

Administrative Offices (724) 586-1165  
Road Department (724) 285-9317  
Police Department (724) 586-1169  
Samuel M. Ward  
Chairman

Douglas A. Roth  
Vice Chairman

Wilbert J. Mowry, Jr.  
Supervisor



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Butler, PA 16002  
FAX (724) 586-1172  
Linda D. Zerfoss  
Township Manager

Clinton A. Bonetti  
Land Use Administrator

Michael K. Corle  
Sewage Enforcement

## RE: 2024 Penn Township Public Relations – March Edition

Good morning, Residents,

It has been many years since we published a newsletter and it is time to resume spreading the "Good News" that is happening in Penn Township in timely and effective ways.

We have been working with the Butler Eagle reporters to get out stories on our work with PennDOT for a new traffic light at Route 8 and Airport Road, the Route 8 repaving on McBride Hill, the reconstruction of Meridian Road, and others. Not all residents have access to the Butler Eagle.

We have been including current updates on many topics in our monthly Board of Supervisors meetings. Not many attend these meetings.

We have been uploading the minutes of our Township Board of Supervisors and committee meetings to the website, [www.penn township.org](http://www.penn township.org). Not all residents use or have access to the website.

We have been sending informational emails to residents. We have a limited number of email addresses.

These efforts have limited effect, but are well received. Residents are interested and stop Bert, Doug, and me in the local restaurants, grocery stores, and other places to get more details about various projects and issues. We want to do more.

These efforts do not require a lot of time and expense. A periodic mass mailing will require more time and mailing expenses.

We will continue to investigate ways to spread the "Good News."

So, let us get started here, spending less time in the Board of Supervisors meetings, and getting the "Good News" out to residents with periodic emails and website postings.

Please send your contact information and email address to [samward@zoominternet.net](mailto:samward@zoominternet.net). You may use this email address for comments and to address your concerns.

Please also consider volunteering your time and talents in the many opportunities, including the parks, Township meetings and committees, Community Day activities, libraries, and the Penn Township Volunteer Fire Department, to name a few.

Bert, Doug, and I thank you for this opportunity to better serve our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Samuel M. Ward'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Samuel M. Ward  
Chairman, Penn Township  
Board of Supervisors

## **RE: 2024 Penn Township Public Relations – March Edition**

**Penn Township Volunteer Fire Department (PTVFD) Tool Bash** – Saturday, May 4, 2024, at the Butler County Airport, 475 Airport Road, Butler, PA 16002 from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m. Tickets are available by calling the PTVFD at 724-586-5030 or the Penn Township Municipal Building. Tickets must be presented for admission and include food and beverages. Prize drawings and 50/50 drawings begin at 1:00 p.m.

### **Parks and Recreation - Harcrest Park Phase II**

Penn Township was awarded a PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) \$300,000 grant for the Phase II development. The Penn Township "Local Share" is \$300,000 plus \$120,000 for engineering.

The Penn Township Engineer, HRG, is developing the permit and construction documents with the close collaboration of the Penn Township Park Committee and the Butler County Department of Parks and Recreation. Permits are expected to be issued in the next few months to allow The Penn Township Public Works Department (PWD) to begin construction.

Butler County provides the services of the Department of Parks and Recreation to advise and administer this grant at no cost to Penn Township.

A Butler County Parks and Recreation/Development Program Community grant application requesting \$10,000 has been submitted for the Phase II stormwater piping materials. The Penn Township "Local Share" is 25% or \$2,500.

A PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) grant application request for an additional 25% or \$75,000 of the existing DCNR grant will be submitted in April 2024. The Penn Township "Local Share" is \$75,000.

A PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP) grant application requesting \$250,000 will be submitted in May 2024 for the Phase II development pavilion. The Penn Township "Local Share" is \$37,500.

The current price for the eight-foot-long park benches with a plaque, and two Penn Township logos now costs \$2,035. The Penn Township Public Works Department will complete the installation.

The park-donated tree program has been discontinued.

The next Park Committee meeting will be held on April 24, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building meeting room. Residents are welcome to attend.

### **Scout Troop/Pack 53**

Scout Troop 53 attended the Klondike Derby at Camp Bucoco and is working on their new Charter, a Troop calendar of events, leadership planning, and a new trailer fundraising.

Penn Township is the sponsor for Scout Troop and Pack 53.

### **South Butler Community Library**

Threads of Freedom, an Underground Railroad and Quilting Journey was presented by a local quilter, Ethel Hayden, who explained the hidden messages in "crazy quilts" and showed the secret codes, sponsored by the Saxonburg Greater Federation of Women's Clubs on February 12, 2024.

The Jane Austen-era movie "Persuasion" was shown on February 23, 2024.

The Knit and Crochet Group meets on Mondays.

The Infant/toddler and Preschool Storytimes are presented on various dates. The Pre-K Playtime is full this time but watch for more!

The Evening Game Night, Chess Club for teens, and Monthly book club for adult events continue.

Monthly "office hours" for Rep Marci Mustello's staff to help with PA-related matters (Penn DOT issues, property tax/rent rebates, state forms, etc.) are available with no appointment required.

The Mini Golf INSIDE the library was held on March 16, 2024, and a Free Teen night was held on March 15, 2024.

Congratulations to library director, Michelle Lesniak, who was invited to speak virtually to a national group of librarians following her funding award of a large grant from the Network of the National Libraries of Medicine to improve the library space. She has subsequently been invited to speak in person, with travel costs covered by the National Libraries of Medicine, at the Public Library Association Conference in Ohio in April.

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### **ARLE Grant - Route 8 at Airport Road Traffic Light Replacement**

A Pennsylvania Automated Red-Light Enforcement (ARLE) grant in the amount of 79.6% of the actual cost, not to exceed \$446,706, was awarded to replace the existing traffic lights, add left turning lanes on North and Southbound Route 8, add pedestrian crossings, add additional signage, and add area lighting. The Penn Township "Local Share" will be 20.4% of the actual cost.

Penn Township has submitted a Butler County Use Fee grant application for up to \$50,000 to help fund this project. A notice of award, if any, should be made in the next few months.

The new traffic light contract has been awarded to M and B Services, L.L.C. from Clarion, PA in the amount of \$496,162.88. The traffic light is expected to be complete by late Summer 2024.

PennDOT has approved the traffic light pole shop drawings. There is a twenty-six-week lead time for the pole fabrication. Concrete foundations for poles will begin in approximately two months.

Brightspeed and other communications companies moved existing wiring to the existing First Energy poles at the Southwest corner of the intersection. Two communications poles were removed. In addition, the existing power pole will be removed and the traffic light controller will be moved to the Northwest corner of the intersection. This will improve the area in front of the Audubon Society facility.

### **Meridian Road Closure and Renfrew Bridge**

The Meridian Road repair has received funding and will be completed in April and May 2024. PennDOT and Penn Township representatives will update the emergency plan in the immediate future.

The Renfrew bridge replacement has been rescheduled for late 2025 with completion in 2026.

Additional Route 8 paving resurfacing will be two to three years in the future.

### **Penn Township Community Day**

The Board of Supervisors and Penn's Men group have scheduled the 2024 Community Day event on August 17<sup>th</sup> from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.

The 2023 event was attended by approximately 500 people.

The Penn's Men group will again provide a barbequed chicken lunch at no cost.

Local businesses and residents will provide donations, and raffle baskets and display local services.

BSA Troop/Pack 53 and the Girl Scouts of America, South Butler Service Group will have displays and activities.

Master of Ceremonies, Ron Muhlenkamp, will keep the event on track with humor and local stories.

Volunteers are welcome to join the Committee and participate in the 2024 event.

### **Penn Township Impact Fee Committee**

The Traffic Impact Fee Committee and Engineer, Gannett Fleming, representatives are working on the Impact Fee Ordinance revisions. The purpose of the Land Use Assumptions report is to describe the existing land uses and to reflect the projected changes in land uses, densities of residential development, intensities of nonresidential development, and population growth rates which may affect the level of traffic within the designated area or areas over ten years. The Impact Fee Ordinance revision will be completed later in 2024.

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### **Penn Township Comprehensive Plan**

The Comprehensive Plan Update Committee and Consultant, HRG, have completed an updated draft of Goals and Objectives.

HRG closed the reopened survey on February 9, 2024, and will provide a summary of the updated results in the immediate future.

HRG will provide "Transformation Sketches" for the following:

- Trail Map – A map that shows potential locations and routes to make connections to/from Penn Valley Athletic Club, the Airport, Harcrest Park, Succop Nature Park, and the Municipal Building property. Maybe include a call out with a sketch, such as benches, trees, and a sidewalk along Airport Road.
- Welcome Signage – Incorporate the Penn Township Rubble or Ashlar pattern stone similar to the Municipal Building entrance and Harcrest Park entrance sign as recognition of the three Penn Township stone mason families.
- Acreage around the Municipal Building – Sketch out public amenities and uses, including a proposed Farmer's Market on Saturdays during the Summer for local produce, crafts, artwork, baked goods, and more.

Penn Township submitted the Pennsylvania Municipal Assistance Program (MAP) grant application requesting up to fifty percent of the Comprehensive Plan Update cost. A notice of award, if any, should be made in the next few months.

The next committee meeting will be on May 1, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building meeting room. Residents are welcome to attend.

### **Butler County Municipal Outreach**

The Butler County Municipal Outreach meeting on February 6, 2024, discussion included:

- Commissioner Kim Geyer and Commission Kevin Boozel provided updates on issues that they are working on for Butler County.
- Dr. David Rottinghaus, Independence Health System, President of Physician and Provider Network provided a Community Health Update.
- Butler County Tax Collector Committee representative, Mary Papik, provided an overview of their oversight role and responsibilities for earned income, business privilege, per capita, and local services tax collection. Linda Zerfoss has been appointed as Penn Township representative and Erma Mowry has been appointed as the alternate representative to this committee. Each municipality and school district have representatives.
- Berkheimer Tax Innovations, representative, William Leonard, discussed the earned income, business privilege, per capita, local services tax processing, and taxpayer relations. A local Berkheimer office is located on Duffy Road. The taxpayers may contact Berkheimer by means listed on their tax notice. Berkheimer distributes approximately \$70,000,000 directly to Butler County municipalities and school districts.

The next meeting will be on March 12, 2024. Videos of the Municipal Outreach Meetings may be viewed at the Butler County website.

### **Municipal Water Authority of Adams Township (MWAAT)**

The MWAAT contractor for the waterline extension along Route 8 between Airport Road and Larchwood Drive has some paving restoration that remains incomplete.

Larchwood Drive and other area residents are still interested in the MWAAT water service and are looking for grant funding. MWAAT has access low interest financing through the Butler County Infrastructure Bank.

Other older developments face the same high-cost issue for new water service. When their housing plans were developed, individual wells and water treatment facilities were installed that provided limited water quantity and quality. Now they are faced with abandoning these systems and the high cost of water service.

New housing plans will utilize the MWAAT water system and this cost and other infrastructure costs will be included in their property cost.

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds**

Penn Township will use Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to demolish an abandoned and unsafe property at the intersection of Old Plank and Mushrush Roads.

The Butler County Housing and Redevelopment Authority has grant funding available to homeowners for Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation projects. Eligibility is also income-based and other grant guidelines. If you or someone you know has a home renovation project and meets the grant eligibility requirements, please contact the Butler County Housing and Redevelopment Authority representatives, Ricky Houk or Martha Brown.

### **Butler County Tax Collection Committee**

The committee will meet again in March 2024.

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### Southwest Butler Stormwater Planning Committee

Penn Township was awarded a PA Municipal Infrastructure (MIP) grant in the amount of 85% of the actual cost, not to exceed \$582,814, for the Dodds Road Realignment and Streambank Stabilization Project. The Penn Township "Local Share" will be 15% of the actual cost.

A contract for the Dodds Road realignment was awarded to CRS Contracting, LLC, from Cabot in the amount of \$402,071 and a contract for the Streambank Stabilization, which includes erosion control and aquatic habitat improvements in Thorn Creek, has been awarded to Phil Hay and Sons Excavating in the amount of \$6,500. The Penn Township PWD will also provide materials, labor, and equipment. This project will start on May 20, 2024, and be completed by late Summer 2024.

The permits are expected to be issued in March 2024.

### Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania

Refer to the Audubon Society website for their schedule of Summer events. <http://aswp.org/events>

### Penn's Men

Penn's Men will have a Chicken BBQ benefit for the daughter of a Country Kitchen employee who has a serious medical condition. The BBQ will be held at the Glade Run Presbyterian Church at 1091 Pittsburgh Road (Route 8) in Valencia on Saturday, April 27, 2024. The Country Kitchen will hold a Spaghetti Fund Raiser at their facility on April 6, 2024.

### Shadow Ridge Development

The Penn Partners Development LLC, Shadow Ridge Traditional Residential Development (TRD) off Penn Drive has been approved. This will be a development of 24 single-family lots in the R1 Zoning District. The project will include the construction of the lots, stormwater facilities, a public road with cul-de-sac, and utilities with access from Penn Drive.

**Aaron Bernstine PA State Representative – 8<sup>th</sup> District – [www.representative.com](http://www.representative.com) - Ryan Laidlaw, District Office Manager [ryanlaidlaw@pahouse.com](mailto:ryanlaidlaw@pahouse.com) 790 Pittsburgh Road, Suite 3, Butler, PA 16002, 724-847-5291.**

- Driver's license and registration renewals
- Property tax/rent rebate applications
- Unemployment Compensation help
- PAC/OACENET applications for seniors
- Unclaimed property applications
- Handicapped placards
- State tax forms available
- Tours of the state Capitol
- Referrals to agencies to resolve state-related matters
- House of Representative citations

Minutes of all meetings are posted on the Penn Township website [www.penn township.org](http://www.penn township.org), under "Documents" in the folders as soon as they have been approved by the Board or Committees.

- Board of Supervisors
- Comprehensive Plan Update
- Park
- Route 8 and Airport Road Traffic Light
- Stormwater Grant Dodds and Rockdale Roads