

GREGG TOWNSHIP NEWS

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www.greggtownship.org

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TOWNSHIP MEETING NIGHTS CHANGE

Sometimes changes are made for the right reasons, and this should be one of those times.

After working with our zoning ordinance for over a year, members of our Planning Commission recommended changes in our meeting schedule to enable our elected and appointed officials to review subdivision and land development plans in a more structured manner.

Bottom line: township residents with building plans will be able to work through the review process a little faster.

Our Sewer Authority has also changed their meeting nights to accommodate the work schedules of some of their newer appointees.

Gregg Township Meeting Calendar

Board of Supervisors	2 nd Thursday	7:00 PM	Township Building
Planning Commission	1 st Monday	7:00 PM	Township Building
Sewer Authority	4 th Tuesday	7:30 PM	Fire Hall
Zoning Hearing Board	As needed	7:00 PM	Fire Hall

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR ROAD CREW

Has this been a winter or what? We seem to have had more little storms than any winter in recent memory. Some years in the 90's might have had more total accumulation – but those were winters with a few big snowfalls. This year we seem to have been hit almost daily with enough snow to bring our crew out of bed early to keep our roads clear, and our community residents safe.

The next time you see Walter Strouse, John Deviney and Chris Smith please thank them for their extra hours and efforts this year.

GREEN GROVE ROAD TO BE PAVED THIS SUMMER

The western section of Green Grove Road was at the top of PADOT'S 5 Year Plan and Roadmaster Walter Strouse's list of needed improvements. And because Secretary Teresa McFeely prepared our bid letting early, we awarded the contract for less than PADOT's estimate – saving township residents nearly \$10,000.

GREGG TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION by Doug Bierly, Chairman

The Gregg Township Planning Commission has held two town meetings (one on Feb. 5, one on Mar. 19) for the purposes of reducing air pollution caused by burning in Spring Mills (Spring Mills only, not all of Gregg Township) and proposing a Village District for Spring Mills. Both topics were discussed at each meeting.

Burning has been reviewed in Spring Mills because of the close proximity of homes. Also, the presence of Sinking and Penns Creeks provides a significant amount of settlement area for cooler air to collect and for smoke to concentrate. In their simplest form, burning regulations would be as follows:

Permitted Fires

- Ceremonial or recreational campfires
- Outdoor cooking fires, charcoal grills, and smokehouses
- Fires for production of agricultural products
- A fire set to abate a hazard
- A fire set to generate heat
- A fire set for the prevention and control of disease
- Fires necessary for the Township's Emergency Operations Plan
- Fires necessary to save life and property
- Fires to burn household/yard waste, leaves and brush

Fire Regulations

- No burning of recyclable products
- Fires must be attended until extinguished
- Fires are not permitted during adverse wind and weather conditions
- Fires shall not be allowed to smolder
- No burning of plastic, plastic coated products, treated lumber, asphalt products, furniture, mattresses, tires, PVC, rubber products, automotive parts, batteries, appliances and the like

At a village meeting held March 19, in the Spring Mills Fire Hall, those citizens attending seemed to feel that the burning regulations, shown above, would be acceptable.

A village district for Spring Mills has also been discussed, primarily to provide more favorable property set-back lines for those people living in Spring Mills. Changing property set-back lines would allow residents more leeway to add on to their homes or to build accessory structures without having to seek a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board.

A meeting will be held at the Spring Mills Fire Hall in May (date not determined as of this writing) to review a draft of both the burning regulations and the revised setbacks. If you have questions or concerns please contact us at the addresses and phone numbers on the front of this newsletter. We had a great turnout at our two meetings in February and March to discuss the pros and cons of creating a village district and bringing on some ordinances to address some concerns for folks living in Spring Mills.

TRUE STORIES FROM OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

The town of Soap Lake, Washington did a booming tourist business but had fallen on hard times lately. Their elected officials responded by voting for a revitalization plan to draw visitors back.

Their first step was to build a 60-foot tall lava lamp on Main Street. Is this a great country or what?

STATEWIDE PRIMARY ON MAY 20TH

Whether you are an "R" or a "D" we all have something in common - the right and responsibility to participate in our nation's electoral process. Please take time from your busy schedule to support the candidates of your choice and vote in this year's primary election. Township residents will vote in the municipal office located on RT 45 next to Smith Custom Builders.

Please join us in thanking the people who volunteer their time to work ALL DAY inside the polling area. Our democratic form of government is special, and these dedicated men and women help keep it that way.

FIRE HALL BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT DELAYED

After pressuring the township and fire company to start earlier than initially agreed upon, this project has been delayed because PADOT could not get the Fish Commission to grant early entry into Penns Creek.

The schedule on this project has moved back and forth more than a ping pong ball in China. We expect them to begin in May and to finish just before we're enjoying Thanksgiving Dinner with family and friends.

ROADS AND BRIDGES

By the time you read this, we will have finalized our plans and sent out bid requests for safety improvements to several township bridges. Fortunately, a \$28,400 grant from Centre County will help offset much of the costs. Most projects will include new structure mounted guide rail and the addition of approach guide rail. Both projects are designed solely to improve the safety of drivers that fail to keep their vehicles on the road. We will also install some large rock (known as rip rap) to protect the abutments of several bridges.

FIVE YEAR ROAD IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

The five-year road evaluation and improvement program from PADOT lists \$680,000 in township road paving projects, and prioritizes them for us. The good news is that we have an excellent guide for choosing future projects. The bad news is that roads don't pave themselves - we need money, and the costs over five years are above our annual allotment of Liquid Fuels Funding, which is around \$83,000 a year. Remember that part of Liquid Fuels funding covers our snow removal costs - which this winter are higher than they've been for a while. We seem to have two basic choices:

1. Borrow money from the state, at roughly 2%, and pave all the projects in 2004
2. Stretch the projects out over eight or ten years, and do some each year as our budget allows

BENEFITS TO THE ALL IN 2004 PLAN

- Roads are improved at current prices, which are attractive right now (paving rates are extremely low)
- Grouping all the miles of road into one bid contract will reduce the cost/mile for paving (economy of scale)
- Paving all these roads eliminates the budget expenses for labor and materials for repairs and patching
- Newly paved roads are smoother to drive on; they are easier and quicker to plow than roads with patches
- We reduce risk of further deterioration on these roads, which would add extra expense when paved in the future
- We could pay off a low-interest state loan in 10 years, with our yearly Liquid Fuel Funds, without a tax increase

DRAWBACKS TO ALL IN 2004:

- Borrowing money is never as attractive as paying as you go

Do the benefits outweigh the drawbacks? Call your supervisors or come to a Thursday meeting to share your views.

EXPANDED RECYCLING IN GREGG TOWNSHIP?! By Joanne Shafer, Centre County Solid Waste Authority

Hello, Gregg Township residents!

I have had the pleasure of speaking with many of you in the last several months, both in person and over the phone or via email. By far, when we "talk trash" the most asked question is, "How can we get more recycling in the Township?" We here at the Centre County Solid Waste Authority are working with your Township Supervisors to find additional locations for drop off recycling containers, as well as adding some additional recyclables to the program. Watch this newsletter for continuing developments.

We have already expanded the recycling program by placing recycling containers at all of the schools in the Penns Valley Area School District. In addition to the recycling container in Spring Mills across from the Post Office, you may also recycle at any of the Penns Valley Schools. Thanks really go to Tom Horton, Director of Physical Plant for PVASD for working so hard with me to get this program set up in the schools.

What can you do while we are working on additional sites to enhance and increase recycling in Gregg Township? You can begin to recycle additional materials in the containers already there, but please prepare them properly. You can:

Recycle all plastic bottles. Although the compartment for plastic says, "#1 and #2 plastic bottles only", you can recycle all plastic bottles now. For right now, yogurt cups and margarine containers are still NOT recyclable, so, please continue to dispose of them with your regular trash. What's a "bottle"? Anything where the neck is smaller than or equal in size to the bottom.

Recycle mixed paper, junk mail & magazines. Please make sure these things are in a separate bag or box that can be secured shut, or bundled with twine. Put these items in the compartment marked "Newspaper".

While there is some concern from some residents about confidentiality of their mail, I'll let you know that once the paper makes it's way to the recycling facility at the Solid Waste Authority, it's ruffled to help a large bale stay together. No chance of knowing what belonged to whom. If you are still concerned, shredded paper is just as recyclable as whole paper.

You can place your shredded paper in a closed bag or box, in the compartment with the newspapers. By the way, chip board, pressed cardboard, cereal boxes and tablet backs are still not recyclable, so please continue to dispose of these items with your regular trash. Remember, chip board is easily compostable.

Recycle Corrugated Cardboard. Especially with Internet and catalog shopping, more and more people have corrugated cardboard in their homes. This is an easily recycled item.

Corrugated cardboard is the type that comes with three layers; the wavy one in the middle is the corrugate. You may recycle your corrugated in the compartment marked "Newspaper".

Just please, please break it down flat before you put it in the bin. If the corrugated is not broken down, the compartment will fill too quickly, and it will be really inefficient for us to come and pick up the bin.

Questions? Please visit our web site at www.centrecountyrecycles.com or call us at 238-7005.

"If YOU'RE NOT RECYCLING, YOU'RE THROWING IT ALL AWAY"

Joanne Shafer
Centre County Recycling Coordinator and unofficial Trash Queen

COUNTY TRANSPORTATION GRANT HELPS SENIOR CITIZENS

Centre County received a grant to buy two vans to carry folks to appointments in the county. The program is for senior citizens and disabled folks in rural areas – including Gregg Township residents. Even though many around here rely on friends, family and church members, at times when you need extra help, it's nice to know there is a way to find transportation to doctor's appointments and for other important errands.

PADOT will pick up most of the cost, and the county will pay the rest if you qualify. To find out more, call Ann Gaumond in the Centre County Office of Aging, 355-6807. She's friendly and knowledgeable.

PENNS VALLEY MUNICIPALITIES MEETING AND COOPERATING

For several months representatives from the seven municipalities in Penns Valley have gotten together to share ideas and challenges in the hopes of elevating the cooperation that has existed out here for generations. In April several speakers are coming to talk about ways to foster low-impact economic development in our region.

We know that some folks are unhappy with the amount of development they see, but it's not hard to understand what's behind it. Family farmers face ever-mounting challenges - weather, low market prices, increasing tax bills and in some cases a lack of desire on the part of the next generation to embrace the agrarian way of life. With land prices as high as they are, it is very understandable why some in our farming community turn to development.

An alternative to *residential* development could be an increase in low-impact industrial and commercial land uses. That's why this month's speakers are coming – to help us learn more about making that happen. Why?

Many studies show that for every \$1 in property taxes a residential property owner pays, the community spends nearly \$1.25 in services. Compare that to agricultural, industrial and commercial properties; they receive less than a quarter in services for the dollar they pay. Keep that in mind when you see these folks around town – they pay more than their fair share in taxes and help subsidize the cost of local government.

That's why some say a more balanced approach to land use helps townships fight against ever-increasing property taxes. And so Gregg Township joined with our neighbors, and adopted a resolution to investigate the pros and cons of forming a Penns Valley Planning Commission. This is a non-binding resolution and we are not giving up our own Planning Commission. Our goal is to bring all seven municipalities together and begin addressing common issues like traffic, growth & development, land use and planning from a valley-wide perspective.

Recommendations of the joint commission will be advisory only – we will retain control over what occurs in Gregg Township. Working together may be a great way for us to retain what makes living here so special.

FALSE ALARM ORDINANCE MOVES FORWARD

Members of Gregg Township Fire Company have asked the Board of Supervisors to address the increase in the receipt of false alarms and false notifications. Our Planning Commission has drafted an ordinance that provides penalties for false alarms. Why? When fire fighters respond to false alarms it puts everyone else in potential danger because it detracts from their ability to be available for a true emergency elsewhere.

We will hold public meetings and take your comments before acting on this ordinance – stay tuned to the legal section of *The Centre Daily Times* for more information on this and other upcoming township meetings.

HAZARDOUS WASTE COLLECTION SLATED FOR JUNE 6TH AND 7TH

The Centre County Solid Waste Authority (CCSWA) in cooperation with the Centre County Local Emergency Planning Committee is hosting another Household Hazardous Waste collection, to take place at the Transfer Station on Friday, June 6th from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Saturday, June 7th from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. **The Transfer Station is located between Rockview Prison and the Nittany Mall along Route 26.**

Gregg Township residents can drop off their oil-based paints (no latex) and paint related products, insecticides, pool chemicals, cleaners, poisons, corrosives, and flammables **AT NO CHARGE**.

CCSWA will **NOT** be accepting used motor oil or filters, antifreeze, batteries, tires, latex paint, radioactive or medical materials, explosives, ammunitions, ordinance, or compressed gas cylinders. For more information, watch for ads in the *Centre Daily Times* and radio stations before the event. **Call the CCSWA at 238-7005 with any questions** – especially if you are not sure about the disposal of certain items.

UPCOMING GREGG TOWNSHIP FIRE COMPANY AND LADIES AUXILIARY EVENTS

Spring Bazaar:	April 5 th	Gregg Township Carnival:	July 31, August 1, 2
Fisherman's (Public) Breakfast:	April 12 th	Parade	August 1 st
Public (Ham Pot Pie) Supper:	April 26 th	Public (Ham Pot Pie) Supper:	October 25 th
Fishing Derby:	May 17 – 18	Holiday Bazaar:	December 6 th

To have the Ladies Auxiliary serve your Public Sale or cater your banquet contact Vicky Barner at 422-0387