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franc talk

May 2015

Franconia Township Poised for Long-Term Financial Success

Like many municipalities throughout the state, Franconia was faced with difficult budget decisions for 2015. With rising pension obligations, unfunded state mandates, and ever increasing health care costs, the Township's Board of Supervisors made the difficult decision now to ensure long-term financial success for years to come.

With a new millage rate of 1.8415, Franconia remains amongst the lowest taxed municipalities in our region while providing essential services like police coverage, road maintenance, and recreational facilities. While taxes have remained low for 2015, services will not only be maintained, but, in many cases, enhanced.

Township Supervisor Robert Nice, former vice president and chief financial officer for Rosenberger Dairies, helped craft a new five-year financial plan that will serve as a blueprint for the Township's financial future. The five-year plan includes a look at Township finances

from both a strategic and tactical point of view with a focus on ensuring that tax money is spent wisely.

With the Township's financial situation on sound footing, the Supervisors remain committed to ensuring that Franconia remains a family friendly community for generations to come. Working in partnership with the county and state, Franconia has preserved over 1000 acres of land, more than any other community in Montgomery County. Not only does preserving open space enhance the quality of life, it saves tax dollars by saving on services that would otherwise need to be provided by the Township, Souderton Area School District and Montgomery County if that open space would have been developed.

There is more good news. Earlier this year, Franconia was recognized as one of the safest communities in all of Pennsylvania. Based on the most recent FBI statistics available, Movoto Real Estate's annual 'Safest

Places in Pennsylvania' list ranks Franconia Township as the 15th safest area in Pennsylvania.

There's no doubt the future of Franconia looks very bright. But none of this success could have been accomplished without the volunteers who devote so much of their time to our community. We'd like to recognize and thank the members of the various Authorities, Boards, and Commissions, our volunteer firemen, police officers and others who have worked so hard to ensure public safety.

As always, it is our role as the Board of Supervisors to serve you. If we can ever be of assistance, feel free to contact us by calling 215-723-1137 or you may email Township Manager Jon Hammer at jhammer@franconia-township.org.

FRANCONIA TOWNSHIP

671 Allentown Road
Telford, PA 18969-2205
215-723-1137

www.franconiatownship.org

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Grey R. Godshall, Chairman
David B. Fazio, First Vice Chairman
Robert H. Nice, Second Vice Chairman
Curtis N. Kratz, Supervisor
Steven P. Barndt, Supervisor

TOWNSHIP MANAGER

Jon A. Hammer

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Administration 215-723-6777
Emergency 9-1-1
Joseph Kozeniewski, Chief
Stephen Rinker, Sergeant/Patrol
George H. Moyer III, Sergeant/Detective Division

BUILDING/PLUMBING INSPECTION

215-723-1137
Roger M. Koffel,
Code Enforcement Director
Jerry Rittenhouse, Building
Inspector/Code Enforcement Director

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

215-723-1153
Paul R. Nice, Public Works Director

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Tips For Making Sure A Mailbox Survives Winter

I realize the snow season is behind us, so now you will have the opportunity to improve your mailbox before the next season.

The condition of your mailbox is always revealed during snow removal operations. We are seeing more of the white plastic mailbox assemblies, which do appear aesthetically pleasing, but do not withstand the weight of heavy snow and slush along with the cold temperatures during snow removal operation.

Franconia Township is not, and will not, be held responsible for the integrity of your mailbox that becomes damaged during snow removal operations. They are the sole responsibility of each property owner within our community.

When searching for a replacement system, we have found that the Rubbermaid combination box and post to be the most durable system available.

When installing your mailbox, be sure to keep the front of the box 12-24 inches behind the edge of paving along our rural roadway, giving the snow plow room to clear the snow from the road. All boxes along curbing need to have the front of the unit behind the back of the curbing and not hanging into the roadway so that any maintenance equipment can run along the curb without damage to your box or post.

Hope this helps to answer some questions. After all, it's only eight months until winter.

Recycling Required In Franconia

The Township requires recycling by all entities existing within the municipality.

According to Chapter 115, Article I, Section 115-1 through 115-13 of the Franconia Township Codebook, all homes, apartments and other residential establishments are required to separate and recycle the following: clear glass, colored glass, newsprint (including newspaper inserts, junk mail and telephone books), aluminum cans, steel cans, bimetallic cans, No. 1 PET plastics and No. 2 HDPE plastics.



Commercial establishments are required to separate and recycle the following: corrugated paper, high-grade office paper, aluminum cans and yard waste. Hospitality establishments, which include restaurants and taverns, shall be required to separate and recycle the following: cardboard, office paper, newspaper (including newspaper inserts, junk mail and telephone books), aluminum cans, steel cans, bimetallic cans, No. 1 PET plastics and No. 2 HDPE plastics. Also, recycling containers shall be provided at all community events attended by 200 or more people.

Recycling bins are available for all residents at the Township Building.



Grey Godshall Elected Supervisor Chairman

Supervisor Grey R. Godshall was re-elected Chairman of the Board at its annual organizational meeting in January. David B. Fazio was re-elected First Vice Chairman and Robert H. Nice was elected Second Vice Chairman. Curtis N. Kratz and Steven P. Barndt complete the board's composition.



Robert Nice Appointed Supervisor

The Franconia Township Board of Supervisors appointed Robert H. Nice to fulfill the remaining term of office that was vacated by W. Keith Freed when he resigned in October.

Mr. Nice will complete the current term, which expires on December 31st, 2015. In order to serve another term in office, Mr. Nice would need to run and win the general election in November 2015. Mr. Nice comes to the Township Board with a strong background in finance. He owns and operates his own consulting firm, Robert H. Nice Consulting LLC, in which he helps clients buy, start, improve, and/or sell businesses. He has worked with over 100 clients and has assisted in the buying/selling of over 45 businesses to date.

He has a degree in Accounting from Temple University. He has served on the Franconia Sewer Authority, Franconia Pension Committee, Franconia Industrial Development Authority, and is also a member of the Telford Borough Authority.

Township Welcomes Administrative Staff

Jon A. Hammer and Beth T. Gooch are the newest members of the Township's administrative staff.

Jon was appointed as the Township Manager in September. He has a strong financial background and extensive experience in township management.



Jon is a graduate of St. Joseph's University with a degree in Finance.

He is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to implement its policies and he serves as a liaison between the board and the residents. His primary duties include the management of the budget, directing the daily administrative functions of the Township and implementing procedures for efficient and effective government. Mr. Hammer is married with two children.

Beth T. Gooch joined the Township Administration in April 2014. She is the friendly voice you hear when you call into the Township Administrative Offices. She provides support to the Building Inspectors/Code Enforcement Officers, as well as the Township Manager, Assistant Manager, and Finance Director.



Beth is responsible for the processing of all permit applications and zoning applications, coordination of all appointments for the Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officers, preparing zoning/permit violation letters and also monthly zoning/permit reports. She is also responsible for scheduling use of the Township Building or park pavilions, and various other duties as directed by Township management.

Beth resides in Marlborough Township with her husband. She has two children. She is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and has a background in business, customer service, billing and receiving.

Franconia Faces Stormwater Challenges

The Township currently regulates stormwater today through Ordinances and Codes, such as the PA Act 167 (Stormwater Management Act), which requires Watershed Plans to control flooding, and the Clean Streams Law, which sets standards for water quality.

The U.S. Clean Water Act requires that the nation's waterways be restored to swimmable and fishable conditions. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers the Clean Water Act (CWA). The CWA requires states to develop a pollution reduction plan for all Impaired Waterways.

In Franconia, the Indian Creek, Skippack Creek and Neshaminy Creek are currently listed as impaired. The East Branch of the Perkiomen Creek is currently not impaired, although it is being restudied for possible impairment. These impaired waterways are studied and a total maximum daily load (TMDL) is determined. A TMDL is assigned to a waterbody that will regulate how much pollutant the waterbody can absorb and still meet the CWA requirements. A municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) is the mechanism in which stormwater runoff is carried and then discharged into local waterways. These municipal systems are regulated by EPA and DEP through a permitting process. The permit requirements for these systems must be met.

The Township was required to submit a "strategy" to DEP in August 2012 to show how the TMDL can be met for the watersheds. This "strategy" was submitted taking a minimalist approach, since no guidelines were provided. Additionally, if a more generous approach was offered and accepted, a reduction in the requirements would not have been permitted with the anti-backsliding regulations.

Even with the minimalist approach submitted, a substantial investment in the waterways, both financially and with Best Management Practices (BMP's) is required such as infiltration, rain gardens, stream bank restoration, disconnection of impervious areas, tree planting, and more.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued a review of Franconia Township's strategy in February 2015. As anticipated, it is an aggressive review, as was received by many municipalities. A revised MS4

TMDL "strategy", which is a strategy to reduce pollution entering the waterways from municipal storm sewers, is required to be submitted by the end of this year. Prior to this submission, a public comment and review period of the revised strategy is required.

This is probably the most complex unfunded regulatory issue Franconia Township has ever had to address. Separate from the strategy is the on-going litigation with DEP/EPA in regards to the Indian Creek sediment issue. A settlement is currently being proposed by EPA that will need to be discussed between the four entities involved: Franconia Township, Franconia Sewer Authority, Lower Salford Township and Lower Salford Authority.

What is ultimately agreed to with the Indian Creek may affect the strategy with the other impaired watersheds in Franconia Township. There will be major implications from the Indian Creek litigation and the TMDL Strategy that will impact the Township substantially. The MS4 Program will become more demanding and Township involvement is necessary.



Police Committed To Serving Township Residents

The Franconia Township Police Department continues to provide around-the-clock service to the Franconia community. Because of the staff reductions that were implemented in October, the department has had to restructure its staffing and delivery of services. There are eleven full-time officers currently serving the residents of Franconia Township.

According to Police Chief Joe Kozeniewski, the top priority has been the necessity to have as many officers available to respond to all calls for service and to initiate preventive patrols. "Immediate response to all 911-type of emergency calls has always been our top priority," the Chief said. He emphasized that, "we have been able to maintain our timely arrivals at the scene of vehicle crashes and other serious emergencies. We want to reassure our residents that the department is sufficiently staffed for patrols and we are here for them."

On occasion, when a Franconia officer may be busy with an urgent call, our neighboring departments have gladly provided assistance to respond to any other emergencies that may come in during that time period. Franconia officers will also assist those neighboring departments when needed.

All of the police agencies in Montgomery County participate in a mutual aid plan that provides assistance to local departments when that local agency may require additional officers for backup on vehicle stops and other potentially

serious situations. Requests for assistance are usually coordinated through the Montgomery County central 911 dispatch system. Fortunately, those requests for assistance are infrequent.

Prior to the layoffs, two officers were regularly scheduled for patrol during each shift. Since October, there is always at least one patrol officer on duty. On many days, there is a second officer assigned to patrol duty during the traditionally busy hours.

The department has eliminated some non-patrol assignments, such as a school resource officer and an investigator position. The investigator had assisted the detective when there were additional cases that needed follow-up investigation.

In January, the officers and the township supervisors agreed to a new five-year salary and benefits package that will guarantee the continuity of the police department and to its mission of service.

The officers and staff of the Franconia Township Police Department have dedicated themselves to continually provide top-quality policing to the residents of the township. They all share a positive attitude and will do whatever it takes to get the job done.



Police Chief Joseph Kozeniewski discusses an investigation with Sergeant George Moyer.



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Discount Amusement Park Tickets Available

The Park & Recreation Board will be selling discount amusement park tickets again this summer. The tickets usually arrive around Memorial Day and can be purchased at the Township office Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tickets must be purchased with cash or money order. No checks can be accepted.

Memorial Tree Program

The Franconia Township Parks and Recreation Board would like to remind residents of the memorial tree program the board developed. Details regarding this program are available at the Township Building and at www.franconiatownship.org.

Volunteer Applications Available

Residents that have an interest in serving on a committee or other volunteer commission should submit a Volunteer Application form to the Township Manager. The Township retains applications for a two-year period to fill vacancies as they occur. The Township relies on volunteer residents to be part of the committees that advise the Board of Supervisors in its decision making process. Support Franconia by volunteering your time and expertise.

No Dumping

Any illicit discharge as defined in the Franconia Township Stormwater Ordinance is a violation of the code and those who dump will be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine. Also please make use of the doggy bags provided in the area parks to clean up after your pet.

On-Lot Sewer System Maintenance

Any property owner that has an on-lot sewer system is reminded that they must comply with Township Ordinance #328. Under this ordinance all, property owners are required to maintain their on-lot system. This includes a pump-out of your system every three years. Documentation of the pump-out is to be submitted to the Township for their records. Documentation is to be submitted to the Township within seven days of the pumping/hauling operations. In addition, a written statement from the pumper/hauler or from any other qualified individual (acceptable to the Township) that the baffles in the septic tank have been inspected and found to be in good working order is required. This written statement must be provided to the individual property owner and a copy of such statement should be submitted to the Township along with the pump-out receipt.

Rain Garden Project Completed



The Township now has a rain garden in Franconia Community Park.

The park is located within the impaired Indian Creek Watershed. The rain garden areas will collect runoff and assist in the process of oxidation of the nitrogen and transpiration and volume diminishment.

The Township believes the visible location for the rain garden will provide the opportunity to install signage and information to park patrons about how rain gardens operate and the benefits they provide. The rain garden will also enhance the park, allowing for new plantings and vegetation. It will also provide a peaceful and aesthetic improvement to the park.

The rain garden will help manage stormwater runoff, reduce pollutants and provide an example of a rain garden, possibly encouraging residents to plant rain gardens on their own properties.

The rain garden was funded by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development through its Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program. The grant award included monies received from the Act 13 Legislation that takes profits made from the Marcellus Shale drilling and spreads the money throughout the state for various projects.



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Franconia Calendar

SATURDAY, MAY 9

24th Annual Fishing Derby

When: 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Where: Branchwood Park, Camp Road

State Representative Robert W. Godshall and the Franconia Park & Recreation Committee will be sponsoring the 24th, Annual Youth Fishing Derby this spring. All youths up to age 12 may come out and join the fishing contest. There will be refreshments and prizes!

SATURDAY, MAY 16

Franconia Township Clean-Up Day

When: 7 a.m.-11:45 a.m.

Where: J.P. Mascaro & Sons Transfer Station, Lower & Wile Roads

Franconia Township has designated Saturday, May 16th as Clean Up Day. Any Franconia resident may dispose of normal household trash at the J.P. Mascaro and Sons Inc. Transfer Station located on Lower and Wile Roads. Prior registration is required and can be done beginning Friday, April 10th in person at the Township Municipal Building located at 671 Allentown Road between the hours of 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Registration is first come, first served and spaces will be limited.

Normal household trash may include: Old appliances & white goods (i.e. dishwasher, washing machine), refrigerators or freezers (only with condenser & coils removed), and other normal items.

Please note grass clippings, construction debris, motor oil, tires, paint and hazardous materials will NOT be accepted!

SATURDAY, JUNE 6TH, 2015

Montgomery County Tire Drop-off Event

When: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Where: Montgomery County Community College, 340 Dekalb Pike, Blue Bell

The Montgomery County Recycling Commission will be holding its annual tire drop-off event at the Montgomery County Community College. For information, visit the Township website at www.franconiatownship.org or contact the Recycling Commission at 610-278-3618.

JUNE 15 -18, JUNE 22-26, JUNE 29-JULY 2, JULY 6-9; AUGUST 3-6 (TEENS ONLY)

Youth Tennis Camp

When: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Where: Franconia Community Park Tennis Court

The Franconia Park & Recreation Board will be providing youth tennis camps this summer. The camp will be for children age 6-12 years old, except for the August Teen Camp. Skilled instruction will be provided by Monica Bach. The cost of the clinic is \$85 per person. If you are interested in developing your tennis skills, this is the camp for you! Just bring a tennis racket and join in on the fun. Please check with the Township or visit www.franconiatownship.org for the program's status along with the dates and time of the clinic.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 15

Concert in the Park (Band to be determined)

When: 7 p.m. -9 p.m.

Where: Franconia Community Park

The Franconia Park & Recreation Board is planning its annual summer concert event. A band has not yet been determined and there is the possibility of more than one concert. Please check www.franconiatownship.org





FRANCONIA TOWNSHIP

671 Allentown Road
Telford, PA 18969-2205

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U.S. POSTAGE
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19399

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Election Day Is May 19

The Township reminds all eligible residents to vote on Tuesday, May 19. Polling places are listed below.

If you are unsure at which polling location you should be voting or you would like additional information pertaining to the election please contact Voter Services at 610-278-3280.

Polling Places:

- Precinct 1 Franconia Township Building
671 Allentown Road, Franconia
- Precinct 2 Christ Reformed Church
Church & Cowpath Roads, Telford
- Precinct 3 Christ Reformed Church
Church & Cowpath Roads, Telford
- Precinct 4 Franconia Township Building
671 Allentown Road, Franconia
- Precinct 5 Immanuel Leidy's Church
276 W. Cherry Lane, Souderton
- Precinct 6 Peter Becker Community
800 Maple Avenue, Harleysville
- Precinct 7 Peter Becker Community
800 Maple Avenue, Harleysville
- Precinct 8 Immanuel Leidy's Church
276 W. Cherry Lane, Souderton



Sign Up For The Township's Email Newsletter

The Township plans to start an email newsletter to help improve communication. All you need to do to receive the newsletter is visit the Township's website at www.franconiatownship.org and click on the "Sign up for Email Notification" link. Your address will only be used for the Township's email newsletters.