



The Solebury Messenger

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March 2022

Supervisors Spell Out Priorities for 2022

At its first work session of 2022, the Board of Supervisors outlined its top agenda items for the coming year. While some items were carried over from 2021 due to the pandemic, a few new items are receiving heightened attention.

The Board has long wanted to bring together the chairs of the Township's several boards and committees in a public meeting, to share their priorities and ensure that every committee understands what each other is working on. This was a priority in previous years, but Covid restrictions made convening the meeting difficult.

Ordinance review will be on the agenda in 2022. Board members have received a good deal of community feedback on a number of issues, from AirBnB regulation to sign permits, and the board will use that community input to

revisit some legislation. Concerns about residential leaf burning and a review of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to encourage energy sustainability are also on the table.

The hiring of a new township manager will be a top administrative priority, as Manager Dennis Carney has announced his retirement later this year. Since Carney also serves as the de facto Public Works director, the Board will need to consider how to address the management of that department.

A number of Climate Action items will receive attention from the board this year. Several projects developed in the Environmental Advisory Council are reaching fruition, and the Board will consider how best to develop them.

Arriving at a long-term plan for the best uses for the old

flea market property along Route 202 will be a significant issue. The land is preserved as open space, and can be used for passive recreation, active recreation or cultural activities. Residents will be soon asked to provide input through an online questionnaire (see below), and several public meetings will follow.

2022 is the target year to try to bring the overpopulation of deer herds down to a manageable level. Herd reduction efforts, led by the US Department of Agriculture, will continue through the spring, with ongoing assessments from aerial surveys.

Ongoing activities beyond targeted 2022 agenda items include water resources management, trail development, quarry reclamation and traffic calming along the 202 corridor.

Keep an Eye on Your Mailbox for an Important Message

The Solebury Board of Supervisors wants your thoughts on how to use the Township's newly-acquired land along Route 202.

An invitation to share your thoughts with the Board will be arriving in the mail shortly

after April 1. Every Solebury household will be receiving a post card with instructions on how they can complete a short on-line questionnaire to express their views on uses for the land.

Responses will be limited to one per household, so be sure to save the postcard in a safe place, gather everyone

together and share your collective thoughts with the Board.

The online questionnaire will be open for two weeks, and should only take five minutes to complete.

Your opinion is valuable, and this is your chance to be heard!

What's in Your Inbox?

Meeting agendas, police alerts, weather bulletins and more are available by email. Visit SoleburyTwp.org and click "Email Notices."

Board of Supervisors Lists 2021 Accomplishments

2021 was another year that was significantly influenced by the pandemic. Throughout this time the Township continued to make adjustments as was done in 2020 to adapt to this new and challenging environment. Regardless of the difficulties Covid presented, Solebury Township staff, resident committee members, consultants and Board of Supervisors worked as best and as flexibly as could be done to provide the support the community has expected from their local government.

During 2021, the Solebury Board of Supervisors addressed over 170 issues. Many of these topics required extensive additional meetings and analysis. The Board of Supervisors met together a minimum of 39 times during the year. The Zoom video interface was an important meeting tool this year. In addition, all Supervisors are liaison to multiple Township Committees which in total met at least 80 times a year. Additionally, Supervisors and Township staff participated in many community and individual resident meetings. Lastly, the Township Administration continued to provide the valuable service of addressing many community matters daily as well as coordinating the decisions made by the Board of Supervisors.

Special mention should be made of the resident volunteer committees, Aquetong Spring Park Advisory Committee, Deer Committee, Environmental Advisory Council, Historical Architectural Review Board, Land Preservation Committee, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, Solebury Farm Committee, and Zoning Hearing Board. They continued to provide the foundation of many Township activities and decisions.

Although this report should be much longer to accurately describe all the achievements of those associated with Solebury Township, for readability sake, the following descriptions are a brief summary of accomplishments.

Finances & Bond Rating

- Moody's again has rated the Township at Aa1 due to its strong financial position that has been consistently improving in recent years.

- The pandemic created an uncertain economic situation for the Township. Consequently, expenditures were reduced, eliminated, or deferred. There are balanced budgets for both 2021 and 2022.

Township Administration

- Solebury Township hired two administrative employees to fill two existing open positions to assist with the increasingly complicated local government.

- The Township completed the integration of Zoom in the main meeting room as an enhancement to the video equipment that was installed in 2020. This capability allows participants, both in the building and on-line, to actively participate in Board of Supervisors as well as committee meetings.

- The Township is paying more

vendors electronically to eliminate the need for paper checks. Of approximately 278 regularly used vendors, 114 (41 percent) have been signed up for ACH or other electronic type payments.

- Continued with permit applications being available on Solebury's website and are being accepted electronically.

Land Preservation

- The Land Preservation Committee has had discussions concerning five Solebury properties, two of these may be preserved in 2022.

- Capping off a strong year of contacts, the LPC hosted a well-attended open house, garden gathering for those who have preserved, or are considering preserving, their property.

Police Department

- The Police Department, successfully completed the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association's accreditations program and has been re-accredited. The Department will once again go through the

process in September 2024. Accreditation is a means to evaluate and improve the STPD's overall performance. Approximately 10 percent of all Pennsylvania police agencies have such an accreditation.

- The Township goal is to provide to the community the 2021 Solebury Police Department incident report by the first quarter of 2022.

Roads, Bridges & Trails

- Paved 13 roads with 2,841 tons of blacktop.

- Various bridges were repaired, including stone arch bridges and a steel road grate.

- Ida Cleanup & Restoration - 500 tons of rock & stone placed in washed out areas as well as realignment of Cuttalossa Stream after it left its banks.

Parks & Recreation

- Completed construction of two dugouts at Laurel Park softball field.

- Opened two pickle ball courts at Laurel Park, with ongoing oversight of court time among players/users.

Board of Supervisors Lists 2021 Accomplishments

- Conducted park and facility site visits and reviews to educate members and residents about Solebury P&R assets, and spark new thinking about their future.

Aquetong Spring Park

- The park project was completed with a grand opening conducted in late spring, 2021.

- The 44 acre park contains approximately 2 miles of paved, grass, stone and woodchip walking trails with directional signs. Six benches have been donated and placed; 150 new trees planted.

- Numerous Solebury boards of supervisors; local, regional and state agencies, organizations and government officials have contributed to the success of this project.

Deer Management

- A Drone survey of deer was conducted with 2,054 deer observed. This measures to an estimated 76 head per square mile. Expert analysis indicates it should be in the 8-10 head per square mile to support a healthy environment.

- The volunteer hunter program continued, coordinated by the USDA. Approximately 289 deer have been harvested.

- Culling Program RFP's: USDA was selected with the goal of reducing the herd by 1,000 for 2022. The meat will be processed and donated to food banks.

Route 202 Corridor

- The Administration, Township road engineering consultants and two supervisors talked a number of times with the Bucks County Planning Commission to draw attention to Solebury planning needs along the Township's Route 202 corridor. Discussions will continue.

Development

- Reviews continued regarding a variety of development and remodeling applications. The Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board have devoted extensive amount of time and energy with numerous applications, including Heritage Senior Care/New Cartwheel Development site, the Carversville Inn, Riverview Land Development Plan and Solebury School.

- Special mention should be made of the extensive number of meetings by the Zoning Hearing Board to review the Carversville Inn application.

New Hope Crushed Stone Quarry

- The Township is continuing to meet with the DEP regarding the Quarry reclamation and stream restoration of Primrose Creek. The primary focus is the DEP-developed two year plan comprising the following three phases: dam or outflow structure development, revegetation of

quarry area, and Primrose Creek restoration.

Sustainability

- Developed a "Sustainability Matrix" designed as a measuring tool as well as for goals to enable the community to improve energy efficiency. Additional analysis will be performed in 2022 by Township committees before a Board of Supervisors review. The Planning Commission and EAC are leading this effort.

- The EAC is continuing efforts to develop a community outreach and ordinance relative to single-use plastics. The plan is for the Board of Supervisors to review these projects this year.

- The EAC is continuing efforts to make progress on "Ready for 100" and the energy transition plan.

Historical review

- The HARB accomplished nine application reviews:

- three full review applications
- six RRIK applications (Repair and Replacement In-Kind)

- Average HARB response time for review and approval of RRIK applications was less than one day.

Farming

The Solebury Farm Committee initiated a work plan with Land Trust of Bucks County to provide a "Land Owner – New Farmer" match application on the Land Trust's server.

Know Who to Call to Report Potholes

The coming spring thaw means potholes are bound to pop up. To help our road crews fix these potholes quickly, we need your help in reporting them as soon as they appear.

PennDOT is responsible for the state roads in the Township. Call 1-800-FIX-ROAD (1-800-349-7623) or file an electronic report at <https://customercare.penndot.gov>.

To report a pothole on any other road in Solebury, call 215-297-5656 or use the "Contact Us" button on the Township website.

State Roads in Solebury:

Aquetong Road ~ Carversville Road

Fleecydale Road ~ Green Hill Road

Lower York Road ~ Mechanicsville Road

Phillips Mill Road ~ River Road ~ Stoney Hill Road

Sugan Road (Paxson Road to Upper York Road)

Upper York Road ~ Windy Bush Road

Hanna Howe, Our Newest Supervisor

Hanna Howe is the newest member of the Solebury Township Board of Supervisors, having been elected to a 6-year term after the retirement from the Board of Carversville's Noel Barrett. Howe won her seat along with Kevin Morrissey, who was re-elected to another 6-year term.



Howe lives in Solebury township with her teenage daughter, and is the head librarian at Solebury School, where she has worked for 20 years. She has a Masters in Library Science from Rutgers University, a Masters in African Studies from Temple University, and a BA from The College of Wooster.

Prior to her election to the Board, she has served as a member of the Land Preservation Committee.

Last Big Piece of Ida Repairs Gets Under Way on Upper York Road

PennDOT has begun a \$1.3 million dollar project to replace an 800-foot-long section of Route 263 between River Road and Center Bridge Road. This section of road was severely damaged by the remnants of Hurricane Ida.

In addition to rebuilding the section of road that was washed away, the work includes repairing the damaged embankment, replacing drainage facilities and guide rails, and constructing a new retaining wall. The work is scheduled to be completed by July 1,

weather permitting.

Contractors are laying-out the area that needs to be cleared of debris, trees and shrubs, the first step in the intensive repair project.

Engineers will then get to work designing the retaining wall on Route 263, a key component of the project that will help protect the roadway from future storm damage.

In the remainder of this winter, crews will clean out and rebuild the drainage system

Drones Return to the Sky For Follow-up Deer Survey

Aerial photography drones will be hovering in the early night sky over Solebury during the first week of March, to help the Township get an accurate count of deer herds and their locations. The drones, carrying infrared cameras, will be operated by FAA-certified staff scientists from the Raritan Valley Community College Center for Environmental Studies.

Beginning Feb. 28 and continuing for eight days, weather permitting, the drone team will be operating from positions on Township-owned land, at the end of cul-de-sacs, and along roads with wide shoulders. The flights will take place at night, many between 7 p.m. and 10 p.m. The team will be wearing reflective jackets and will mark out their takeoff and landing point with safety cones.

An accurate deer population count is an important part of

Solebury's Deer Management Program. The data from the deer survey are used to determine whether the Township is meeting its goals, if additional control measures are necessary, and to identify any "hot spots" where deer density is high.

Infrared drone surveys provide additional clarity to existing survey data, giving the Township a more robust picture of the deer population. The Raritan Valley Community College program has been conducting wildlife surveys for municipalities in central New Jersey for over 13 years and operates as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.



The DJI Inspire drone in flight, the same model in use for the deer survey.



The scene along Center Bridge Road, September 2021.

Volunteers Sought for Boards and Committees

One of the reasons Solebury is such a great place to live is because of our citizen volunteers. We are very fortunate to have more than 40 volunteers who serve the township on permanent and ad hoc advisory boards. Solebury currently has numerous vacancies, for full members, associate members or alternate members, on the following boards:

The Environmental Advisory Council seeks three one-year associate members. The EAC advises local governmental agencies, including the Planning Commission, Parks & Recreation Board and elected officials, on matters dealing with protection, conservation, management, promotion and use of natural resources, including air, land and water resources, located within the Township.

There is one vacancy on the Solebury Farm Committee for a three-year member and three openings for associate members with a one-year term. The Committee was established in July 2016 to protect agricultural land in the Township and support and strengthen our farming economy.

On the Historical Architectural Review Board, which evaluates the appropriateness of proposed construction or renovation within our two regulated historic districts, there are three one-year associate member vacancies.

The Land Preservation Committee is seeking volunteers to fill two two-year member vacancies and three one-year associate member vacancies. The Committee works individually with land owners to eliminate development potential on their properties with either gifted or purchased conservation easements.

Three one-year associate members are sought by the Parks & Recreation Board. Members are charged with master planning for Township park sites, recommending, organizing and implementing recreational programs to address the needs of all segments of Solebury's community, and developing, improving and maintaining Township-owned parks.

The Solebury Planning Commission has two one-year associate member vacancies. Working under the guidelines established in Solebury's

Comprehensive Plan, Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code, the Planning Commission coordinates with the Township Manager, Solicitor, Planner and Engineer to review all land development site plans.

The Zoning Hearing Board seeks two volunteers to fill three-year alternate member vacancies. The Board conducts public hearings at the request of developers and residents seeking zoning relief to an existing provision of the zoning ordinance via variance or special exception.

File Your Local Tax Return Online

Tax Day is fast approaching. Solebury's local tax administrator, Keystone Collections Group, offers e-file, a way to file your local taxes online using your desktop computer or any mobile device.

With e-file, you enter only the most basic information necessary to file your local return. You can easily transfer overpayments to your spouse's balance due using the "Married Filing Jointly" option. You can file multiple returns from one e-file account, and you can view the status of your returns on the Home Page.

You can file your return today and schedule your payment for April 17 or before. You will get an online receipt for the payment. If you are due a refund, you'll receive an online confirmation that your refund was deposited into your bank account.

Solebury residents file and pay the 1 percent Earned Income Tax and the \$52 Local Services Tax through Keystone.

The 1 percent EIT is assessed by Solebury Township (0.5 percent) and the New Hope-Solebury School District (0.5 percent) on the earned income of Solebury residents, as well as on that of individuals who live outside the Township but work in Solebury.

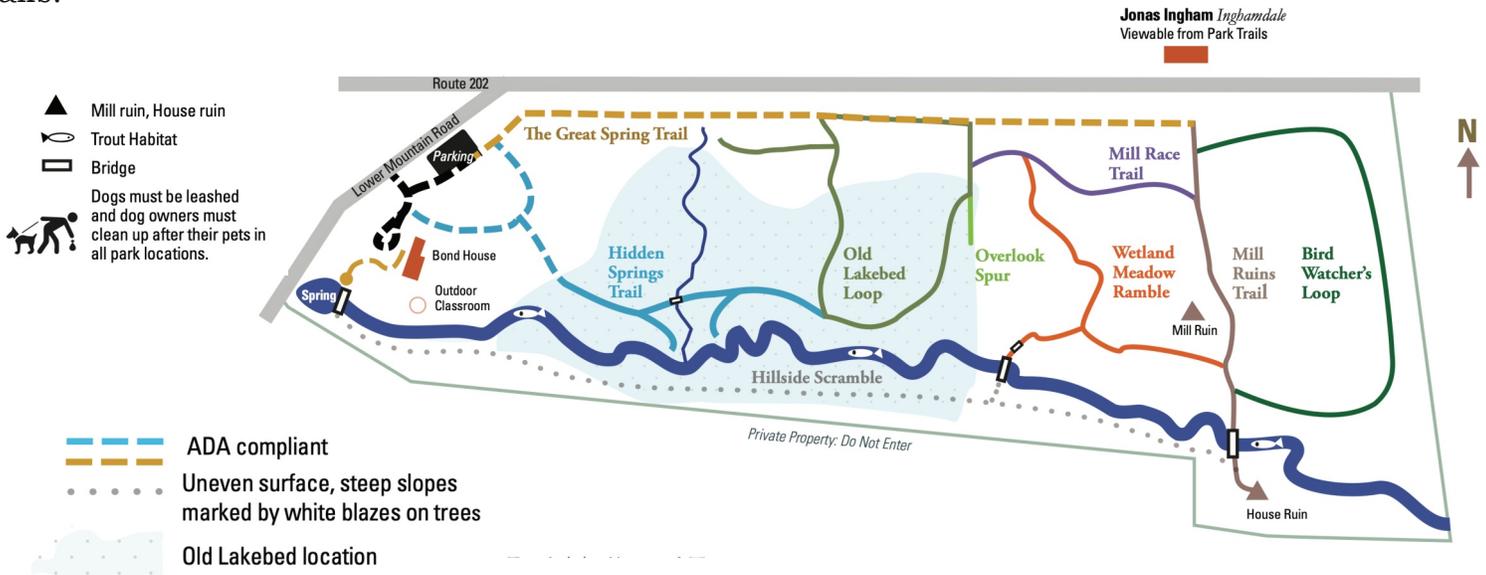
Earned income and net profits from all sources for a specific calendar year that total less than \$5,000 are exempt from the EIT.

Just point your desktop or mobile web browser to efile.keystonecollects.com/#/login.

Everything You Wanted to Know About Our Many Parks & Recreational Opportunities

Explore our Township parks and recreation offerings, and see what's new, by checking out our website at www.soleburytpw.org/parks-recreation for information and maps.

You can find out what is happening at our new park – Aquetong Spring Park – and even download a map of the trails that wind their way throughout that 48-acre site by going to our Facilities, Parks & Trails page at www.soleburytpw.org/parks-recreation/pages/facilities-parks-trails.



Township Directory

Police:

Emergency? Dial: 9-1-1. Nonemergency? Call: 215-297-8201.
General Inquiries: Police2@soleburytpd.org

Administration:

Township Number: 215-297-5656
General Inquiries: soleburytownship@soleburytpw.org

Township Manager Dennis H. Carney:
soleburymanager@soleburytpw.org

EAC Administrator Debra McFadden:
dmcfadden@soleburytpw.org

HARB Administrator Emily Kopach:
ekopach@soleburytpw.org

**LPC Administrator, Planning Commission Administrator
Jean Weiss:** jweiss@soleburytpw.org

Parks & Recreation Director Dudley Rice:
soleburyparks@soleburytpw.org

Right-To-Know Officers

Administrative Records: Jean Weiss,
soleburymanager@soleburytpw.org
Police Records: Police Chief Dominick Bellizzie,
police@soleburytpd.org

Board of Supervisors

Chair Mark Baum Baicker mbaumbaicker@soleburytpw.org | **Vice-Chair John Francis** jfrancis@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Hanna Howe hhowe@soleburytpw.org | **Supervisor Robert A. McEwan** rmcewan@soleburytpw.org

Supervisor Kevin Morrissey
kmorrissey@soleburytpw.org

Township Calendar

*Calendar information is subject to changes.
Confirm all dates and times with the Township office.
Instructions on virtual meetings are posted on the Township website.
Meetings begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.*

March

3/1 10 a.m. Board of Supervisors Work Session
3/7 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
3/8 Environmental Advisory Council
3/9 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
3/14 Solebury Township Planning Commission
3/15 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
3/17 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
3/24 Parks & Recreation Board
3/29 Solebury Farm Committee

April

4/4 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
4/5 10 a.m. Board of Supervisors Work Session
4/11 Solebury Township Planning Commission
4/12 Environmental Advisory Council
4/13 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
4/19 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
4/21 6 p.m. Land Preservation Committee
4/28 Parks & Recreation Board

May

5/2 6 p.m. Historical Architectural Review Board
5/3 10 a.m. Board of Supervisors Work Session
5/9 Solebury Township Planning Commission
5/10 Environmental Advisory Council
5/11 Zoning Hearing Board (as needed)
5/17 6 p.m. Board of Supervisors
5/19 Land Preservation Committee
5/26 Parks & Recreation Board

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