



FALL 2024
NEWSLETTER

Township of LONGSWAMP

Dear Friends and Residents of Longswamp Township,

The first day of Fall is soon upon us. With the changing seasons the Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors is pleased to present you with this current issue of your township newsletter.

As you will read in this issue, the Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors, Office Staff, and Public Works Department have been busy planning and reviewing, administratively organizing the Township's permitting process and records, performing maintenance work, and all of the duties required to keep our wonderful township running smoothly and continue to enhance the way of life for our residents. With all of this being said, running a township takes teamwork. Longswamp Township has a team of Township Administration, Board of Supervisors, Public Works Department, Township Professionals, and citizen volunteers who serve on township committees, all dedicated to making sure the best interests of Longswamp Township are at the forefront of our goal to serving all of our residents in the best way possible.



The Board of Supervisors identifies the needs of the township and works hard to find the most cost-effective way to resolve issue(s). As we finish 2024 and move through 2025 you will see two main items continuously on the Board of Supervisors agenda each month.

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Message from the Board of Supervisors ...continued from cover

The first is the 2017 Act 537 Plan the Township adopted. The Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (Act 537) was enacted to address existing sewage disposal problems and prevent future problems. All municipalities must develop and implement a comprehensive official sewage management plan that addresses their present and future sewage disposal needs. The PA Department of Environmental Protection reviews and approves these plans and revisions. The Township's Act 537 plan needs to be reviewed, approved, and implemented.

The second item is to refurbish the Township Municipal Maintenance Building so that there is enough room to house and provide the necessary maintenance to all of the Public Work's equipment and vehicles. In order for our Public Work's Department to continue to provide daily essential public services the Township has purchased two 2025 Volvo Dump Trucks. Saving tax payer dollars these trucks were purchased using funds received through the American Rescue Plan.

As a resident, stay informed. Read this newsletter, visit the township website at www.longswamptownship.org, visit our Longswamp Township Facebook page, feel free to attend a Board of Supervisors meeting, or even join a committee.



Board of Supervisors

The Environmental Advisory Council is in need of 3 members and The Parks and Recreation Board is in need of volunteers to assist with events. Contact the Township office for more information.

We are honored to be your supervisors. Never hesitate to contact any of us on the Board of Supervisors to let us know about issues or concerns. Our Board of Supervisors meetings are held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month at the Longswamp Township Building.

Proudly Serving Longswamp Township,

Don Hickman- Chairman

Mark Hilbert- Vice Chairman

Mike Sacks- Supervisor

Longswamp Township Board of Supervisors

Public Works Department

The Longswamp Township Public Works Department is dedicated to the safety of its residents. The Public Works Department provides the daily direction, planning, coordination and supervision of numerous essential public services. These services include street cleaning, snow and ice control, removal of storm debris, storm drain maintenance, street sign maintenance, street construction and maintenance and park system maintenance. All of these services and more are completed with our crew of 4.

Please observe direction offered by our Public Works Crew if you encounter them at a job site, as they always have everyone's safety in mind while conducting this necessary maintenance within the Township.

Winter will be upon us soon, the plows will be out on the roads fulfilling our responsibility to maintain roads and byways. Occasional incidents may occur involving mailboxes, planters, fences, shrubs, etc. Your mailbox and the access to it for the U.S. Postal Service is the responsibility of the homeowner. Again, because the crews have no place to put the snow, curbside mailboxes may become blocked. Heavy snow coming off the plows may damage mailboxes.

This is not intentional, but does occasionally happen. The Township will not be responsible for repairs/replacements to mailboxes, fences or shrubs placed within the legally defined rights-of-ways of its road. The homeowner is responsible for replacing/repairing a mailbox damaged by plowed snow, unless the mailbox is struck by the snow removal vehicle. If this has occurred, please complete and submit to the Township office a Resident Complaint Form. This form can be found on the Township website. This is the only way that the Township will address this issue.



Parks and Recreation

The Longswamp Township Parks and Recreation Board is comprised of dedicated and hardworking volunteers who are responsible for ensuring the community and residents of the Township feel proud of our parks and recreation areas. The Board with the help of volunteers in our community hold four main events throughout the year. The Parks and Recreation Board sincerely thanks everyone who has volunteered and attended our events. The Board is grateful to have the opportunity to hold these events and bring the members of our community together. Be sure to save the following dates:



GREAT PUMPKING HUNT

October 5, 2024



CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING

December 7, 2024



EASTER EGG HUNT

April 12, 2025



7TH ANNUAL SWAMP FEST

June 14, 2025

As most of you know our largest event is Swamp Fest. A whole day event in our Community Park filled with good food, music, and activities for attendees of all ages. If you are interested in volunteering at Swamp Fest or any of our events contact the Township office for more information.



Swamp Fest T shirt design contest:

Design a one color, PG rated design for t shirts that will be on sale on the day of Swamp Fest. The contest is open to all interested in applying. All designs need to be submitted (via email preferred) by February 1, 2025. Submit designs to Office Administrator, Allison Fuller @ afuller@longtwsp.net. Remember to include your name, address and phone number. Contest winner will receive a free shirt and name recognition to the design.



Support Swamp Fest 2025

Donate and sponsor one of our Swamp Fest entertainment activities. Perhaps in the name of a loved one or of a business. Contact the township office for more information.

A huge thank you to all that supported Swamp Fest 2024. Whether you bought an ad in our event book, volunteered with a nonprofit organization, or attended, the event could not have happened without all of you.

See you at our next event,

Tyrene Christman Chairman

Leann Sacks—Vice Chairman

Kristina Digiampaolo- Secretary

Kaitey Sacks- Member

Jeremy Rehrig- Member

Mike Sacks- BOS Liaison

Allison Fuller- Director



DID YOU KNOW?

The highest point in Longswamp Township is near Tower Road on Tower Mountain near the big communications tower.

The lowest point in Longswamp Township is the wetlands across Valley Road from the Atlas Minerals Plant.

The difference in elevation is approximately 800 feet.

When Do I Need A Permit?

Our Zoning Officer is here for you to discuss what is required.
Zoning Officer Office Hours
Tuesday- 2-4pm | Thursdays-12-2pm

A Permit is required for . . .

- Storage Sheds – even if it is pre-fabricated
- New Homes/Additions
- Replacing structures destroyed by natural causes (Weather, fire, etc.)
- Structural Modifications (Interior bearing wall relocation)
- Porches/Patio
- Interior/Exterior stairs and railings
- Adding bedrooms/bathrooms
- Decks/patios
- Swimming pools – in-ground or above-ground
- Wells
- Driveways – constructing new, modifying or resurfacing
- Signs
- Timber harvesting
- New businesses
- Electrical service – replacement or upgrade
- Farm buildings (including open sided sheds)
- Home occupation
- Rental units
- Moving and occupancy – when moving from or to existing home in Township



A Building Permit is NOT required for..

- Replacement of windows
- Replacement of doors
- Re-roofing a building
- Installation of insulation
- Installation of drywall
- Fencing- Installation of fencing 6 feet or less in height requires a Zoning permit not a Building permit.

How to apply for a permit . . .

- Fill out and complete all necessary pages of the official Township Permit Application Packet – this can be found on our website or picked up at the Township Office
- Submit the application, plans/drawings, insurance information, and an application fee of (Residential: \$50.00 (Commercial: \$500.00) to the Township. (Cash or check only - checks payable to Longswamp Township)
- Once everything is received by the Township, it will be sent to the Zoning Officer for review. When approved, applicant will be notified that the application has been processed and is ready to be paid for, signed, and picked up at the Township Office. We are unable to send permits out until they are paid for and signed.
- If application is denied, the Zoning Officer will let applicant know why and how to adjust/correct the application.

Sewage Management Program

Longswamp Township follows a cycle-based system to ensure that all comply and have their septic system pumped out every 3 years. All rules and regulations of the Sewage Management Plan were enacted by the Board of Supervisors on December 12, 2006 under Ordinance 2006-238.

Cycle 1 July 1st-June 30th 2025-Current Cycle

Cycle 2 July 1st -June 30th 2026

Cycle 3 July 1st – June 30th 2027

Each property is assigned a cycle per their location. HOWEVER, if at any time your property is pumped out of your assigned cycle, your property is recorded in the cycle at the date of pumping. All property owners must have their septic systems pumped every three years.

The Sewage Hauler you use to pump out your septic system must be a registered hauler with the township. Invoices from a hauler do not suffice as a record of pumping. Your date of pumping is recorded when the Township receives the Township's Sewage Hauler Record form from the hauler.

As a courtesy to our residents, the Township will send out postcards as **reminders** to property owners that their property is recorded in the current cycle that has just begun. This postcard is **NOT** a notice of violation it is simply a reminder.

If you are not sure of what cycle your property is recorded in contact the Office Administrator, Allison Fuller. 610-682-7388 ext. 129



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Topton Volunteer Fire Company No.1



2023 was another busy year for the Topton Volunteer Fire Company. We responded to 450 calls for service, which was the second year in a row of hitting a record high for us. Those calls ranged from Structure Fires, Motor Vehicle Accidents, Medical related incidents as well as weather-related calls during storms.

Training will continue in 2024 as we continue with national level training courses. One goal for 2024 is to have our active members complete their Vehicle Rescue Training. This training will teach them the construction of today's motor vehicles, how to cut pry and disassemble vehicles that are

heavily damaged in an accident. Once the vehicle rescue training is completed, we look forward to special rescue training that will cover buses and commercial vehicles such as box trucks or eighteen wheelers.

We are pleased to announce that the new Utility 21 that was placed in service earlier this year has been working out better than we expected. It has been used for assisting EMS on medical emergencies, traffic control and weather-related calls such as downed trees. The utility replacement project started in January of 2023 and was fully funded by municipality tax money, as well as funds raised through the community's tremendous support of our annual fund drive and our other fundraisers that are run throughout the year.

We continue to look ahead and plan for future equipment upgrades. We have started the research and design process for a new ladder truck. The process will include manufacturer meetings as well as going to other stations to look at their equipment, with a goal of having an order placed by the end of the year. The expected cost of this replacement project is expected to fall somewhere between 1.4 and 1.6 million dollars.

While we realize that this is a huge expense, our members will remain committed to fundraising efforts and fund this project without impacting our current municipality contributions. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for events and project updates as the year progresses.

We are extremely appreciative of the continued support not only from the members of our community but from the municipalities to which we provide protection. Without you all we would not be able to provide emergency services at the level that we are currently equipped to do.

100th Anniversary Rededication Preparations Continue Christian Congregation Church of Mertztown, Pa.



Work continues to effect repairs in preparation for the 100th anniversary of a restoration project undertaken in 1923-24 for a union church in Mertztown then known as St. Paul's. In addition to the construction of a narthex and bell tower*, other improvements included significant enhancements to the existing apse and sanctuary areas inside the church and several decorative, exterior modifications, including the installation of decorative trim and corbels.

The latest improvement involved the replication and replacement of the trim and the sanding and painting of both the corbels and new trim. (See photo.)

Built in 1837, the church is among the oldest standing structures in Longswamp Township. Over the course of its life, it has served members of the Lutheran, Presbyterian and German Reformed (now

UCC) traditions. Since 1998, it has been home to Christian Congregation Church of Mertztown, Pa., a non-denominal, non-creedal Protestant church located at the intersection of Valley Road and Chestnut Street in Mertztown. From its Facebook page (Christian Congregation Church of Mertztown, Pa.), you can watch weekly sermons and keep abreast of upcoming church activities. Visitors and new members are also welcome to attend each Sunday's 10 AM service.

The restoration project was launched in Fall, 2023; much of the original funding was donated by current and past members of the congregation.

** The bell tower was removed a number of years ago for safety reasons.*

Longswamp Township Museum and Historical Library is Chugging Along!

A New Community Gathering Spot is Taking Shape, Thanks to Ever-Growing Community Support



A little over a year ago, a 1941 Reading Company cupola caboose was loaded aboard a flat-bed trailer and transported to its new home: Longswamp Township Community Park. Here, it rests upon track installed on land leased to the Longswamp Township Historical Society (hereafter LTHS) by the Township Board of Supervisors. By late winter, 2024, it gained a companion: A building shell that, once complete, will serve as a museum and historical library operated by the LTHS. If the building looks familiar in shape and color, you're onto something: It was specifically designed to closely resemble the historic Mertztown Train Station. And when you consider how, for nearly a century, the railroad greatly improved the lives of Longswamp Township residents and business owners, adopting a railroad theme for structures that will help the LTHS to tell stories of the area's heritage somehow felt appropriate.

We feel humbled by the generosity of financial supporters and the many hours of labor that volunteers donate to support our goal of inspiring a sense of community and pride in the township's heritage. And this goal, like almost everything else worth having, will cost money. Which means that we can't forget to also mention the many historical society members and other individuals living in the area who made last year's caboose acquisition possible.

Our latest fundraiser, held last June, yielded profits enough to supplement our now-dwindling funds and make possible the installation of electrical, heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems in the museum building. As additional funds become available, we'll proceed with construction in the following order: insulation, drywall, painting, flooring and interior trim. We'll also keep working to secure the funds needed to make repairs in and around the caboose's sink and oil stove areas.

Since 1734, Longswamp Township has been a place that many thousands of people have called or call home. Which means that this area's history and heritage **matters**. We thank everyone who has already done so much to ensure that our area's history and heritage is never forgotten. And we invite you visit our website or Facebook page to learn more about the LTHS, its museum project and upcoming activities, programs and events. We also share information about upcoming events and activities in our bi-monthly members-only newsletter and post the details on public bulletin boards located in municipalities that lie between Longswamp Township and Kutztown.

Website: www.longswamphistory.org • **Group Facebook page:** www.facebook.com/groups/223973110961828/

TIME TO GIVE THANKS...

Longswamp Township would like to thank the businesses that appear in this newsletter and recognize them as supporters of our community. For it is with their contributions that this newsletter is produced, saving each citizen tax dollars. Communication is key, we thank these businesses for choosing to help us share information with our community.

A Message From Senator Pennycuik

56 WEST 4TH STREET, FLOOR 2 | RED HILL, PA 18076 | PHONE: 215-541-2388



Dear Neighbor,

As your State Senator for the 24th District, I'm committed to serving you and our community. I've had the privilege of meeting many of you, and my office is always happy to help with various state government issues.

My staff and I can assist with a wide range of issues involving Pennsylvania state government, including Property Tax and Rent Rebate forms, help in processing PennDOT forms, navigating problems with state agencies, obtaining information on Pennsylvania House and Senate laws, bills, and important forms like tax forms, absentee ballots, voter registration, PACE/PACENET applications, and applications for state birth and death certificates, among many other services.

In Harrisburg, I'm dedicated to supporting the 24th District. My focus has been on empowering families and small businesses by advocating for lower taxes and less regulation. This allows job creators to thrive and our economy to grow. As a US Army combat veteran, I'm also passionate about supporting our veterans and ensuring our law enforcement community has the resources they need.

I have been busy this legislative session and I am happy to report that several measures I have authored have been signed into law, including a first-in-the nation comprehensive breast cancer screening bill, establishing a new Task Force on Women Veterans' Health Care, and providing new protections for families who are victims of data breaches.

For your convenience, we hold mobile office hours at the Longswamp Township Municipal Building (1112 State Street, Mertztown, PA 19539) on the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 9 AM to 12 PM.

For additional information about state services or legislation I am working on, please visit my website at senatorpennycuik.com. Also, you can follow me on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn to receive the latest updates. I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

Tracy

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Mike Sacks- Supervisor

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David River- Vice Chairman- Secretary
Greg Kubar- Member
Charles Moore- Member
Kerry Meitzler- Member
Mark Hilbert- BOS Liaison

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING DAYS

2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month @ 7pm

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DAYS

1ST Tuesday of each month @ 7pm

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Steven Parks- Chairman
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Rex Wessel- Alternate
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Mertztown, PA 19539
610-641-9119

OFFICE STAFF

Joni McPike- Secretary/Treasurer
Allison Fuller- Office Administrator

PUBLIC WORKS

Scott Miller- Roadmaster

A NOTE FROM OUR FIRST RESPONDERS

In an emergency, every second counts. Anything that can prevent our first responders from getting to you and your property is a concern.

Make sure your driveway, lane, entrance and exits are clear of debris. This includes any tree branches that may make it difficult for Emergency vehicles to gain access in the event of an emergency.

Thank you in advance for being proactive and doing your part !

Smoke Alarms Save Lives!

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