

A NEWSLETTER
CONTAINING
THE LATEST
INFORMATION
ON LEGISLATION
AND NEWS OF
INTEREST TO
TOWNSHIPS

ARP Payment Expected in August

State Treasurer Stacy Garrity stated that unclaimed funds from first round payments under the America Rescue Plan Act, totaling \$1.5 million, were sent to municipalities that did apply for these funds on July 15. About 75 municipalities didn't apply for the ARP funds. The reallocated payments are relatively small; the largest was \$8,262.81.

However, the second full round of payments — totaling about \$490 million — will take place in August. This is expected to equal your first payment plus a second redistribution of unclaimed funds. All ARP payments should be placed in the same account and recorded as revenue under 353.53, Federal Entitlements to Governmental Units.

Governor Signs Budget

In July, Gov. Tom Wolf signed the commonwealth's \$46 billion 2022-2023 state budget. The budget does not include any new or increased taxes. The new budget funds state government for the fiscal year and allocates the state's American Rescue Funds to numerous programs.

Wolf also signed [Act 54 of 2022](#), the Fiscal Code bill for 2022-2023, which does the following and addresses several PSATS resolutions:

- Creates a grant program of \$135 million for local law enforcement support;
- Allocates \$214.4 million to the Commonwealth Finance Agency's H2O Program, which provides water, sewer, and stormwater grants to municipalities and an additional \$105.6 million for the Small Water and Sewer Program;
- Directs the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to provide \$25 million in grants for greenways, recreational trails, open space, natural areas, watersheds, community parks, and other natural resource projects.
- Allocates \$220 million to the Clean Streams Fund in DEP;
- Provides for an increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates for ambulance transportation, upon federal approval. This includes a loaded trip fee of \$325 for basic life support, \$400 per loaded trip for advanced life support, and not less than \$4 per mile for each loaded mile beyond 20.
- Extends the municipal match requirement waiver for DCED Multimodal grants issued by the Commonwealth Finance Authority until December 31, 2022.
- Appropriates funds to the State Fire Commissioner for a statewide recruitment and retention coordinator and regional technical advisors to develop and implement recruitment and retention training programs and provide technical assistance to local governments and fire organizations.

The General Assembly is now on break for the summer and will return to session in September.

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PSATS testified
before the Senate
State Government
Committee on the
need for
meaningful
Right-to-Know Law
reform.

Capitol Roundup

PSATS Testifies at Legislative Hearings — PSATS recently testified before several legislative committees on behalf of PSATS and its members. Here is a summary:

PSATS Director of Government Relations Joe Gerdes testified before the **Senate State Government Committee** on the need for meaningful Right-to-Know Law reform. He highlighted PSATS support for open and transparent government, while urging senators to provide relief from the financial burden that the act places on townships.

Ben Webber, Township Engineer for Lancaster Township, Lancaster County testified before the **House Environmental Resources and Energy Committee** on MS4s compliance on behalf of PSATS. Webber discussed Lancaster Township’s experiences in attempting to comply with this mandate and the recent EPA audit of the township’s MS4 program.

To read the testimonies, go to psats.org and choose “Legislation & Policy” and then “Legislative Testimony.”

Senate Committee Passes Over RTKL Legislation — In June, the Senate State Government Committee was scheduled to consider comprehensive Right-to-Know Law reform yesterday, but choose to pass over [SB 492](#). According to the chair, Sen. David Argall, the summer will be spent discussing and negotiating SB 492 and [HB 2524](#). PSATS will continue to represent townships at the table over the summer.

NATaT Sends Letter Opposing Federal Gas Tax Holiday — The National Association of Towns and Townships (NATaT) is 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 and would leave transportation maintenance projects unfunded and increase future costs. PSATS members are also members of NATaT.

Governor Signs New Acts

Gov. Tom Wolf recently signed the following new acts and several address PSATS resolutions. Look for more details in the August issue of the *Pennsylvania Township News*.

[Act 41 of 2022](#) (SB 477) more clearly defines which types of improvements to real property require notice to the assessment office and increase the property valuation. The act consolidates and standardizes municipal code provisions that deal with boundary change but not mergers or consolidations. The act allows municipalities to adjust a municipal boundary or settle a dispute over an unclear boundary by agreement. Act 41 takes effect September 6.

[Act 57 of 2022](#) (HB 430) amends the Local Tax Collection Law to allow taxpayers who fail to receive a tax notice during their first year of occupancy to receive a waiver of penalties and additional costs from the tax collector, after showing proof of the property transfer. Act 57 takes effect October 10 and will require townships to adopt a resolution after that date. (PSATS will provide a sample resolution in September.)

[Act 67 of 2022](#) (HB 1615) amends the [state Liquor Code](#) to remove license restrictions and allow any license holder in all counties except Pittsburgh and Philadelphia to use amplified sound as long as it does not exceed 75 decibels beyond the property line. Licensees may amplify sound from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 10 am to midnight Friday and Saturday. Limited wineries were previously given this flexibility.

Act 67 removes restrictions on licensees and does not affect a municipality’s ability to regulate amplified sound through zoning or other local ordinances. Language in Section 493.1

Act 74 of 2022 reforms the Fireworks Law to allow municipalities to enact conditions and limitations on the use and sale of consumer fireworks that do not conflict with state law.

of the Liquor Code preserves the rights of municipalities to regulate zoning and enforce any other local ordinances dealing with health and welfare issues is unchanged by Act 67, which took effect July 11. The Pennsylvania State Police is charged with enforcing this provision.

[Act 72 of 2022](#) (HB 2097) sets the minimum staffing for a Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance as an emergency medical service (EMS) vehicle operator and an EMS provider that is an emergency medical technician (EMT) or above. Act 72 takes effect September 9.

[Act 74 of 2022](#) (HB 2157) reforms the Fireworks Law to allow municipalities to enact conditions and limitations on the use and sale of consumer fireworks that do not conflict with state law. Municipalities will be able to require permits for the use of consumer fireworks, except for certain holidays, and prohibit the use of consumer fireworks within a community if it is not possible to use these devices without being within 150 feet of a building or vehicle.

Act 74 directs the 12% consumer fireworks tax to be used for fire and emergency services programs. This act addresses several PSATS resolutions and takes effect September 10.

[Act 83 of 2022](#) (SB 251) regulates the manufacturing, labeling, packaging, sale, and inspection of fertilizer. The act creates setbacks for application of fertilizer, application rates from turf, and imposes restrictions on when fertilizer can be applied. The act includes a public outreach program. PSATS worked over several sessions to make the act effective while protecting townships from an expensive mandate. Act 83 took effect July 11.

[Act 84 of 2022](#) (SB 382) changes the transportation public-private partnership (P3) approval process and prohibits the approval of projects involving mandatory user fees. Act 84 took effect July 11.

[Act 90 of 2022](#) (SB 1094) requires the state Department of Transportation to obtain driver record information from the federal Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse before issuing, renewing, or upgrading a commercial driver's license. Act 90 takes effect September 9.

[Act 91 of 2022](#) (SB 1171) exempts government-owned vehicles and vehicles of local government contractors that are providing material for road construction or maintenance from bonding requirements on commonwealth-owned highways. Act 91 addresses a PSATS resolution and takes effect September 9, 2022.

To view these acts go to legis.state.pa.us and enter the bill number in the upper-right hand corner.

Give Your Township Access to Salary Survey Results!

Be sure to enter your township's wage and benefit data **by August 17** so that the PSATS Salary Survey Plus reports for 2022 can be released! Hundreds of townships have participated and we are nearly ready to release results, but need your help to make this product a success!

With inflation and challenges to find and keep quality employees, townships should participate to find out how other townships most like theirs are compensating employees and what benefits are provided.

To access Salary Survey Plus, log onto psats.org and look under "My PSATS" for "Salary Survey Plus." If you have any issues accessing the survey or need to change the township official designated to enter data (*the PSATS Salary Survey Plus processor*), email memberservices@psats.org.

Questions about the survey? Need help with a report? Email salariesurveyplus@psats.org or call (717) 763-0930, ext. 126, for Katie Lizza or ext. 138 for Holly Fishel.

Don't Miss PSATS Training Opportunities!

Don't miss these in-person and virtual training options! Go to learn.psats.org for details.

- **PSATS' Regional Forums:** Learn about issues that matter to your community. Coming **August 4** to Erie and **August 31** to Lancaster. Learn more at regionalforum.psats.org for events near you!
- **Developing Your Township Budget:** Learn proven methods to develop budgets that work. **August 8** in Franklin County, **August 9** in Washington County, **August 10** in Clarion County, **August 11** in Luzerne County, and **August 24** in Chester County.
- **Basic Training for Secretaries and Administrators:** Slated for **August 23** in Lackawanna County, this course will range from budgeting, purchasing, advertising, and meeting management to human resource issues and public engagement.
- **Stormwater 101:** This half-day, in-person, introductory class will educate you on the basics of municipal stormwater management and help you efficiently implement stormwater management best practices without breaking your budget. Slated for **August 4** in Montgomery County, **August 12** in Clearfield County, and **August 19** in Lackawanna County
- **Join in PSATS Webinar Series:** PSATS will hold upcoming webinars on topics ranging from Tactics & Controls to Uncover Fraud, to Streaming Municipal code enforcement with GIS/Automation to Making InterMunicipal Stormwater Management Work for you!

This and That...

Be sure to check this section each month, where you will find important reminders and information.

- **IRS Increases Mileage Allowance for Second Half of 2022** — Due to record gas prices in June, the Internal Revenue Service announced that the allowable mileage rate for business use of a personal vehicle will increase from 58.5 cents per mile to 62.5 cents per mile effective July 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022. The board of supervisors may choose to adjust its mileage rate up to the revised IRS rate for the second half of the year.
- **Commonwealth Authority Accepting Applications for RACP** — The Office of the Budget is accepting applications for the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) **until August 19**. RACP grants are for the acquisition and construction of regional economic, cultural, civic, recreational, and historic improvement projects and require a 50% match. To learn more, go to budget.pa.gov and choose "Programs" and then "RACP."
- **Alternative Fuels Grant** — The The state Department of Environmental Protection is accepting applications for the [Alternative Fuels Incentive Grant \(AFIG\) Program](https://www.dep.state.pa.us/energy/alternative-fuels-grant) **until August 26**. Townships and municipal authorities are eligible to apply for \$3 million in grant funding to support retrofitting vehicles to operate on alternative fuels and purchase of new alternative fuel vehicles. To learn more, go to [dep.pa.gov](https://www.dep.pa.gov) and choose "Residents" and "Grants, Loans, and Rebates."
- **Keystone Community Grants Available** — The [Keystone Communities](https://www.keystonecommunities.org) program supports local revitalization initiatives for the growth and stability of the community. Keystone Communities is accepting applications **until August 31** for a variety of grant opportunities. These include planning grants, revitalization, public improvements, and more. Townships are eligible to apply. To learn more, go to [dced.pa.gov](https://www.dced.pa.gov) and choose "Programs and Funding" and then "Search for Funding." Scroll down to find Keystone Communities. Pennsylvania will receive \$5 million through the Bipartisan Infrastructure
- **Federal Bridge Grants Available** — The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) is accepting applications for \$2.36 billion through the competitive Bridge Investment Program (BIP) to replace, rehabilitate, preserve, or protect bridges on the National Bridge Inventory. Townships are eligible to apply **until September 8**. Go to <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law/> for information.