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June 15, 2022

Latest News

PennDOT Accepting Comments on 2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

The State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) are now accepting comments on the 2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) until June 30, 2022.

The 2023 STIP includes funding from federal, state, local, and private resources over a four-year period for capital improvements. The STIP consists of a list of prioritized projects identified for funding by federal fiscal year. Projects are sorted by county. The draft 2023 STIP can be viewed at <https://talkpatransportation.com/how-it-works/stip>.

Treasury Issues Clarification on Buy America Preference

The U.S. Department of the Treasury has clarified that American Rescue Plan are not subject to the Buy America preference in section 70914 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). This determination is based on the programs being authorized to provide assistance for “emergency response expenditures,” as provided for in section 70912(4)(B) of the IIJA, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Salary Survey Plus Phil Needs Your Help!

Make Sure Your Township Has the Earliest Access to Salary Survey Results!
Be sure your designated township staff (PSATS Salary Survey Plus processor) enters your township’s wage and benefit data by June 30 to ensure the earliest access to all PSATS Salary Survey Plus reports for 2022!



Today in History....

On June 15, 1776, the Assembly of the Lower Counties of Pennsylvania declared itself independent of British and Pennsylvanian authority, thereby creating the state of Delaware.

Delaware did not exist as a colony under British rule. As of 1704, Pennsylvania had two colonial assemblies: one for the "Upper Counties," originally Bucks, Chester and Philadelphia, and one for the "Lower Counties on the Delaware" of New Castle, Kent and Sussex. All of the counties shared one governor.

Legislation & Policy



The House and Senate will be in session today, June 15. Watch the session live [here](#).

NATaT Sends Letter Opposing Federal Gas Tax Holiday

While attractive as consumers, it is impossible to maintain roads and bridges without funding, especially given the higher inflationary cost of road maintenance, supplies and equipment. The National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT) and

PSATS are opposing a federal gas tax holiday proposal being discussed in Washington, D.C. The federal gas tax provides funding for many state transportation projects, including bridges. A gas tax holiday would leave transportation maintenance projects unfunded and increase future costs. PSATS members are also members of NATaT. [Click here](#) to read the letter.

An Extra Day to Oppose Unfunded Mandate...Call Your Senator

SB 669, the police pension credit bill, was postponed for a final vote in the Senate today. SB 669 would require municipalities to permit full-time police officers who have satisfied vesting requirements to purchase pension credit for prior police service in a different police department.

PSATS opposes SB 669 as an unfunded mandate and has asked the senators to vote no unless they will provide funding to cover the cost of this new benefit. While PSATS members strongly support law enforcement personnel and the difficult jobs they perform, the negative financial impact of this bill would be significant on many townships. As such, township officials are encouraged to reach out to their senator today and ask them to vote no on SB 669.

The current municipal employer would bear the brunt of future pension costs accrued with a different community in prior service. PSATS pension fund actuaries ran several scenarios which reflect the greatest impact is felt by smaller municipalities, already struggling to maintain a police force.

Senate Passes Budget Bill

The state Senate approved a general fund budget bill for 2022-2023. [SB 1100](#) would provide for the general fund in the upcoming fiscal year. The budget bill is likely to see additional changes in the House over the coming weeks before the House and Senate agree on a budget bill, which is expected to take place before the June 30 constitutional budget deadline.

RTKL Reform Bill Falls Short

[HB 2524](#) was passed by the House yesterday. The bill would amend the Right-to-Know Law to implement a number of reforms, several of which would be beneficial to townships. While PSATS and a coalition of local government associations requested meaningful language on major reforms, such as commercial fees and vexatious requests, the language in the bill falls short of being the effective, meaningful reforms that PSATS continues to ask for. PSATS will continue to work on RTKL reforms in the Senate. More action on RTKL bills is expected to occur over the next few weeks.

[HB 2148](#) was reported out of the Senate Local Government Committee. The bill would authorize local governments to **voluntarily place legal notices** on a website, in addition to the required newspaper advertisement. If the newspaper failed to timely publish the advertisement, the ad placed on the website, along with proof of publication and payment to the newspaper, would satisfy the legal requirements for advertising. This bill previously passed the House and would address a PSATS resolution.

[SB 797](#) was reported out of the House Urban Affairs Committee and would amend the **Neighborhood Improvement District (NID)** Act to provide more flexibility to local governments looking to enact NIDs, eliminate a restriction that a property be located in only one NID, and authorize Allegheny County to create an NID. The bill previously passed the Senate.

[SB 1193](#) was reported out of the Senate Law & Justice Committee. The bill would allocate \$50 million in American Rescue Plan funds to create a **Law Enforcement Recovery Grant Pilot program** to help law enforcement agencies attract new recruits, retain current officers, and fight violent crime.

Learn

PSATS educational events will be listed as follows: Mondays – All webinars; Tuesdays – Administrative; Wednesdays – Planning/Zoning; Thursdays – Public Works; Fridays – Public Safety.



[Duties Of A Zoning Hearing Board - 6/22/22 - Lehigh County](#)

Topics to be covered include procedures for deciding variances and special exceptions, handling hearing-related questions, Ethics Act requirements and much more. Attendees will also learn specific, practical tips that will leave them better prepared for their next meeting or hearing.



2022 PAAZO Fall Seminar

In the PAAZO Fall Seminar, learn from experts on a wide variety of topics pertinent to your duties as a municipal Zoning official.

- [9/13/22 - Cumberland County](#)
- [10/13/22 - Montgomery County](#)
- [11/17/22 - Butler County](#)

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