



Churchill Borough Local Government Newsletter

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Fall 2023

Work Begins on the Borough’s 2024 Budget



Adopting an annual operating budget is one of the main fiscal responsibilities of a borough council. In doing so, the council creates a spending plan for the anticipated revenue it will receive in the coming year. The borough budget, while adopted once a year, is a yearlong process involving the cycle of preparation, adoption, implementation, and then management.

Churchill Borough officials have been developing the 2024 budget through the combined efforts of Manager Alex Graziani and Finance Officer Michelle McAndrew, in conjunction with Borough Council’s Finance Committee. Included in that effort has been a review of the current year’s revenues and expenditures, and an analysis of anticipated future projects to ensure both short-term and long-term financial stability for the Borough.

The Finance Committee anticipates the draft budget will be presented at the Monday, November, 13 regular meeting of Borough Council. At that time, the budget will be available for public review on the borough website and at the Borough Building. Following the public review period, council will consider input and anticipates approving the 2024 Borough budget at its December 11 meeting.

Reminder: Treasurer reports, adopted budgets, and audits are available on Churchill Borough’s website. The various borough budget documents can be found at <https://www.churchillborough.com/government/administration/borough-budget>.

New Traffic Pattern Along Beulah Road

In 2021, after growing concerns about safety on Beulah Road (State Route 130), Churchill Borough officials consulted with PennDOT’s Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). Data analysis concluded that speed and accidents at Lewin Lane and Beulah Road were problematic.

Last summer, the Borough Council petitioned PennDOT to consider removing the southbound right-turn-only lane at Lewin Lane. PennDOT Traffic Engineering staff completed a general safety study. After thoroughly analyzing the data and evaluating the traffic impacts and safety outcomes, PennDOT District 11 staff removed the pavement markings, eliminating the right turn lane. PennDOT staff installed traffic safety signs in September to alert motorists not to turn right from the shoulder. Please take note and be safe. (See related information about radar speed feedback signs under Council Action Items on Page 6.)



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Churchill Borough Moves One Step Closer to Financial Health

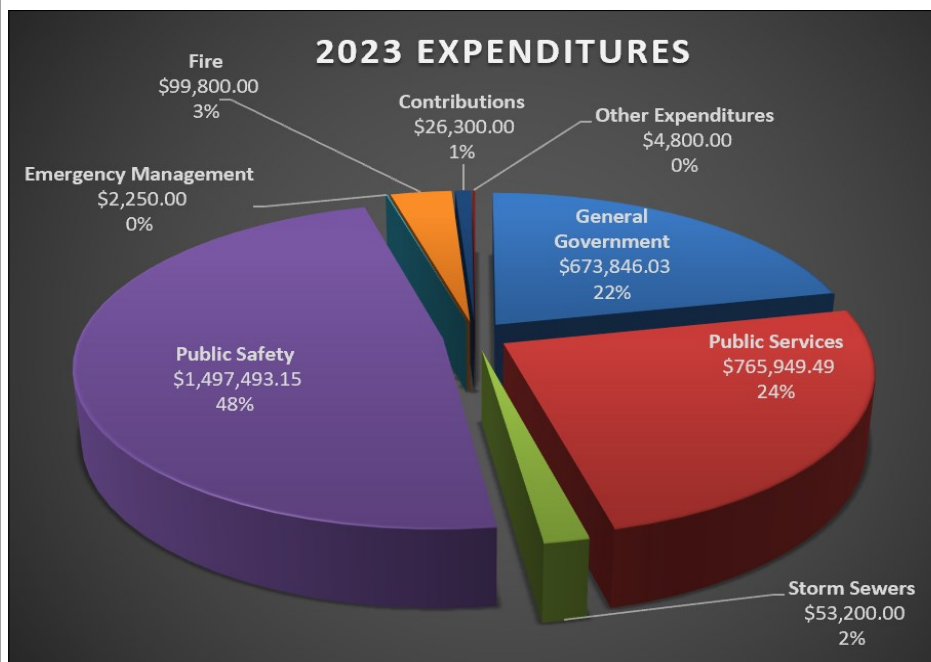


Valerie Reinthaler

Churchill Borough participated in the Local Government Academy (LGA) Financial Health Assessment this summer. Established in 1983, LGA is an independent nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that promotes excellence in local government.

The LGA’s Financial Health Assessment (FHA) is designed to modernize municipal financial documentation and management practices for municipalities that do not need a complete departmental analysis and financial report. Churchill’s project was partially funded through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, Governor’s Center for Local Government Services.

Overall, the Financial Health Assessment showed that the Borough has done a good job of containing costs over the past several years by holding the rate of increase to only 1% per year. The chart below illustrates the General Funding uses.



“The Borough was very excited for this opportunity to participate in the Financial Health Assessment offered by the LGA,” said Valerie Reinthaler, Finance Committee Chair. “It gave the Borough a chance to learn more about the Borough’s financial standing while discovering opportunities for growth. As always, the Borough strives to be transparent with the residents and a copy of the Financial Health Assessment will be available on the Borough’s website for residents to review.”

Beware! It’s Deer Rutting Season.



Did you ever discover damage to your trees in the early fall? Did they look like someone had taken a potato peeler to the bark? A buck likely used your tree to rub off the velvet that covers his antlers and to spread his scent.

“Rut” is a word for deer breeding season. Buck antlers start with a fuzzy velvet coating that is removed as the buck’s testosterone levels rise and daylight decreases. Remember, deer are distracted during mating season, so be especially cautious when driving.

Homeowners can protect their trees by taking action in early fall to prevent buck antlers from reaching the tree bark. There are various methods including tightly wrapping the tree with burlap or commercially available fabric wrap. (Remove in the spring.)

You can also purchase a commercial tree guard or construct your own using at least two sturdy 6-foot high supports driven well into the ground. Then, create a circle of wire mesh around the tree. Secure the mesh on the stakes, being sure that it extends from the top of the stake to the ground. It is usually recommended that the wire mesh have openings no larger than 1 inch. “How to” videos are available on YouTube.

Don't Feed the Wildlife!



Many wild animals are cute and that tempts people to feed them. However, Churchill has a Wild Game Ordinance adopted in 2019 that prohibits feeding, baiting or providing access to food on lands within the borough. Penalties range from \$25 to \$50 for each offense, plus court costs.

According to the ordinance, wild game includes deer, bears, coyotes, groundhogs, opossums, skunks, rats, rodents, raccoons, vermin, turkeys, ducks, geese, swans, herons, egrets and pigeons. Leaving, spreading or storing garbage, pet food, forage products, salt licks or similar items in a manner accessible to wild game is prohibited.

Residents are also reminded to secure outdoor trash, cooking grills and other sources that might attract wildlife.

Feeders for songbirds and backyard birds are permitted but must be placed at least 5 feet above the ground.

Make Halloween Safe and Fun!



Trick-or-Treat time in Churchill is 6 to 8 p.m. on Halloween, Tuesday, Oct. 31

The Borough offers the following tips from the Pennsylvania Insurance Department for making the evening safe and fun for all!

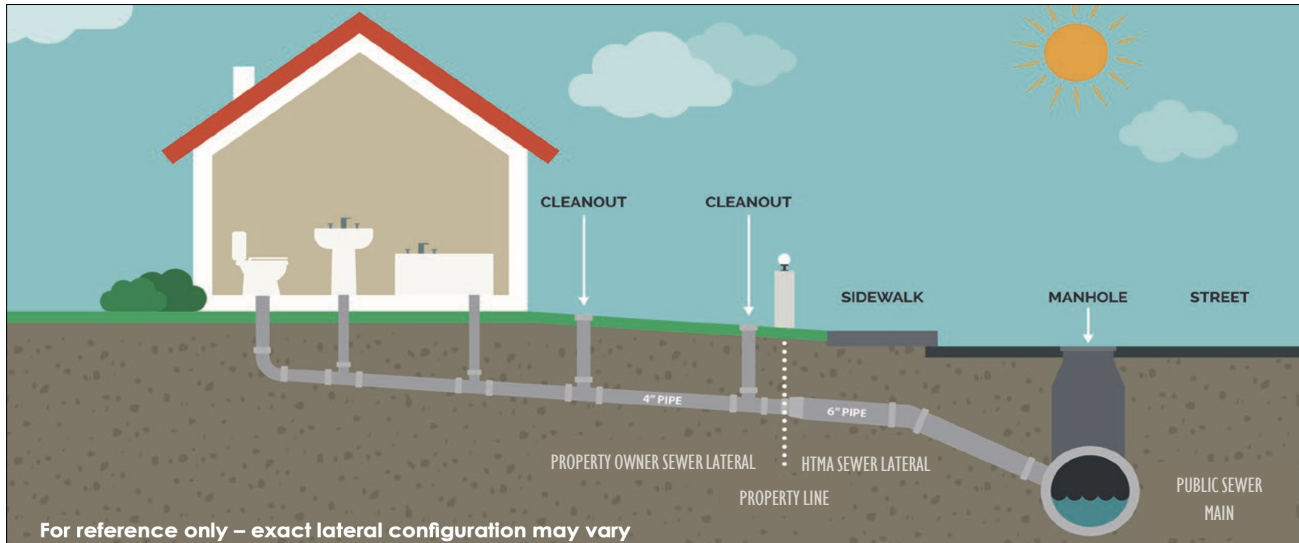
For parents:

- ◆ Make sure costumes fit properly; loose-fitting costumes can cause a child to trip and fall.
- ◆ Use makeup instead of masks. Some masks can obstruct a child's vision.
- ◆ Discuss safety rules with kids before allowing them to go trick-or-treating. Set a trick-or-treating route and stick with it.
- ◆ Remind kids to visit homes familiar to them and not to approach unlit homes. Provide kids with small battery-powered flashlights.
- ◆ Stay on sidewalks and avoid crossing yards. Cross streets at the corner, use crosswalks (where they exist) and do not cross between parked cars.
- ◆ Inspect kids' candy before they eat it.

For neighbors:

- ◆ Turn on all outside lights. Leave them on all night to deter vandalism.
- ◆ Make sure walks and pathways are clear of debris, leaves, garden equipment and lawn decorations.
- ◆ Repair walkways, railings and steps leading to your home.
- ◆ If a pumpkin gets smashed on your sidewalk, clean up all the slippery goo.
- ◆ Move cars, bikes, planters, sprinklers and other items into a locked garage or inside the house to deter theft or vandalism.
- ◆ Swimming pool owners - Be sure the pool cover is secure, gates are locked and lights are on around the pool area.
- ◆ Drivers - Slow down. It will be dark. Children will be running excitedly. Watch for them in the street and on medians. Exit driveways and alleyways with care and caution.
- ◆ Pet owners - Watch your dog. If it is not used to little visitors, keep it away from the front door.

Don't Let Sanitary Sewers Send Home Selling Plans Down the Drain



To address pollution and reduce groundwater inflow and infiltration, Borough Council enacted the Sanitary Sewer Lateral Inspection Ordinance in June 2023. Inflow and infiltration from groundwater and surface water into the publicly owned sanitary sewer system can create excessive sanitary sewer flows, which will adversely impact the health, safety and welfare of the Borough residents and increase the costs for treatment and maintenance of the sanitary sewer system.

When a property is sold in Churchill Borough, the ordinance requires inspection of the structure's lateral sanitary sewer line to ensure it is working properly. If the line connecting the home to the Borough sewer collector is deficient, it must be repaired before the property sale closes. To learn more, visit the Borough website: <https://www.churchillborough.com/services/sanitary-sewers>.

Looking for a way to conveniently dispose of your household hazardous waste safely and responsibly?

Residents have access to Waste Management's **At Your Door Special Collection Service**. This service is in addition to your waste and recycling service from Waste Management. No additional cost to participate.

Visit www.WMAtYourDoor.com or call 1-800-449-7587.

Or visit <https://www.churchillborough.com/services/public-services/household-hazardous-waste>.



Wilkins Elks Most Valuable Student Scholarship Available to Churchill Students

The Wilkins Elks has over \$3.5 million dollars each year available to 2024 graduating seniors from local high schools. There are over 500 separate scholarships awarded yearly ranging from \$4,000 to \$50,000 paid over four years.

Current Churchill high school seniors, or the equivalent, who are citizens of the United States are eligible to apply. ✓ Applicants **do not** need to be related to a member of the Elks or have any affiliation. ✓ High school graduates are not eligible to apply. ✓ Applicants must be citizens by the date their application is submitted; permanent legal resident status does not qualify.

Link to <https://www.elks.org/scholars/scholarships/MVS.cfm>

The applications for the 2023-2024 school year will close on Nov. 3. It is a short window, so don't miss your opportunity. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Raible at 412-860-7088.

Churchill Borough Paving a ‘Top Priority’



Matt Castiglia

Local government units (municipalities, cities and counties) own 77.4% of the nation's roadways. Within Churchill Borough, there are 22.69 miles of roads. The Borough owns and maintains 60% of those roads. The Parkway East (I-376) and other roads owned by the county and state comprise the remaining 40%.

Constructing a two-lane, undivided road in urban areas costs between \$4 and \$6 million, excluding needed right-of-way costs. With this in mind, the value of the roads owned and maintained by the Borough is between \$50 and \$100 million. To maintain this asset properly, the Borough Council voted to increase the real estate tax rate at the end of 2020 to invest more effort and money into the Borough's pavement management program.

In 2022, the Borough updated its 5-year budget analysis for its street maintenance program. Working alongside its engineers, the Borough utilized StreetSaver Pavement Management Software, which is capable of the following: compatibility with various pavement management software, compatibility with the provided inspection data, a map-based graphic interface, initial and yearly maintenance costs, and efficiency of importing data, managing data, and generating budget analysis.

Using information from the engineers and StreetSaver Pavement Management Software, Churchill Borough Council approved spending \$427,192.50 in 2022 to pave 0.77 miles (4,075 feet) of roadway, including Marbury and Elm Hill roads. In 2023, Churchill Borough spent \$432,944.16 on paving 0.96 miles (5,090 feet) of roadway on North and South Margaretta Drive, Surrey Place, Jamestown Place, Brushcliff Road, Nottingham Drive, Thornberry Drive, Old Beulah Road and Margate Road.

“I am excited about how far the Borough’s paving program has come,” said Matt Castiglia, Infrastructure Committee Chair. “The Infrastructure Committee, the entire Council and Borough engineers have dedicated a lot of time and energy to ensure that the Borough’s roads are a top priority and are safe for our residents.”

Submitted by Matt Castiglia, Infrastructure Committee Chair

UNIT OF GOVERNMENT	TOTAL MILES	% OF TOTAL
Churchill Road System	13.63	60.1%
Allegheny County Road System	2.64	11.6%
State Highway System	6.42	28.3%
TOTALS	22.69	100.0%

Volunteers Wanted for Borough Vacancies

Churchill Borough Council is seeking volunteers to fill vacancies on the following boards and committees:

- Planning Commission**
- Zoning Hearing Board**
- Civil Service Commission**
- Recreation Board**
- Human Relations Commission**
- Churchill Area Environmental Commission**
- Tree Committee**



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Any Borough resident interested in volunteering should send a letter of interest and resume to the Borough manager at alex@churchillborough.com.

To learn more, visit the Borough website or contact the Borough office.

ATTENTION: Churchill Area High School Class of 1974 50th Reunion!

Save The Date - Friday, June 28, 2024 - 6-10 p.m.

Edgewood Country Club, 100 Churchill Road, 15235 - Sit-down dinner - \$65 with a cash bar.

Questions and payment through PayPal at: 1974CAHS@gmail.com

Help spread the word to our fellow classmates!

Borough Council Action Items Update

The following is a snapshot of recent Borough Council action items, including ordinances, resolutions and simple motions. Details about ordinances and resolutions can be found on the Churchill Borough document eCode360 online repository <https://ecode360.com/CH1558>.

Monday, June 12, 2023:

- Amended the Borough Code to include sanitary sewer lateral inspection requirements. Inflow and infiltration from groundwater and surface water into the publicly owned sanitary sewer system can create excessive sanitary sewer flows. This impacts the health, safety, and welfare of the Borough residents and increase costs for treatment and maintenance of the sanitary sewer system. The amendment to Article X of Chapter 246 of the Code ("Faulty Connections; Certificate Required for Transfer of Real Property") includes additional requirements and standards for the inspection of lateral sanitary sewer lines in connection with the sale of real property in the Borough of Churchill.
- Approved an application requesting \$20,000 of matching funds from WalkWorks to match the Borough's \$30,100 Redevelopment Authority—Active Allegheny grant to complete an Active Transportation Plan to guide the establishment of safe, accessible, active routes connecting everyday destinations. WalkWorks, an initiative between the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center, supports developing and adopting active transportation plans or related policies to increase access and opportunities for physical activities, such as walking, biking, wheeling and using public transit.
- Appointed Jay Gamze and Tracy Sherksnas as Churchill Borough Tree Committee members for three-year terms that expire on December 31, 2025.
- Awarded the contract for the Municipal Building ADA Bathroom project to P2 Contracting LLC for \$98,040, subject to solicitor review of the final contract form.
- Awarded the contract for the Locker Room Remodeling projects to P2 Contracting LLC for \$114,018, subject to solicitor review of the final contract form.
- Directed the Borough Manager to sign an amended contract with Cargill, Inc. to extend the time to meet the minimum 80% purchase requirement for the existing salt contract.

Monday, July 10, 2023

- Directed the Borough Manager to submit to Allegheny County Planning and Churchill Borough Planning Commission a draft C-1 Zoning District amendment as a precursor to advertise and schedule a public hearing. The proposed ordinance would amend the Churchill Borough Zoning Ordinance, revising certain definitions and adding new definitions. The proposed ordinance would amend Table 201 (permitted uses in the C-2 Commercial District and a variance from Section 304-21(M)(1), requesting an increase in the sign face area from 250 square feet to 378 square feet; and a variance to permit a street right-of-way setback of 2 feet instead of the minimum setback of 100 feet.
- Directed the Borough Manager to advertise a bid request for installing radar speed feedback signs. Per PennDOT requirements, a PennDOT-qualified installer must be utilized to place the signs on Beulah Road and Greensburg Pike.

Monday, August 14, 2023

- Approved an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement with Wilkins Township regarding sanitary lateral sewer line inspections. In June, Council approved an amendment requiring the inspection of sanitary sewer lateral lines in connection with selling real property in Churchill. The agreement with Wilkins will enable Churchill to utilize the services of Wilkins staff to review and inspect video camera footage of sanitary sewer lateral lines in Churchill.
- Updated the Borough's 2023 Fee Schedule to include the new \$40 for sanitary lateral sewer line inspections. The charge to the Borough from Wilkins Township is \$35 per inspection review.
- Accepted the resignation of Churchill Borough Patrol Officer Christopher R. Shell.
- Adopted a resolution stating the Borough's intention to be included in the Allegheny County Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnerships Programs for program years 2024, 2025 and 2026. Allegheny County is required to qualify every three years as an Urban County to receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME) funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

- Adopted a resolution allowing for overhead banners or a sign or banner across a Pennsylvania state highway or within the highway right-of-way.
- Adopted a resolution authorizing a five-year winter traffic services agreement with PennDOT.
- Awarded a contract for the radar speed feedback signs installation project on Beulah Road and Greensburg Pike to Traffic Systems and Services, LLC for \$25,170.
- Directed the Borough Manager to sell the 2011 Ford F-250 Public Works truck with plow and salt spreader via the Municibid online auction.

News from Tax Collector Danielle Weaver



Meet and Greet

I will be in the Yagle Room of the Borough Building on Tuesday, October 17 to receive in-person payments for both Churchill Borough and Woodland Hills taxes. I will send the FINAL NOTICE for all unpaid taxes on November 17.

Checks must be postmarked by December 31, 2023, at the penalty amount shown on your tax bill. On January 1, 2024, unpaid taxes will be turned over to Jordan Tax Service for collection and additional fees will be added.

Woodland Hills School District

If you are making a payment at face or an installment payment for your Woodland Hills School taxes, the payments must be postmarked by October 31, 2023.

Online Bill Pay

I'm encouraging everyone to use online bill pay. The account number is your Lot/Block number. Payment should be made to Danielle Weaver and sent to the address located on your bill. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR PHONE NUMBER IN THE MEMO.

Toby and I moved in March of this year. If you are already using your online bill pay through your bank, please change the mailing address to:

Danielle Weaver, Tax Collector
3710 Henley Drive
Pittsburgh PA 15235

If you have any questions, please call me at 412-241-0815 or email me at dweaver@churchillborough.com.

Submitted by Danielle Weaver, Tax Collector



Drug Take Back Day on October 28

The Wilkins Elks Lodge, in conjunction with the Wilkins Township Police, will host a Drug Take Back Day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. October 28 at the lodge, 728 Brown Ave., Wilkins Township (15145).

This is the time to empty your medicine cabinets of all old over-the-counter drugs and outdated prescriptions. No need to remove labels. Just bring them as they are and deposit them into boxes for proper disposal by police.

We will even take your fur babies' prescriptions, too.

Please, no liquids or needles.





General Election is Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2023

Registered voters will have the opportunity to cast their ballots for candidates running in municipal, school district, county and judicial races. There is still time to change your voter registration, affiliate with a party of your choice and become completely enfranchised.

To review your registration status, go to:
<https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/SurePortalHome.aspx>.

Voter Registration

Voter registration forms (first-time, change of party, or change of address) are available at the Churchill Borough Office or the Department of State websites at www.pavoterservices.pa.gov or www.vote.pa.gov.

New or changed registrations must be **received** at the Allegheny County Elections Division (Room 609, County Office Building, 542 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219) by **5 p.m. Monday, Oct. 23, 2023** (15 days prior to Election Day). **Postmarks no longer apply.**

Absentee/Mail-in Ballots

Applications for absentee or mail-in ballots must be received by the Allegheny County Elections Division by **5 p.m. Oct. 31**, 7 days prior to Election Day. **(Again, postmarks no longer apply).** If registered to vote, residents can apply for an absentee or mail-in Ballot by clicking on www.vote.pa.gov or by calling 1-877-VotesPA (Option 3).

In Pennsylvania, you have two options for mail ballots:

Mail-in ballot – Any qualified voter may apply for a mail-in ballot. You may simply request this ballot without a reason.

Absentee ballot – If you plan to be out of the municipality on Election Day or if you have a disability or illness that prevents you from going to your polling place on Election Day, you can request this ballot type, which still requires you to list a reason for your ballot. Make sure you get one of these ballots for your “away” college children.

What’s on this year’s ballot?

On your ballot will be candidates running for the following offices:

Borough of Churchill

Member of Council (4-year term, 3 positions)

Woodland Hills School Board

School Director, Region 1 (2 positions)

Allegheny County

Chief Executive

County Controller

County Treasurer

District Attorney

County Council, District 7

County Council, At-Large

Magisterial District Judge 05-2-08

Judge of the Court of Common Pleas (1 position)

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Justice of the Supreme Court (1 position)

Judge of the Superior Court (2 positions)

Judge of the Commonwealth Court (1 position)

Important Dates

Last day to register or change your registration before the primary: **Monday, Oct. 23**

Last day to apply for a mail-in or absentee ballot: **Tuesday, Oct. 31**

Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted absentee or mail-in ballots: **Tuesday, Nov. 7 by 8 p.m.**

General Election: **Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2023, 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.**

Helpful web resources for Churchill residents

Churchill polling locations: <https://www.pavoterservices.pa.gov/Pages/PollingPlaceInfo.aspx>

PA voting information: <https://www.vote.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

League of Women Voters voting information: <https://www.vote411.org>

Allegheny County sample ballots: <http://apps.alleghenycounty.us/website/ElectPollPlace.aspx>

Helpful Phone Numbers

Churchill Borough Office: 412-241-7113

Allegheny County Elections Division: 412-350-4500

A Message from the Mayor



Every month, Chief Ronald Akerley prepares a monthly report for the Mayor. The report is generally 20 pages of activities and police vehicle statistics. Also reported are court activities, calls for service citations, tickets summaries, and arrests. I review the report and generate a summarized report to Council each month at the monthly Council meeting.

Some interesting statistics to note: In 2022, our Police responded to 10,828 calls for service, collected \$6898.88 in magisterial fees, accumulated 58,562 miles on our fleet of five vehicles and issued 550 tickets. (Note, a call for service includes regular daily patrols and monitoring.)

After months of waiting, our new 2022 Ford Police Cruiser was put into service on May 15, 2023. It has the latest equipment and a highly visible light bar. On August 2, 2023, the vehicle was involved in an accident. The insurance company feels that the vehicle can be fixed but we will have a lengthy wait until work is completed. Fortunately, our officer and the operator of the other vehicle were not seriously injured. Coincidentally, almost a year to date in 2022, another one of our vehicles was totaled in an accident. Both were identified as car 10. The Chief has decided to retire that number!

Many thanks to Chief Akerley for detailing the retired police cruiser and placing it up for municipal bids. He was successful in getting \$10,300 for the vehicle.

Speeding remains a dangerous issue in our Borough. Our Police Department spends time daily with active speed monitoring. There are no speed limits above 35 mph on our streets, so be mindful of your speed when traveling.

Don't Want Solicitors at Your Door?

Before engaging in commercial solicitation, an individual solicitor must hold a valid registration issued by the Churchill Borough Police Department identifying themselves and their organization. No person is permitted to solicit upon property posted with a plainly visible **No Soliciting** sign. This does not apply to religious entities or political organizations.

Borough Police are responsible for compiling and maintaining a list of property owners and residents who notify the Department that they do not wish to be solicited. This no-soliciting list is posted on the Borough website. No commercial or noncommercial solicitor may go in or upon any address listed on the no-soliciting list. At the time of registration with the Police Department, commercial solicitors will be given a copy of the no-soliciting list.

Stay Informed!

If you haven't already done so, pin our Borough website to your task bar: www.churchillborough.com. Here, you will find the answers to many of your questions and even forms to fill out for services. Please view current meeting agendas and minutes, along with other public documents, on our [ECode 360 Portal](#).

Recordings of past meetings can be found on the Borough's YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/ChurchillBorough>. Also we maintain a regularly updated Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/p/Churchill-Borough-100064074013875/>.

Submitted by Mayor Paul Gamrat



Interested in Joining the Churchill Book Club?

The Churchill Book Club meets the second Wednesday of the month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the Yagle Room at the Borough Building.

For more information, contact Gaye Burkett at 412-576-3344 or gcburkett@aol.com.

Homestead Exclusion for Allegheny County Property Owners

The Homestead Act (Act 50) is a program that reduces your “market value” by \$18,000 for Allegheny County property taxes. To qualify, you must be the property owner and occupy the dwelling as your primary residence. The application deadline is March 1 of each year. You do not have to reapply once your application is approved. Once you have filed, your exemption will remain in effect until you sell/transfer the property or change your occupancy. If you have previously filed and qualified for the Act 50 exclusion, you are automatically registered for the Act 1 program, the Taxpayer Relief Act that provides for property tax reduction allocations.

For more information, contact the Allegheny County Office of Property Assessments office, County Office Building, 542 Forbes Ave., Third Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. Phone number is 412-350-4600.

Churchill Borough Welcomes Climate Action Committee Intern

Pittsburgh native Jess Fortino, a senior at Penn State University majoring in Energy and Sustainability Policy, will intern with the Borough for 2023-2024 school year.

Jess will help the Borough learn more about sustainability in its journey to improve our community’s and residents’ overall health, safety and well-being of our community and its residents. Along with the help of Local Climate Action Program (LCAP) and Congress of Neighboring Communities (CONNECT), she will specifically be working with the Churchill Borough’s Climate Action Committee and Borough Manager to help establish a Climate Action Plan that, among other things, will benefit the Borough when applying for grants.

Shop with a Cop



Officer Justin Hott represented Churchill Police Department at the 2023 Shop with a Cop event hosted by Macy’s on Aug. 27. This is the third year for the event locally, and Churchill has been a proud participant every year. This year’s lucky student was 13-year-old resident Sebastian Kuchta of Beulah Road.

Created by Macy’s in partnership with the Allegheny County Police Camp Cadet program, the program offers a private, in-store Shop with a Cop experience for 20 students alongside officers from local and state police departments. Each student joined police officers in their police cars for a memorable “ride along” experience around Monroeville Mall.

Afterward, students and their families were paired with local officers to enjoy a morning shopping together to find new looks and accessories as they prepare to head back to school. Each student was allotted a \$250 Macy’s gift card for back-to-school essentials. State Sen. Jim Brewster and State Rep. Brandon Markosek provided each student with a new backpack fully stocked with school supplies.

Churchill VFC: What Does a New Firefighter Do?



At Churchill Community Days in August, the Churchill Volunteer Fire Company showed our rescue truck to residents and their families; handed out fire helmets, pencils, and stickers to kids; and talked to people about joining the fire company. One resident asked a seemingly simple question: “What does a new volunteer firefighter do?” I think what they were really asking was, “What would, or could, I do if I joined?”

The answer to that question is quite complex and varies a bit from one volunteer fire company to another. So, I thought I would take the time to explain what a volunteer firefighter does.

The simplest way to answer that question is perhaps a bit cliché: You do what needs to be done, based on what you have been trained to do, what your interests are, and what skills and experience you have.

If a volunteer is new to the fire service, the initial focus is on training. The fire company conducts training sessions two to three Thursdays each month. Our officers will cover the basics that you need to know to safely respond to and assist at emergency calls. This training starts with learning how to respond to the fire station properly, how to don (put on) your protective turnout gear (helmet, coat, pants and gloves), which vehicles respond in what order to different kinds of emergencies and what standard procedures apply to each situation. Training then progresses to safety at the fire scenes on the roadways because many of Churchill’s responses are to vehicle accidents.

Want more information? Please go to our website churchillfire.org and fill out the Volunteer Signup form at the bottom of the page.

Submitted by Brian Papa, Churchill VFC Fire Chief

Resident Represented at National Senior Games

David Bajada, Churchill resident, participated in the biennial National Senior Games held this year in Pittsburgh. Over 11,000 seniors aged 50 and older took part in traditional Olympic events to celebrate healthy aging and staying active. David participated in Track\Field in the 1500-meter (.93 mile) event, placing sixth of 18 runners in his age category (75-80) and earning him a ribbon which jokingly he says he glues to his bald head every day.

A practicing psychologist for the past 49 years, David has been married to his wife, April, for eight years. An avid gardener, he especially loves dahlias and zinnias, and sprinkling his garden with colors and deer resistant plants (not much luck with the latter). David has performed as a magician—mostly stage shows for local schools throughout Pennsylvania and California, and some barroom shows in Jamaica. Prior to the pandemic, he did stand-up comedy for several years at numerous local comedy establishments, culminating in a comedy competition at the Improv Comedy Club.

His philosophy of aging can be summed up: “Be curious; keep turning toward the things you’d rather avoid; stay connected to loved ones, especially friends and family; have a lot of fun; remain open to learning, especially from young folks; and keep moving if you’re able.”

Submitted by Paul Gamrat



David Bajada

Reflections on Churchill's Past: Joan Gottlieb



Joan and Milton Gottlieb

It was more than six decades ago that Joan Gottlieb and her husband Milton arrived in the area. He was hired as a physicist at the new Westinghouse Research and Development Center and she was eager to start her job teaching and doing research in biology at the University of Pittsburgh and later at the new Churchill Area High School (CAHS). But their attempt to settle into their new community wasn't very welcoming.

Although Churchill is a diverse community today, that wasn't the case when the Gottliebs were looking for a home. Many of Westinghouse's engineers were Jewish and, like the couple, wanted to establish residency in Churchill Borough to be close to work. The Gottliebs experienced bigotry first-hand when they attempted to purchase a small home on Churchill Road. After they put down a deposit, the real estate

agent told them the owner wanted to know if they were Jewish. The deal fell through. In 1965, they built their home on Marbury Road in a plan that didn't have a discriminatory "covenant agreement" based on religion or race.

A decade later, Joan made history by becoming the only Democrat on a seven-member Churchill Borough Council that had been solidly Republican. "I won that election by the highest number of votes and replaced the long-serving E. Ogden Thompson, who was known for his authoritarian and racist approaches to governing. My reputation as a hard-working teacher at the high school, plus an exhausting door-to-door campaign to meet as many of our residents as possible, had worked well."

In the 18 years she served on Council, Joan became a powerhouse for shaping Churchill as an environmentally aware community. As a representative to the Churchill Area Environmental Council (CAEC), she helped establish a volunteer recycling center at the high school. The Group for Recycling in Pennsylvania (GRIP) eventually took over the effort until State Act 95 mandated recycling by all municipalities with more than 5,000 residents. With support from the Borough Manager, Churchill and Forest Hills received a grant to start a joint composting site, producing a popular "black gold" mulch from fall leaf and yard waste. With Joan's help, CAEC issued "Local Environmental Advisories" that alerted residents to issues like oak wilt disease, gypsy moths and invasive, alien plants like Japanese knotweed.

Joan became a strong advocate for Bullock-Pens Park. A joint venture with the CAHS science department resulted in a multi-year, comprehensive study of the major creeks and streams in the council's four municipalities, including Chalfant Run, which flows through the park. For 25 years, Joan managed PennDOT's "Adopt-a-Highway" program with volunteers from the Churchill Garden Club. They could be seen with trash bags, picking up litter along Beulah Road.

One of Joan's biggest victories was getting the Borough to join the Allegheny County Health Department, a long-time, politicized issue. Churchill was one of only three municipalities in the county to refuse membership. Access to the many services that the county health department provided, such as pest control and restaurant and school food inspections were advantages to joining, she said. A serious Salmonella outbreak one Thanksgiving from unintended food mishandling at Edgewood Country Club, which was not subject to inspection by the county health department, illustrated the advantages of membership.

"Our Borough Council was dominated by naysayers who did not want Churchill to be controlled in any way by a county run by Democrats," Joan recalls. "Near the end of my Council service, Churchill finally joined. County taxes cover voluntary Health Department membership, and there was no additional cost to residents. I could not have had a better parting gift." Joan moved with her late husband to Rhode Island in 2019 to be closer to family. But her impact on the Borough remains.

The views and opinions expressed in the above article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official or position of Churchill Borough.

Churchill Borough Tree Committee Update

The Churchill Borough Tree Committee added two new members: Jay Gamze and Tracy Sherksnas. Jay and Tracy join existing members Judy Diorio, Natalie Boydston and Ken Balkey, providing a cross-section of neighborhoods in the borough.

- The committee met in July and was joined by Borough Council Climate Action Committee members Andrea Ditillo and Deb Casini Klein, Mayor Paul Gamrat and Borough Manager Alex Graziani. The Tree Committee reviewed the latest information about significant tree canopy loss both worldwide and across Allegheny County before discussing tree canopy changes across Churchill Borough and how we compare with other municipalities.
- Even with the recent planting of over 800 new trees working with community partners at Woodland Hills schools, Beulah Presbyterian Church and the Churchill Valley Greenway, the borough tree canopy has decreased from 53% coverage in 2010 to between 45% - 47% today.
- The Tree Committee reviewed near-term and longer-term strategic needs, and developed and reviewed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) plan. The extensive interfaces that the Tree Committee has already established with several key partners locally and regionally over the last few years are viewed as a major strength. Losing the ability to conduct large public educational forums during COVID is viewed as a key weakness. The above-mentioned loss of tree canopy and the increase of invasive plants and pests are viewed as significant threats. The potential enhancement of the Churchill Valley Greenway working with the Allegheny Land Trust, the possibility of grant funding and revival of the Churchill Community Day are all viewed as valuable opportunities.
- Tracy Sherksnas kindly hosted the Tree Committee table and displays at the Churchill Community Day on August 12, with help from some fellow Tree Committee members, Ruth Anne Balkey and Maeve Rafferty, Education Coordinator at *Tree Pittsburgh*.



- Many residents at Community Day expressed concerns about the ongoing invasion of the spotted lanternfly. Unfortunately, we are only at the beginning stages of this infestation as areas in eastern Pennsylvania have been dealing with this issue for the last 10 years! The Tree Committee has advised some residents to completely remove the tree-of-heaven from their property as best as possible to eliminate hundreds if not thousands of these pests from their premises. (See box on page 15 for natural ways to kill the lanternfly.)



• The Tree Committee has been informed by residents in the Blackridge neighborhood that Duquesne Light has made offers to cut down certain trees for free on their property versus having the trees trimmed to eliminate threats to the electric company's power lines. Residents need to know that while the electric company will cut down the tree for free, they do not remove the tree cuttings. Some citizens have had to pay close to \$2,000 to have the tree trunk and branches hauled away. More importantly, the resident loses all the benefits associated with their trees.

- The Tree Committee plans to host a public educational workshop in the fall or in early 2024 to present and discuss the latest developments impacting our borough tree canopy.

Submitted by Ken Balkey, Chair, Churchill Borough Tree Committee

Ewww Bugs!! Natural Ways to Kill the Lanternfly



Whether you are enjoying a cup of coffee on your porch, trying to unload groceries, doing some gardening or just getting the mail you probably have seen them.... The lanternflies are out and about causing damage in their wake. Here are some natural ways to kill these invasive bugs:

- **Insecticidal Soap**

A solution of insecticidal soap can be sprayed directly on adult lanternflies. Misting plants and trees with this solution where there is evidence of infestation is a good way to kill the insect. Alternatively, mix the insecticidal soap with apple cider vinegar in a mason jar and hang it near or on the infested plant. This helps to attract, catch and kill the bugs.

- **Control the Tree of Heaven**

The Tree of Heaven is one of the host plants of the spotted lanternfly. Cutting this tree down is an immediate temporary fix. For more permanent removal of this tree, see the Penn State Extension link <https://extension.psu.edu/tree-of-heaven>.

- **Vinegar**

Vinegar kills them on contact. You can dilute apple cider vinegar or white vinegar, but it's more effective when you spray it directly on them at full strength.

- **Soap and Water**

A homemade mixture of equal parts of soap (such as Dawn) and water is another way to kill them. The soapy water will suffocate them.

- **Neem Oil**

Neem oil is a natural fungicide and pesticide from the neem tree. Neem oil doesn't kill the fly immediately. It works by inhibiting their eating abilities. There are commercial products that contain neem oil or you can make your own solution.

- **Flip Flop**

If you can get them, squish them! The Penn State Extension website provides several management resources for residents to address this pest: <https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly-management-resources>.



Chilly weather making you want to curl up with a good book? Get cozy with C.C. Mellor Memorial Library! This season, we are excited to share a slew of events and programs for all ages and interests – and, of course, our large collection of books, DVDs and audiobooks.

Feeling generous this Giving Tuesday? Don't forget about your favorite local library! C.C. Mellor Memorial Library, along with other local nonprofits, will be taking part in Pittsburgh Magazine's Give Big Pittsburgh online giving day on Nov. 28.

Here's a peek at some of our events this fall:

Halloween Party and Parade - Our annual Halloween Party and Parade is back! On Monday, Oct. 23, join us outside Edgewood Elementary STEAM Academy at 6 p.m. in your costumes to parade down to the library, then stay for snacks and a kids' dance party at the Edgewood Club (down the hall from CCM Edgewood)! All are welcome at the parade, but we'll have limited space at the party, so please register at ccmellorlibrary.eventbrite.com starting Oct. 1.

Nature's Tricks and Treats - While we celebrate tricks and treats with candy on Halloween, nature is full of hidden "tricks" that animals and plants use for survival all year round! Join us and learn more Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6 to 7 p.m. at CCM Edgewood.

Meet the Candidates - Come to this virtual town hall event to meet your municipal candidates and hear their platform for the upcoming Nov. 7 elections. This event will span several dates through October and November. Check out our website for more information and a zoom link to attend!



Some of our other fall events include: Family Tree Basics (10/07), Braddock's Battlefield History Lecture (10/21), Squirrl Hill Poetry Workshop Reading (10/21), Seed Swap & Launch of our Seed Library (11/04), Flights of Wonder (11/8) and Make Your Own Tutu (12/09). For more information or to register for these events, go to www.ccmellorlibrary.org!

Our full slate of programming continues through the fall with programs including Family Storytime, Baby Talk, Pajama Storytime, Music and Movement Storytime, Makerspace Mondays, Adventure Club, Teen Group, Tween Club, Board Game Club, Dungeons and Dragons Club, and our adult book clubs and social hours at CCM Edgewood and CCM Forest Hills.

Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram @ccmellorlibrary and check our website for the latest events and news!

Churchill Borough
2300 William Penn Highway
Pittsburgh, PA 15235



Rep. Abigail Salisbury

SAVE THE DATE
Friday, November 3, 2023, 2-4 p.m.

- What: PA State Rep. Abigail Salisbury, 34th District Mobile Office Hours
- Where: Churchill Borough Building, 2300 Wm. Penn Highway, Pgh., PA 15235

The Representative and her staff will be able to assist residents with LIHEAP, Senior ConnectCards, unemployment, property tax and rent rebates, vehicle registrations and other state-related concerns.

Churchill Borough Elected Officials:

Mayor: Paul Gamrat

Borough Council:

President: Jay Dworin

Vice President: Diane Law

Brooke Burchette-Williams

Deb Casini Klein

Matthew Castiglia

Andrea Ditillo

Valerie Reinthaler

Tax Collector: Danielle Weaver

Churchill Borough Government Newsletter:

Content Editor: Zandy Dudiak

Layout Editor: Leanne Longwill

Find us on social media:



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Contact the Borough, Keep Informed

Any resident who has questions or concerns about Churchill Borough matters is encouraged to call, text, or email Borough Manager Alex Graziani at 412-758-8818 or alex@churchillborough.com.

Savvy Citizen - Simple. Convenient. Free. www.savvycitizenapp.com