

WORCESTER



TOWNSHIP

At the Center Point

of Montgomery County

Making Cents

Saving Taxpayers Money

Saving taxpayer money, it's one of the things Worcester Township does best! Here's another example of a step we're taking today to keep our financial position secure tomorrow.

What We Did...

Provide "in-house" inspection of the annual Road Program and other construction projects.

The Details...


Some municipalities contract for the inspection of road, park, and other construction projects. Typically, these municipalities assign the work to a consulting engineer or hire a construction manager. Worcester utilizes its Public Works Department employees to do this work.

How Much We Saved...

The Township saves approximately \$22,000 in inspection and related costs for the annual Road Program alone.

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And the dollars saved for other projects completed throughout the year can total even more! 

2020 BUDGET PROPOSED

No new taxes, no tax increases and Per Capita Tax eliminated

Like low taxes and local government that's sensible and responsible? Then there's a lot to like about Worcester Township. The proposed 2020 Budget includes no new taxes and no tax increases, and maintains the higher-quality services and programs our community enjoys today.

The current Township real estate tax, at 0.05 mills, is the lowest municipal millage rate in Montgomery County. This rate will stay the same in the coming year. This means that the owner of a property in Worcester Township that is assessed at \$400,000 pays \$20 in property tax to the Township. This same owner pays \$1,539 in property tax to Montgomery County (3.849 mills), and \$12,151 in property tax to the Methacton School District (30.3781 mills).

In addition, the Per Capita Tax is proposed to be eliminated in the coming year. This tax is currently paid by all non-student residents ages 18 and older, at an annual rate of \$1.

The proposed Budget provides:

- more than \$900,000 in road improvements, to keep our roads safe and in good repair;
- several improvements to Township trails and parks;

- a 5% increase to the Township's contribution to the Worcester Township Volunteer Fire Department, our community's all-volunteer emergency service provider;
- a 5% increase to the Township's contribution to the Norristown Library, our community's public library; and,
- new Public Works equipment, to replace needed equipment that have reached the end of its useful life.

The Budget also includes one hire, an entry-level Public Works Laborer position. This hire is needed because our Public Works team has recently assumed new responsibilities—like construction inspections—that the Township had traditionally assigned to consultants. And while the hire will increase labor costs, the Township will see a decrease in overall expenses by doing more work "in-house".

The Budget proposes a one-half percent increase in residential and commercial sewer rates in the coming year. For residential customers the sewer rate will increase by about 23 cents per month.

The 2020 Budget is now available for review at the Township Building and at worcestertwp.com. (Continued on page 2)

Hollow Road Bridge

The Township recently reviewed a segment of on-road trail located on the Hollow Road bridge. In order to improve the safety of the pedestrians and cyclists who use this trail, the bridge will be converted to one-lane crossing, with vehicles yielding to oncoming traffic in both directions. By creating a single lane of traffic, a wider trail corridor will be established, one that is further separated from passing vehicles. The Township's Traffic Engineer is now preparing the plans needed to install these improvements, and the work is expected to get underway shortly. The Township will also make signage and other safety improvements to a portion of on-road trail near the intersection of Hollow Road and Zacharias Road, and to the trail crossing at the entrance to Heebner Park.

Ask Mary Ann

When the telephone rings at the Township Building, and the resident on the line asks a question, Receptionist extraordinaire Mary Ann always has the answer. Here's one of questions that Mary Ann often fields, and her answer...

RESIDENT: "Can I get documents notarized at the Township Building?"

MARY ANN: "Yes, one of our Township employees is a notary, and the Township provides notary service at no cost to our residents. We recommend calling the Township Building before your visit, to ensure the notary will be here when you arrive."

2020 Budget Proposed

CONTINUED

The Board of Supervisors will consider adoption of the Budget at their monthly Business Meeting on December 18. Folks with questions about the Budget may contact Township Manager Tommy Ryan at (610) 584-1410, or by e-mail at tryan@worcestertwp.com.



NEW TRAIL AND BRIDGE AT DEFFORD PARK

The Township recently completed construction of a 900-foot pedestrian trail that links the existing sidewalk system in the Defford Road and Clyston Road neighborhoods to the nearby shopping center at Skippack Pike. In addition, a small bridge was built to span the scenic Zacharias Creek.

The project was funded in part by a \$63,000 grant from Montgomery County.

The new trail segment is part of a proposed trail network in Evansburg State Park to Heebner Park to the historic Peter Wentz Farmstead. Worcester and Skippack Township officials are now finalizing an agreement with the Commonwealth to construct a one-mile extension to the Zacharias Creek Trail that will connect this trail to the 26-mile trail network in Evansburg State Park. More information on this exciting trail project will be included in future newsletters! 🐾

THREE BRIDGES RE-DECKED



The Township recently completed upgrades to three bridges, with new decking installed at bridges at Barley Lane, Green Hill Road and the aptly-named Woodbridge Lane. In 2019 alone the Township invested more than \$1 million in our community's infrastructure network—an impressive number

given our entire budget totals about \$5 million each year. When it comes to keeping our roads and bridges in great condition, Worcester is second to none. 🐾



CANDLELIGHT TOURS AT HISTORIC PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD

Let the soft glow of candlelight guide you throughout the historic Peter Wentz Farmstead on a tour that showcases colonial music and seasonal entertainment. There's even a visit from Belsnickel, the traditional Pennsylvania German Saint Nicholas. Join the festivities on Saturday, December 7, from 3pm to 9pm (the last tour begins at 8:30pm). All ages welcome, and a \$2 per person donation is kindly suggested. For more information please contact the Farmstead at (610) 584-5104. 🐾



HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE FARMERS' UNION HALL

Saturday, December 7
1pm to 4pm

The museum at Farmers' Union Hall will be decorated for the holidays in vintage style. One lucky visitor will take home a delicious homemade gingerbread house. Limited-edition handmade ornaments will be for sale. The Farmers' Union Hall is in Center Point Village, at 2011 Valley Forge Road. For additional information please visit worcesterhistorical.org. 🐾



SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

Saturday, December 14
(rain date December 21)

He's made his list. And after checking it twice—Santa Claus will be in town on Saturday, December 14. Mr. Claus will be escorted around Worcester Township on a fire engine! Santa's appearance is made possible by the great folks at Worcester Volunteer Fire Department who, as always, have been good all year! Please check worcesterfd.com for Santa's tour times. 🐾

Boy Scout Troop 133 Christmas Tree Sale

Friday, December 6 (6pm) to
Sunday, December 8 (5pm)
and Friday, December 13 (6pm)
to Sunday, December 15 (5pm)

Boy Scout Troop 133 will hold its Annual Christmas Tree Sale at the Worcester Township Community Hall at 1031 Valley Forge Road. The Scouts offer a terrific selection of trees, so finding the perfect tree has never been easier. Proceeds make possible the many great programs and activities the Scouts enjoy throughout the year. Hurry... the trees always sell out!

Holiday Tree Drop-Off

Trees and greens may be dropped-off between December 26 and January 31.

Worcester Township will again host a holiday tree drop-off location at the self-serve bins located at the Public Works complex (behind the Township Building), 1721 Valley Forge Road. Since we recycle the trees into mulch, all stands, ornaments, plastic bags and tinsel (*do they still make this stuff?*) must be removed. And please note that wreaths are not accepted.

Toys for Tots Collection

Last year we received more than 100 toys; help us to do even better this holiday season! Worcester Township will again serve as a drop-off location for the United



States Marine Corps' annual Toys for Tots Program. Help brighten the holidays for those less fortunate by bringing a new and unwrapped toy to the Township Building, 1721 Valley Forge Road, during office hours, 7:00am to 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. Used toys, realistic-looking toy weapons and items containing food can't be accepted. For more information visit toysfortots.org.

Free Little Library Book Review

Tales of a Fourth-Grade Nothing

by Judy Blume

reviewed by Carly Davis (age 9)



The Story...

The book is about nine-year-old Peter Hatcher and his younger brother Fudge. Fudge is constantly misbehaving, and his parents don't seem to care. Sometimes, his parents even blame Peter for Fudge's bad behavior!

My Favorite Part...

My favorite part was seeing what crazy thing Fudge would do next.

My Recommendation...

5 stars out of 5. I think it is a great book for kids my age.

Thank you, Carly, for an amazing book review! Would you like to review a book from our Little Free Library collection? Simply visit the library at the Township Building, 1721 Valley Forge Road, pick a book (it's free), and ask a parent to contact Recreation Coordinator Steve Heintz at (610) 584-1410, or by email at sheintz@worcestertwp.com.

Days Gone By

For more than a century a general store operated at the northwest corner of Skippack Pike and Valley Forge Road, where the gas station now stands. In addition to various merchandise, the store offered an array of useful services. Residents could mail letters and buy stamps, cash paychecks and make deposits to the local bank, and even get their hair trimmed at a small barbershop that did business in a portion of the building.

Source: *A History of Worcester Township.*



WORCESTER SCENES

Does the picture above look familiar?

The first person to identify this location in Worcester Township will receive a prize, and a shout-out in our next newsletter. Send your best guess to Mary Ann at mmurray@worcestertwp.com. And congratulations to Greg Olen, who was the first to correctly identify the plow at the Township Building courtyard in our last newsletter. 🐦

HOME COOKIN' AT MEADOWOOD

by a Meadowood Senior Living residents,
amateur Chefs Gary & Marilyn Kester

Marilyn and her husband, Gary, have called Meadowood home for more than four years. Before moving into Meadowood their home was in Salford Township for 45

years. Marilyn worked as an elementary school librarian in the Souderton Area School District, and Gary worked for Merck in Research Information. Gary and Marilyn have three children and seven grandchildren. This Chocolate Chip Cake recipe is a favorite of the Kester children and grandchildren. "The sour cream is the most important ingredient," says Marilyn. "This assures that the cake will be moist. And the chocolate chips appeal to children of all ages!" 🐦



Marilyn and her famous Chocolate Chip Cake.
(Gary not shown, in kitchen eating cake.)

WATERSHED PROTECTION TIP

Friendly Yard Care Tips for Winter

Yard work done for the year? Not yet... there are plenty of things to do in the yard this winter that will help reduce the need for pesticides next spring.

- Spray dormant oil on the bark surfaces of pest-prone ornamental trees and shrubs. Dormant oil is non-toxic and works to kill the eggs of wintering insects. Check product labels for a list of sensitive plants, such as azaleas. Be sure not to spray on blue-needled conifers.
- Spray a leaf protectant on hollies, rhododendrons and other broadleaf evergreen plants to protect against winter moisture loss. Spray early in the winter season when the temperature is above freezing.
- Late winter (i.e., March) is a good time to overseed bare spots in lawns. This will increase turf density before weeds have time to germinate.

This Watershed Protection Tip is part of Worcester Township's ongoing efforts to provide public education on stormwater management and to protect our environment. 🐾

PROPER MAILBOX PLACEMENT

Help Reduce the Opportunity for Damage

Worcester Township takes every precaution to avoid damaging mailboxes during snow removal operations.

Below are some helpful mailbox placement tips to help reduce the chance your mailbox is damaged this winter:

- Along an uncurbed roadway, a mailbox should be located 2' from the edge of pavement to provide adequate clearance.
- Along a curbed roadway, a mailbox face should be located 8" behind the curb face.
- Install the mailbox on the side of your driveway away from approaching traffic. This will lessen the likelihood of a plow strike, and minimize the shoveling needed to clear the area around the mailbox.

The Township will replace a standard mailbox and post only if either or both are struck by the plow, and only if these are installed to the specifications of the United States Postal Service (USPS).



The USPS requires that:

- the mailbox be installed at least 42" above the roadway surface; and,
- mailbox posts not exceed 4" by 4" for wooden posts, and a 2" diameter for steel pipe posts; larger posts are deemed "deadly fixed objects", and are not permitted within the right-of-way.

The Township neither replaces nor reimburses residents for custom mailboxes or ornate posts, and the Township is not responsible for damage caused by snow or ice that is thrown from the snowplow blade.

If you believe a properly-installed mailbox or post was struck by a Township vehicle please contact the Township at (610) 584-1540. 🐾

Remember the Flushable Four

Grinder Pump Man says...

If your property has a grinder pump, only four kinds of materials are permitted to be discharged into the sanitary sewer system:

1. human waste & toilet paper;
2. food wastes processed through a garbage disposal unit (but not grease);
3. water from sinks, tubs & dishwashers;
4. and, water from washing machines.



Any other material can damage your grinder pump, and this includes all varieties of adult and baby wipes—even the ones

advertised as "safe for septic systems."

Grinder pumps are owned by homeowners, and major repairs can be expensive. So avoid costly fixes, and remember the "Flushable Four!"

Recycling Ideas

Reuse and Organize

US consumers will spend an estimated \$10.3 billion on home organization products in 2019 (packagedfacts.com).

But you don't need to buy a new container, basket or bin to get organized. Plastic jugs, glass bottles and other recyclables can do the trick, and without the cost!



Assist Emergency Responders

Below are three simple tips to reduce delays when emergency responders are called to your home.

- Make sure house numbers are visible from the street. Reflective letters, or a reflective background, make numbers easier to locate and read.
- Clear snow from fire hydrants. This helps firefighters to connect to the hydrant as fast as possible.
- Trim bushes and trees along the driveway. Fire engines are much higher and wider than the average car. A clear corridor that's 11-foot wide and 14-foot high allows an engine to pass unhindered.

The sooner emergency responders can find you, the sooner they can help you!

2020 Road Improvement Program Preview

The Township completed the 2019 Road Program in August—on schedule and under budget! The program repaired and resurfaced more than 3.4 miles of Township-owned roads—a significant investment in our community's roadway network. And that doesn't include the many smaller fixes made by our Public Works team throughout the year!

The Township is now preparing a list of roadways for possible repair or resurfacing in 2020. At this time the list includes all or portions of Adair Drive, Artmar Road, Berks Road, Creedley Road, Ernest Lane, Ethel Avenue, Morris Road, and Old Orchard Road. Please note the list is tentative. As the winter progresses Township staff will carefully monitor roadway conditions, and prioritize projects as conditions warrant.

Additional information on the 2020 Road Improvement Program will be published in the Spring newsletter. Until then—enjoy the season, and stay warm!



VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS HOURS LOGGED

Through the first nine months of 2019, the men and women of the Worcester Volunteer Fire Department logged 4,504 hours conducting drills and responding to calls for help.

If these folks were paid firefighters, the estimated cost to Worcester taxpayers for the same number of service hours would total about \$481,900. And if the Township were to employ a full-time paid fire department this cost would top \$2 million per year, or about \$180 for each person now living in Worcester!

Our volunteer firefighters may not be paid, but maintaining a dependable volunteer fire department isn't free. The Worcester Volunteer Fire Department is always looking for persons who can help protect our community. But if you don't have the time to volunteer please consider making a tax-deductible contribution to those who are willing to put themselves in harm's way to keep our families safe. 🙏

Send your contribution to:

1725 Valley Forge Road, Post Office Box 1
Worcester, PA 19490

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The following projects are now under review:

- Palmer: A subdivision of seven commercial lots and one residential parcel at Skippack Pike and Valley Forge Road.

The following subdivision and land development projects are among those receiving approval in the recent years, and construction has not yet begun:

- Meadowood: A 4,200 sf addition for administrative offices and resident amenities at an existing retirement community at Skippack Pike.
- Sparango Construction: An eight single-family detached home subdivision on Berks Road.

- Stony Creek Village: Office, retail and restaurant buildings at North Wales Road & Township Line Road.

The following approved subdivision and land development projects are now under construction:

- Meadowood, The Grove: A 52-unit age-restricted development at an existing retirement community at Skippack Pike.
- Reserve at Center Square: A residential subdivision at Skippack Pike that includes 125 townhomes and 125 single-family detached homes.
- Whitehall Estates: A 39 single-family detached home subdivision on Whitehall Road. 🙏



YOUNG REMBRANDTS DRAWING CLASS



Is your preschooler or elementary school student dreading spending yet another cold winter indoors? Sign-up for the Young

Rembrandts Drawing Class, and let their imaginations run free! This program allows every child to learn the basics of art and drawing from experienced staff in a fun environment! Children will learn how to draw the things they love, explore the artwork of the Masters, and more!

Saturdays, January 11 to February 22

Preschool Drawing: 10:30–11:15am

Elementary Drawing: 11:30am–12:30pm

Worcester Township Community Hall

Fee is \$113/child

To register, and for complete information, visit youngrembrandts.com.

DISCOUNTED TICKETS AVAILABLE

Looking for something to do on those snowy days off from school or work? Discounted tickets to ski resorts and other area attractions are now available at the Township Building. Most ski tickets are good for the entire season, however some blackout dates may apply. And they make a great stocking stuffer! For more information contact Steve Heintz, Recreation Coordinator, at (610) 584-1410, or e-mail at sheintz@worcestertwp.com.



BEGINNER'S HATHA YOGA

Join Worcester resident Ash Aragam for yoga! Learn basic poses and alignments for this ancient and popular practice. No experience needed! Please wear loose-fitting, comfortable clothing, and bring your own mat and water.

Session 1: Saturdays, 12/15 to 2/15
(no classes on 12/21 and 12/28)

Session 2: Saturdays, 2/22 to 4/28
9am to 10am

Worcester Township Community Hall
Please note: Some Saturdays may be unavailable due to other events at Community Hall. Registrants will be emailed these dates ahead of time.

\$5 residents / \$7 for non-residents—
and that's the fee for one *entire* session!
To register, download a recreation activity form at worcestertwp.com, and return it to the Township Building. Questions? Contact sheintz@worcestertwp.com.

SUGGESTIONS WANTED!

Our Parks & Recreation Department loves to provide fun programs our residents enjoy... like Worcester Community Day, Movie and Concert in the Park, and athletic programs. And if you have an idea for other great events, we want to hear from you! Send your event idea to Steve Heintz, Recreation Coordinator, at sheintz@worcestertwp.com, or call Steve at (610) 584-1410.



Methacton Dodgeball Tournament

Games held on Saturday, March 21
Registrations due January 10, 2019

Ready to get your game on? Sign-up for the Methacton Education Foundation's First Annual District-Wide Methacton Dodgeball Tournament. This fun event is open to Methacton School District students, families, employees and alumni. Games will be held on Saturday, March 21, but registrations are due on January 10. For more information visit please methactonfoundation.org/dodgeball.



Vegas at Variety

March 28 from 6pm–10pm

Find out if Lady Luck is on your side at Vegas at Variety! The event, which supports children with disabilities, will be held at College Hall at Montgomery County Community College, Blue Bell, on March 28 from 6pm to 10pm.

Proceeds from this fun night of dinner, drinks, gaming and prizes fund programs and operations of Variety—the Children's Charity in Worcester. In addition to gaming there will be a DJ, craft beer tasting and a photo booth! Tickets can be purchased online at varietyphila.org for \$47 each, or for \$55 at the door.



At the Center Point

of Montgomery County

1721 VALLEY FORGE ROAD
P.O. BOX 767
WORCESTER, PA 19490

HOURS: 7:00 AM-4:30 PM
PHONE: (610) 584-1410
FAX: (610) 584-8901
WORCESTERTWP.COM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

RICHARD DELELLO, CHAIR
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What's Happening!

Every Friday afternoon the Township distributes a **"Peek at the Week"**—a list of Township meetings and community events scheduled for the upcoming seven days, plus other useful information. To get your Peek by e-mail simply enroll for E-News Sign-Up at worcestertwp.com. **Peek at the Week** is also posted to the Township's Facebook (@worcestertownship) and Twitter (@WorcesterTwp) accounts.

HOW MUCH CANDY IN THE FISHBOWL?

There is a fish bowl in the lobby of the Worcester Township Building. And in this fish bowl there is candy... Strawberry Suckers to be exact. And lots of them. How many Strawberry Suckers are in the fish bowl is your guess, and if your guess is the closest without going over the actual number you'll win the candy, and sweet bragging rights.

Submit your guess at the Township Building, before 4:00 pm on January 30, 2020. One guess per person please. The winner will be announced in our next newsletter.



And congratulations to **John Detwiler**, whose guess of 286 came closest to the actual number of Peanut Butter Balls (288) in the fishbowl in our last contest. John, don't forget to share! The candy is kindly contributed by the employees of Worcester Township, who are not eligible to submit a guess (*sorry folks!*). 🐟