants.

“Who here has a Dollar General store in their community?” he asked. “If you do, chances are you are dealing with issues of blight.”

Restore Pennsylvania will tackle blight, he said, with projects that revitalize and invest in communities. It will help municipalities comply with stormwater mandates and prevent flooding, and it will bring high-speed internet to every part of the state.

“It’s 2019, and we all need broadband,” he said. “It’s a fundamental right to be fully participatory in the 21st century and one of the things Restore Pennsylvania is guaranteed to deliver to all your communities.”

How often, Fetterman asked, do people tearing down buildings or making infrastructure changes to prevent flooding celebrate these projects with photos of local officials holding gold-plated shovels or oversized checks? Not much, he said, yet those are the kinds of real-world, everyday issues local officials must deal with.

“I know a dreaded phrase for local officials is unfunded mandates,” he said, noting that Restore Pennsylvania is the reverse of that.

“We want to deliver $4.5 billion over the next four years for projects that matter in your community, and you will say what those projects are in your area,” Fetterman continued. “That’s what I would have wanted and dreamed of as mayor.”

“This is about a solution we can all come together and work with friends across the aisle to deliver billions of dollars to communities like yours for projects you need.”
Township Officials Represent Power Closest to the People

As the government closest to the people, townships can do their part to keep legislators informed of how laws and regulations affect their communities, House Majority Leader Bryan Cutler told conference delegates. He encouraged them to share their stories, anecdotes, and examples.

Township supervisors have a good pulse on the communities they serve, and by sharing that knowledge with their state legislators, they can help ensure positive and effective change for all of Pennsylvania. That was the message that state House Majority Leader Bryan Cutler delivered to delegates on Tuesday morning at PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference.

“You have the most important job,” the Lancaster County representative said. “One of the blessings of our commonwealth is having so much power closest to the people, and you all represent that on a daily basis.”

Conference delegates show their appreciation to House Majority Leader Bryan Cutler, who tells them that local officials have the most important job in the commonwealth.

Streamlining laws

Tasked with making government more efficient, lawmakers in Harrisburg will frequently revise, streamline, or repeal outdated laws, Cutler told the delegates. In fact, under an initiative currently under way, the House has been repealing antiquated laws that date back to the 1930s.

“For example, did you know there’s a law restricting playing sports between 2 and 6 on Sunday?” he asked.

As the legislature performs its duty by adopting or repealing laws, he urged township officials to reach out to their senators and representatives and share their stories and experiences.

“I’m sure you have examples locally of things that need to be fixed or improved,” he said, “and I encourage you to call and share ideas where you think we could do better or where you think it would be nice if the law allowed you to do this.”

He recommended that township
officials get to know their legislators well enough to feel comfortable telling them, “This is who I am, and this is who I serve, and if any questions arise about ‘fill in the blank,’ you can call me.”

“It could be a municipal problem or an issue you’re passionate about or something you deal with in your everyday job,” Cutler said. The point is to become the expert that legislators can rely on for knowledge and know-how about specific topics.

“As elected officials, we are expected to know a breadth of issues that go beyond our area and our experiences,” he said. “That’s why experts like yourselves are so important to provide the expertise, the knowledge, and the personal examples.”

**Share your stories**

While Cutler believes that state lawmakers generally mean well, he said, “I’m not sure they always hit the mark when it comes to application.”

He cited permitting complaints he’s heard from local officials in his district as examples of good intentions gone awry. In one instance, it took two years and cost $25,000 for a township to meet the permitting requirements to install a drainage swale near a road.

“It was an afternoon’s worth of work and less than $10,000 of supplies,” he said, “so they spent more time and money than it took to actually do the work.”

Anecdotal stories like these are very powerful, he said, noting that legislators use them to drive home a point about how laws and regulations affect a community.

“As I talk to my fellow members, one of the number-one issues we are concerned about is what’s happening on the local level,” he said.

Cutler stressed that local control and common sense are important when establishing laws and regulations. Environmental permitting, for example, could be streamlined and made more efficient. While it’s important to protect the environment, he said, a balance must be struck.

“We can be smart about it,” he said, “smarter than our current structure and our current permitting process.”

Using his earlier example about a township’s onerous efforts to get a drainage swale permitted and installed, he noted that two problems could have been fixed with the amount of time and money the township spent on just one. To provide relief from burdensome regulations, he announced that five bills targeting permit reform would likely be moving soon in the House, and he urged township officials to call their representatives in support.

“Your voices will help change things like that,” Cutler said.

“The more examples and expertise we can get from all of you,” he continued, “the better it will be for us to apply that information and change the laws accordingly.”

“I encourage you to call and share ideas where you think we could do better or where you think it would be nice if the law allowed you to do this.”

Rep. Bryan Cutler explains how lawmakers often turn to experts for knowledge and know-how on certain topics. Local officials can serve as a resource by sharing stories and anecdotes about their communities with their legislators.
SEN. JOHN GORDNER

Small Changes to the Law Can Result in Big Differences

Senate Majority Whip John Gordner is an advocate for townships in Harrisburg. During his address to conference delegates, the senator reviewed the status of legislation affecting local governments that he has supported or is currently backing.

“The State Association’s policy process, which begins at the county level with the passage of resolutions that are eventually brought to the floor of the PSATS Annual Conference for a vote, personifies democracy in action, something that state Senate Majority Whip John Gordner believes in and supports.

“I always attend the township conventions in my district in the fall,” he said, “and the resolutions that are passed there are important because they make their way here and then to us in the legislature.”

The senator used his time before conference delegates at Tuesday’s general session to review previously passed and pending legislation, some of which began life as resolutions adopted at prior conferences.

“I’ve been asked to be a prime sponsor on some of the legislation that comes out of your resolutions process,” he said. “I think I’m batting 100 percent in getting these bills through the House and Senate into law.”

Small but significant changes

Gordner, a strong advocate of local government and a fan of PSATS’ Grassroots Advocacy Network, sponsored two bills that became laws last session. The first, Act 21 of 2017, raised the dollar threshold for personal property a township wants to dispose of from $1,000 to $2,000 before having to go through the bidding process. The second, Act 28 of 2017, clarified that township supervisors may hold certain appointed positions while in elected office, such as serving on the township planning commission.

Legislation like this may result in small modifications to the law, he noted, but such commonsense changes can make a mighty difference to townships. “They are small but helpful provisions,” he said.

In the current legislative session, Gordner has again introduced bills that would benefit townships. Senate Bill 316 would allow townships to reimburse newly elected officials for attending relevant training before they are officially sworn into office. Senate Bill 317 would reduce the number of days from 20 to 10 that a township must wait before adopting a budget that has been revised and re-advertised.

He also anticipates legislation to be proposed to permit local police to use radar — Pennsylvania is the only state to not allow it, he noted — and to amend the Right-to-Know Law so that municipalities are appropriately reimbursed for time spent on time-consuming and profit-driven commercial requests.

“I believe you should be rightfully compensated for your time and effort,” he said.

“God forbid we ever run out of volunteer firefighters and have to start worrying about paying for fire service.”
Support of firefighters

The significant decrease in the number of volunteer firefighters across the state, from 300,000 in the 1970s to around 40,000 today, is alarming, Gordner told the delegates, and the legislature must do what it can to support this vital volunteer institution.

“That’s almost a 90 percent drop since the 1970s,” he said. “God forbid we ever run out of volunteer firefighters and have to start worrying about paying for fire service.”

Picking up on recommendations recently made by the Senate Resolution 6 Commission, which was tasked with studying the volunteer crisis and exploring possible solutions, Gordner mentioned several proposals to offer incentives to emergency providers.

Senate Bill 146, of which he is a cosponsor, would allow first responders to take some of their required hours of training online for free through a program to be set up under the Office of the State Fire Commissioner. Another proposal, Senate Bill 447, would provide a state income tax credit to “active” volunteer firefighters with a certain number of years of service.

“While the state provides grants every year to fire companies, we need to work on other ways to incentivize and keep volunteers, as well as encourage young people to get involved,” he said.

Finally, Gordner addressed the governor’s controversial proposal to charge municipalities without a police force for their reliance on State Police.

“This is not an idea that the Senate is interested in pursuing,” he said, to which the audience responded with applause.

He noted that while rural communities might only call on State Police a handful of times a year, Philadelphia tops the list as the municipality with the most calls, some 30,000 last year.

“Yet under the governor’s proposal, Philadelphia would pay zero dollars,” Gordner said.

He questioned what would happen if the proposal were changed to charge municipalities instead by the number of calls responded to by the State Police.

“You know what that would do to this bill,” he said. “It would kill it.”
Townships Urged to Think Twice Before Adopting a Community Bill of Rights

Community bills of rights have become as controversial as the corporate practices they are trying to stop, and Atty. Gen. Josh Shapiro advised township officials to do their research to avoid making a costly mistake.

BY JILL ERCOLINO / MANAGING EDITOR

He may not be allowed to give legal advice, but state Atty. Gen. Josh Shapiro can offer warnings, and he has an urgent one for township supervisors who are considering adopting a community bill of rights (CBOR).

While Shapiro didn’t call CBORs unconstitutional, others have, and he admonished local leaders at PSATS’ Educational Conference to tread carefully.

“Be cautious as you are approached on these CBORs,” Shapiro told delegates. “They can be financially ruinous for townships and lead to significant amounts of litigation.”

The trouble with a community bill of rights

Environmental groups have touted the community bill of rights as a strategy for protecting municipalities from controversial corporate practices, such as factory farming, coal mining, fracking, and sewage sludge use.

The trouble is, CBORs have become as controversial as the activities they are trying to stop and have resulted in lawsuits nationwide. In Pennsylvania, for example, CBORs have clashed with ACRE, a 2005 law that authorizes the attorney general to sue communities with ordinances that violate the Right to Farm Act. While Shapiro’s office has mediated many of these cases, others have led to drawn-out court battles, he said.

“Some municipalities face bankruptcy as a result of the litigation,” the attorney general said, advising township officials to do their research before enacting a community bill of rights or any other statute that inhibits farming operations.

A good starting point is www.attorneygeneral.gov/ACRE, a catalog of ACRE-related decisions.

“When municipalities are considering ordinances and regulations, they’re able to go [to our ACRE website],” Shapiro said, “and see if this has happened somewhere else and avoid a lot of headaches and litigation.”

He noted that his office is involved
in a number of other environmental issues, including a multi-state effort to keep the invasive Asian carp from inhabiting the Great Lakes and a lawsuit that will help Bradford County landowners recoup natural gas royalties.

“We found out that landowners were being ripped off by those big drilling companies, and we took those companies to court to stand up for the landowners’ rights and interests,” Shapiro said. “We are going to get them their money back and the money they’re owed.”

**Deaths and arrests**

Shapiro also spoke at length about the heroin epidemic, which he called “the top public health and safety threat in Pennsylvania.” Overdoses claim the lives of 15 Pennsylvanians a day.

Rather than treat drug addiction as a crime, however, state law enforcement officials and others are approaching it as a disease, he said.

“Unlike many challenges we face, this one knows no municipal bounds: black, white, brown, rich, poor, male, female, rural, urban, suburban...this crisis impacts all,” Shapiro said, noting that of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties, the 10 with the highest percentage of heroin deaths are rural. “Our priority is to get these poisons out of our communities.”

In addition to developing treatment and other programs for addicts and their families, the commonwealth is focused on arresting dealers and doctors who run “pill mills,” cutting off the supply chain, and holding major pharmaceutical companies accountable for feeding the epidemic.

“Every single day I’ve been in office,” he said, “we’ve arrested, on average, five mid- to high-level drug dealers — that’s over 3,000 drug dealers since I took the oath of office in January 2017.”

Shapiro said that 4 out of 5 heroin users start their addiction with prescription painkillers and that 70 percent get those legal opioids from a friend or relative, many of whom have unused medications in their homes.

“Those little pills — those Oxycontin, those Percocets — are the jet fuel in this crisis,” he said.

Atty. Gen. Josh Shapiro urges PSATS members to steer clear of community bills of rights, which have led to lawsuits and potential municipal bankruptcies. He also used his time on stage to update township officials on the state’s efforts to combat the opioid epidemic, which claims the lives of 15 Pennsylvanians a day. Shapiro asked local leaders to help get legal painkillers, a stepping stone to addiction, off the streets by initiating prescription drug disposal programs.

Local drug disposal programs are effective, and Shapiro wants to see more of these efforts in the commonwealth. In the past two years, for instance, these programs have led to the destruction of 100 tons of unused medications, he said.

“I have just one ask of you in this crisis — just one: Commit your communities to getting these medicines out of the cabinet and to a drug disposal site, and let’s destroy these drugs together.

“You are literally saving lives,” Shapiro added, “if you help us destroy these drugs.”
Speakers

SHERI COLLINS, ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GOVERNOR’S OFFICE OF BROADBAND INITIATIVES

Severance Tax Would Make High-Speed Internet Expansion Possible, Official Says

Everyone wants high-speed internet, but the problem is, how will the commonwealth pay for its expansion? Sheri Collins says the solution can be found in Restore Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf’s infrastructure improvement plan, which would generate millions in new severance tax revenues to bridge the commonwealth’s digital divide.

BY JILL ERCOLINO / MANAGING EDITOR

The clock is ticking, and Pennsylvania has just three years to ensure that every resident has access to high-speed internet by the 2022 deadline set by Gov. Tom Wolf.

Sheri Collins, the person overseeing this challenge, told delegates at PSATS’ Annual Educational Conference that spotty internet service not only inconveniences gamers and people who stream movies but also impacts business growth and development, learning, and health care services.

“One thing a company will always ask is, ‘Do I have access to high-speed internet?’,” the acting executive director of the Governor’s Office of Broadband Initiatives said. “Because as a manufacturer, they need [this] access so they can continue to implement advance manufacturing technologies, which are crucial as they seek to grow and be competitive in the global marketplace.”

Collins has also spoken to teachers, parents, and medical professionals, all of whom have had to make concessions due to a digital divide that separates the broadband haves from the have-nots and affects an estimated 800,000 Pennsylvanians. This includes families who have to travel miles from home to pick up a wi-fi signal so their kids can do homework and ambulance crews who have to drive out of their way to find an internet connection to relay life-saving, patient information to a hospital.

“There is not one person in this room,” she said, “who would say this is an acceptable course of action in 2019. It’s just not.”

A plan to fund broadband expansion

In January, Gov. Wolf unveiled Restore Pennsylvania, an infrastructure improvement plan that would borrow
$4.5 billion over the next four years to help municipalities expand broadband access, address flooding, stormwater management, and blight, clean up brownfields, build new parks, and repair roads.

A press release from the governor’s office says that “projects identified by local stakeholders will be evaluated through a competitive process to ensure that high-priority, high-impact projects are funded and needs across Pennsylvania are met.”

Wolf wants to fund Restore PA with a severance tax on coal, oil, and natural gas, but there’s one problem with that idea. Up until now, lawmakers have been reluctant to greenlight such a tax, which the governor has proposed in every budget since taking office four years ago.

Collins said the severance tax deserves serious consideration this time around.

“Pennsylvania is the second largest producer of natural gas in this country, and yet we are the only state that does not impose a severance tax on the industry,” she said. “Short of this [tax], I’m not sure how these issues get fixed.”

Township officials, however, worry that the severance tax will replace or reduce Pennsylvania’s local natural gas impact fee, which already supports community improvement projects across the commonwealth. Collins tried to ease those concerns.

“We don’t want to take away your impact fee,” she said. “We know that is critical for your communities. We know that there needs to be balance...[and that] we need to work with our communities, but the reality is that we are at the 97th Conference right now. Do we want to come back to the 100th Conference and have the same discussion then that we’re having today?

“If we don’t work together to get something done, we’re not going to move this commonwealth forward.”

Collins encouraged townships to learn more about Restore PA at governor.pa.gov.

“I encourage you to look at the governor’s plan, ask questions, work with your legislators, whether you’re for it or against it,” she said, “but at the end of the day, we all know that this is a critical issue that needs to be addressed sooner rather than later.”

“Pennsylvania is the second largest producer of natural gas in this country, and yet we are the only state that does not impose a severance tax on the industry. Short of this [tax], I’m not sure how these issues get fixed.”

Sheri Collins was among the Wolf Administration officials to support Restore PA, which she says will raise the revenues to provide high-speed internet to every Pennsylvanian by 2020.
Pennsylvania townships are not alone in the challenges they face, whether fighting against forced consolidation, unfunded mandates, fire and emergency services shortages, and more, Bryan Smith, president of the National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT), told local officials at PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference in April.

Smith, who is also executive director of the Townships of Illinois, PSATS’ counterpart in the land of Lincoln, said that he hears a lot of the same concerns at his association’s annual conference every November. Like the local governments in his state, Pennsylvania’s townships are affected by what happens in the state capital and the nation’s capital.

The bigger-is-better movement, which pushes for local government consolidation, is a threat coming from both the state and federal levels, he said. The Founding Fathers created our representative form of government based on the full participation of the electorate.

“Nowhere else has this been more evident and more fully accomplished than at the local government level,” he said. “What keeps us on the path is the active participation of the constituents that we serve, which is local democracy in action.”

**Fighting forced consolidation**

There is a threat to this form of representation, however, Smith said. Forced consolidation threatens not only local government but also the well-being of our states and nation.

“All across the nation,” he said, “people are being told by the media, by ivory-tower dwellers, and even by some of our former elected officials that our financial woes in our communities and our country would be solved if we would only do away with these unnecessary local governments.”

The trouble is, there is no real evidence to support this idea, he said.

“Money is only half the issue, in my opinion,” Smith said. “More important is that we stand to lose the ability to govern ourselves.”

Nothing gets less expensive if local governments are consolidated into larger governments, and it simply distances...
the electorate from active participation in their government, he said.

“We are not going to see this consolidation talk go away, but the future rests with us,” he said. “We need to stand up for local government and what it means.”

Those who stand by and allow local governments to lose their authority and ability to provide essential services to their citizens, he told the township officials, are going to be complicit in the demise of local democracy. This will lead to even more uninformed citizens.

“It rests with us, how local government is going to survive in this country,” he said.

Strength in unity

Like sticks in a bundle, there is strength in communities working together, which is where NATaT comes in, Smith explained.

The association is townships’ voice in Washington, D.C. The NATaT board adopted its federal platform for 2019 and communicated its legislative priorities to congressional staff and membership. These include:

• tax benefits for volunteer first responders;
• broadband expansion while preserving local authority; and
• reauthorization of federal transportation funding.

NATaT has also been on the front lines of legislation that would impact local governments.

To help address the crisis in recruiting and retaining volunteer first responders, NATaT worked to get the Volunteer Responder Incentive Protection Act introduced in Congress on February 14. The bill would exempt nominal volunteer incentives from federal taxes up to $600.

This measure was law from 2008 until it expired in 2010, Smith said. If the current bill passes, the exemption will become permanent and take effect in 2020. Currently, the bill has 27 cosponsors, including Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick, Mike Kelly, Mary Gay Scanlon, and Glenn Thompson of Pennsylvania’s congressional delegation.

NATaT also submitted comments to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers about the proposed changes to the jurisdictions of the Clean Water Act, which would have made roadside
Speakers

“What keeps us on the path is the active participation of [our] constituents, which is local democracy in action.”

one," Smith said. “That was included in the bill but not in the order published by the Federal Communications Commission in December, which would hold all local governments to the same timeline.”

Consequently, NATaT is supporting House Resolution 530, which would nullify the FCC’s order and ensure that the federal government does not preempt local decision-making authority, he said.

To address broadband expansion, NATaT is supporting many of the current bills in Congress that focus on broadband deployment and improved broadband mapping, which indicates service availability in geographic areas.

Township officials can read about these and other legislative issues in NATaT’s weekly legislative update at natat.org.

For more personal engagement, PSATS members can participate in NATaT’s legislative fly-in in early June in Washington, which gives them the opportunity to meet face-to-face with senators and congressional members on the Hill.

Smith concluded his remarks with a nod to Charles Schulz, creator of the Peanuts comics, whose homespun philosophy reminds us that we seldom remember yesterday’s headliners and award winners. Instead, we remember influential teachers, friends who have helped us through rough times, and those who have taught us something worthwhile or inspire us.

The lesson is that we remember the people who care, rather than those with the most money, awards, or credentials.

“Thank you for caring,” Smith said. “Thank you for serving and for your support of the National Association of Towns and Townships.”

“...ditches, ponding water, and other transient bodies of water subject to pollution regulations.

The national association has been asked to provide comments on last year’s Streamline Bill, which created shot clocks for local governments’ review of small-cell permit applications. The bill also limited the fees a municipality could charge a wireless provider for reviewing applications and collocating on public property.

“We worked last year to include a separate shot clock for smaller local governments that may not have the staff, leadership, or time to complete the application process as quickly as a larger...
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Speakers

PSATS FIRST VICE PRESIDENT MARVIN METEER

Township Officials Should Be Patient, Persistent, and Proactive to Get Results from Harrisburg and Washington

Local government officials are used to fixing things, from problems to roads to equipment. Sometimes, though, roadblocks are put in their path by the state and federal governments. PSATS First Vice President Marvin Meteer told township officials at PSATS’ Annual Conference that to get around them, they should follow the three P’s: patience, persistence, and proactivity.

BY BRENDA WILT / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Marvin Meteer decided to address the elephant in the room, rather than pretend it didn’t exist. As first vice president of PSATS, Meteer addressed the township officials at the Annual Educational Conference only because someone else was missing: Bill Hawk, who was elected president last April, only to pass away unexpectedly three months later.

“Bill Hawk was my friend first and my colleague on the PSATS Executive Board second,” he said. “When he left us last July to walk through Heaven’s...
door, our Maker gained a kind and gentle soul. And we, well, we lost a man who dedicated his life to the service of others.”

Meteer said that all township officials are cut from the same cloth. They are generous, committed local leaders who put their community before anything else, including at times, their own family.

A colleague once described public service to Meteer this way: “When things begin to fray around the edges, it is up to people like us who care deeply about the fate of our communities to pull out the needle and thread and fix the damage.”

“And he’s right,” Meteer said. “We’re fixers. We fix problems, we fix roads, we fix equipment — you name it.”

‘We didn’t know what hit us’

Look up the term “public servant” in the dictionary, though, and you’ll find just a three-word definition: a government official.

“Yes, technically, we are government officials,” Meteer said, “but that doesn’t even begin to describe what it’s truly like to serve a community. It takes rock-solid nerves, a strong will, and thick skin to do what we do, and just when we think we’ve got one problem solved, two or three more pop up.”

To illustrate this truth, Meteer told the story of Marcellus Shale development in Bradford County, where he is a supervisor for Wyalusing Township.

“When the shale’s development started, it was bigger than anything we could have imagined,” he said. “We didn’t know what hit us.”

A massive fleet of trucks and a squadron of workers turned the narrow dirt and gravel roads into mud and caused a housing shortage.

“It hasn’t been all bad, though,” he said. “Jobs, once scarce, became plentiful. And many of our neighbors, people who had lived paycheck to paycheck, were cashing in lottery-size royalty checks.

“Eventually, all of us adjusted and found a way to work with the natural gas companies.”

Rather than sitting back and basking in the glow of economic growth, however, Bradford County communities continue to face challenges, as all townships do, Meteer said.

“In fact, I would bet that the issues we’re experiencing in the Northern Tier aren’t much different from the ones many of you are facing,” he said.

These include flooding and stormwater management, spotty broadband service, and volunteer first responder recruitment and retention issues.

Remember the three P’s

At last year’s conference, then-president Shirl Barnhart called on the governor to convene a special session on the first responder crisis. Subsequently, the SR6 Commission released a report and recommendations after studying the issue for several months.

“And here we are — a year after Shirl’s impassioned speech — and what’s changed?” Meteer asked. “Well, guess what? Nothing.”

While frustrating, it’s not the first time local officials have hit a roadblock and it won’t be the last, he said. The solution is the same as when dealing with physical roadblocks: find a way around them to reach your destination.

“In this case, our destination is really a goal, and that goal is to get Harrisburg and Washington to pay attention to and act on the issues that really matter to us and our communities,” Meteer said.

He suggested that township officials work toward this goal by remembering the three P’s:

1) Be patient.
2) Be persistent.
3) Be proactive.

“Bear in mind, too, that 2019 has brought many changes to Harrisburg, and we need to reach out to new lawmakers and others,” he said. “We need to educate them about local government, and we need to build new

“Our destination is really a goal... to get Harrisburg and Washington to pay attention to and act on the issues that really matter to us and our communities.”
relationships through phone calls and visits.”

While it’s important to highlight the challenges that their communities face, he said, officials also need to remind legislators that the nation’s forefathers created townships because they wanted government to be of the people, by the people, and for the people.

In closing, Meteer shared the following quote: “Many people are good at talking about what they are doing but in fact do little. Others do a lot but don’t talk about it; they are the ones who make a community live.”

Township officials often fall into that second category, he said. They don’t toot their own horns, and their deeds often go unnoticed.

“But understand this: With every act, large and small, we are breathing life into our communities and making them better places for everyone involved,” Meteer said. “Never forget that, especially when you’re facing an angry crowd or feeling defeated because you didn’t win that grant or can’t afford to fix a road or bridge.”

In those moments, township officials need to step back and see the bigger picture of what they and their colleagues are trying to accomplish.

“You’re in public service for a reason,” he said. “You care about your township, and your community needs you so hang in there. You’re doing just fine.”
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PSATS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DAVE SANKO

Share ‘Your Township Story’ with Legislators to Build a Foundation of Support in Harrisburg

In January, 50 new legislators took office in Harrisburg. During his annual message to PSATS’ members, Executive Director Dave Sanko encouraged township officials to seize this opportunity to educate newcomers about township government and seek support for meaningful changes.

BY AMY BOBB / ASSISTANT EDITOR

The only thing constant in life is change, PSATS Executive Director Dave Sanko said during the Association’s Annual Conference in April, but with change comes opportunity. In his annual address, he urged township officials to take advantage of a recent influx of new lawmakers in Harrisburg to seek improvements for their communities.

“We, as an Association and as individuals who believe deeply and strongly in local government, need to seize the moment,” he said.

PSATS and its members must do their best to reach out to these newcomers, as well as seasoned legislators, and share their “township story.”

“Our job is to educate new and experienced folks in Harrisburg about what you do for the commonwealth and what your communities need,” Sanko said.

“Pennsylvania is a patchwork quilt of communities,” he continued, “large and small, urban, suburban, and rural, that are led by caring, committed local officials who simply need support from the state to fulfill the visions for their townships.”

Beyond business as usual

On the surface, Sanko said, it may appear that business is as usual in Har-

“Our job is to educate new and experienced folks in Harrisburg about what you do for the commonwealth and what your communities need.”

In his annual address, PSATS Executive Director Dave Sanko expresses his wish for every legislator to take a tour of townships and see for themselves how local officials put their community first, ahead of politics and bickering.
risburg, especially when it comes to which issues are taken up or ignored by legislators.

“Lawmakers continue to drag their feet on Right-to-Know Law reforms, unfunded mandates remain a burden, and remarkably, in the 21st century, you still don’t have the authority to advertise online,” he told conference delegates.

Legislators and policy makers have also spent three decades analyzing the volunteer firefighter and emergency management crisis, yet no effective solutions have been implemented.

“We still have a shortage,” he said.

Meanwhile, Gov. Wolf continues to lobby — for the fourth year in a row, Sanko noted — for a State Police tax and a severance tax on the oil and gas industry.

“So, in that respect, nothing is different at the Capitol,” he said. “However, when you look at the faces seated around the table, that’s where you start noticing the changes.”

Some of townships’ most valued supporters in Harrisburg have either retired or moved on. In addition to 50 new legislators, he said, Pennsylvania has a new lieutenant governor — John Fetterman, who was a local government official — and new leaders of the House and Senate Local Government Committees.

“We can’t assume that people who have replaced them appreciate or even understand local government,” Sanko said.

While there are many legislators in office who have either come from or understand townships, he stressed that it’s important that all lawmakers learn to appreciate the critical role of township government.

“You’re important to Pennsylvania,” he said to the audience of township officials. “You’re important to Pennsylvanians, and the people who pass the laws — whether

The Association continues to embrace change by streamlining and adding services that help to make the organization better for its members, PSATS Executive Director Dave Sanko told members during his annual message.

Over the years, PSATS has introduced new programs and platforms to educate and communicate with local officials, including:

• A searchable, online discussion group;
• A mobile app to put conference information at attendees’ fingertips;
• A real-time, interactive salary survey;
• A webinar Power Pass that offers unlimited access to live and recorded webinars; and
• Expanded training, including the creation of Fall Forums targeting specific regions around the state.

In addition, the Association recently launched a new online system, called “Learn,” that makes it easier to register for workshops and webinars and manage your education, Sanko said.

“This upgraded system puts on-demand training at your fingertips, tracks the credits you’ve earned, lets you download class materials and attendance certificates, and much more,” he said.

Find out more about this new training tool at learn.psats.org.
they're new or experienced — have to open their eyes to the bigger picture.

**Putting community first**

Sanko told the delegates how he wished every lawmaker could take a tour of townships to witness what he has while attending county conventions, public meetings, and other gatherings around the state.

“I’ve seen people who put their community first — ahead of politics, name calling, and bickering — and who willingly come together to learn and share best practices for the greater good of their townships,” he said.

He has observed local leaders play by the rules, even when they don’t make sense, and spend public money as responsibly as if it were their own.

“On this tour, lawmakers would surely witness the very best in governing,” he said, “not because you have to, but because you want to.”

He warned against the dangers of forced mergers and consolidations of local governments and noted that bigger, consolidated government is not better or cheaper.

“Nothing could be further from the truth,” Sanko said. “Does anybody think Philadelphia is better or cheaper? How about Scranton or Harrisburg or Reading? They're all distressed communities.”

Sanko closed his message by reminding conference delegates that townships are the critical layer — the foundation — of government.

“It’s about improving the quality of life not only for your families but also for your friends, neighbors, and generations yet to come, not because you have to, but because you want to.”
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HEATHER “LUCKY” PENNEY

Groundbreaking Air National Guard Officer Says ‘Heroism is Within All of Us’

Heather “Lucky” Penney was one of two pilots protecting the airspace over Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001. On the final day of the PSATS Educational Conference, she talked about United Flight 93, a hijacked airliner that was heading for the nation’s capital. Her mission: Take down the airplane by any means necessary. The events that followed taught Penney many lessons about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. “We headed northwest toward the Pennsylvania countryside...and never found anything. Sass and I were no heroes that day. We were a mission failure. The passengers on Flight 93 are the true heroes.”

“We all have that average, everyday hero inside of us but why wait for a national crisis to bring that hero out? Don’t we need everyday heroes every day?”
“In the time since that clear blue morning, I’ve come to realize that heroism isn’t something unique or possessed by a chosen few.”

“What we were willing to do that day was nothing special. It was nothing unique because any one of you would have been willing to do the same. Why? Because there are things in this world that are more important than ourselves.”

“We need to practice heroism in our daily lives because it’s like a muscle. We all have that potential, that potential for strength, but unless we practice it, unless we exercise it, all it can ever be is potential.”

“You are public servants. This is something that you live and breathe. You’re not doing this for you. This isn’t about you. You’re doing this for the people you’re serving.”

“The communities that you are building and constructing lift everyone up and leave no one behind, and that is what our nation needs. America needs you as township supervisors.”
LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE ROUNDTABLE

Lawmakers Share Opinions on Stormwater Regulations, Firefighter Crisis, the Prevailing Wage, and More

PSATS brought together a panel of state senators and representatives, all leaders of their respective Local Government Committees, to find out where they stand on the issues confronting Pennsylvania’s townships.

BY JILL ERCOLINO / MANAGING EDITOR

When leaders and members of the House and Senate Local Government Committees gathered for an unscripted roundtable on the final day of PSATS’ Educational Conference, they ping-ponged through a list of challenges facing townships.

In between, some took jabs at the state’s enforcement of stormwater regulations, questioned Gov. Tom Wolf’s proposed severance tax to fund infrastructure improvements, and railed against the prevailing wage. All, however, agreed that lawmakers need to work with municipalities, not against them.

“I believe in empowering communities...[and] we need to tackle reforms in Harrisburg to give you the ability to run the most efficient and effective local governments you can,” Sen. Scott Martin, majority chair of the Senate Local Government Committee, said.

“As your legislators, we are your conduits to Harrisburg,” said Rep. Dan Moul, majority chair of the House Local Government Committee. “You bring us your issues and your problems, and we try to convince 203 people in the House and 50 in the Senate that we need to fix this. That’s the huge challenge.”

During the hour-and-a-half discussion, the panel of four lawmakers answered questions submitted by PSATS members during the conference, many of which focused on the Association’s legislative priorities.

Republicans Martin and Moul were joined by two Democrats, Sen. Judy Schwank, a member of the Senate Local Government Committee, and Rep. Bob Freeman, minority chair of the House Local Government Committee. Charlie Gerow, CEO of Quantum Communications in Harrisburg, was the moderator.

Here are some highlights from the discussion.

Issue: Pennsylvania’s spotty high-speed internet coverage

The numbers are staggering. Nearly 1 million Pennsylvanians lack high-speed internet access.

One of Gov. Tom Wolf’s goals in his second term is to provide this service to every Pennsylvanian by 2022. Proposed funding would come from a severance tax on energy producers.

“We have a lot of catchup work to do,” Schwank said, “and we need to act quickly to implement the plan the governor is talking about.”

Freeman agreed: “This is a bold and imaginative plan.”
Moul and Martin weren’t as enthusiastic.

“If this was easy or inexpensive, then we would already be done,” Moul said, noting that in the commonwealth’s remotest corners where homes and people are sparse, the significant cost of building broadband infrastructure would outweigh the return and waste millions of dollars.

Eventually, he added, technology will catch up with the public’s need. In fact, Moul hopes he sees the day when Pennsylvanians can get their internet service through a satellite dish. “The day that happens,” he says, “all that fiber optic cable becomes obsolete. That’s the conundrum.”

Martin said he supports partnerships for broadband expansion over imposing another tax on natural gas companies and other industries.

“We’re sitting on the Saudi Arabia of natural gas deposits, but what do we do: We say, ‘We’re going to find a new way to tax you, a new way to regulate you, and use it to fund education and now we’re going to use it to fund every other project in the commonwealth,’” Martin said. “To me, that’s frustrating.”

Panelists on the Local Government Committee Roundtable were, from left, Sens. Judy Schwank and Scott Martin, moderator Charlie Gerow, and Reps. Dan Moul and Bob Freeman.

Issue: MS4s and stormwater management

When the discussion turned to municipal separate storm sewer systems, or MS4s, it became clear that township officials aren’t the only ones concerned about the state Department of Environmental Protection’s enforcement of stormwater regulations.

Martin wants the inconsistencies to stop.

“’I’ve sat in meetings with our localities, and I’ve heard one thing said, and six months later it’s completely different. The target keeps moving.’”
“If we have expectations set forth by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the federal government, the state should make it easier for municipalities to meet them,” he said, “but I’ve sat in meetings with our localities, and I’ve heard one thing said and six months later it’s completely different. The target keeps moving.”

Moul isn’t a fan of local stormwater fees, which municipalities and stormwater authorities may impose to cover the costs of state- and federally mandated system upgrades.

“In my neck of the woods, it affects everyone,” he said. “They’re collecting $1.2 million to $1.4 million per year for four years before they even have their first project on the books.”

He shared the story of a neighbor who had to choose between buying his monthly medication or paying the township’s $80 stormwater fee.

“We should all call the governor’s office and demand that he ask the [DEP] secretary to put this on hold until we get some real standardization,” the Adams County lawmaker said. “I’ve never seen a piece of legislation that was so poorly guided and so poorly managed at the state level than this one.”

Meanwhile, Schwank has seen a lot of cooperation in her district, where local leaders have formed a regional committee to address MS4 issues. “Water doesn’t know political boundaries, so we have to work together,” she said, adding that the state should incentivize regional stormwater partnerships.

Freeman says he’d like to see more “green” approaches taken to manage stormwater. In his community, for instance, officials curbed flooding at a local park by creating a wetland to stop rain water from spilling over into other areas of the municipality.

“We spend a lot of money on major engineering projects with a lot of steel and concrete when maybe all you really need is a wetland,” the lawmaker said. “Sometimes, we are better served by going with time-honored projects.”

**Issue: The loss of volunteer firefighters**

For years, state officials have been trying to come up with solutions to revitalize Pennsylvania’s volunteer fire companies, which are losing members at a steady pace.

The Senate Resolution 6 report, their latest attempt to address the crisis, proposed a number of programs and incentives, including tax credits, to recruit and retain volunteers and was released this past November. PSATS President Shirl Barnhart served on the SR6 Commission.

Schwank said a local fire chief asked her about the report and resulting legislation at the company’s recent banquet.

“One thing he said hit home with me. He said, ‘Judy, a little tax credit is not helpful. You know what that means to me? $50 a year,’” she said, noting that funding for firefighting gear and equipment, which are more high-tech and expensive than ever, would be more valuable to local fire companies.

“He made it clear to me that if he didn’t have to spend time selling hoagies and running chicken barbecues, he could do a better job of protecting this community,” Schwank said. “We’ve got to fine-tune our approach to this.”

Freeman likes the idea of low-interest mortgage programs for firefighters while Martin has introduced legislation to exempt local fire companies from paying tax on food sales.

“It means the state is going to be giving up a little bit of money, but why wouldn’t we do it?” Martin asked. “Why wouldn’t we support their efforts and make it easier for them?”

Moul wondered the same thing after sharing a story about a small fire company that made a fundraising paperwork error and was fined $8,000. He said “disconnected bureaucrats” and nonsensical rules are also making it difficult for volunteer fire companies to stay afloat.

“We need somebody somewhere to shake it up for these fire companies,” he said.

**Issue: Reforming Pa.’s prevailing wage law**

PSATS has been at the forefront of advocating prevailing wage reforms, a move that Martin said he supports. In Lancaster County, he said, the prevailing wage, which must be paid to workers when the total cost of a local project exceeds a certain threshold, added $14 million to a school project.

“I want our government entities and school districts to pay what the local market demands,” Martin said, “and until we do that, this injustice will continue.”

**Issue: Fees for State Police coverage**

The fee for State Police coverage is like the natural gas severance tax: Every

“Schwank on high-speed internet

“We have a lot of catchup work to do, and we need to act quickly to implement the plan the governor is talking about.”
Under Gov. Wolf’s latest proposal, municipalities who rely on full-time State Police protection would be assessed a population-based fee, anywhere from $8 to $166 per capita. PSATS, guided by resolutions passed by members, opposes the fee.

“This issue has been around a long time, and the governor has moved in the right direction with the sliding scale,” Freeman said, “but there is no easy answer to this.”

Moul, however, said the fee is a bad idea. “That would be double taxation, and there’s no way,” the lawmaker said to the audience amid applause and cheers.

Martin also questioned the need for the per-capita fee.

“Everything that’s being proposed related to funding is nothing more than a solution looking for a problem. The reason I say that is this: The stats don’t bear [the need] out,” he said. “Forty-five percent of incidents the State Police respond to are in municipalities that have their own police.”

Philadelphia, for example, has its own police force. However, the State Police responds to more than 30,000 calls there. Under the governor’s proposal, the city’s residents would not be charged the per-capita fee.

Martin contends that instead of providing more funding to the State Police, Harrisburg needs to restructure law enforcement in Pennsylvania to mirror that of other states, which have countywide sheriff’s departments, metro police departments, and State Police who patrol the highways.

“We have created an overlapping mess,” he said, “and the solution isn’t going to come from the funding side.”

**Issue: Radar use by local police**

Pennsylvania is the only state in America that doesn’t allow local police to use radar to nab speeders. PSATS has been in front of the issue by lobbying lawmakers to enact legislation that would open the door for all certified police officers to have access to this tool.

“I live on a township road, and I get mad because I can’t walk on my road because people are speeding,” Schwank said. “I don’t understand why we don’t get this done.”

Freeman agreed: “This is something that is long overdue.”

“People argue that it’s a moneymaker,” Martin added, “but this is about local neighborhoods and keeping people safe. For me, it’s a no-brainer.”

Moul didn’t state his position. “This is a mixed bag for me,” he said. “All of the townships in my district want it, but most residents do not.”

**Issue: Elected auditors**

It’s no secret that the relationship between township supervisors and the elected auditors can be a bit rocky at times, but does it make sense to eliminate the auditor position?

Currently, townships may opt to hire a certified public account to perform their audit, but the wages of supervisor-employees must still be set by the elected auditors, which makes eliminating the position tricky, Moul said.

“What I don’t like to see is that some of the positions are used as political tools to get back at somebody,” Schwank said.

“My belief is in the ability of local governments to have more control, [and] that townships should have choices,” Martin said. “If they want to use the elected auditors, fine. If not, they should be able to eliminate them in favor of a CPA.”

Freeman contends that elected auditors play an important oversight role and would be reluctant to eliminate the position. “I’m a belt and suspenders kind of person,” he said. “I believe in a second set of eyes looking at the books.”
Association Remains in Solid Fiscal Shape as Board Decides ‘No Dues Increase’ is Necessary

During Tuesday’s annual business session, delegates reviewed the Association’s finances and adopted 30 resolutions that will shape the policies of the organization for years to come. They also elected officers for the upcoming year. (See the election results in the article on the facing page.)

Finances — The Association remains in excellent fiscal shape with revenues continuing to exceed expenses, PSATS Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Anna Swailes said during the Treasurer’s Report to members.

Therefore, the Executive Board, in consultation with the Finance Committee, decided that a dues increase is not necessary for 2020. This marks the fifth consecutive year with no dues increase, Swailes said, noting that only 14 percent of the Association’s income is derived from member dues.

The largest sources of revenue come from member services (28 percent) and training contracts (23 percent) followed by dues and then conference planning (13 percent).

While holding the line on expenses and keeping its operations efficient, the Association continues to improve and expand its services to members, including increasing educational opportunities, such as a new Webinar Power Pass and additional Fall Forums.

“All of the numbers in this report tell a story,” Swailes said. “As your member-service organization, PSATS continues to expand its services to help you do your jobs better, and like you, the Association keeps delivering more services on a limited budget.”

The Association continually strives to hold the line on costs, Finance Committee Chair Heidi Pickard reported. In 2019, there are no increases in affiliate organization dues, conference registration fees, exhibit space costs, or advertising and subscription rates for the Township News.

Rules — Delegates revised the Association’s bylaws to change when members take office on PSATS’ standing committees. Under the change, appointees will begin their service at the conclusion of the Annual Conference, instead of January 1.

Resolutions — During a lively session led by Resolutions Committee Chair C. Stewart McCleaf, delegates debated and voted on resolutions on such issues as broadband, open records requests, tax collectors, taxation, and mandates. (See photos on page 70.)

The 30 adopted resolutions will help to guide the Association’s legislative priorities and policies.

To view all current resolutions, log onto connect.psats.org and choose “Resources, Programs & Services” and then “PSATS Resolutions.”
Members Elect Officers

During the annual business session, conference delegates elected the following Association officers and Executive Committee members:

**Officers** *(Elected for a one-year term: April 2019-April 2020)*
- **PRESIDENT:** Shirl Barnhart, Morgan Twp., Greene Co., *Population:* 2,587
- **FIRST VICE PRESIDENT:** Marvin G. Meteer, Wyalusing Twp., Bradford Co., *Population:* 1,353
- **SECOND VICE PRESIDENT:** A.J. Boni, Perry Twp., Fayette Co., *Population:* 2,552
- **SECRETARY-TREASURER:** Jay Wilkes, Jackson Twp., Luzerne Co., *Population:* 4,990
- **ASSISTANT SECRETARY-TREASURER:** Anna Swailes, Metal Twp., Franklin Co., *Population:* 1,866

**Executive Committee Members**
- **David R. Nyman,** East Rockhill Twp., Bucks Co., *Population:* 5,884 *(second three-year term)*

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**Congratulations, Evaluation Prize Winners!**

Each year at PSATS’ Annual Conference, delegates fill out daily evaluation forms, which the Association reviews and uses in planning the next year’s event. Everyone who submits an evaluation form on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday is entered into a prize drawing for that day. The winner for Wednesday, April 17, was drawn and notified following the event. Congratulations to Dale Hassler, Supervisor of Allen Twp., Northampton Co., who won a preferred parking pass for PSATS’ 2020 Annual Conference.

The winners of the hotel evaluation drawing were also pulled after the event. They are Jeff Bartlett, Manager of North Whitehall Twp., Lehigh Co., and Doyland Gladfelter, Supervisor of Smithfield Twp., Huntingdon Co. They both won vouchers for their choice of hotel for PSATS’ 2020 Annual Conference.

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**Who attends PSATS’ Conference?**

PSATS Annual Conference attendees are able to choose one of numerous “position” categories when registering for the event. Here’s a list of the categories that had the most representatives in Hershey this year, from largest to smallest:

1. Supervisor/council member
2. Secretary and secretary/treasurer
3. Manager
4. Roadmaster
5. Road crew (tie)
6. Zoning/code official
7. Engineer
8. Treasurer
9. Solicitor
10. Emergency mgt. coordinator
Support staff (tie)

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**Mark your calendar for next year’s Annual Conference!**

May 3-6, 2020
The following quotes from speakers, vendors, and delegates were either spoken while at PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show in Hershey in April or sent via messages on the Association’s discussion group soon after township officials returned home.

I like the grassroots nature of the conference and talking to other townships.
— Terry Steinheiser, Chair, Connoquenessing Twp., Butler Co.

This is a bigger crowd than I thought!
— Sen. Judy Schwank, Member, Senate Local Government Committee

This show offers us the ability to meet township officials from across the state and put a face with a bid.
— Mike Spolar, Midland Asphalt Materials, Woodland

I like the camaraderie. Where else do you have this opportunity to see so much in one place?
— Ed Overberger, Supervisor and Roadmaster, District Twp., Berks Co.

Twitter is not the real world. What is the real world are the concerns and issues that every one of you faces in your communities.
— Lt. Gov. John Fetterman
You are one of the most valuable forms of government.
— Sen. Scott Martin, Majority Chair, Senate Local Government Committee

You always can get the information you need to do your job better.
— Leland Bassett, Supervisor, Summerhill Twp., Cambria Co.

Thank you for caring enough about our commonwealth and your communities to be involved.
— Rep. Bryan Cutler, PA House Majority Leader

FROM PSATS’ DISCUSSION GROUP:

“The amount of time and effort that goes into creating an event that size is enormous.”
— Connie Kline, Township Secretary/Treasurer/Code Enforcement, North Centre Twp., Columbia Co.

“Fabulous job, PSATS. Very timely issues discussed at the general sessions also. Kudos!”
— Janice M. Meyers, Township Administrator, Heidelberg Twp., Lehigh Co.

“One of the values of attending the conference is not just the information . . . but the networking it allows us to do with other townships.”
— Lana Shabloski, Sewer Secretary/Township Clerk, Delmar Twp., Tioga Co.

“I learned things at each workshop.”
— Karen B. Shipton, Secretary/Treasurer/Tax Collector, Findley Twp., Mercer Co.
PSATS Honors Late President Bill Hawk

PSATS paid fond tribute to William B. Hawk, its late president, with the posthumous presentation of the Founder’s Award, which recognizes those whose outstanding efforts have benefited Pennsylvania’s townships.

BY JILL ERCOLINO / MANAGING EDITOR

PSATS honored its late president, William B. Hawk, with the posthumous presentation of its highest honor, the Founder’s Award, at the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show.

Hawk’s wife of 56 years, Billie, accepted the award, which is given to those who show exceptional commitment to townships and is only presented when someone is truly deserving of the distinction. Past recipients have included Govs. Dick Thornburgh, Robert P. Casey, and Tom Ridge, Lt. Govs. Mark Schweiker and Jim Cawley, and Sen. John Eichelberger.

Hawk, a long-time supervisor for Lower Paxton Township in Dauphin County, died July 14, 2018, just months after being elected PSATS president.

“Bill loved his community, and he loved PSATS,” Billie Hawk said, “and he was so proud to serve as its president and represent townships. He may not be here physically, but if he were, Bill would be grinning and as honored as I am to accept this award.”

“Bill’s positive impact on this association cannot be overstated,” PSATS First Vice President Marvin Meteer said, “nor can his legacy of working for years to strengthen and preserve local government in Pennsylvania.”

Bill Hawk’s trademark was a warm smile and a firm handshake. He was candid, too. Once, he said that although he loved public speaking — he taught Dale Carnegie courses — he valued listening over talking.

“Sometimes,” he said, “to be truly effective, you just have to shut your mouth.”

In 1996, Hawk was elected to the Lower Paxton Township Board of Supervisors. The funny thing is, he never aspired to be a public servant. “That wasn’t on my bucket list,” he said.

Soon, however, Hawk began to understand the value of local government. He lobbied lawmakers on behalf of townships statewide, quoted Thomas Jefferson, a fellow township advocate, and got involved in PSATS, where he was elected to the Executive Board in 2004.

“Not many people know this,” Meteer said, “but in early 2018, Bill had major heart surgery. He was 78, and even that didn’t slow him down. A week after the surgery, he was back at the township building — as dedicated as ever...doing what he loved for a community he loved.”

Meteer noted that one of Hawk’s last trips was to Washington, D.C., where he lobbied federal lawmakers on behalf of townships.

Hawk was also active in his church, Faith Immanuel Presbyterian in Harrisburg, and numerous other community organizations.
“Bill’s positive impact on this association cannot be overstated, nor can his legacy of working for years to strengthen and preserve local government in Pennsylvania.”

ABOVE: Bill Hawk, a long-time supervisor for Lower Paxton Township in Dauphin County, died July 14, 2018, just months after being elected PSATS president. The photo above was taken during the 2018 gavel exchange ceremony. Hawk was honored posthumously at the recent PSATS Educational Conference.

LEFT: Hawk’s wife of 56 years, Billie, accepted the Founder’s Award on his behalf. The honor is given to those who show exceptional commitment to townships. She is shown with family friend and First Vice President Marvin Meteer.
Former Legislator and Township Supervisor Recognized for Her Work with and on Behalf of Local Government

PSATS honored former Rep. Kate Harper with the Chairman’s Distinguished Service Award for her extraordinary service to townships. A former township supervisor, Harper recently retired after 18 years as a state representative in Montgomery County.

BY AMY BOBB / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Former Rep. Kate Harper of Montgomery County received the Chairman’s Distinguished Service Award in April during PSATS’ Excellence Awards ceremony honoring the significant achievements of township officials and others across the state.

The Association’s Executive Board established the award in 2000 to honor individuals who offer their time and talents to help township officials and PSATS. The award is only given for extraordinary service to the Association.

“Kate has had a long career working with local government and has been a tremendous supporter of townships and the Association for many years,” PSATS Executive Board Chairman and First Vice President Marvin Meteer said in presenting the award. “She began as a public servant in Lower Gwynedd Township, and she never forgot her local government roots once she became a member of the state legislature.”

Harper was elected to the House of Representatives in 2000 and served nine consecutive terms before her retirement last year. While in office, she was chair of the House Local Government Committee and was appointed to the Local Government Commission.

Prior to her service as a representative, Harper was a supervisor in Lower Gwynedd Township, Montgomery County.

With her dual background as a local and state elected official, former Rep. Kate Harper explains how legislators know they are dealing with the VIPs of a community when they hear from township supervisors.
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Excellence Awards

Former Rep. Kate Harper of Montgomery County receives the Chairman’s Distinguished Service Award from Executive Board Chairman and First Vice President Marvin Meteer during the awards ceremony at PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show.

County, for 13 years, chair of the Montgomery County Open Space Planning Board, and a member of the Montgomery County Planning Commission and the township’s planning commission.

“As a former township supervisor, Kate understands the obligations and dedication of local officials,” Meteer said. “In her time as a state legislator, she repeatedly stood strong on issues that place an undue burden on local governments. Her faithfulness and commitment to townships have been unwavering throughout her career, and the Association appreciates her steadfast support of local officials.”

In accepting the award, Harper reminisced about her first appearance on the conference stage about two decades ago when she was a township supervisor and chair of PSATS’ Resolutions Committee. She noted that while chairing the resolutions process could be difficult at times, she received a valuable lesson that she took with her to the General Assembly.

“I learned that every person in this ballroom is a leader in his or her own community, and most of you have strong opinions about a variety of subjects,” she said.

Harper urged township officials to share these opinions with their legislators and to pick up the phone and call them whenever PSATS sends an alert about critical legislation or issues.

“I want you to know that when you call your legislator, they know you’re a VIP, that you’re a leader in your own community, and that you know your community very well,” she said.

“You’re the VIPs, and they will listen to you,” she continued. “Your voice matters.”

Before being elected as a state representative, Harper was also a member of the Governor's Conference on Trails and Greenways and served as president of the Montgomery County Association of Township Officials. She received the PSATS President’s Leadership Award in 1999.

Now in private practice, she works in municipal law and serves as a solicitor for several municipalities. Harper has previously spoken at PSATS conferences and once used the Township News as a reference source in a committee hearing in Harrisburg.
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Township Officials Recognized for Dedication, Service to Their Communities

While many benefit from the behind-the-scenes efforts of local leaders, these public servants don’t often get the praise they deserve. That changed 30 years ago when PSATS started recognizing those who have truly made a difference in their communities. Every year since, PSATS has presented the President’s Leadership Award to two hard-working township officials whose accomplishments have made their townships better places to live and work.

BY JILL ERCOLINO / MANAGING EDITOR

Fred Krizinsky, a supervisor for Mineral Township in Venango County, and Larry Gregan, manager of Montgomery Township in Montgomery County, were honored with PSATS’ 30th Annual President’s Leadership Awards.

Presented during the Excellence Awards Ceremony at the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show, the honor recognizes township officials whose outstanding projects and programs have benefited their community and whose service to township government exhibits the highest standards of dedication, leadership, and creativity.

PSATS established the award, one of its highest honors, in 1990 and presents it at each conference to a township supervisor and an administrator.

Fred Krizinsky, Supervisor
Mineral Township, Venango County

A supervisor for three decades and the township’s roadmaster/foreman, Krizinsky joins an elite group of local government officials who have received this award.

“He’s a truly dedicated township employee and wonderful human being,” Hilary Buchanan, deputy director of the Venango County Regional Planning Commission, said.

A model of leadership and public service, Krizinsky was born and raised in the township, where he spent his summers working on the road crew while in high school.

“He learned the mechanics of road management, cutting brush, picking stones, and running off-road equipment,” said the township secretary who submitted the nomination. “In addition, he worked at a neighborhood trout hatchery. This experience contributed to his love of fishing while teaching the impact of weather conditions and water management on a successful harvest.”

Over the years, many of Krizinsky’s accomplishments have had a common focus: protecting water resources in his community and surrounding areas.

Whether helping to form a local watershed association, developing a treatment system to restore a native trout stream, coming up with innovative ideas to control runoff, or obtaining grants for stormwater projects, his philosophy about water can be boiled down to two goals: Tell it where to go and keep it clean.

Working with other municipalities,
he helped form the Oil Region Council of Governments and represents the organization on the board of the Venango County Regional Planning Commission.

Such intergovernmental efforts are a common practice for this supervisor, who firmly believes in townships working together for the good of all.

“Through Fred’s leadership and willingness to work cooperatively with other organizations,” Lance Bowles, district manager of the Venango Conservation District, said, “he has been able to make a positive impact on greatly improving the infrastructure and water quality of Mineral Township and Venango County.”

Larry Gregan, Manager
Montgomery Township, Montgomery County

A former staff sergeant in the U.S. Army Reserves, Gregan has more than three decades of experience working in communities in southeastern Pennsylvania and Florida. He plans to retire at the end of 2019 after 12 years with Montgomery Township.

“I have watched Larry for years as manager of this busy and growing township balance the needs and desires of the businesses, the residents, and quite frankly, the considerable traffic, to help the board of supervisors achieve its vision of the township as a great place to live, work, and raise a family,” retired state Rep. Kate Harper said.

During his tenure, Gregan has:

• Overseen the construction of a 40,000-square-foot community and recreation center;

• Founded the Pennsylvania Stormwater Coalition, which has 45 municipal members in the southeast;

• Led the creation of the county’s tax collection committee;

• Helped the township preserve a piece of land next to the township park; and

• Directed multiple events to celebrate the township’s tricentennial.

“I have often said that being a township manager is one of the toughest jobs in the world, and Larry does it very, very well,” Harper said. “Larry Gregan is a superstar.”

Michael J. Fox, chair of the township’s board of supervisors, agrees: “Larry has been an immeasurable asset to our community. This is demonstrated through his leadership and experience in navigating the township through many important and challenging projects.”

In addition to his work for Montgomery Township, Gregan is active in the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities, the Montgomery County Association of Township Officials, the Association for Municipal Management, the International City Management Association, and the Montgomery County Tax Collection Committee.
Bucks County Township Recognized for Exceptional Communication Efforts

Doylestown Township in Bucks County uses various print and digital means to inform and engage its residents, from colorful brochures to a website, social media, and audiovisual communications. These efforts have earned the township recognition with PSATS’ 28th Annual Outstanding Citizen Communication Award.

BY BRENDA WILT / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Doylestown Township in Bucks County received the 28th Annual Outstanding Citizen Communication Award during the Excellence Awards ceremony at PSATS’ Annual Educational Conference in April. The township was recognized for its exceptional efforts to keep residents informed and engaged.

The Association presents the award each year as part of its Annual Citizen Communication Contest to recognize one township for its overall achievement and commitment to citizen communication.

The yearly contest recognizes townships from across the state for their efforts to communicate current township issues and gather feedback through various publications and other media.

Entries in the contest were judged on the usefulness of information presented and how well it was communicated. Publications were also judged on their overall attractiveness and readability.

In addition to receiving the top award, Doylestown Township also placed first in the social media and website categories, second (tie) and third in the audiovisual communications category for videos about the municipal building groundbreaking and the township’s bicentennial gala, and tied for third place in the other publications category for various promotional materials for the bicentennial celebration. (Note: Townships may submit up to three programs in the audiovisual communications category.)

The township has won several PSATS communication awards over the years for its robust efforts to keep its citizens informed, but the recognition is never taken for granted.

“Doylestown Township is pleased to receive the PSATS Outstanding Citizen Communication Award in 2019,” says Barbara Lyons, chair of the Doylestown Township Board of Supervisors. “We know every township works hard to make sure their residents are informed so to be recognized by our peers is indeed a great honor.”

As the number of information outlets continues to expand, so too must the effort to reach citizens with timely and relevant information.

“The challenge is to craft communication that will compete with the myriad of news and social media messaging, keep residents’ attention, and be a reliable source of facts and information in an attractive and effective format,” Lyons says. “It’s important to be...
trusted with the information delivery so our residents return to our communication network whenever the need arises.

“We use whatever medium necessary — sometimes all — to get the message out and give our residents links for information collaboration.”

PSATS will begin accepting entries for this year’s Citizen Communication Contest later this summer. Watch the Townshp News for guidelines and entry details.

In addition to the Outstanding Citizen Communication Award, Doylestown Township also received prizes for publications about its bicentennial celebration (1-5) as well as its website (6), social media pages (7-9), and audiovisual communications (10).
Townships Are Recognized for Projects That Increase Safety on Roads and Bridges

Two townships were recognized during PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference for transportation projects that improved safety in their communities. One road and one bridge project received top honors in the 37th Annual Road and Bridge Safety Improvement Contest.

RECIPIENTS
Bridge Winner: Wharton Township, Fayette County
Roadway Winner: Rapho Township, Lancaster County

BY BRENDA WILT / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Two townships received top honors in the 37th Annual Road and Bridge Safety Improvement Awards presented during the Excellence Awards Ceremony at the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show in Hershey. Road and bridge projects were recognized in separate categories, and the winning activities were a culvert replacement and the removal of a sharp curve with limited sight distance.

The Pennsylvania Highway Information Association (PHIA) and the state Department of Transportation (PennDOT) partner with PSATS each year to present the awards. Professional engineers and safety consultants from PennDOT, highway construction and design representatives, and PHIA staff judge the entries according to four criteria: safety, resource innovation, benefits to the community, and cooperation.

“A lot of times, the large interstate or interchange projects get all the attention in the media,” PHIA Managing Director Jason Wagner said during the award presentation. “We recognize the local projects that you struggle to finance and maintain and that really have so much impact on the lives of many Pennsylvanians. I want to thank you for what you do to improve infrastructure and the quality of life for your residents.”

PennDOT Deputy Secretary for
Bridge Winner: Wharton Township, Fayette County

Representatives of Wharton Township in Fayette County accept the first-place bridge award in the 37th Annual Road and Bridge Safety Improvement Contest, presented during the PSATS Excellence Awards ceremony at the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show in Hershey in April. Participating in the presentation are, from left, Fayette County Commissioners Vincent Vicites and Dave Lohr; PHIA Managing Director Jason Wagner; Wharton Township supervisors John Lewis and Jim Means; Jim Stanton of McMillen Engineering; PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Planning Jim Ritzman; Tammy Stenson of McMillen Engineering; PSATS Second Vice President A.J. Boni; and Wharton Township secretary Carrie Morrison.

Wharton Township installed a new aluminum arch culvert (left) to replace a deteriorating pipe culvert (above bottom). The old culvert was inadequate during heavy rains, leading to a frequently flooded road (above top) and five-mile detour. (Photos courtesy of the township.)
Planning James Ritzman joined Wagner to present the awards.

‘The flood issues are gone’

Wharton Township received the bridge award for replacing a deteriorating culvert that carried a creek beneath a local road. The old culvert was undersized and caused flooding of the road during heavy rains, which resulted in a five-mile detour. The culvert also prevented native brook trout from migrating upstream to the creek’s headwaters to spawn.

“We were always repairing the culvert,” Wharton Township Chairman Jim Means says. “Every time we got a hard rain, it washed out.”

After researching various repair and replacement options, the township supervisors settled on a proposal from McMillen Engineering to use a Contech aluminum arch culvert with an open bottom that allows fish passage. The township public works crew completed most of the work, including diverting the stream, removing the old culvert, and assembling and installing the new culvert. A hired contractor did the excavation.

The project was the first in Pennsylvania to incorporate Contech’s Express Foundation system, which features prefabricated steel forms that support the assembled culvert. Concrete poured inside the forms locks everything together.

McMillen Engineering helped the township secure a grant from the state’s Dirt, Gravel, and Low-Volume Road Program to cover about 77 percent of the cost. The completed project has performed better than the township could have hoped, Means says.

“It’s beautiful,” he says. “We have had several hard rains since it was installed, and we’ve had no problems. The flood issues are gone, and the detours are gone. We are planning to do at least three more like this in the township.”

The culvert project also received the Outstanding Partner in Conservation Award from the Chestnut Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

‘A long-needed project’

Rapho Township was honored for completing a road realignment project to improve sight distance and reduce vehicle accidents at a sharp curve. Property owners along the stretch had com-
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Dan Roupp - Road Master & Supervisor, Cogan House Township, Lycoming County

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plained for years about cars running off the road into their yards. Numerous reportable accidents, including several involving overturned tractor trailers, made this one of the township’s most dangerous stretches of road.

With the donation of a half-acre of land from the owner of a preserved farm and the eventual approval of the county agricultural preserve board, the township was able to get to work. The project design involved removing, reconstructing, and relocating a portion of the road. Rapho Township’s project involved easing this sharp curve to improve sight distance and reduce the number of vehicles running off the road.

“We are proud of the perseverance by our staff to complete a long-needed project.”

**Roadway Winner: Rapho Township, Lancaster County**

Representatives of Rapho Township, Lancaster County, accept the first-place roadway award in the 37th Annual Road and Bridge Safety Improvement Contest during the PSATS Excellence Awards ceremony at the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show in Hershey in April. Participating in the presentation are, from left, PHIA Managing Director Jason Wagner; Rapho Township Manager Sara Gibson, public works foreman Jim Fidler, and chairman Lowell Fry; PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Planning Jim Ritzman; and PSATS Second Vice President A.J. Boni.
of the road. It also called for the installation of drainage and stormwater management facilities, including roadside swales, storm pipes, and rain gardens.

“After years of design, permitting, land transfer, and setting aside of capital funds, in 2018 the township’s public works crew started the project,” township manager Sara Gibson says. “Because of the heavy traffic, we decided to close the entire road, resulting in a lengthy and frustrating detour for travelers.”

The road crew, with the help of contractors, worked many hours of overtime to be able to reopen the road in four months.

“We are proud of the perseverance by our staff to complete a long-needed project,” Gibson says. “The safety improvements are visible from all angles, and our contractor’s drone technology enabled us to provide our residents with dramatic views of our progress on social media.”

Think about entering your projects in this year’s contest

As your township undertakes road and bridge projects this summer and fall, consider entering them in the 38th Annual Road and Bridge Safety Improvement Contest. Document your work and take before and after photos. Brochures for the 2019 contest will be mailed to member townships and members of the Township Engineers Association in late December. The deadline is typically in early March.

For more information, contact Brenda Wilt at PSATS at (717) 763-0930, ext. 123, or email bwilt@psats.org. Townships may also go to www.psats.org, select the “Programs and Services” tab, and choose “PSATS Award Programs.”
Two Townships Forge Multimunicipal Agreement to Provide Police Services Cost-Effectively

As the threat of a per capita tax for municipalities that rely on the State Police for public safety looms once again, the Association recognized two townships for finding an alternative to providing police coverage that doesn’t bust their budgets. A neighboring borough and school district are benefiting from a similar arrangement.

BY BRENDA WILT / ASSISTANT EDITOR

The State Association has long been an advocate for townships working with neighboring municipalities, counties, and state and federal governments to provide services more efficiently and cost-effectively. In fact, PSATS is such a proponent of multimunicipal projects that it rewards deserving cooperative efforts with its annual Excellence in Intergovernmental Cooperation Award.

The Association, along with the Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Governments, the award cosponsor, recognized Hemlock and Madison townships in Columbia County with this honor during the PSATS Excellence Awards ceremony at the Annual Educational Conference in April.

In January 2018, the full-time Hemlock Township Police Department agreed to start patrolling Madison Township during set hours and provide 24/7 emergency response. Previously, Madison had only a part-time department. The new agreement gave the township round-the-clock coverage at half the cost, plus safety enforcement on its roads.

Hemlock didn’t partner with just Madison Township on police services, however. Mid-year, Millville Borough approached Hemlock Township and forged a similar agreement to replace its part-time, limited-coverage police department.

By the end of the year, Millville Area School District had also partnered with Hemlock Township to provide a full-time school resource officer.

“With Hemlock Township supplying service to the three entities, it allowed us to increase our police force from six full-time officers to nine and add two part-time officers,” Hemlock Township manager Jeffrey Sutton says. “This extension of service allowed four gov-
Representatives from Hemlock and Madison townships in Columbia County receive PSATS’ Excellence in Intergovernmental Cooperation Award during the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show in Hershey in April. The association established the award in partnership with the Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Governments (PACOG) to honor communities that are working together to complete projects and provide services more efficiently and cost-effectively. Participating in the award presentation are, from left, PSATS Executive Board member Dave Nyman, Hemlock Township supervisor Randy Howell and manager Jeffrey Sutton, Madison Township supervisors Glenn Titman and Terry Rider, and PACOG President Steven Hurni.

The police department in Hemlock Township, Columbia County, entered into an intergovernmental agreement with Madison Township, as well as Millville Borough and Millville Area School District, to provide cost-effective police services. (Photo courtesy of Hemlock Township Police Department’s Facebook page.)
Newest Class of PMGA Graduates Recognized at Annual Conference

The 2019 graduates of the PSATS Municipal Government Academy had their moment to shine during the Annual Conference in Hershey.

BY BRENDA WILT /ASSISTANT EDITOR

The 2019 graduates of the PSATS Municipal Government Academy received diplomas and certificates of completion during the Association’s Annual Conference in April. They were recognized during the PSATS Excellence Awards ceremony.

“PSATS launched the Municipal Government Academy several years ago to give township officials and staff a leg up on performing their duties,” PSATS Executive Director David Sanko says. “In the academy, education in leadership and communication skills overlaps the training in four technical tracks: administration, planning, public safety, and public works.”

Ten individuals completed the graduate, or diploma, program by earning 60 credits from across the four tracks. Another six people completed the certificate program by earning 30 credits from the administration track. (See the box for the names of the graduates.)

‘You can never know it all’

The PSATS Municipal Government Academy is purposely structured to provide concrete, relevant information for township officials and staff in four specific disciplines, Sanko says. “We didn’t want to just have courses on abstract local governance topics,” he says. “We wanted to make sure that students came out with practical and useful strategies and techniques to help them do their jobs better and more efficiently.”

According to the recent graduates, PSATS has achieved that goal.

“All of the information I have acquired and classes I have attended have had an immediate, positive impact on my position as township manager,” Marc Woerner of West Manheim Township in York County says. “The information is useful and relevant daily. “I would certainly recommend that others take part in the academy, whether in the certificate or graduate program,” he adds. “I have always found the instructors to be top-notch.”

Tammy Russell of Sadsbury Township in Chester County says that the academy taught her much about municipal government and gave her a chance to grow in her position as township treasurer.

“I made great contacts and gained knowledge, lots of resources, and information to help me in my career,” she says. “I would recommend it to everyone.”

Jeff Beck, secretary-treasurer of Rice Township in Luzerne County, completed the certificate program and intends to continue his education through the academy.

“The PMGA allows targeted learning beyond that gained by being on the
job,” Beck says. “It is easy to get caught up in the routine, but the job is so broad that you need some structure, such as PMGA, to force your exposure to all elements of small-government activity. “You can never know it all, and our job is to know it all,” he adds. “The next step for me is the certificate in planning and zoning since I am the planning commission’s secretary-administrator. After that, the graduate program. The learning can never stop.”

Please note: Six PMGA graduates were unable to attend and are not pictured. See next page for photos of three certificate program graduates.

2019 Graduates of the PSATS Municipal Government Academy

Graduate Program
Brad Graham, Manager, Antrim Twp., Franklin Co.
Devin Groff, Roadmaster, Lancaster Twp., Lancaster Co.
Lisa Krone, Secretary-Treasurer, Potter Twp., Centre Co.
Dawn Maciejczyk, Secretary, London Grove Twp., Chester Co.
Corina Mann, Manager, Hellam Twp., York Co.
Shirley Moyer, Secretary-Treasurer, Oley Twp., Berks Co.
Tammy Russell, Treasurer, Sadsbury Twp., Chester Co.
Amy Schmidhamer, Secretary-Treasurer, North Sewickley Twp., Beaver Co.
Tiffany Strine, Secretary, Dover Twp., York Co.
Marc Woerner, Manager, West Manheim Twp., York Co.

Certificate Program
Jeff Beck, Secretary-Treasurer, Rice Twp., Luzerne Co.
Tracy Miller, Secretary-Treasurer, Beaver Twp., Columbia Co.
Krista Predmore, Manager, Delaware Twp., Pike Co.
Erin Sakalik, Former Manager, Mount Pleasant Twp., Washington Co.
Billie Schall, Secretary-Treasurer, West Franklin Twp., Armstrong Co.
Anna Swailes, Supervisor/Secretary-Treasurer, Metal Twp., Franklin Co.
Even long-time township staff find value in the Municipal Government Academy.

“Although I have been employed in township government for 40 years, I feel there is a need to keep up with the current issues, and PMGA was a good way to achieve that,” Shirley Moyer, secretary-treasurer of Oley Township in Berks County, says. “Also, I learned a lot by networking with various municipal officials from across the state about issues they were dealing with and how they resolved them.

“This is a great program for any municipal official to take,” she adds, “but I highly recommend it for anyone who is new to municipal government.”

How PMGA works
The PSATS Municipal Government Academy offers elected and appointed township officials and staff the opportunity to earn credits and certification for completing specific training courses and other activities. They choose between two programs, graduate or certificate. For the certificate program, applicants must earn 30 credits and focus on one of the four tracks. For the graduate program, applicants must earn 60 credits from courses across all four tracks. Anyone in the certificate program may switch to the graduate program at any time during their course of study.

Certificate students must attend the essentials course for their chosen track, and graduate students must attend the essentials course for each of the four disciplines.

Participants in both the certificate and graduate programs must also earn secondary credits by attending conference workshops or classroom courses and/or webinars throughout the year. Credits can also be earned for attending other relevant PSATS learning experiences, such as the Human Resources and Labor Management Institute, Boot Camp for Township Officials, affiliate association seminars, and grassroots advocacy days.

For more information about the PSATS Municipal Government Academy, go to pmga.psats.org or call PSATS at (717) 763-0930, ext. 154.
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Workshops

PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference featured more than 80 workshops over four days that offered something for everyone. The sessions covered a range of topics, including fire and EMS issues, stormwater management, broadband, pipeline safety, and resolving community conflict.
Exhibits

With nearly 300 businesses and government agencies participating in the Association’s annual exhibit show, it has become the largest of its kind in the state. In between workshops and the general sessions, township officials crowded the indoor and outdoor exhibit areas, checking out the latest equipment and looking for deals and information.
Resolutions

Delegates at the Annual Conference debated and voted on resolutions that will shape the policies of the Association for years to come. This year, delegates adopted resolutions on such issues as broadband, open records requests, tax collectors, taxation, and mandates. PSATS members may view all current resolutions by logging onto connect.psats.org and choosing “Resources, Programs & Services” and then “PSATS Resolutions.”
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Welcome Reception

A large turn-out of conference-goers gathered to socialize Sunday evening at PSATS’ ‘60s-themed opening welcome reception. The event, sponsored by PSATS’ Trustees Insurance and Retirement Services, Visit Hershey & Harrisburg, and Yuengling, featured a fun atmosphere of ’60s music and dancing, games, photo station, and much more.
PSATS rolled out the red carpet for township officials who were first-time attendees at the Annual Conference. Events included a Meet and Greet on Sunday, where newcomers gathered with the Association’s Executive Board, staff, and “mentors,” a group of experienced township officials who volunteered to offer their advice during and after the conference. The “new-bees” also had the opportunity to attend another reception just for them Monday evening of the conference to welcome them onboard to township government. T&M Associates sponsored the Sunday evening reception.
Grassroots Advocacy Network Reception

Members of the PSATS Grassroots Advocacy Network gathered on the opening day of the conference to celebrate their successes, learn what is on the legislative horizon, and meet each other and members of the Association’s Executive Board and staff. The event’s sponsors included Broadband Cable Association of Pennsylvania, Campbell Durrant Beatty Palombo & Miller, P.C., and Zelenkofske Axelrod.
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PSATS again paid tribute to the efforts of township secretaries and managers at its annual thank-you luncheon during the conference. Association Executive Director Dave Sanko praised the group for its efforts during the event, sponsored by COSTARS of the Pa. Department of General Services.
Dessert Reception

Delegates and their guests enjoyed some free dessert and camaraderie Monday evening of the conference during a Dessert Reception cosponsored by Verizon and Aqua Pennsylvania.

Reps. Dan Moul and Parke Wentling, second and third from left, respectively, present a copy of House Resolution 68 to Daniel Dickey, chairman, Bob Waddingham, vice chairman, and Mike Klink, zoning and building officer, left to right, of North Shenango Township, Crawford County, during the conference. Also pictured, at left, is PSATS Executive Director Dave Sanko. Rep. Moul sponsored House Resolution 68 to recognize the work of local government officials during Pa. Local Government Week.
Donuts with Dave

PSATS Executive Director Dave Sanko hosted the ever-popular “Donuts with Dave,” an informal event that allows him to meet directly with members and address their questions and concerns over some donuts and coffee. The sponsor on Monday was AT&T, and on Tuesday, Delaware Valley Trusts.

County Association Breakfast

The leaders of the state’s county associations of township officials gathered for breakfast on Wednesday of the conference to network and learn about PSATS initiatives. There, PSATS Executive Board members and staff stressed that the county associations are part of the Association’s leadership team and PSATS depends on them for many things. One of the main topics discussed was how to better engage younger people and interest them in serving in township government one day. The breakfast was sponsored by HUB/Summit.
Farewell to a PSATS Board Member

PSATS First Vice President Marvin Meteer, left, presents a plaque to outgoing Executive Board member Ed Brensinger of North Lebanon Township, Lebanon County, to thank him for his service to the board.
Conference at a Glance

By the conference wrap-up at noon on Wednesday, delegates had been through a whirlwind of activity. Here’s a look back at the people who truly make the Annual PSATS Conference a success: township officials, their guests, exhibitors, speakers, and sponsors. Thank you, everyone!
Entertainment

Delegates manage to pack a lot into three-and-a-half days at PSATS’ Annual Conference, from workshops and networking to speakers and time on the exhibit show floor. They deserved to kick back and relax on Tuesday evening of the conference, when Rick K. and the Allnighters came to town with their blast from the past.
Township Projects, Leaders Honored with Governor’s Award for Local Government Excellence

Township leaders were recognized for their dedication and commitment to their communities at the 2019 Governor’s Awards for Local Government Excellence ceremony during Local Government Week, April 8-12.

“When local governments go above and beyond by implementing new technologies, forming new partnerships, or developing new ways to tackle their problems, that has a huge effect on residents’ quality of life. The purpose of these awards is to commend those municipalities and individuals that showed incredible service to their communities,” Secretary of Community and Economic Development Dennis Davin said.

Representing PSATS were Executive Board member and honoree Ed Brensinger, Executive Board Chair and First Vice President Marvin Meteer, and Executive Director Dave Sanko.

In addition to Brensinger, nine other local leaders and nine projects were honored in the following categories:

- building community partnerships;
- innovative planning and sound land use practices;
- responding to adversity;
- intergovernment cooperation;
- promoting community and economic revitalization;
- information technology;
- innovative community and government initiatives;
- health and wellness initiatives; and
- fiscal accountability and best management practices.

Note: Recipients from PSATS member townships are highlighted on these two pages.

Online nominations for the Governor’s Award for Local Government Excellence are accepted September 1 through December 1 of each year. A link to the application will be posted at www.newPA.com/lgawards. For more information about the awards, call toll-free (866) 466-3972.

Individual Award

ED BRENSINGER, center, chairman of the North Lebanon Township Board of Supervisors in Lebanon County, was honored for his outstanding local government service. A member of the PSATS Executive Board since 2013, Brensinger also is the township’s roadmaster and has spearheaded a number of municipal improvements, including the installation of a public water system. He’s not only an active member of the Lebanon County Association of Township Officials but also belongs to the Mount Zion Fire Company and several other community organizations.

FROM LEFT: Kim Bracey, executive director of the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services; Ed Brensinger; and DCED Secretary Dennis Davin.

Individual Award

L. STEWART NEFF, center, chairman of the Warriors Mark Township Board of Supervisors in Huntingdon County, was also honored for his outstanding local government service. Nominated by the Pa. Association of Councils of Governments (PACOG), Neff is a past president of that organization and an active member of the Huntingdon County Council of Governments. Neff has said that intergovernmental efforts are critical to local government’s future. His township, for instance, partners with several neighboring communities and was the first municipality to work with the county on agricultural land preservation.

FROM LEFT: Kim Bracey of the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services; Stewart Neff; and DCED Secretary Dennis Davin.
HEMPFIELD TOWNSHIP in Westmoreland County spearheaded the Westmoreland County Firefighters Initiative (WestCoFire), a volunteer recruitment program that is enabling local fire departments to respond with sufficient numbers of competent, trained, and certified firefighters. Made possible by a federal SAFER grant, the program funds physical exams and insurance, tuition reimbursement, training, stipends for responding to calls, and marketing for recruitment. Other partners are the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County, Westmoreland County Community College, and the Hempfield Bureau of Fire.

FROM LEFT: Kim Bracey of the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services; Bill Bretz, Hempfield Township Planning Commission member; Zachary Freeman, SAFER grant coordinator; township supervisor Doug Weimer; township manager Jason Winters; supervisor Tom Logan; and DCED Secretary Dennis Davin.

BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP, a home rule municipality in Delaware County, is combatting economic challenges with a number of projects, including redeveloping the Granite Run Mall into the Promenade. This mixed-use retail and housing development is serving as a model for other struggling malls. The township also created a multi-tract master plan to restore the shuttered Franklin Mint. As part of that project, local leaders are working with SEPTA to develop a Transit Revitalization Investment District to finance infrastructure improvements there.

FROM LEFT: Kim Bracey of the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services; Middletown Township Councilman Scott Galloway; and DCED Secretary Dennis Davin.

INNOVATIVE PLANNING/SOUND LAND USE PRACTICES
WHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE PUC INTERSECT

Understanding the Impact of the Commission’s Regulatory Authority

If your township finds itself in the middle of a utility-related hearing, rate case, or complaint, you will need to understand the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission’s powers, rules, and regulations to successfully navigate what could be a rather complicated proceeding. Experienced legal counsel, consultants, or accountants may be critical as well.

BY NEVA STOTLER, ESQ. / CAFARDI FERGUSON WYRICK WEIS + STOTLER, LLC
AND JONATHAN NASE, ESQ. / COZEN O’CONNER

Once upon a time in Pennsylvania, a borough disbanded its municipal authority and began providing water service through its own water department. The borough painstakingly followed the dissolution process in the Municipality Authorities Act but underestimated the impact of the authority having long provided service in a neighboring township.

When the borough attempted to raise rates, a customer in the neighboring township filed a complaint with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC), resulting in an enforcement action for operating a public utility without a certificate of public convenience and civil penalties of up to $1,000 per day.

In a neighboring community not so far away, a longtime borough resident decided he was tired of the bumpity-bump of the railroad tracks crossing a borough street. He had replaced the shocks on his vintage pickup truck twice over the last year and a half. A quick search on Google directed him to the PUC’s jurisdiction over railroad crossings. He filed a formal complaint with the PUC and soon, the county, borough, railroad, utility companies, resident, and PUC were visiting the tracks, submitting information to the PUC, and attending hearings in Harrisburg to determine whether the crossing was a hazard to the traveling public.

Sometimes, well-intentioned municipalities inadvertently fall subject to the PUC’s authority. PUC administrative proceedings are unique, potentially involving a wide range of parties, includ-

Convinced that regularly crossing over railroad tracks had taken its toll on his vintage truck, a borough resident filed a complaint with the PUC, and the borough found itself in unfamiliar state regulatory proceedings.
The PUC's Bureau of Investigation and Enforcement, the Office of Consumer Advocate, the Office of Small Business Advocate, and customers. Because of the unique and sometimes complicated matters of a PUC administrative proceeding, particularly a rate case, experienced legal counsel can be helpful in navigating these strange waters, and even better, for preparing a strategy to do so.

This means that township officials need to know, understand, and prepare for the specific powers of the PUC that could affect them.

**Crossing paths with the PUC**

Townships may find themselves crossing paths with the PUC in the following circumstances:

- **Creating a public utility, expanding its service territory, or changing its ownership** — If a township wants to provide utility service to the public for compensation outside its municipal boundaries, it must obtain a certificate of public convenience from the PUC. This certificate authorizes the municipality to provide a certain type of service, such as water, in a specific territory.

  For the utility to provide that service in a different territory or provide a different type of service, such as sewer, the municipality must obtain a new certificate of public convenience authorizing it to provide that service in that territory.

  In the first situation above, the borough should have filed for a certificate of public convenience before it disbanded its municipal authority. Another option would have been for the borough to file a petition with the PUC asking it to find that a certificate of public convenience is not necessary based on unusual circumstances, such as providing service to a very small number of customers outside its boundaries.

  Once a municipality obtains a certificate of public convenience to serve a territory, it must obtain another certificate of public convenience to stop providing service in that territory. Generally, these proceedings involve a sale of the system to another municipality or an investor-owned utility.

  A recent state law that changed the way municipal water and wastewater systems are valued when they are sold...
to investor-owned utilities has encouraged some local governments to sell their municipal systems. The PUC must approve such transactions.

• Rates charged by public utilities — Perhaps the most common way that the PUC affects local governments is by setting rates for a municipal utility system. This can occur by a customer outside the municipality filing a complaint with the PUC, usually alleging that the municipality is not charging the rates in its commission-approved tariff. More frequently, the municipality is the party filing the case, seeking commission approval to raise rates to customers outside the municipality.

To raise rates, a regulated municipal system must file a rate case with the commission, generally 60 days before the increase will take effect. The municipality also must provide notice of the proposed rate increase to customers, who can file comments on the increase or complaints against it. The commission can suspend the rate increase for an additional seven months to investigate it.

Municipalities filing a rate case should consider consulting with specialists in this area. The PUC has certain rate-making methodologies, often foreign to even the most seasoned accounting professionals, that should be used in preparing a rate case. As a result, a rate consultant or an accountant experienced in public utility matters is essential to successfully navigating the PUC process and coming out on the other side with a rate that can sustain the operation.

• Quality of facilities and services — The Pennsylvania Public Utility Code requires public utilities, including municipal systems subject to PUC regulation, to furnish and maintain adequate, efficient, safe, and reasonable service and facilities. The PUC has interpreted this law very broadly as applying to everything from failing to provide potable water to failing to adequately communicate with customers about service issues.

If a customer files a complaint with the PUC and the parties cannot reach a settlement, the municipality would need to defend itself in a trial-type proceeding, which can be expensive and time-consuming.

• Rail-highway crossings — The PUC has jurisdiction over the intersection of railroads and highways or streets. This authority is not limited to at-grade crossings; it also includes bridges carrying a highway over train tracks and railroad bridges over highways. Specifically, the commission regulates the construction, alteration, or removal of rail-highway crossings to promote public safety.

Generally, these proceedings begin with an application filed with the com-
mission and served on affected parties, including the county and city, borough, or township where the crossing is located. Many of these cases are resolved by an agreement among the parties, but, if necessary, the matter is referred to an administrative law judge for hearings.

Significantly, the commission has the authority to allocate the costs of the project among the parties, including local governments. In some cases, the commission has held a local government responsible for certain costs despite claims that the local government did not have the financial resources to pay those costs.

• **Contracts between local governments and public utilities** — Contracts between local governments and public utilities must be submitted to, and approved by, the PUC before taking effect except for contracts for the provision of public utility service at regularly tariffed rates. The failure to make the required filing renders any such contract invalid in the eyes of the law.

This provision is particularly important if a neighboring municipality sells its utility system. For example, suppose a borough has a wastewater treatment plant and enters into a contract with a neighboring township to receive and treat sewage from that township. If the borough sells its treatment plant to an investor-owned utility, the township's contract with the borough would need to be assigned to the utility. As a result, the contract would now be between the township and the utility, which means the PUC must approve the assignment of the contract.

**Involved in a PUC proceeding?**

Here's what to do if your township finds itself involved in a PUC proceeding:

• **Move quickly** — The time frames for responding to PUC complaints are unusually short, and opportunities to extend these periods are limited.

• **Assemble a team** — Consultants and professionals with PUC experience can streamline the process and protect your interests. They work faster in the PUC space and know the relevant players.

Talk to your solicitor. In this situation, your solicitor may be like a family doctor who is able to identify a problem and, if necessary, refer you to a specialist who can help you address it by facilitat-

In some cases, the commission has held a local government responsible for certain costs despite claims that the local government did not have the financial resources to pay those costs.
MANAGING STORMWATER

Smart Financial Forecasting Can Result in Effective Projects

BY JAMIE SCHLESINGER, DIRECTOR, PFM FINANCIAL ADVISORS LLC

After every cloudburst, water races along gutters, parking lots, and low spots in a community, but if you’re a township manager or elected official, you are likely paying closer attention to that water and its effects.

Townships are increasingly required to manage stormwater to help conservation efforts. Stormwater carries pollutants, such as automobile oil, grease, sediment, nutrients, and pesticides, into rivers and streams. It can also cause erosion and flooding.

If properly managed, however, stormwater can recharge groundwater and help protect land and waterways from adverse environmental effects. It’s a challenge that local governments across Pennsylvania and the nation must contend with during each storm.

Stormwater management

To collect or direct stormwater toward sewers or appropriate treatment facilities, many townships create, own, and operate municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s). Elements of an MS4 may include roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins,
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curbs, gutters, ditches, manmade channels, or storm drains.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency administers stormwater regulations associated with the federal Clean Water Act under the MS4 program. In Pennsylvania, the program is managed by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). To improve water quality and develop more efficient stormwater management across the state, DEP recently required MS4 communities to reduce sediment discharge by 10 percent over five years.

To address this mandate, townships must develop new best practices, some of which may include retrofitting and updating existing stormwater management systems. Long- and short-term revenue analysis by townships is essential for funding these kinds of projects, and many municipalities have turned to developing and implementing a stormwater impact fee or funding projects through traditional real estate taxes.

Depending on the makeup of your municipality, a dedicated fee may be more efficient and understandable to the public. Mathematically evaluating the impact of stormwater and communicating it to the public are crucial steps in this process.

Preparation through planning

One way to make sure funds are available for stormwater, as well as other initiatives, is through long-term financial planning, which the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) cites as one of its best practices. In fact, the more detailed a township can be in addressing the key elements of time horizon, scope, and content, the better its plan will be — and the more prepared a township is to implement expected and unexpected costs. (Source: GFOA, gfoa.org/long-term-financial-planning-0)

However, the prospect of developing a long-term financial plan — and factoring in its associated variables — can be daunting. To understand the intricacies of financial modeling, townships should review the strategic drivers that commonly shape long-term outcomes, including:

- **Historic trends** — Consider the last three to five years of revenue and expenditure data;
- **Macroeconomic trends** — Look at projections that relate to the local,
The prospect of developing a long-term financial plan — and factoring in its associated variables — can be daunting.

If you would like to learn more about PFM and how its forecasting resources can help your township, please reach out to us today.

* * *

About the author: Jamie Schlesinger is a director for PFM Financial Advisors LLC and can be reached at schlesingerj@pfm.com.
EDITOR’S NOTE: In keeping with PSATS’ commitment to helping members meet their legal and regulatory obligations, this regular column updates township supervisors on their emergency management responsibilities.

The column is brought to you by PSATS’ Township Emergency Management Association. This time, we’re providing a recap of the 2019 TEMA Spring Educational Forum, held in April in conjunction with PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show.

Probably the most important duty of your board of township supervisors, as outlined by Chapter 607(1) of the Township Code, is “to secure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens.”

One effective way is to make sure your emergency management coordinator (EMC) and other members of the emergency management team receive regular training. PSATS developed the Township Emergency Management Association (TEMA) to help meet these educational needs.

Recently, nearly 90 emergency management professionals gathered for a one-day training seminar in Hershey. Here’s a recap of the day’s events.

A day of learning

After hearing updates on a wide array of state emergency management issues from D. Randy Padfield, acting director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, seminar participants heard from Fred Boylstein, director of PEMA’s central area office, who discussed how these area offices work with local emergency management coordinators.

Jonathan Anschutz, director of PEMA’s Bureau of External Operations, outlined a process known as “typing.”
Stuff happens. Are you prepared?

Join the Township Emergency Management Association and serve your community better.

**Full membership benefits include***:

- **Subscriptions to:**
  - *The Emergency Manager*, the official quarterly newsletter of the Township Emergency Management Association
  - *The Pennsylvania Township News*, PSATS’ award-winning monthly magazine
  - *The PSATS News Bulletin*, a monthly newsletter that will keep you up to date on legislation and other breaking news affecting townships
- **Member fees** to attend our educational seminars addressing relevant issues and topics *(one in the spring at the PSATS Annual Conference and one in the fall)*
- **Access to the online** Members-Only PSATS Resource Center
- **Free phone consultations** with PSATS staff

*Note: These are the benefits for those who join TEMA as “full” members. Partial memberships are also available and include everything above, except subscriptions to the Township News and News Bulletin and access to the Members-Only PSATS Resource Center. Each township must have at least one full membership before additional members may join at the full or partial membership level. Annual TEMA dues are $125 for full members and $50 for partial members.

Don’t wait ... sign up today for the **Township Emergency Management Association**!

Call PSATS at (717) 763-0930 or download a membership form at www.psats.org.
which helps townships properly identify equipment and other assets and determine the skills employees need to safely operate it.

In addition to knowing how to operate equipment during an emergency, your staff members also must know how to execute their assigned role in the township’s incident command system. This may include how to communicate with the public and press, if they are the public information officer, or how to secure the scene for first responders and victims, if they are the safety officer.

The afternoon’s presentations started off with a review of a program developed by the Chester County Department of Emergency Services that offers firefighting courses at local high schools to recruit younger members for local fire companies. This was followed by a panel discussion on the findings of the Senate Resolution 6 Commission.

A wide-ranging discussion ensued about actions that townships can take locally and as grassroots advocates in Harrisburg. Recognizing that firefighter recruitment and retention are important to townships, PSATS and TEMA will continue to monitor, report on, and participate in events as lawmakers and others address the many recommendations in the commission’s final report, which was released last November.

Members of the Dauphin County Emergency Management Agency also conducted an abbreviated “thunderbolt” tabletop exercise. Afterward, John MacMillan, who oversees the commonwealth's computer network, discussed actions local governments can take to avoid cybersecurity scams, ransomware, and viruses.

PSATS Executive Director David Sanko concluded the event with an “after-action review” of the day’s discussions that brought out suggestions for future TEMA educational events.

These will include the Fall Emergency Exercise Forums, which will be held September 20 in Montgomery County and November 7 in Westmoreland County. Participants will learn how to develop effective tabletop exercises to train their emergency management team. To register for either forum, go to tema.psats.org.

Mark your calendar

If your township’s emergency management coordinator did not attend the TEMA spring seminar, make sure your township’s 2020 budget includes funding for next year’s event, slated for May 3, 2020, at the Hershey Lodge. ✨

Scenes from the TEMA Spring Educational Forum

John Macmillan, top right, deputy secretary for information technology and chief information officer of the state Office of Administration, was among the experts to participate in TEMA’s Spring Educational Forum this past April. More TEMA events are planned later this year, including the Fall Emergency Exercise Forums, which will be held September 20 in Montgomery County and November 7 in Westmoreland County. To learn more and to register, go to tema.psats.org.
The following is a summary of a new law and legislation affecting townships that is under consideration by the General Assembly. Please check the latest edition of the “Week in Review” for status updates since the News went to press. To receive the “Week in Review,” email grassroots@psats.org.

**Act**

**Financial best practices for municipal authorities**

*Act 4 of 2019/HB 264*

**Major provision:**
- Amends Title 53 (Municipalities Generally) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to establish financial best practice procedures for municipal authorities, including annual reports to the state Department of Community and Economic Development.

**Effective dates:** The requirement to file an annual report takes effect October 28, 2019. The rest of the act takes effect July 30, 2019.

**Tax sale of abandoned properties**

*SB 174/PN 131*

**Major provisions:**
- Would authorize the tax sale of abandoned properties and create a definition of abandoned property.
- Would require purchasers of abandoned property to enter into an agreement with the municipality or, at the municipality’s option, with the redevelopment authority, obligating the purchaser to redevelop the property in accordance with all municipal codes and adopted plans for the area where the property is located.

**Status:** Before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

**Legislation**

**Rescue from motor vehicle**

*SB 49/PN 95  
HB 279/PN 1330*

**Major provision:**
- Would amend Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to provide civil immunity for damage done to a motor vehicle when using forceful entry to rescue a child.

**Status:** SB 49 has passed the Senate and is before the House Judiciary Committee. HB 279 has passed the House and is before the Senate.

**Training reimbursement for newly elected supervisors**

*SB 316/PN 295*

**Major provision:**
- Would amend the Second Class Township Code to clearly allow townships to pay for newly elected supervisors.
sors to attend training before officially taking office in January.

Note: This bill would address a PSATS resolution.
Status: Has passed the Senate and is before the House Local Government Committee.

Re-advertisement of amended budget
SB 317/PN 296
Major provision:
• Would amend the Second Class Township Code to decrease the required time to re-advertise an amended budget from 20 days to 10 days.

Note: This bill would address a PSATS resolution.
Status: Has passed the Senate and is before the House Local Government Committee.

Width of farm vehicles
SB 338/PN 503
Major provision:
• Would amend Title 75 (Vehicles) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to increase the maximum width of farm vehicles that may be driven, hauled, or towed between sunrise and sunset from 16 feet to 18 feet.

Status: Before the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Archives retrieval
SB 372/PN 453
Major provision:
• Would amend Title 37 (Historical and Museums) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes to modernize artifact disposition, acquisition, and retention for the commonwealth and municipalities and permit the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to retrieve an archival record from a private entity on behalf of a local government.

Status: SB 372 has passed the Senate and is before the House State Government Committee.

Historic agricultural buildings
SB 453/PN 448
Major provisions:
• Would amend the Uniform Construction Code (Act 45 of 1999) to exclude historic agricultural buildings from the inspection and construction standards of the act provided that an annual affidavit is filed with the municipality, and if the owner fails to do so, the municipality would be responsible for inspecting the structure.
• Would require the affidavit to include the following:
  – a report by a construction code official stating that the structure complies with the fire safety specifications for historic buildings of the International Existing Building Code in effect at the time and that the electrical wiring has been inspected; (Note: An automatic sprinkler system would not be required.)
  – existence of smoke detectors, portable fire extinguishers, building liability insurance, and signs posted stating that “this facility is subject to alternative commercial building and public safety requirements as provided under the Pennsylvania Construction Code,” and
  – a prohibition on smoking and open flames in the structure except flames used to reheat food.
• Would define “historic agricultural building” as a structure built before 1999 as an agricultural building that is now being used by the general public for events such as weddings and other large gatherings

Status: Before the Senate.

Non-building lots
HB 103/PN 1373
Major provisions:
• Would amend the Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247 of 1968, as amended) to require subdivision and land development ordinances to exempt up to two non-building lots or two or more non-building lots if the property is being di-
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Interest rate management agreements
HB 320/PN 1494
Major provision:
• Would allow a local government to enter into an interest rate management agreement only under specified conditions, such as having appropriate insurance coverage, and would prohibit financially distressed communities from entering into these agreements.
Status: Before the House.

Third-party agencies
HB 349/PN 1129
Major provisions:
• Would require a municipality or multi-municipal program that currently contracts with a single third-party agency to enforce and administer the Uniform Construction Code to contract with two or more third-party agencies by January 1, 2020.
• Would require municipalities using two or more third-party agencies, including through an intergovernmental arrangement, to enter into a professional services contract with the agencies and have a process for submitting complaints about the agencies.
• Would restrict contracts with third-party agencies from exceeding three years.
• Would authorize a municipality or multi-municipal program that is unable to find more than one qualified third-party agency to self-certify to the state Department of Labor and Industry and therefore use a single third-party agency.
• Would authorize municipalities or multi-municipal programs that use a third-party agency to supplement a code enforcement program that uses in-house staff to continue to use a single third-party agency.
Status: Has passed the House and is before the Senate Labor and Industry Committee.

Third-party agencies
SB 486/PN 515
Major provision:
• Would require a municipality that currently contracts with a single third-party agency to enforce and administer the Uniform Construction Code to contract with three or more third-party agencies.
Status: Before the Senate Labor and Industry Committee.

UCC trainee program
HB 422/PN 1088
Major provision:
- Would amend the Uniform Construction Code to create a trainee program for inspectors.
Status: Has passed the House and is before the Senate Labor and Industry Committee.

Notice of violations
of toxic substances law
HB 476/PN 1455
Major provisions:
- Would require the state Department of Environmental Protection to provide affected municipalities with notice of non-compliance for violation of the Toxic Substances Control Act issued by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- Would allow the municipality to opt out of these notices at any time.
Status: Has passed the House and is before the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.

Right-to-Know Law
exemptions
HB 860/PN 1127
Major provisions:
- Would amend the Right-to-Know Law to clarify that personal financial information, including W-2s and payroll deductions, are exempt from the act.
- Would exempt an agency's account numbers, credit card numbers, and PIN numbers from disclosure.
Note: This bill would address a PSATS resolution.
Status: Before the House Appropriations Committee.

Local Government
Unit Debt Act
HB 882/PN 1495
Major provisions:
- Would require local governments to file with the state Department of Community and Economic Development before adopting an ordinance to issue debt and would revise the required filings.
- Would restrict the ability of a municipality to guarantee the debt of another local government or authority.
- Would increase the small-borrowing threshold from $125,000 to $250,000.
- Would provide for fiduciary duties of financial advisers for local governments.
Status: Before the House.

Borrowing proceeds
HB 883/PN 994
Major provision:
- Would require proceeds from borrowing under the Local Government Unit Debt Act to be used only for the purpose or project for which the debt was incurred and prohibit these funds from being used for any unrelated purpose.
Status: Before the House.

Public Works Contractors’
Bond Law compliance threshold
HB 885/PN 1497
Major provision:
- Would amend the Public Works Contractors’ Bond Law of 1967 to increase the threshold for compliance from $10,000 to $50,000 to public works contracts.
Status: Before the House.
The all-new PSATS Leadership Development Series continues for township supervisors, managers, secretaries, and other officials and employees. Jim Rowell of Rising Sun Consultants will present the remaining sessions as simulcasts that participants may view remotely on their computer or in a classroom setting at the scheduled locations throughout the state. The PSATS Leadership Development Series is designed so that each session stands alone, giving attendees the flexibility to attend sessions as their schedules permit.

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

Session 1 — Leadership 101: Effective Supervision and Why It Matters
In this session, Jim Rowell will review data demonstrating the impact that effective — and ineffective — supervision has on employees and organizations and provide an overview of the 10 keys to effective supervision. Attendees will learn the core tenets of servant leadership and how emotional intelligence is the No. 1 influence in achieving success as a leader.

Session 2 — Facing Change: Change and Transition Management
Attendees will discuss how managing transitions (whether resulting from new boards, employee changes, or something else) is the No. 1 influence to successful change management. They will also review the emotional impact that change has on employees and organizations and learn about the eight steps to effective change and transition management.

Session 3 — Managing Conflict, Team Development, and Relationship Building
In this session, attendees will learn about how to transform their employees from a group into an effective team, as well as team development dynamics and relationship building. In addition, using Jim Rowell’s five steps to conflict resolution, they will explore ways to effectively manage conflict to create healthier relationships between staff members and use conflict as an opportunity for growth and development.

Session 4 — There is No “I” in Team: Supporting Employee Growth
This session will focus on the growth and development of employees through effective coaching, empowering employees to be responsible for their performance, and effective delegation.

Session 5 — Let’s Talk: Effective Communication and Managing Difficult People
In this session, Jim Rowell will review effective communication skills, question-based processes for communicating with employees, ways of managing difficult conversations and people, and much more.

Session 6 — High Hopes: Establishing Expectations and Accountability
This session reviews six criteria for establishing effective expectations and setting goals. Attendees will learn ways to hold employees (and themselves) accountable, understand the importance of consistency and fairness, and appropriately address discipline and negative behaviors.
Dates/Locations

Participants may view the simulcasts remotely on their computer or travel to one of the scheduled locations listed below to view it with others. To register, go to psats.org and click on the “PSATS Leadership Development Series” button on the homepage.

Session 1
FEB 5 Cranberry Twp., Butler Co. — Cranberry Twp. Building Meeting Room
MAR 1 Enola, Cumberland Co. — PSATS Educational Center
MAR 19 Spring House, Montgomery Co. — Lower Gwynedd Twp. Building

Session 2
MAR 13 West Alexander, Washington Co. — Donegal Twp. Building
MAR 22 Jamison, Bucks Co. — Warwick Twp. Building
APR 14 Hershey, Dauphin Co. — Hershey Lodge ( Held in conjunction with PSATS’ 97th Annual Educational Conference)

Session 3
MAY 6 Moon Twp., Allegheny Co. — Moon Twp. Municipal Building
MAY 9 Hazle, Luzerne Co. — Hazle Twp. Administration Building
JUNE 4 Paradise, Lancaster Co. — Paradise Twp. Building

Session 4
JULY 10 Jackson Center, Mercer Co. — Jackson Twp. Building
JULY 17 Exton, Chester Co. — West Whiteland Twp. Building
AUG 1 Enola, Cumberland County — PSATS Educational Center

Session 5
SEPT 5 Cranberry Twp., Butler Co. — Cranberry Twp. Building Meeting Room
SEPT 18 Monroe Co. — Chestnuthill Twp. Building
OCT 2 Tioga Co. — Covington Twp. Building

Session 6
NOV 7 Erie Co. — Greene Twp. Building
NOV 14 Berks/Lehigh Co. — Longswamp Twp. Building
DEC 10 Enola, Cumberland County — PSATS Educational Center

Times
Each simulcast runs from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

Credits
Each session is eligible for two PMGA credits and/or two Society for Human Resource Management professional development credits.

Pricing
Each simulcast session is $60 per person for PSATS members and $90 for non-members.

For More Information
Call Scott Coburn at (717) 763-0930, ext. 171, or email scoburn@psats.org.
The Township Role in Emergency Management

FOR: Elected and appointed municipal officials; administrators; emergency management coordinators; fire, ambulance, and police chiefs; roadmasters and public works personnel; building and zoning code officers; and public safety personnel.

PURPOSE: To explain how to structure an emergency management team and develop an emergency operations plan to respond to potential natural and manmade threats facing municipalities.

DATES/LOCATIONS:
AUG 21 West Chester, Chester Co. — West Goshen Twp. Bldg.
AUG 22 Enola, Cumberland Co. — PSATS Educational Center

TIME: 9-11:30 a.m.
CREDITS: Eligible for 2½ PMGA secondary public safety credits or two secondary credits if enrolled in a different track.
COST: $35 for PSATS members* and $45 for non-members.

NIMS and the Incident Command System

FOR: Elected and appointed municipal officials; administrators; emergency management coordinators; fire, ambulance, and police chiefs; public works personnel; zoning code officers; and public safety personnel.

PURPOSE: To explain the National Incident Management and Incident Command systems and how they improve emergency response coordination and help local emergency management personnel make effective, consistent, and timely decisions.

DATES/LOCATIONS:
AUG 21 West Chester, Chester Co. — West Goshen Twp. Bldg.
AUG 22 Enola, Cumberland Co. — PSATS Educational Center

TIME: 1-3:30 p.m.
CREDITS: Eligible for two PMGA primary public safety credits or two secondary credits if enrolled in a different track.
COST: $35 for PSATS members* and $45 for non-members.

Probable Cause Training for CDL Supervisory Personnel

FOR: All personnel who have supervisory responsibilities for CDL employees. All CDL and CMV employees also will benefit from attending this workshop.

PURPOSE: To provide supervisory personnel with a working understanding of the federal CDL regulations, including on-the-job probable cause procedures and what to do if they suspect or verify that a CDL employee is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol while on duty.

DATES/LOCATIONS:
JUNE 13 Dallas, Luzerne Co. — Back Mountain Regional EMS Bldg.
AUG 7 Enola, Cumberland Co. — PSATS Educational Center
AUG 8 Bedford, Bedford Co. — Bedford Twp. Bldg.

TIME: 1-4 p.m.
CREDITS: Eligible for three PMGA secondary credits.
COST: $35 for PSATS members* and $45 for non-members.

CMV/CDL Records Management

FOR: Municipal secretaries, managers, administrators, roadmasters, road foremen, and anyone who supervises CDL employees.

PURPOSE: To help employers understand all the records they should be maintaining for their commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) and their operators. The workshop will also review CMV/CDL employee and vehicle paperwork, including pre-employment inquiries about an applicant’s past drug and alcohol test results and driving safety reports; requests for CMV driver’s license information; annual review of each driver’s qualifications to continue driving; daily vehicle inspection, maintenance, and repair reports; the employer’s required policy on drug and alcohol testing; and a general overview of all CDL regulations.

DATES/LOCATIONS:
AUG 13 Cecil, Washington Co. — Cecil Township Bldg.
AUG 16 Erie, Erie Co. — Greens Township Bldg.

TIME: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
CREDITS: Eligible for six PMGA primary administration credits or six secondary credits if enrolled in a different track.
COST: $75 for PSATS members* and $125 for non-members.

Basic Training for Municipal Secretaries and Administrators

FOR: New and experienced elected and appointed municipal officials, secretaries, managers, treasurers, and auditors.

PURPOSE: This full-day class will cover the administrative and management topics that townships face daily in an interactive and engaging manner. Topics will include budgeting, purchasing, advertising, meeting management, human resources, public engagement, and more.

DATES/LOCATIONS:
AUG 13 Cecil, Washington Co. — Cecil Township Bldg.
AUG 16 Erie, Erie Co. — Greens Township Bldg.

TIME: 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
CREDITS: Eligible for six PMGA primary administration credits or six secondary credits if enrolled in a different track.
COST: $75 for PSATS members* and $125 for non-members.
Developing Your Township Budget

FOR: Elected and appointed municipal officials, secretaries, treasurers, managers, roadmasters, and public works officials.

PURPOSE: To help township officials and staff develop a financial plan that shows how much money the township will have, where it will come from, and how it will be used. Instructors will focus on careful planning of the township’s activities for the coming year and making reasoned and balanced decisions on how municipal resources will be allocated.

DATES/LOCATIONS:
AUG 14 Coplay, Lehigh Co. — North Whitehall Twp. Bldg.
AUG 20 Enola, Cumberland Co. — PSATS Educational Center
AUG 28 Clarion, Clarion Co. — Park Inn by Radisson

TIMES:
• 8/14, 20, 23, and 27: 1-3:30 p.m.
• 8/15 and 28: 9-11:30 a.m.

CREDITS: Eligible for two PMGA primary administration credits or two secondary credits if enrolled in another track.

COST: $35 for PSATS members* and $45 for non-members.

*MEMBERSHIP: To qualify as PSATS members, registrants must have paid current annual membership dues to PSATS or its affiliates (solicitors, engineers, planning, zoning officials, and emergency management associations) or the associate membership fee.

REGISTRATION: To register for these courses, go to psats.org, choose the “Training” tab, and click on “PSATS Training.”

Join With Other Solicitors Who Are Serving Their Townships Better.

Member benefits include publication subscriptions, member training rates, copies of all new laws affecting townships, and more.

Call (717) 763-0930 for more information or visit solicitors.psats.org to download a membership form.

REGISTER NOW!
25th Annual Tioga-Bradford Equipment Show

August 22, 2019 • 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Troy Fairgrounds in Bradford County

ATTENDANCE IS FOR MUNICIPAL SUPERVISORS, MAYORS, SECRETARIES, COUNCIL MEMBERS, MANAGERS, ROADMASTERS, AND ROAD WORKERS ONLY.

• Vendor Displays and Product Info Sessions
• Fantastic Lunch FREE to Municipal Officials
• Morning Training/Roundtable Discussion for Supervisors/Secretaries/Road Crews

Questions? Call Ethan Sexton at (570) 265-1511

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. To register, return this form by August 1, 2019:
• Mail to Ethan Sexton, 312 Main Street, Towanda, PA 18848
• Fax to (570) 265-7585 Email sexton@northernntier.org

Township ___________________________ Ph: __________

Attendee 1: ___________________________ Title: ___________________________
Attendee 2: ___________________________ Title: ___________________________
Attendee 3: ___________________________ Title: ___________________________
Upcoming Courses

ADA Transition Plans and Self-Evaluations
- July 9 — Logan Township Office, Altoona, Blair County
- September 12 — Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance, Pittston, Luzerne County

Asphalt Roads: Common Maintenance Problems
- June 20 — Banksville Shelter, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County
- June 26 — Monroe Township Building, Mechanicsburg, Cumberland County
- September 11 — Delaware Valley Trusts, Horsham, Montgomery County
- September 18 — East St. Clair Township Building, New Paris, Bedford County
- September 19 — Training and Workforce Development Center, Hermitage, Mercer County

Bridge Maintenance and Inspection
- September 10 — Penn Township Public Works Building, Hanover, York County
- September 30 — SEDA-COG Office, Lewisburg, Union County

Drainage: The Key to Roads That Last
- September 25 — Delaware Valley Trusts, Horsham, Montgomery County

Engineering and Traffic Studies
- September 5 — Patton Township Municipal Building, State College, Centre County

Equipment and Worker Safety
- July 16 — Monroeville Public Safety Training Center, Allegheny County

Full-Depth Reclamation
- June 20 — Penn Highlands Community College, Ebensburg, Cambria County

Local Road Safety Plans
- June 19 — Point Township Building, Northumberland, Northumberland County

Pavement Markings: Applications and Maintenance
- July 18 — Caln Township Municipal Building, Thorndale, Chester County

Pavement Preventive Maintenance
- September 12 — Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, Allentown, Lehigh County

Risk Management Strategies
- September 11 — Berks County Agricultural Center, Leesport

Roadside Vegetation Control
- September 24 — Vernon Township Building, Meadville, Crawford County

Salt and Snow Management
- September 17 — Hoss’s Steak and Sea House, Duncansville, Blair County
- September 18 — Morris Township Municipal Building, Morrisdale, Clearfield County

Speed Limits and Speed Management
- July 10 — Coudersport Maintenance Facility, Coudersport, Potter County
- August 13 — Schuylkill Community Education Council, Mahanoy City, Schuylkill County

Stop Signs and Intersection Traffic Control
- August 7 — Berks County Agricultural Center, Leesport

Stormwater Facility Operation and Maintenance
- August 2 — Shirley Township, Shireysburg, Huntington County
- August 22 — Schenley Park Skating Rink, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County

Unpaved and Gravel Roads: Common Maintenance Problems
- September 26 — Scandia Fire Department, Russel, Warren County

Work Zone (Temporary) Traffic Control
- July 9 — Lock Haven City Hall, Clinton County
- August 2 — City of Allentown Streets Department Building, Lehigh County
- August 15 — Providence Township Municipal Building, New Providence, Lancaster County
- September 10 — Hampton Township Building, Allison Park, Allegheny County

To register for these free courses, go to ltap.state.pa.us or call toll-free (800) 367-5827.
Help PSATS Recognize Youth Groups for Outstanding Community Service

Has a youth organization completed a community service project in your township or county? Has a Scout troop helped clean up a township park or a high school group developed an environmental program for residents? Has a local 4-H club held an event for children or adults or a church youth group volunteered to help elderly residents repair their homes?

Township supervisors and county association officers can help identify and recognize such outstanding examples of next-generation leadership by encouraging groups to enter the annual PSATS Youth Awards Contest.

The awards program recognizes the contributions youth groups make to improve the quality of life in Pennsylvania’s townships. Entrants in this year’s contest will vie for cash prizes of $500 each.

To be eligible, projects must have been undertaken or continued between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019, and must have benefited a township of the second class.

Promotional materials were mailed to townships, county associations, 4-H groups, school districts, and Scout councils in May. Townships may download a PDF of the guidelines and entry form, plus an article and ads suitable for township newsletters, websites, and social media, by going to psats.org, selecting the “Programs and Services” tab, and choosing “PSATS Award Programs.”

Townships are encouraged to help youth groups submit their entry forms to the county association by July 1. County associations must sign off on the projects and forward the entries to PSATS by July 15.

Four winners will each receive $500 and a framed certificate, along with recognition in the Pennsylvania Township News and their local newspapers.

For more information, contact Brenda Wilt at PSATS at (717) 763-0930, ext. 123, or bwilt@psats.org.

Turn page for more Newsworthy

Last year’s winning projects included, from left, filming a video to commemorate a township’s bicentennial, installing a fence in a township park, restoring a historic one-room school that houses the township office, and creating a veterans memorial garden.
Townships that want to begin using alternative energy may apply for grants or loans through the Commonwealth Finance Authority’s (CFA) Alternative and Clean Energy, Renewable Energy, and Solar Energy programs. The deadline for applications is July 17.

These programs are jointly administered by the CFA and state Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Community and Economic Development (DCED).

The Alternative and Clean Energy Program provides grants and loans for the use, development, and construction of alternative and clean energy projects, infrastructure associated with compressed natural gas and liquefied natural gas fueling stations, and energy efficiency and conservation projects.

Grants for any alternative energy production or clean-energy project must not exceed $2 million or 30 percent of the total project cost, whichever is less. Loans for any alternative energy production or clean-energy project must not exceed $5 million or 50 percent of the total project cost, whichever is less.

There is a match requirement of at least $1 for every $1 of program funds awarded and a $100 non-refundable application fee due at the time of submission.

The Renewable Energy Program provides grants and loans to promote the use of geothermal and wind energy. Grants are available for wind energy generation and distribution up to $1 million or 30 percent of the project cost, whichever is less. Grants for planning and feasibility studies are available for up to $175,000 or 50 percent of the project cost, whichever is less.

Loans for geothermal systems or wind energy generation or distribution projects may not exceed $5 million or 50 percent of the project cost, whichever is less.

There is a match requirement of at least $1 for every $1 awarded and a $100 non-refundable application fee.

The Solar Energy Program provides grants and loans to promote the use of solar energy. Eligible projects include facilities to generate, distribute, or store solar photovoltaic energy. Grants may not exceed $1 million or $1.50 per watt, whichever is less. There is a matching investment requirement of at least $1 for every $1 of program grant funds awarded.

In exchange for a grant, solar photovoltaic projects will contractually commit to transfer ownership of the solar renewable energy credits (SRECs) generated by the system to the CFA for the life of the project.

The maximum loan may not exceed $5 million or $3 per watt, whichever is less. There is a match requirement of $1 for every $3 awarded and a $100 non-refundable application fee.

For more information about these energy programs, call DCED’s Greg Welker at (717) 787-6245 or go to dced.pa.gov, hover over “Programs & Funding,” and click on “Commonwealth Financing Authority.” Hover over the “Programs” box and choose “Energy” in the pop-up menu.

Funding for alternative-fuel vehicles available

Townships that want to purchase or convert vehicles to natural gas or other alternative fuels may apply for funding through DEP’s Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant Program. The deadline for applications is July 12.

Grants are available for the conversion or purchase of natural gas vehicles, as well as the conversion or purchase of electric, propane, or other alternative-fuel vehicles of any size.

This year, there is no gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) limit and no
minimum number of vehicles required to apply for a vehicle purchase or retrofit reimbursement.

Grants are also available to fund the purchase and installation of refueling infrastructure for alternative-fuel fleet vehicles. This category includes two options:

- **Fleet refueling projects** must service an existing fleet of at least 10 alternative-fuel vehicles weighing up to 26,000 pounds GVWR, and
- **Home-based refueling projects** must be located at the base of operations for one or more alternative-fuel vehicles weighing up to 10,000 pounds GVWR.

For more information and application guidelines, go to [www.dep.pa.gov](http://www.dep.pa.gov), choose the “Citizens” tab at the top of the page, click on “Grants, Loans and Rebates” and then “Alternative Fuel Incentive Grants” on the right. ✶

**Preserving township archival records**

Townships and other organizations that preserve historical records may want to apply for the new Historical & Archival Records Care (HARC) grant program from the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) and the Pennsylvania State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB). The application deadline is **August 1, 2019**.

Funding is available to historical records repositories, such as historical societies, libraries, universities, local governments, and school districts, for collections care, including surveying, inventorying, preserving, arranging, and describing historical records significant to Pennsylvania, as well as for records reformatting and equipment. Also, a portion of funding may be requested to support outreach and accessibility initiatives.

Applicants may apply for up to $15,000 with a 50 percent cash or in-kind match. Smaller grants up to $5,000 are available with no match required. Funding is provided by PHMC.

The HARC program is designed to improve the preservation and accessibility of historically valuable records.

Applicants must use the web-based electronic grant application process (eGrant). For grant program guidelines and eGrant application instructions, visit PHMC online at [www.phmc.pa.gov](http://www.phmc.pa.gov), choose the “Preservation” tab at the top, and click on “Grants and Funding.” Click on the “Records Care Grants” button to learn more about the program. ✶

**Transform your township a gallon of paint at a time**

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is accepting applications for the 2019 Fresh Paint Days Pennsylvania grants.

The application deadline is **June 28**, and grants will be awarded in mid-July. Projects must be completed during Fresh Paint Days Pennsylvania September 1-30, 2019.

The month-long program, provides eight awardees and their volunteers with up to 20 gallons of exterior paint provided by Behr and a $50 gift card from Home Depot for painting supplies to renew a structure in need.

Townships and any other tax-exempt groups in Pennsylvania are eligible, and only one building per application is allowed. Applicants must provide two before photos of the intended project. Grant awardees must also provide proof of liability insurance, signed permission to paint from the building owner, and the chosen paint color from the Behr line. Selected grantees must also provide a final report with photos of the work in progress and of the completed project.

For more information or to download the application, go to [www.keeppabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppabeautiful.org) and click on the “Grants and Awards” section. Additional information is also available by contacting Michelle Dunn, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful program coordinator, toll-free at (877) 772-3673, ext. 113, or mdunn@keeppabeautiful.org ✶

Applications are due June 28 for Fresh Paint Days grants from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

Join in National Night Out on August 6 to help fight crime

Townships are encouraged to plan community activities to observe the National Association of Town Watch’s 36th Annual National Night Out (NNO) on Tuesday, **August 6**.

Last year, citizens, law enforcement agencies, community groups, businesses, youth organizations, and local, state, and federal officials from 16,790 communities in all 50 states, U.S. territories, and military bases worldwide joined forces to celebrate the event.

“The energy, dedication and leadership of our NNO local coordinators never ceases to amaze me,” says Matt Peskin, NNO creator and national project coordinator. “When neighbors and local law enforcement get together under positive circumstances, great things happen. These are bonds that will last forever.”

In addition to the traditional vigil of turning on porch lights, many communities also sponsor block parties, cookouts, parades, police visits and demonstrations, neighborhood flashlight walks, safety fairs, contests, rallies, and youth programs and activities.

Lehigh Township in Northampton County, Spring Township in Berks County, and Upper Merion Township in Montgomery County won awards from the National Association of Town Watch for their 2018 events.

If your township is holding an NNO event this year, tell the News about it and be sure to include photos. Email the info to glinn@psats.org.

For more information, call toll-free (800) NITE-OUT (648-3688) or go to [natw.org](http://natw.org).
Chester County township has state’s best parks and recreation department

The parks and recreation department of East Goshen Township in Chester County was recently named by the Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society (PRPS) as the 2019 Agency of the Year.

The township was honored for making parks and recreation an essential public service with significant community impact. The department showcases innovation and collaboration and has demonstrated a high level of resourcefulness over the last five years.

After a new parks and recreation director, Jason Lang, took the helm in 2014, department programming increased 344 percent with the addition of such activities as senior camps, rock-ery camp, toddler story time, Neighbor-to-Neighbor Day, a senior card club, Ping Pong, and origami. At the same time, associated expenses decreased by 4 percent.

The department also adopted recognized standards and introduced the three pillars of the National Recreation and Parks Association, social equity, conservation, and health and wellness, to guide its programming.

The township’s park and recreation commission grew from seven to nine members, and planning became an essential department function. In the last five years, the township has adopted a comprehensive plan; a park, recreation, and open space plan; the Paoli Pike Trail and Feasibility Study; the Paoli Corridor Master Plan; and the East Goshen Township Master Plan.

In 2018, Lang was named chair of the PRPS Opioids Task Force and is working to secure partnerships with the American Academy of Pediatrics, Pennsylvania Chapter, and the Penn State Consortium to Combat Substance Abuse to be able to offer the Youth Sports Drug Abuse Prevention Program.

Also last year, East Goshen Township became the first in Chester County to be designated a gold-level sustainable community by the Pennsylvania Sustainable Community Certified Program.

The parks and recreation department in East Goshen Township, Chester County, received the 2019 Agency of the Year Award from the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society. Shown with the award are, from left, East Goshen Township supervisor David Shuey, parks and recreation director Jason Lang, park commission chair Danny Leicht, and township manager Rick Smith. (Photo courtesy of the township.)

Share your township news with our Township News!

The Township News is looking for short accounts (about 100 words) of events, awards, personal accomplishments, and human-interest stories happening in PSATS’ member townships. They can be serious, comical, or somewhere in between but must relate to township activities or people. Send us the details; we’ll do the rest!

Email your news to Editor Ginni Linn at glinn@psats.org.
Prepare Now for Winter Road Service Agreements

Townships that want to renew or establish winter road service agreements with the state Department of Transportation should notify their district maintenance office now. For agreement renewals, the cutoff date for a municipality to legally withdraw in writing is July 31 unless otherwise specified in an existing agreement.

Under these agreements, which can have terms of up to five years, PennDOT pays municipalities an upfront annual lump sum to remove snow and ice from state roads from October 15 to April 30. PennDOT pays a winter severity adjustment at the end of the season depending on how the winter stacks up against PennDOT’s five-year average historic cost.

PennDOT must approve all contracts before winter maintenance begins.

To determine if PennDOT’s reimbursement rate will cover expenses, townships should look at the costs of purchasing salt, anti-skid materials, and other supplies and providing equipment maintenance, labor, and overhead.

Townships should also consider the legal ramifications of entering into such an agreement and review these contracts with their solicitor.

Ten percent of state roads are maintained through service agreements with townships and other municipalities.

For more information, including other agreement mechanisms and options, call your PennDOT district maintenance office.

Prepare Now for Winter Road Service Agreements

Townships have until July 31 to renew or establish winter road service agreements with the state Department of Transportation. Under these agreements, townships are paid an upfront lump sum to remove snow and ice from state roads from mid-October to the end of April.

For more information, including other agreement mechanisms and options, call your PennDOT district maintenance office.

County Association
Record of Officers

Allegheny County, May 2, 2019
President: Robert Doddato, North Fayette Township
First V.P.: Shirley Hollibaugh, West Deer Township
Second V.P.: Albert Kaan, Indiana Township
Secretary-Treasurer: Jason Davidek, Allegheny League of Municipalities
Asst. Secretary: Crystal Sickles, Allegheny League of Municipalities

Somerset County, May 2, 2019
President: Greg Walker, Stonycreek Township
First V.P.: Steve Buncich, Conemaugh Township
Second V.P.: Randy Beistel, Somerset Township
Secretary-Treasurer: Keith Barnick, Jenner Township

Call: (717) 763-0930
Find us online:
psats.org
connect.psats.org
Time flies, and hopefully, you’re keeping track of each passing day with PSATS’ 2019 calendar.

Mailed to each member township in December, the calendar includes information that’s valuable to townships, such as 2019 filing deadlines for state and federal forms and reports, dates for PSATS training sessions and webinars, major holidays and other observances, and much more.

Here’s what you’ll see when you “turn the page” to June:

**Featured member service — Legislative Advocacy:** PSATS encourages and works with state lawmakers to draft legislation that benefits townships and fulfills PSATS resolutions and fights bills and policies that work against townships.

At the federal level, PSATS participates in the National Association of Towns and Townships, which gives communities a voice and place at the table in the nation’s capital.

PSATS encourages its members to get involved in its Grassroots Advocacy Network to communicate with state legislators on the issues that concern townships. The Week in Review email newsletter keeps members informed about what is happening in Harrisburg and Washington, especially if it impacts local governments.

For more information about legislative advocacy, call PSATS at (717) 763-0930, ext. 178, or go to psats.org and choose the “Legislation & Policy” tab.

**Workshops and webinars:** Don’t miss PSATS’ Webinar Wednesday series. Each weekly session, held from noon to 1 p.m., focuses on a particular municipal issue: public safety (June 5); planning (June 12); administration (June 19); and public works (June 26).

To register or learn more about PSATS’ educational programs, turn to page 102; visit training.psats.org, or call PSATS at (717) 763-0930.

**Holidays and observances:** June 14 is Flag Day, followed by Father’s Day on June 16. Summer officially begins on June 21.

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Would you like to appear with your pet in the 2019 PSATS calendar?

We’re looking for photos of township officials or staff with their animal “best friend,” be it a dog, cat, horse, iguana, or whatever.

Photos must include the township official or staff and the pet. Please provide the following:

- township name and county;
- person’s name and title; and
- pet’s name.

Email your photo(s) to Kaylin Kirk at kkirks@psats.org by September 16, 2019.
Chester County Township Road Crew Takes Top Prize in ‘Better Mousetrap’ Contest

East Brandywine Township in Chester County received the top prize in PennDOT’s 2019 Build a Better Mousetrap Contest. The annual competition honors projects built and designed by road crews or municipal employees to improve safety, reduce costs, or increase efficiency.

LTAP Program Director Lou Ferretti presented the award to the township during the PSATS Excellence Awards ceremony, which took place at the Association’s 97th Annual Educational Conference in Hershey in April.

East Brandywine’s road department came up with a way to store the salt spreaders for their trucks.

“The spreaders were always on the floor taking up space, and if we needed to move them, we had to hook them up to a chain with the backhoe,” township roadmaster Matthew VanLew says.

“We also used a backhoe to mount the spreaders on the trucks, which took two people.”

The road department devised a portable storage rack for the spreaders made of scrap lumber and $50 in wheels. The rack holds four spreaders and can be moved around the garage and outside to a lift for mounting the spreaders on the trucks.

“This saves time for the department, using one person and no extra equipment to install and remove salt spreaders from the trucks,” VanLew says.

East Brandywine's winning entry will be submitted into the national competition, whose winners will be announced at the annual LTAP/TTAP national conference this summer. All entries at the national level will be posted on the LTAP/TTAP website and compiled into an electronic booklet.

The East Brandywine Township road crew created a portable storage rack for spreaders (above) out of scrap lumber and inexpensive wheels. A hoist (left) lifts the spreaders for mounting on trucks.

Turn page for more Newsworthy ➤
Don’t miss out on your chance to get up-to-the-minute information on legislation, events, education, and township-inspired stories. How? Follow PSATS on Twitter and Facebook!

www.facebook.com/PSATS
http://twitter.com/PSATS

For just $825 a year (or $725 for members of the Pa. State Association of Township Engineers), you can advertise on these pages and reach close to 10,000 local government officials in Pennsylvania every month.

To reserve this space, call Ginni Linn, executive editor, at (717) 763-0930, ext. 127.
MISSED A PSATS WEBINAR? Don’t worry. You can catch up on any PSATS webinar you may have missed but still want to listen to in the PSATS On-Demand Webinars.

- On-Demand webinars include those since January 2017
- Earn one secondary credit from PMGA
- Access webinars from anywhere at any time

Go to connect.psats.org, click on the “Education” tab, and choose “On-Demand Webinars Catalog.”

On-Demand webinars are $30 for PSATS members and $40 for all others.
Engineers, Architects, Planners (continued)

Watch the new Township Video News at www.psats.org

Save the Date

PSATS’ 2020 Educational Conference,
May 3-6 in Hershey!

Stay tuned for more information.
Whether you’re talking display, professional, or classified ads, the many repeat advertisers in the Pennsylvania Township News say their ads get results. Advertisements in the Township News reach close to 10,000 readers across Pennsylvania every month. Recipients include:

- Township supervisors, secretaries, managers, and roadmasters
- Township solicitors
- Township engineers
- Planning commission members
- Emergency management coordinators
- Miscellaneous individuals interested in Pennsylvania local government
- Advertisers
- State legislators
- State and federal agency officials

To learn how you can target this audience with your display or professional ad, call Ginni Linn at (717) 763-0930, ext. 127, or email glinn@psats.org. For classified ads, call Brenda Wilt at (717) 763-0930, ext. 123, or email bwilt@psats.org.
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Engineers, Architects, Planners (continued)

Got Some Shopping to Do?
Check out PSATS’ Local Government Marketplace!

Looking for a particular product or service for your TOWNSHIP?
Don’t know quite where to start?

All you need to do is POINT, CLICK, and SHOP on the PSATS Local Government Marketplace!

There, you will find a variety of vendors searchable by:
➤ Vendor name
➤ Product or service category
➤ Counties in which the vendors do business in Pennsylvania.

TO START YOUR SHOPPING, go to www.psats.org. Click on SHOP and then PSATS Local Government Marketplace. You can simply scroll down through the table of vendors or search by one of the three choices. It’s that easy!

All vendors are associate members of PSATS.

Are you a VENDOR and not on the PSATS Marketplace?

If so, all you have to do is become a PSATS Associate Member.

For $200 a year, you get a Marketplace listing and various other benefits.

To learn more about joining...
➤ Call PSATS at (717) 763-0930
➤ Go to www.psats.org, click on Programs & Services and then PSATS Associate Membership. Follow the prompts under the “Ready to Join?” header.

Join today and become a part of PSATS’ online marketplace for township shoppers!

Looking to hire?
Buy? Sell?

Look no further than the PSATS classifieds. Check out ads for open positions, items for sale, and items wanted to buy every month in the Township News and online at www.psats.org under “Publications.”

Township News advertisers may also place classified ads.
Are you a township engineer? If so, consider the benefits of joining an association that specifically addresses what you need to know for your local government work.

The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Engineers gives you access to the latest information to assist you in your duties. For one low annual fee, you will receive:

- Subscription to the *Township News* and reduced advertising rates.
- Subscription to the *Township Engineer*, the quarterly newsletter of the Engineers Association.
- Subscription to the *PSATS News Bulletin*, which provides legislative and other updates.
- Association-sponsored engineer workshops.
- Consultation with the Association staff and its engineering consultant.

For more information, call PSATS at (717) 763-0930, ext. 128, or log onto [engineers.psats.org](http://engineers.psats.org).

**VISIT US ONLINE:**
[www.psats.org](http://www.psats.org)
Please enter my subscription to the Pennsylvania Township News at $36 or $40 per year for 12 issues.

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(Make checks payable to PSATS.)

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- [ ] Non-member Subscription $40

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**CLASSIFIED ADS**

**RATES / DEADLINES**

To advertise in the Township News **OR** online:  
Member townships per line .... $5  
All others per line .................. $7

**Upcoming deadlines:**  
- July 1 for August 2019 issue  
- July 30 for September 2019 issue  
- August 30 for October 2019 issue

To advertise in the Township News **AND** online:  
PSATS members and nonmembers: Add $10 to the cost of your ad.

To submit a classified ad:  
Email ad copy to Brenda Wilt, assistant editor, at bwilt@psats.org *(preferred)* or fax to (717) 763-9732.
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101 J&J Truck Bodies and Trailers
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IBC E.M. Kutz, Inc.
IBC, Lancaster Truck Bodies, Inc.
IBC Levan Machine & Truck Equipment
89 Maxwell Truck & Equipment, LLC
47 Medico Industries, Inc.
75 McTrim Inc.
29 Municipal Risk Management
24 New Holland Auto Group
87 Penn State Construction
91 Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust (PLGIT)
99 PIRMA
IBC Powell's Sales and Service
25 PSATS Health Insurance Fund
32 Recreation Resource USA
88 SealMaster Pavement Products
33, 57 Stephenson Equipment, Inc.
101 Tioga-Bradford Equipment Show
105 Triad
101 U.S. Municipal

www.psats.org

Township News Ads Reach Almost 10,000

Advertisements in the Pennsylvania Township News reach almost 10,000 readers across Pennsylvania every month. To target this audience with your display, professional, or classified ad, contact Editor Ginni Linn at (717) 763-0930, or email glinn@psats.org.
Q What types of consumer-grade fireworks may Pennsylvania residents purchase?
A Pennsylvania residents 18 and older may purchase consumer-grade fireworks with a maximum of 50 milligrams of explosive material. Examples include firecrackers, Roman candles, and bottle rockets. They are also known as 1.4G fireworks.

Q Does Pennsylvania’s Fireworks Law place any restrictions on where or how consumer fireworks may be used?
A Yes, Act 43 of 2017 places the following restrictions on the use of consumer fireworks. They may not be:
- discharged within 150 feet of any occupied structure;
- ignited or discharged on public or private property without express permission of the property owner;
- discharged from or within a motor vehicle or building;
- discharged toward a motor vehicle or building; or
- discharged by a person under the influence of alcohol, a controlled substance, or another drug.

Q What resources may we use to promote the safe use of consumer fireworks?
A The American Pyrotechnics Association has resources on its website, americanpyro.com. In addition, this association has a website dedicated to promoting fireworks safety, celebratesafely.org.

Q Where may consumer fireworks be purchased?
A Consumer fireworks may be purchased from any licensed permanent fireworks facility in Pennsylvania.

Q May consumer fireworks be purchased at licensed temporary fireworks facilities?
A No. On December 4, 2018, the Commonwealth Court issued an order modifying Act 43 of 2017, Pennsylvania’s fireworks law, to no longer give the state Department of Agriculture the legal authority to license temporary structures to sell consumer fireworks.

Q If consumer fireworks are being sold out of an unlicensed tent facility, who may shut it down?
A The Pennsylvania State Police, a sheriff, or local police officer may shut down illegal operations and remove the fireworks from these facilities.

Q If a motion and a second are made by a three-member board, must all three supervisors vote to approve the motion or may just the supervisor who didn’t make the motion or second indicate his or her vote?
A All of the supervisors must vote on each motion. A motion is simply a procedural means to bring an item up for debate and a vote. No matter what size the board of supervisors, all supervisors must vote on the motion so that the minutes can accurately record the results of the vote.

Q Do we have to take a roll call vote on each motion?
A No, but the minutes must document how each supervisor voted and if there were any abstentions due to a conflict of interest. If a motion was approved unanimously, it should be noted as such in the minutes. If the vote was split, the minutes should note who voted in favor and who voted against the motion.

Q When I took office as a township supervisor, I was given a Second Class Township Code book dated December 31, 2003, along with Cumulative Supplement #5. Have there been any additional updates since then?
A The current version of the Second Class Township Code is the 2003 printed edition, along with Cumulative Supplement #7, which was distributed this spring. This supplement contains all amendments from 2004 through 2018.

Q Should I keep any earlier supplements?
A No. Supplement #7 contains the language from all previous updates, so discard all prior supplements.

Q When reading the 2003 edition of the Township Code, what is the best way to keep track of the amendments in Supplement #7?
A PSATS staff recommends crossing out the sections in the 2003 edition that are also in Supplement #7 since the language in the supplement replaces the provisions in the 2003 edition. Doing this will keep you from inadvertently reading outdated language from the 2003 edition. Also, when looking for a particular section of the code, start with Supplement #7 and only refer to the 2003 edition if that section is not in the supplement.

Q May we access the Second Class Township Code online?
A Yes. The state legislature has an official, searchable copy of the Second Class Township Code online that is constantly updated. A direct link can be found at psats.org. (Choose “Member Resources” and then “Second Class Township Code.”) Feel free to print this version so you have a “clean” copy of the code until the latest version is officially available in print.
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