



Churchill Borough Local Government Newsletter

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Winter/Spring 2021

From the Mayor

The Borough is at the beginning of a whole new era. We are welcoming our new Manager and Finance Officer/Treasurer, who are doing an excellent job of moving us forward in the midst of a pandemic. Even though the building remains closed for safety, regular meetings are continuing online. More residents are joining us each month for meetings. These meetings are the source of information for the most frequently asked questions. Questions concerning the recent land developments can be addressed with accurate information. It is your chance to address council directly. Our website is being updated to provide more information and to make it more user-friendly. Meetings are recorded and can be viewed on YouTube.

We are also welcoming new officers to the Police Department, along with a new fuel-efficient police cruiser. We are nearing a full complement of officers to provide services to our Borough. And we would like to thank the road crews for all their snow removal efforts. So far, we have been experiencing some heavy snowstorms, and we still have more to come.

I would like to thank everyone for their efforts to mitigate COVID-19. Social distancing and limiting group activities according to the CDC guidelines are helping. We can get through this and get ourselves back to our normal way of life when it is safe to do so. As we move forward, I am seeing a bright future for not only the Borough, but also the Eastern Suburbs. As always, if you would like to volunteer any of your services to the Borough, please contact me through the Borough Office.

Also, as a reminder from our Police Department, make sure your vehicles are always locked and secure when left outside. Obey all traffic signs and posted speed limits. This is for your safety and the safety of other residents. Let's be courteous and respectful while driving.

Paul Gamrat

Virtual Borough Meetings

Zoom was the word of 2020. This virtual conferencing tool has been used by businesses, individuals, schools and governments to connect us all together amidst the COVID-19 pandemic while keeping us all safe within our homes. In addition, it has allowed more residents to actively engage in the Borough. However, a common misconception is that Zoom is only for the computer savvy.

Zoom can also be used via any telephone to dial into the meeting as a conference call by dialing toll free: 877-853-5247 or 888-788-0099 and enter Meeting ID: 967 2848 6683 Passcode: 924938

Or click this button on the www.churchillborough.com homepage

[Join Borough Zoom Meeting](#)

To learn more about the capabilities of Zoom, visit support.zoom.us or contact the Borough offices.

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Two Appointees Fill Vacant Council Seats

Churchill is pleased to welcome new Borough Council members Matt Castiglia and Valerie Reinthaler, both Democrats appointed in late 2020, to fill the seats vacated by Donald DeFranco and Diana Yankes, respectively.



Matt Castiglia

A desire to know more about local decision-making led Matt Castiglia to seek the open seat on Borough Council. Matt, who is married with three children, moved to Churchill in 2015, attracted by a family-oriented neighborhood and quiet roads. “We considered the area because of affordability and central location.” He says they found so much more when they got here and it’s important to attract new residents based on more than affordability and location. He says we have a real opportunity to develop and highlight our schools and community to those moving to Churchill. As the owner of JCMR Engineers, an independent civil and structural engineering consulting firm, Castiglia is well-suited to chair Council’s infrastructure committee.

When Westinghouse left its facility, Borough residents were stuck making up the lost tax revenue. With the potential for new development on that site and others, Council wants to balance short- and long-term goals to make sure that will not happen again. For that reason, Borough Council wants to focus on long-term planning and visioning for Churchill. Upcoming decisions on three potential developments—the former Westinghouse, Churchill Valley Country Club, and Shaffer School sites—will be “how Churchill turns the corner from our past to our future,” Castiglia says, noting that Council encourages resident input and involvement.



Valerie Reinthaler

With a background in social work and nonprofit management, Valerie Reinthaler has always given back to the communities in which she has lived. Born in Colombia, South America, Reinthaler grew up and attended college in Florida before moving to Point Breeze and then, four years ago, to Churchill. “I love its proximity to the city and its homey suburban feel,” Reinthaler says. “I love the numerous picturesque trees that line the roads. I consider Churchill my home.”

Joining Council has provided Reinthaler with “the perfect opportunity for me to use the skills I’ve gained throughout my career to give back to my community.” She is deputy director of behavioral health for Auberle, a nonprofit social services agency in McKeesport, where she oversees programs that help families and youth. Reinthaler says through her job, she has “learned a lot about leadership and serving a community” and has skills that will benefit her as a council member.

The mother of a soon-to-be 2-year-old who is married to her high school sweetheart, Reinthaler thinks it’s important to attract young families to the Borough. She loves cooking and golfing (and is member of Edgewood Country Club). She also has a small business, Val+Co. Home Apothecary, that focuses on candles and room and linen sprays.

Call Before You Dig – PA One Call 811

Spring and summer are excellent times to take on those projects you have been waiting all winter to tackle. However, if you plan on performing excavation, demolition or paving work on your own (If you are utilizing a contractor, a separate process is needed), don’t forget to alert the PA One Call service. This service alerts the Borough and other utility providers to your request and they will mark any underground utilities in the area you have indicated. This prevents unnecessary damage to underground utilities such as electric, gas, cable, sewage and water. To file a One Call application for your address, head online to PAOneCall.org or dial 811 from any telephone. File this request no less than three nor more than ten business days in advance of beginning all work. This service is free of charge to all homeowners.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**



Borough Council Raises 2021 Tax Rate, Sewer Surcharge

The 2021 General Fund Budget adopted by Churchill Borough Council on December 14, 2020 increased the Real Estate Tax Millage Rate from **7.48 to 8.00 mills** and the Sewer Surcharge Fee from \$6/1,000 gallons to \$8.50/1,000 gallons. The Borough Administration presented a “momentum budget” for 2021. Across the state and country, local government financial administrators echoed very similar sentiments to budget conservatively for the year ahead.

One mill of tax is equivalent to \$1 in tax for every \$1,000 of a home’s assessed value. Assessed values are determined by the Allegheny County Department of Real Estate. The millage rate set for 2021 reflects an increase of .52 mills, so real estate taxes will increase by 52 cents for every \$1,000 of a home’s assessed value. For an average home valued at \$148,100, the annual tax obligation will increase by \$77.02. (See more information on the Sewer Surcharge in the article below.)

“COVID-19 is not yet behind us and there is an uncertain future for the former Westinghouse property that is among the top-10 borough taxpayers, along with the potential conversion of another of these high yield properties, the former Churchill Valley Country Club, into a tax-exempt property,” says Borough Manager Alex Graziani. “Therefore, the goal for this budget was to select a millage rate that maintains the financial health and current service levels here in the Borough, while maintaining its financial stability. This will allow 2021 to be a year where strategic planning can be exercised to create long-term financial goals and stability while supporting the integrity of the Borough’s infrastructure, both physical and in personnel.”

The decisions by Borough Council to increase both the current Real Estate Tax Millage Rate and the Borough Sewer Surcharge fee were incredibly tough to make, especially during these difficult times, but Council worked hard to ensure that the increases taken were the minimal ones necessary. For more information on either increase and/or to view the adopted budgets for all Borough funds, visit the Borough website or call the Borough Offices at 412-241-7113 to schedule an appointment to review a physical copy.

Increased Sewer Surcharge Begins March 1

Starting March 1, 2021, the Borough of Churchill sewer surcharge, billed by Wilkesburg Penn Joint Water Authority (WPJWA), will be raised from \$6/1,000 gallons of water used to **\$8.50/1,000 gallons of water used**. Depending on your billing cycle, the increase may be reflected on WPJWA bills as early as March but may not be fully reflected until April’s billing statement. For the average homeowner using 4,000 gallons/month, this should mean a \$10.00 increase to your monthly WPJWA bill. Factoring in the increases imposed by both the WPJWA and ALCOSAN this year as well, the average resident should see an increase of \$13.31/month overall given the table outlined below.

The surcharge the Borough collects allows for regular maintenance and repair of the 23.78 miles of sanitary sewer line the Borough owns and is responsible for. These funds also support the Borough’s efforts to comply with the current Consent Order enforced by the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which requires annual closed-circuit filming of these lines and determination of necessary repairs. The ALCOSAN charge residents are billed for provides for the conveyance and treatment of wastewater.

For residents to better understand the sanitary sewer charges imposed by ALCOSAN and the Borough, WPJWA is working to improve the clarity of billing to Churchill residents by separating the Borough’s charges from ALCOSAN’s charges into distinct lines on your billing statement. This change will go into effect on bills printed sometime after April 1, 2021. However, at the time of this printing, the exact date will depend on the outcome of further testing regarding this improvement. For additional resources and more information on this increase, visit the Borough of Churchill website at www.churchillborough.com.

Increased Sewage Surcharge Breakdown

	ALCOSAN*	ALCOSAN w/ 7% increase for 2021*	WPJWA**	WPJWA w/ 5% increase for 2021**	Churchill Sewer Surcharge	Total Quarterly Charges	Difference/Month w/ BOC Surcharge Increase	Difference/Month w/ All Changes	% Total Increase
\$6.00/1,000 gallons	\$119.86	\$128.31	\$101.18	\$102.65	\$72.00	\$302.96			
\$8.50/1,000 gallons	\$119.86	\$128.31	\$101.18	\$102.65	\$102.00	\$332.96	\$10.00	\$13.31	4.00%
*ALCOSAN estimates courtesy of ALCOSAN									
**WPJWA estimates courtesy of WPJWA									

Changes to Real Estate Tax Collection

We would like to thank the Borough’s real estate principal and deputy tax collectors, Mr. Daniel and Mrs. Mary Lou Duerring, for their 18 years of service. As of February 1, 2021, Borough resident Danielle Weaver will be assuming the role of tax collector after being appointed by Borough Council in January. Danielle has chosen to deputize Keystone Collections Group on recommendation of Borough Council. Keystone Collections Group (KCG) will be handling day-to-day tax bill processing with Ms. Weaver assisting Borough Council and administration as a liaison. KCG has eight offices with one office located close to the Borough in Penn Hills for those wishing to pay their tax bills in person. For those who desire contactless pay methods, KCG accepts credit and debit card payments, as well as Apple and Google Pay. Property owners should expect a welcome letter with more information to be included with their 2021 Borough Real Estate Tax Statements. **These statements will be mailed out the first week in March.** To learn more now, visit www.keystonecollects.com.

Churchill Creek Project Eyed for Vacant Westinghouse Property

A plan to redevelop the vacant George Westinghouse Technology and Research Park into a proposed e-commerce fulfillment center could potentially generate annual tax revenues for Churchill Borough and for the Woodland Hills School District—and create more than 1,000 full-time jobs with benefits.

In a proposal known as the Churchill Creek Project, LLC, Texas-based Hillwood Development Co. plans to redevelop the 134-acre tract along Beulah Road and the Parkway East by demolishing the existing blighted buildings and constructing a 4.5 story, 2,600,000-square-foot distribution and logistics facility.

In November, Council approved an amendment to the Borough Zoning Code that clears the way for Hillwood to redevelop the property at an estimated cost of \$300 million. In February, the Borough Planning Commission tabled the item until its March 3, 2021 meeting, therefore April is likely the earliest that the Planning Commission will take action to recommend conditional use approval to Council. If recommended, Council will likely hold a public hearing on the project on May 10 and could render a final decision as early as June 14.

To view the most recent submissions from Hillwood or redevelopment of the Shaffer School property, see the Borough’s [website](#).



Spring Leaf and Yard Waste Pick Up

For pick up at the curb, place leaves and yard waste in paper biodegradable bags on the evenings prior to **May 11 and 25, June 8 and 22, and July 6 and 26, 2021**. No plastic bags or bags that are taped or stapled shut will be accepted. Acceptable items include leaves, trimmings, cuttings and clippings from trees, small bushes and other plants, and garden residue. Longer branches (more than 6 inches in length, but less than 3 feet) should be bundled together separate outside of these bags. Non-acceptable items are dirt, stones or grass clippings; heavy tree trunks; stumps; or excessively large items. There is no limit to the number of bags or branches that are accepted per residence. These items will be picked up on these scheduled dates automatically and it is not required that you schedule or request a date in advance.



Black and Gold Compost Distribution 2021



Over the winter and spring, the Borough turns the biodegradable paper bags full of autumn leaves that residents have picked up into functional compost. This year, the compost will be ready for distribution in June. Residents can pick up a supply from the Joint Churchill/Forest Hills Compost Site at the corner of Business Route 22 and Rodi Road between the hours of 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on **June 12 and 19**. BYOC: Bring Your Own Containers.

There is a suggested donation of \$2 a vehicle. Delivery is available at a set cost of \$10/bucket of mulch (2 buckets equals 4 cubic yards), plus \$30 for delivery. Cash, checks or money orders are accepted, made payable to Borough of Churchill. To establish a delivery time and date, as well as coordinate delivery payment, contact Borough Public Works Director Ralph Zatlin at 412-241-7113 x203. **NOTE: ALL DELIVERY ORDERS MUST BE PAID IN ADVANCE AT THE BOROUGH OFFICE.**

2021 Paving Program

Borough Council put out for bid the proposed streets to be paved in 2021. Borough road segments to be paved will have other improvements, including signage and drainage. Work is expected to be completed before November. Costs below reflect the estimated additional costs that may be incurred for base repairs.

PROPOSED 2021 PAVING PROGRAM & ESTIMATED COST			
Road Segments	Distance (LF)	Area (SY)	ESTIMATE
Woodland Hills Drive - Entire Road	1,636	5,138	\$ 224,000.00
Jamestown Place – Hollywood Drive to border	388	937	\$ 31,000.00
Sub Total			\$ 255,000.00
11% CONTINGENCY			\$ 28,050.00
TOTAL	2,024	6,075	\$ 283,050.00



Street Sweeping

Street sweeping will be conducted throughout the Borough on **May 1, 2 and 3**. Street sweeping not only beautifies the Borough, but also clears leaves that otherwise can disturb and clog the Borough’s storm sewers. Please assist by not parking your vehicle on the street during the hours of 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on these dates. Your cooperation is appreciated.



Churchill Borough 2021 Collection Schedule

All leaf and yard waste must be placed in biodegradable bags. Trash must be placed in your bin with the green lid, no material outside of the bin will be collected. Recyclables must be placed in your bin with the yellow lid, no material outside of the bin will be collected. Please do not bag recyclables.

January						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
				1*	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

February						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

March						
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22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

April						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

May						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31*						

June						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

July						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
			1	2	3	4*
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12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

August						
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						1
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

September						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
		1	2	3	4	5
6*	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
				1	2	3
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25*	26	27	28
29	30					

December						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	SU
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25*	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- Even Recycle Week
- Summer Yardwaste Collection
- Odd Recycle Week
- Bulk Collection Day - Residents are permitted 2 bulk items per collection day
- Holiday - Service delayed until Wednesday when a holiday falls on a Monday or Tuesday
- Fall "Leaf Only" Collection

Check your street's recycling day [HERE](http://www.churchillborough.com/downloads/refuse-recycling/2021-recycling-street-rotation.pdf) or
<http://www.churchillborough.com/downloads/refuse-recycling/2021-recycling-street-rotation.pdf>

Spring Ahead: March 14, 2021

Daylight Savings Time for the year 2021 begins at 2 a.m. EST on Sunday, **March 14**. Remember to turn your clocks ahead one hour to adjust to this change. In addition, don't forget to change your smoke detector batteries when the clocks change. The Churchill VFD recommends replacing your old detectors with new 10-year maintenance free detectors, which don't need battery replacements. It is recommended that you install these detectors in each bedroom and on each floor of your house.

March 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Sunday, Mar 14th 2021

2021 Primary Election

The 2021 Primary Election, scheduled for Tuesday, May 18, is when those who want to govern at the local, state and federal levels of government will be selected from candidates competing within qualified political parties. In addition to state and county candidates, your ballot includes candidates running for the following Borough of Churchill offices: Mayor (4-year term), Member of Council (4-year term, 4 seats), Member of Council (2-year term, 1 seat), Tax Collector (4-year term), and Constable (6-year term). The last day to register to vote is **May 3, 2021**.

Pennsylvania has "closed" primaries, which means that you must enroll in a political party to participate, unless there are ballot questions, constitutional amendments, or special election contests. If you are already registered to vote as a member of a particular party, you will be able to select your party's candidates for the November General Election from those who have met the petition and other requirements for listing on the Primary ballot. No one will be on the fall ballot who does not first win in the Primary.

To register, change your registration, change your address, find your polling place and/or learn more about absentee or mail-in ballots, visit the Pennsylvania Voting Information website at www.votespa.com, the League of Women Voters website at www.vote411.org or contact the Allegheny County Division of Elections at 412-350-4500.

Churchill Borough Meeting Calendar March-September 2021

March 2021

3/1 Council Workshop
3/3 Planning Committee
3/8 Council Regular Meeting
3/22 Zoning Board

June 2021

6/2 Council Workshop
6/7 Planning Committee
6/14 Council Regular Meeting
6/28 Zoning Board

September 2021

9/1 Council Workshop
9/7 Planning Committee
9/13 Council Regular Meeting
9/27 Zoning Board

April 2021

4/5 Council Workshop
4/7 Planning Committee
4/12 Council Regular Meeting
4/26 Zoning Board

July 2021

7/6 Council Workshop
7/7 Planning Committee
7/12 Council Regular Meeting
7/26 Zoning Board

May 2021

5/3 Council Workshop
5/5 Planning Committee
5/10 Council Regular Meeting
5/24 Zoning Board

August 2021

8/2 Council Workshop
8/4 Planning Committee
8/9 Council Regular Meeting
8/23 Zoning Board

Sign up for  **SWIFTR**REACH
A Rave Mobile Safety Company

In an effort to provide more reliable communication to our residents and businesses within the borough, we have implemented the SwiftReach Networks, Inc. This system will enable us to launch alerts to your home or cell phone. It will be used to communicate Borough information only.

If you would like to participate in this program, you can login into the SwiftReach Portal found on the Borough website home page at www.churchillborough.com. Also, if you have changes to their email, phone number, etc., login onto the SwiftReach website to update your information or contact the Borough offices at office@churchillborough.com or 412-241-7113.

Get to Know Your School District



Woodland Hills School District's website contains information about the district schools, administration and school board, sports and performing arts programs, COVID-19 updates and much more. Visit www.whsd.net and support your local public schools.

Contact the Borough, Keep Informed

Any resident who has questions or concerns about Churchill Borough matters is encouraged to contact Borough Manager Alex Graziani at 412-758-8818 or alex@churchillborough.com. The Borough website is a one-stop source of information about Churchill, such as the Borough Code online, meeting agendas and minutes, past newsletters, community calendar and recreation programs. Visit www.churchillborough.com.

Find us on social media:



<https://www.facebook.com/Churchill-Borough-100676791820384>



YouTube www.youtube.com/user/ChurchillBorough

Churchill Borough
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