The Westtown Gazette

The Quarterly Report to the Citizens of Westtown Township

From the Westtown Township Board of Supervisors

Thomas A. Foster, Chair
Charles P. Barber, Vice Chair
Carol R. DeWolf, Police Commissioner

January 2011
Westtown Township is both family and community oriented. Westtown emphasizes a high quality of life while enjoying and maintaining its natural and manmade environments.

**CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP**
Saturday, January 15th. Curbside by 7AM. No tinsel, ornaments, plastic bag.

**Billing Glitches**
Due to a software problem, the amount due appearing on some of the sewer bills is off by a few cents. Please pay the amount shown on the bill. The problem has been corrected and subsequent bills should print correctly. We regret any confusion this may cause.

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Bridge Report

As a result of the heavy rain storms this past fall, two of the bridges owned by Westtown Township have been compromised. The Oakbourne Bridge has been affected to the degree that it was necessary to close it down. The bridge abutment and the adjoining ground on the west side have been partly washed away, making travel by vehicular traffic dangerous. Had the road not been closed, the bridge would have eventually collapsed.

The New Street Bridge has also experienced a similar deterioration. However, the abutments are securely on bedrock and a short term collapse is not threatened. While the bridge is not in an immediate danger, the Township will need to do some repair work in order to assure its continued viability.

The Board of Supervisors has undertaken several actions to deal with the bridge problems. First, they have charged the engineers with the task of determining the actual condition of the bridges and to recommend the necessary repair to secure them. Their initial findings aided the Board in determining the need to prohibit the movement of traffic on the Oakbourne Bridge.

Second, the Board has been looking for funding sources at both the State and Federal level. At this time it would appear as if these sources may not work. Both governments are looking to cut spending in the future and there is very little in any current program which has not been allotted to other projects. Further, even if such money becomes available, it comes with a number of strings which would increase the cost and delay the work due to complex review requirements.

The Board will be meeting with its engineers, who will have a final series of recommendations on the options for the fix. Until that happens, the Township will not know when the Oakbourne Road Bridge might be opened.

The Township will post on its website www.westtownpa.org any updates as they are made available.

Westtown Township Winter Maintenance Procedures

Westtown is divided up into six plowing districts. Each district consists of approximately 10 miles of road. Each district has one to two trucks dedicated to its plowing. The township contracts with a few companies and individuals to plow three districts. Township personnel plow three districts, load salt, plow all township property, and assist in other districts when mechanical problems arise.

Salting operations begin at a coating of snow/ice and continue until the entire district is salted. It is important to apply salt at the beginning of a storm to keep the snow and ice from bonding with the paved surface, making removal difficult in the future.

Plowing begins after 2 inches of snow has accumulated on the road surface. Plowing will be ongoing for the duration of the storm. If the expected duration of the storm is prolonged, personnel may cease operations during the overnight hours for rest. The initial focus is to open and clear the higher volume main collector roads and conclude with developments and lower volume roads. Starting at the conclusion of the storm, all districts will be finished plowed to open roads to the maximum width possible. Due to differences in routes, it may take several hours after the snow has stopped for the plows to clear all roads and intersections to the edge. In order to avoid having your driveway and/or mailbox plowed shut, leave the last 10 feet of your driveway un-shoveled until we are completely finished. Another method to reduce the windrowing of snow is to shovel 15 feet of the shoulder to the left of your driveway facing the street. That will allow a snowplow full of snow an area to deposit the snow before it reaches your driveway.

The most challenging and time consuming areas to plow are the 91 cul-de-sacs within Westtown Township and the narrower paved roads. Cars parked in these areas make snow plowing very difficult and sometimes impossible. It is recommended that cars not be parked on the roads and cul-de-sacs when it snows. Cul-de-sacs are an already difficult area to plow as we are limited to where the snow can be placed (i.e.: driveway openings, mailboxes, fire hydrants and stormwater drains). Due to these constraints and liability, we will not plow cul-de-sacs with cars parked in them. Please be kind to your neighbors.

PennDot maintained roads in Westtown Township are listed below.

- West Chester Pike (Rt. 3)
- South Chester Road (Rt. 352)
- Street Road (Rt. 926)
- Wilmington Pike (Rt. 202)
- Westtown Road
- Westbourne Road
- Oakbourne Road (Rt. 202 to S. Concord Rd)
- South Concord Road (Oakbourne to Westbourne)
10 Tips for Surviving the Winter Plowing Season

A little patience and a cooperative attitude are essential ingredients for getting through the winter plowing season. When we as citizens, plowing contractors, and township crews work together, we can reduce frustrations that sometimes accompany winter snowstorms. There are many things residents can do to minimize plowing-related problems for themselves and to assure that township crews do the most effective job possible.

When the snow and ice come, just follow the “Top 10 Tips” for the winter plowing season:

- Please do not park your car on the street.
- Residents may find it less frustrating to wait until the plow trucks have completed their street before cleaning the end of their driveway. Township plow units are designed to discharge snow to the sides of the road and are not capable of skipping driveway areas.
- Snow from the driveway should be shoveled to the right as you’re facing the street. This will reduce the amount of snow being placed back into the driveway during the next plowing.
- Residents hiring contractors to plow their driveways should remind the contractor about state and local laws that prohibit pushing or placing snow back into or across the street. Doing so not only creates hazards for drivers and neighbors, but also makes it difficult for the township to keep the streets clean.
- Residents should clear snow from the mailbox area after each Storm. Snow that remains in front of mail-boxes will get compacted by post office vehicles and make subsequent plowing less effective.
- If trash/recycling pickup day coincides with plowing activities, make sure your trash can and recycling bin are well behind the curb or in the driveway so the plow will not hit them.
- Residents who have experienced sod damage in the past may wish to mark their yard line with flexible stakes or lathe. This will help the plow operators avoid future damage.
- Don’t allow children to build snow forts and tunnels in the snow banks adjacent to the curb, or to play near the roads. It can be difficult for the plow operators to see children.
- Keep sleds and toys away from the street.
- Residents are encouraged to “adopt a fire hydrant” near their home and keep snow shoveled away from it. This will ensure that hydrants are accessible in case of an emergency.
Frequently Asked Questions about Taxes

When are the Real Estate Tax Bills mailed?
County bills are mailed on February 1st. Westtown Township bills are mailed on March 1st. West Chester Area School District bills are mailed on July 1st.

When are the Real Estate Tax Bills due?
Bills are due within 60 days to receive a 2% discount.

Does my mortgage company pay my Real Estate Tax Bill?
This is an arrangement between the taxpayer and the mortgage company. The Township bills are mailed directly to the owner of record. It is the homeowner's responsibility to forward the bill to the mortgage company if this money is escrowed. Check with your mortgage company before paying your bill to avoid duplicate payments.

How much will my Real Estate Taxes be?
The rate of your tax bill varies each year based on the millage rate and assessed value of your property. The real estate millage rate is applied to a property's "assessed value", not its market value. The assessed value of a property does not change unless the owner successfully appeals or the property is enhanced. The sale of a property does not impact the tax assessment. Chester County last reassessed properties in 1997.

What is a mill worth?
1 mill is worth 1/1000 of a dollar or .001 dollars. For example, a property with an assessed value of $200,000 and a rate of 2.5 mills would be calculated as follows:

- Face Amount: $200,000 x .0025 = $500.00
- Discount Amount (2%): $200,000 x .0025 = $500.00 x .98 = $490.00

How are my real estate taxes allocated?
It is important to understand the various taxing authorities and where your tax dollars go. Therefore the following graph demonstrates the tax allocation based on an average assessed value of $200,000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taxing Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Mills</th>
<th>Tax</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Westtown Township</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester County</td>
<td>3.965</td>
<td>$793.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WC Area School District</td>
<td>18.36</td>
<td>$3,672.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local Property Tax Allocation

- Westtown Township 10%
- Chester County 16%
- WC Area School District 74%
The Westtown Township Fiscal Year 2011 budget was approved at the December 20th, 2010 Board of Supervisor’s meeting. Reduced revenues due mostly to the economy along with increasing costs for services resulted in a deficit of $138,144 in the 2010 General Fund budget. This is a conservative budget in a challenging financial environment. Although we are optimistic that some revenues will increase over projections during the upcoming year, it was necessary to adopt a .5 mill increase in property tax. This increase will offset the expenses incurred for the necessary repairs of the Oakbourne Road bridge and the South New Street bridge as well as the acquisition of a Public Works Department Snow Plow Vehicle.

The Refuse Fund remains in balance due to a larger than anticipated Recycling Grant and lower Tipping Fees at the landfill. The trash user fees will remain unchanged at the current $80.00/qtr. The anticipated revenue in the Liquid Fuels Fund will be utilized entirely for repaving projects in 2011.

The 2011 Sewer Fund budget is also in balance and no increase in sewer user fees is anticipated.

The supervisors recognize that although necessary, the timing of this increase is unfortunate in these economic times. The following are the 2011 Revenue projections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fund</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fund</td>
<td>$5,238,996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse Fund</td>
<td>$1,053,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquid Fuels Fund</td>
<td>$248,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sewer Fund</td>
<td>$2,295,223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt Service Fund</td>
<td>$1,703,111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Reserve Fund</td>
<td>$325,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Projects Fund</td>
<td>$22,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Fund Revenues</td>
<td>$10,886,947</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Real Estate Property Taxes and Act 511 Taxes continue to be the largest revenue source in the General Fund. The Westtown-East Goshen Police Budget remains the largest expenditure.

Glossary

**Police** - Payments to Westtown-East Goshen Police budget and Debt Service Sinking Fund payments to Police Building Bond of 2004, Pension, & Pension Reserve

**Fire & Safety** - Payments to volunteer fire & ambulance, SPCA & Emergency Management

**Parks & Rec** - Park Maintenance, Oakbourne Mansion/Tower, recreation program and forestry management.

**Personnel** - Employee payroll and benefits

**Administrative** - Legislative, legal, engineering, planning & zoning, Code and tax collection

**Public Works** - Roads, winter maintenance, traffic control, street construction

**Debt Service** - Sinking Fund Payments (Refunded Series of 2000)
The Gazette

Calling All Gardeners

Have you ever heard of Community Supported Agriculture or CSAs? The concept is to create central shared garden spaces where people can have their own plot to grow vegetables and flowers. Such programs are gaining great popularity around the country because the hard part of gardening—finding fertile ground, tilling, fencing, etc.—is provided by the community. The gardeners just have to plant and tend whatever they want to grow. Not only do they enjoy harvesting their own food and flowers, but they share the experience with their neighbors.

Westtown is considering such a program if there is enough interest. Our township has several open space areas ideal for gardening, and a local professional farmer has volunteered to help get the program started. There would be no cost to be a part of the CSA. All that is needed is the commitment to do the work and join in the fun. If you are interested in being a part of our township’s 300-year agricultural tradition, call or email Helen Greer at the township office (610-692-1930). Her email is hgreer@westtown.org.

Oakbourne Mansion Renovations Still Under Consideration

The Township supervisors are continuing their review of what to do with Oakbourne Mansion. While a few cosmetic improvements have been made in the last few years that have allowed it to be used for certain types of rentals, the aging Victorian building is in need of repairs and more extensive renovations. The governing issue that will determine what improvements to make is how should the building be used by the township and its residents?

The plan under consideration is to convert the rear, non-historic wing of the building to administrative offices and to renovate the front rooms for use as meeting spaces for township, public and private functions. Necessary structural repairs would be made to the rest of the building, but no further renovations would be made at this time.

No decision will be made until a public meeting is held, probably in the early part of 2011. In the meantime, the Oakbourne Mansion Commission will continue to earn money for the township by renting out the building for social events.

BEHIND THE BADGE

Officer Dave Wetten

Officer Dave Wetten is a 3 year veteran of the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department and is assigned to the Patrol Division. Officer Wetten is a member of the Police Department’s Bike Unit. Before joining the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department, Officer Wetten served with the Brookhaven Police Department in Delaware County. He is married with a seven month old daughter. Officer Wetten enjoys spending time with his family and their 3 month old Vizsla puppy named Colby along with playing softball and wood working.
The Parks and Recreation Commission is pleased to present the following activities for 2011.

All events are scheduled to be held at Oakbourne Park on S. Concord Road.

(Make note of these events on your calendar now, and please contact us if you are willing to get involved. We’re a fun group of all ages with a tendency to juggle more than we should, so we could really use your help!

Email us at ParkandRec@Westtown.org to express your interest in any or all events.)

April 30 – A Community Yard Sale
June 17 – Summer Movie Night #1 *
July 23 – Christmas in July
August 19 – Summer Movie Night #2
September 9 – Summer Movie Night #3
October 8 – 4th Annual Westtown Dog Show
December 4 – Winter Festival

(*Movie choices to be voted on in the next newsletter!)

Join us for a super-size Westtown Township Yard Sale!
Participate by selling or buying or both!
Go to www.westtownPA.org/parkandrec.htm for more information.

The Westtown Gazzette

Parks and Recreation 2010 Year in Review

With the same budget as the year prior, Parks & Rec was able to add an extra Summer Movie Night for a total of three showings. (Movies shown were Planet 51, Bedtime Stories, and Hotel for Dogs.) Fortunately, First National Bank of Chester County agreed to sponsor the first movie. Thank you from the hundreds of people who attended these family-friendly movies!

The Christmas in July event was a super hot one and the location was changed to Tyson Park, but that didn’t stop at least 100 people from visiting Santa in his summer attire, playing reindeer games, enjoying pony rides, and making snow.

The Westtown Dog Show has grown leaps and bounds! For its third year, more than 300 people turned out to watch dozens of pampered, costumed, and energetic poohces compete in twelve different categories. This year, Parks & Rec was thrilled to have three distinguished judges making the difficult decisions. Many thanks to Sarah Dutton (last year’s Best in Show owner), Officer Tony Ruggieri (a WEGO canine officer), and Hon. Ron Nagle (Court of Common Pleas Judge). Again, First National Bank of Chester Country proved itself to be a generous community bank by sponsoring the event. Thank you!

New this year was the merry Winter Festival held at Oakbourne Park and Mansion. Almost 100 people came out for this inaugural event and all enjoyed the crafts, games, music, and steaming hot chocolate and cookies. Everyone enjoyed the Mansion’s beautiful holiday décor, and the little Christmas tree (planted by the Friends of Oakbourne) looked quite festive after everyone hung their critter-friendly ornaments.

In 2010, Parks and Rec was greatly enhanced with the appointment of Lori Aaronson to the Commission. Jen Shea-Schwacke was also appointed Vice Chair in 2010.

Parks & Rec continues to look for more volunteers, so if you enjoy events, please join us. We meet the first Tuesday of every month at the Township building.

–Kristine Lisi, Chair
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Rain Barrel Sale!

It’s not too early to get ready for spring showers...  
RESERVE your rain barrel today for pick up in February/March 2011!  
The Chester County Conservation District is now accepting advance  
orders. Payment will be due at time of pick up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specifications</th>
<th>Why buy a rain barrel?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 40 Gallon capacity, neutral color with the Chester County Conservation District Logo on the front.</td>
<td>• Provides alternative water source during periods of dry weather.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Made from a durable resin material with a simulated wood grain appearance.</td>
<td>• Decreases the amount of stormwater runoff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flat back for close placement against your house.</td>
<td>• Reduces demand for treated water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 21.5 L x 21.5 W x 28.25 H</td>
<td>• Makes a great gift!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To reserve a rain barrel call Tammy at (610) 925-4920 ext. 100.  
▸ Estimated Cost: $100 each (price subject to market conditions)  
▸ You will be contacted when your rain barrel is in stock and ready for pick up at the Chester County Conservation District, Willowdale Town Center, 688 Unionville Road, Suite 200, Kennett Square, PA 19348
SPCA CONTRACT

The Township contracts on a yearly basis with the SPCA to pick up stray dogs and cats in the Township. The dog or cat must be confined before you call the SPCA. They will not come out unless the animal is confined. Please call 610-692-6113 for a pickup. The SPCA does not pick up any wildlife such as foxes, raccoons, skunks, etc.

DEER

Unfortunately we have a large deer herd in the Township which has led to numerous accidents involving deer killed by vehicles. To have a dead deer picked up you must contract the Pennsylvania Game Commission as it is their responsibility to pick up the deer. The contact number is 610-926-1966.
How to Prepare Items for Recycling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glass—Green, Brown &amp; Clear</td>
<td>Bottles or Jars only. Rinse Clean. Remove lids and rings. Labels may be left on. NO plate glass, ceramics, drinking glasses, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic</td>
<td>Must be marked with #1 through #7 inside triangle on bottom. Rinse clean. Remove lids and discard. Labels may be left on. NO unmarked containers or containers marked with other than #1 through #7 inside the triangle on bottom. No antifreeze or motor oil containers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aluminum Beverage Cans</td>
<td>Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. No bottle or jar lids, no pie plates or aluminum foil. No other aluminum items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bi-Metal Cans</td>
<td>Rinse clean. Cans may be flattened. Examples include pet food cans, soup cans, vegetable cans. NO cans with plastic parts. NO paint or aerosol cans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper, Magazines, Phone Books, Junk Mail, small cardboard boxes (cereal, crackers, etc) &amp; Office Paper</td>
<td>Combine in paper bag or bundle and tie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardboard Boxes</td>
<td>Must be cut in three foot squares, tied and placed next to the recycling bin. This is necessary because of the compacting system of the recycling truck. Unfortunately if the cardboard is not prepared this way it will be taken with the regular trash. Cereal boxes and similar cardboard items may be combined with newspaper.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A.J. Blosenski Inc.
www.ajblosenski.com
610.942.2707

Four Generations of Quality Service from the Blosenski Family

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Construction
- Residential
- Recycling
- 1-40 yard containers
- Storage containers
- Special cleanups
- Junk removal
- Residential toter carts

15 cubic yards
14ft long / 8ft wide / 5ft high

30 cubic yards
22ft long / 8ft wide / 6ft high

Mention this ad and receive $10.00 off a special pick-up or roll-off container