

# GREGG TOWNSHIP NEWS

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## Sewage Enforcement Officer

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## Sewer Authority

Gil Morrison, Chairman 422-8779

## Tax Collector

Donna Miller 422-8101

## Newsletter Editor

Jay Sletson 422-8243

## Gregg Township Meeting Calendar

Board of Supervisors	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday	7:00 PM	Township Building
Planning Commission	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	7:00 PM	Township Building
Sewer Authority	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday	7:30 PM	Fire Hall
Penns Valley Regional Planning Commission	4 <sup>th</sup> Monday	7:00 PM	Gregg Twp. Bldg.

## WHAT'S NEW

- ▶ **Town Hall "Future Planning Summit" Set for September 30<sup>th</sup>**
- ▶ *Massive Road Improvement Projects Cost Less than Budgeted*
- ▶ **State Mandated Building Codes Enacted Across the Valley**
- ▶ *Township Budget Meeting Set for September 16<sup>th</sup>*
- ▶ **See Draft Regional Comprehensive Plan at [www.centre.co.us](http://www.centre.co.us)**

## ROAD IMPROVEMENTS COST LESS THAN BUDGETED

Going into the project, we knew we would save roughly 10% after reviewing the bid pricing for neighboring municipalities. And those savings would cover the interest expense for the project. What we didn't know was that our Roadmaster, Walter Strouse, in combination with an inspection firm hired by the township, would bring further savings. Call it bird-dogging, or basketball's double team - we had township eyes, thermometers and lasers everywhere, making sure that our specs were followed, and only the tonnage necessary to meet the job was used on our roads. When Eastern's final bill came in, it was **\$10,660 less** than their winning low bid, nearly double the cost for the Inspector and our Roadmaster's time.

Thanks for your extraordinary patience during the most extensive road improvement project in Gregg Township's recent history. We are especially grateful to local farmers and businesses, who sacrificed in the short run so that everyone in our community would benefit.

We will discuss bridge and road projects for 2005 on September 16<sup>th</sup> - if you've got something to say, call us at 422.8218 or stop by the township building at 6 pm and share it with YOUR supervisors.

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## REGIONAL PLANNING SUMMIT SET FOR SEPTEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup> AT PENNS VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Where will the 1600 new homes go? That is one of the biggest questions that elected and appointed officials must tackle as we work on planning for our future. And not just here in Gregg Township - because every municipality will face its share of this growth and development. *Conservative* projections point to 1600 new homes in Penns Valley in 20 years.

We may look like one township, geographically - but when it comes to land use, planning and zoning there are several competing ideas in our community. Here's a revelation: no one has cornered the market on having the right answer, and no one has a solution that satisfies everyone. One person's idea of lightweight zoning is another's example of property taking.

Some folks feel that government should stay out of land use issues and let property owners have the final say over how, when and if their lands are developed. When one considers who pays the taxes on the land, it is a hard point to argue. And many township residents are relying on their land's value as a key component of their retirement, because they do not have a 401K.

Some say the community should have the final say on land use since law gives them that power. They argue that growth costs everyone more in taxes; more homes = more school children to educate, more classrooms, teachers, and eventually more school construction. Developers who dedicate roads to the township dump the high cost of maintenance on everyone, because PennDOT's liquid fuels allocation does not come close to covering the true costs a municipality faces when keeping roads in good repair. If road maintenance were inexpensive, developers would not build roads and then give them away!

No matter which side of the discussion you find yourself, what we can all agree on is that Gregg Township is growing and changing and will not look the same in twenty years. So, truly it comes down to whether we want to plan for the growth - where the houses and new roads will go, or let it occur on its own, and deal with it when and where it happens.

If you want to stay on the sidelines as we discuss and decide this issue, then do not plan on coming to the valleywide Town Hall meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup> at the High School cafeteria at 6 pm. The rest of us will be trying to come up with an answer that, quite honestly, we can literally...live with.

We need a balanced, reasonable and respectful land use policy for the future - and we are much more likely to develop sound policies if YOUR VOICE is heard. Turn off the tube, fire up the pick up and put in your two cents, or, should we say, sense.

## MAKING SENSE OF THE STATE'S NEW BUILDING CODE INSPECTION PROGRAM

If you build it, they will come! And we're not talking sports, but inspectors. Unless your idea of a game includes trying to get around the new state requirements for building maintenance and new construction we suggest you take a moment to learn more about how our world has changed after the state passed the new code laws. Every township in Penns Valley "opted in", as have over 85% of townships across the state. This means that your elected officials decided that our community, and not the Department of Labor and Industry in Harrisburg, will be responsible for handling inspections. **Most every building or addition will need a building permit issued before it construction begins. Home alterations that change a structural element will also need permits.** Home repairs and basic remodeling do NOT need a permit.

**NOT SURE IF YOU NEED A PERMIT?** Call Penns Valley Code Enforcement Agency at 349-8177.

**WHERE ARE PERMITS?** Township building & Penns Valley Code Enforcement Agency in Millheim.

**WHAT NEEDS TO BE INSPECTED?**

- Plans for **many** projects - before you even start construction - ask the Code Office
- Footers, framing, plumbing, drywall, and electrical as they're being done - just to name a few!

**COSTS:** Vary, depending on the project. Fee Schedules are available at the township building.

The state's building code is new to all of us, so don't hesitate to ask questions before you start, or during a project. Both the township secretary and the code enforcement officer are there to help.

## SMOKE ALRM TESTING FOCUS OF FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

The National Fire Protection Association has set October 3 – 9 for Fire Prevention Week, and this year's theme is "Test Your Smoke Alarms." This year's campaign focuses on fire prevention for your home including the installation and regularly testing of smoke alarms, practicing home escape plans, and being alert for home hazards. They emphasize the importance of responding quickly when a fire alarm sounds, and remind everyone that once safely out of the building, you should stay out until the fire department gives you permission to return.

Speaking of which, Gregg Township Fire Company comes off a very successful community carnival, and is now looking to expand the number of active fire fighters. Training is available – and you will be joining a great bunch of folks who care deeply about protecting the lives and property of our community.

If you would like more information, stop by the fire hall on Monday evenings, or call any of the officers listed on the front of our newsletter. Join the most dedicated and important volunteers in our community!

## TOWNSHIP'S 2005 BUDGET PROCESS BEGINS

Several years ago we adopted a more open and participatory budget review and spending process. On September 16<sup>th</sup>, YOUR supervisors will meet at the township building to begin constructing our 2005 budget.

Here's how it works: we begin by comparing our previous year's audit (2003) with our projected income and expenses for the current year (2004). Next, we talk about any issues that could impact revenues or expenses for the upcoming year (2005). That's where YOU come in. If you have road improvement projects or other thoughts that you want us to consider we need to hear from you ...now.

By the end of the budget workshop we are usually very close to having our draft budget completed. Often there may be an issue or two that we have to track down, or a cost that we have to explore. In a few weeks, at the October supervisor's meeting, we review our draft budget and discuss any new ideas, or revisions. Our treasurer brings a final draft budget to the November meeting of the board of supervisors for final discussion.

The last step is to advertise the budget and vote to adopt it at our December meeting. Again, if you have an idea worth sharing, please stop by our budget workshop or call one of YOUR supervisors by mid-September.

**HELP WANTED:** The Township is looking for a copy of the *History of Gregg Township*. If you have one and are willing to part with it – it will be kept in the Township Office - please contact Julie Mason, Secretary, at 422-8218.

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**Spring Mills Town Wide Yard Sale**

**SEPTEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup> & 25<sup>TH</sup>**

**9 am - 5 pm**

**BE A PATRIOT – VOTE ON NOVEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
Remember – elections are now at the Fire Hall in Spring Mills

Our form of government works because we have an easy way to deal with folks who don't perform – remove them from office. Equally important, we can keep elected officials working on our behalf by voting to retain them. Whether you want to “thrown the bums out” or have “two, four, or six more years”, the best way to do this is by casting your ballot.

Remember, your voting site is located in the Village of Spring Mills, at the Fire Hall.

**HAM POT PIE SUPPER \* SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30 4 – 7 PM \* GREGG TWP. FIRE HALL**

Come out and support our Firefighters and the Ladies Auxiliary during their premier fall fundraiser. Enjoy a fabulous “public supper” with your friends and neighbors from 4 – 7 PM (take-out is also available).

**Did you know that our Ladies Auxiliary serves food at Public Sales (auctions) and that they cater dozens of banquets at the Fire Hall each year? Call Lisa Strouse for more information at 422.0509**

...and for those who like to plan ahead, this year's Holiday Bazaar will be on December 4<sup>th</sup> from 9 – 3 PM

**GREGG TOWNSHIP**  
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