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June 28, 2021

Latest News

Reminder: Townships Need to Apply for American Rescue Plan Funds ASAP

Township officials are reminded that each township with a population of less than 50,000 must apply for its American Rescue Plan funds through the state Department of Community and Economic Development's Single Application for Assistance as soon as possible. Completed applications can expect to see funds transferred in mid-July. Townships with populations of 50,000 or more must apply directly through the U.S. Treasury.

PSATS has learned, from other states, that the U.S. Treasury Department has made clear that unapplied for ARP funds cannot be reallocated for 60 days (late July in PA). Accordingly, expect to hear this week that while townships are urged to apply by June 30, additional time will be provided in accordance with Treasury guidance. We are pressing DCED and the Governor's Office to confirm this extension which would provide welcome relief for the many townships struggling to update or apply to SAM.gov.

PSATS has provided detailed information on how to apply on its COVID-19 page, which is available by [clicking here](#). Please note that ALL townships are now required to apply for a SAM.gov registration, and proof of application for a SAM.gov account is required for the DCED Single Application. **You do NOT need to wait for approval for SAM.gov before applying to DCED.**

Together Again!

Watch Your Mail for Information on PSATS Business Meeting, Centennial Celebration

Join PSATS for two major events scheduled for this fall in Hershey! Registration information was mailed late last week for our **Centennial Celebration Dinner on October 14**, followed by **PSATS 2021 Annual Business Meeting on October 15**.

Registration Opens August 2: Registration for the Business Meeting and Centennial Dinner will open on Monday, August 2. Look for registration materials with detailed instructions in your mailbox this week!

Business Meeting: On Friday, October 15, voting delegates will conduct **PSATS' 2021 Annual Business Meeting**, hear committee reports, elect PSATS leadership, and most importantly, adopt resolutions that will guide state association policy in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C. All are welcome with priority registration going to voting delegates.

Appointing Your Voting Delegates: When registering for Business Meeting, you will need to note who your voting delegate is because no records were "rolled over" from the spring conference registration. Technically, it is the same event and does not require a public action unless you are changing your township's original designation. If making a change, be sure to decide at your next scheduled meeting so you are ready when registration opens.

Centennial Celebration Dinner: On Thursday, October 14, the Pennsylvania Leadership Institute will host a **Centennial Celebration of PSATS' First 100 Years**. This fun-filled historic evening, complete with dinner and light entertainment, is not to be missed!

Pennsylvania Mask Mandate Gone

Effective at 12:01 am today, Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam [lifted the statewide mask mandate](#). Beam continues to encourage Pennsylvanians to follow [Centers for Disease Control guidance for wearing a mask](#) where required by local business and workplace guidance. The CDC recommends individuals wear a mask on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation, as well as airports and stations. [Vaccinated individuals generally do not need to wear masks](#) according to CDC guidance, except where required.

PennDOT Accepting Applications for Funding Opportunity

The state Department of Transportation will accept applications for the 2021 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program **until October 15**. \$18 million is available for projects that enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improve access to public transportation, create safe routes to schools, preserve historic transportation structures, provide environmental mitigation, create trails that serve a transportation purpose, and promote safety and mobility. Local governments are eligible to apply. For more information, [click here](#). Questions about the TA Set-Aside program can be directed to RA-pdTASA@pa.gov or 717.775.3276.

Pa. COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, Deaths Continue to Drop

Case counts decreased for the tenth week in a row with 1,263 new cases of COVID-19 reported this week, 38% less than last week. The statewide COVID-19 total case count now stands at 1,211,603. The commonwealth has dropped to the 41st highest growth in cases per 100,000, with Missouri, Nevada, and Wyoming

now making up the top three.

For the tenth week in a row, the [number of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Pennsylvania](#) has decreased from 441 to 350, a 20.6% decrease. 66 of these patients are in an ICU, down from 99 the prior week. The number of COVID-19 patients on a ventilator statewide decreased from 67 to 54.

Deaths attributed to COVID-19 in Pennsylvania decreased for the fifth week in a row. 85 deaths were reported this week, 10.5% less than the previous week. Total deaths in Pennsylvania have reached 27,654. Deaths nationwide officially passed 600,000 this week.

Pennsylvania's statewide percent-positivity rate has decreased for the tenth week in a row from 1.4% to 1.2% and is below 5% for the sixth week in a row. 65 counties now have rates less than 5% (*up from 64 last week*), two counties have rates of 5% to less than 10% (*down from three last week*), and no county had rates of 10% to less than 20% for the second week in a row. [Click here](#) for more county-specific information.

This Day in History

On June 28, 1953, workers at a Chevrolet plant in Flint, Michigan, assemble the first Corvette, a two-seater sports car that would become an American icon. The first completed production car rolled off the assembly line two days later, one of just 300 Corvettes made that year.

Here is the link for this week's issue of the [Pennsylvania Bulletin](#).

Legislation & Policy



General Assembly Approves Final 2021-22 State Budget

On Friday, the General Assembly approved the final \$40.8 billion 2021-2022 state budget package, which includes \$2.2 billion in federal stimulus funds and is a 8 percent increase in spending from the previous fiscal year. The final budget does not include any State Police fees, new taxes or tax increases.

Many line items are the same as the 2020-2021 budget, while gaps for some programs, primarily in education and health and human services, were filled with stimulus funds. The budget package also includes allocations for rental, utility and water assistance, as well as childcare stabilization for those struggling from the pandemic.

The Pennsylvania State Police received a net increase of \$14.6 million. As expected, the PSP budget received less funding from the Motor License Fund than in previous years, with the increase coming from the General Fund.

The state Department of Transportation's allocation from the Motor License Fund for traffic signals increased from \$10 million to \$40 million.

The state Department of Community & Economic Development received a slight increase of \$2 million while the Governor's Center for Local Government Services and the Office of Open records received level funding. The General Assembly also allocated \$20 million from federal stimulus funds for broadband deployment in unserved and underserved areas.

Governor Wolf has expressed his support of the final budget package and is expected to sign it soon.

Meeting Agenda Bill Passes

On Friday, the Senate unanimously approved SB 554 which will amend the Sunshine Act to require agencies, including townships, to post a meeting agenda containing all items that will be voted on at least 24 hours before a meeting. Additionally, the agenda must be posted on an agency's website, if it has one, or at its building and meeting place. SB 554 does allow an agency to vote to add unadvertised items to the agenda if agreed to by a majority of the governing board. SB 554 has passed both the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

5G Legislation Passes

On Friday, the Senate unanimously passed HB 1621 which provides for the regulation of small wireless facilities in municipal rights-of-way. It also authorizes municipalities to charge an annual fee for the use of the right-of-way, not exceeding \$270 per small wireless facility or \$270 per new utility pole with a small wireless facility and sets the maximum permitted height of the pole and small cell facility at 50-feet. Small cells will be required to comply with restrictions in place in underground utility districts and municipalities will be able to develop reasonable design guidelines to minimize aesthetic impact. Municipalities will have 60 days to review applications for collocation on preexisting structures and 90 days for the installation of a new structure with attached small wireless facilities. HB 1621 has passed the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

Authority Rate Adjustment Legislation Passes

On Friday, the Senate unanimously passed HB 957 which amends the Municipal Authorities Act to allow owners of multiple rental properties served by a single meter to request the authority to adjust the amount billed. An owner requesting an adjustment will be required to show a minimum of five consecutive years of actual usage data showing the amount billed exceeds the actual usage by 30 percent or more. If the usage data shows an adjustment is needed, the authority will be required to adjust the billing and use the adjusted amount going forward. An owner will not be able to request another adjustment for a period of 5 years after a rate adjustment. HB 957 has passed the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

Election Reform Legislation Passes

On Friday, the Senate passed HB 1300 which allows for early in-person voting

beginning in 2025, the correcting of non-fatal defects on mail-in ballots and gives counties the option of using secure mail-in ballot drop boxes. HB 1300 also expands Pennsylvania's voter identification law, improves election uniformity among the 67 counties, enhances certification processes for all machines used in elections, require signature verification using ballot scanning equipment for mail-in and absentee ballots, improves lists of registered voters and more. HB 1300 has passed the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

Microenterprise Loan Legislation Passes

On Friday, the House unanimously concurred on Senate amendments to pass HB 827 which gives municipalities the option to create a microenterprise loan program and allow for tax abatement for blighted properties. HB 827 has passed the House and the Senate and will be presented to the Governor.

House Judiciary Committee Approves Impeachment Bill

On Friday, the House Judiciary Committee approved HR 117 which would direct the Judiciary Committee to investigate the conduct of Township Supervisor Kerry Bumbaugh, Quincy Township, Franklin County, to determine whether he is liable for impeachment for misbehavior in office. HR 117 is now before the House.

Learn

PSATS educational events will be listed as follows: Mondays – All webinars; Tuesdays – Administrative; Wednesdays – Planning/Zoning; Thursdays – Public Works; Fridays – Public Safety. Click on the title of the class for more information and to register.

[Webinar - Traffic Calming - 6/30/21](#)

This webinar introduces traffic calming - an engineering tool that municipalities can use to address these requests and concerns.



[Webinar - Energy Assurance and Emergency Planning - 7/7/21](#)

This webinar will provide an overview of the state's current energy assurance plan and efforts in relation to Emergency Support Function 12 - Energy.



[Webinar - Understanding & Implementing PA's Police Reform Bills: Acts 57 & 59 of 2020 - 7/8/21](#)

This program will review the statutory and regulatory requirements for a municipality and their police department to properly implement Act 57, relating to background checks for law enforcement employment purposes and Act 59, relating to mental health evaluations and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) for law enforcement officers.



[Webinar - Your Personal Financial Foundation - Session 2](#)

Everyone knows that identity theft and ransomware is on the rise and is a headache to rectify when it happens, whether to you as an individual or as a township. But do you know all of the steps that you can take to better protect your identity and your personal information? In this webinar, you will learn some key tips to protect your personal information.



[Webinar - Using Open Space to Deliver Economic, Social and Environmental Benefits - 7/14/21](#)

This presentation will discuss how planners and community leaders can meet the increased demand for open space while addressing broader social, environmental, and economic needs.



[Webinar - Basic Parliamentary Procedure for Local Government - 7/15/21](#)

Parliamentary procedure may not seem to be the most exciting topic, but it is the absolute foundation for running an efficient township meeting and instilling confidence in your residents that the township is being effectively governed.



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