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IMPORTANT MEETING: Blairstown Land Use Board Talks Zoning Change, Affordable Housing and Data Centers

Time: Wednesday, August 26th at 7:30pm

Location: 106 Rt. 94, Blairstown, NJ

FMI: 908-362-6663

“Best” Class of Belvidere High School Hosts 60th Reunion



Belvidere High School’s Class of 1966, which set the standards for much of the school’s future success, recently held its 60th class reunion at Tiptons Tavern in Harmony Township. The class of ‘66 is regarded as the best graduating class since 1938

when the school was built. The class of ‘66 has had many notable accomplishments and graduates who made their mark in the history of the school. In the fall of 1965 the team was the first to beat Hack-ettstown in football and was Conference Cham-

pions. In attendance was Robert Place, Captain of the Football Team and who later became a coach at the school. Principal Saul Cooperman became New Jersey’s Commissioner of Education. Assistant Principal Andrew *BELVIDERE cont’d on pg 2*

Project Self-Sufficiency Hosts Free Back-to-School Fair for Local NJ Families

Hundreds of parents and children recently turned out for a Back-to-School Fair hosted by the Journey Family Success Center at Project Self-Sufficiency. Designed to prepare

the entire family for a successful academic year, the event featured numerous workshops, children’s activities, information from local social service agencies and healthcare organi-

zations, mobile gaming, and more. Children and families received new backpacks filled with school supplies and were invited to enjoy free pizza and snacks *SCHOOL cont’d on pg 3*

Polo Match to Benefit Project Self-Sufficiency



Plans are underway for the second annual Project Self-Sufficiency Polo Classic to be held at the Grayfields Polo Club in Allamuchy on Saturday, September 12th. Proceeds will benefit the agency’s services for low-income individuals and families in northwest New Jersey. “We are excited to be partnering with NJ Polo to raise funds for the programs and services which are essential for struggling families in our area,” said

Project Self-Sufficiency Executive Director Deborah Berry-Toon. “The Project Self-Sufficiency Polo Classic invites people of all ages to come together in a fun and relaxing environment, see an exciting sporting event, enjoy a tailgate and time outdoors, and support local families in need.” The event kicks off at noon as VIP Tent ticketholders will be treated to hors d’oeuvres, fine *POLO cont’d on pg 10*

PROTECT AND PREVENT

BACK-TO-SCHOOL SAFETY TIPS FOR FAMILIES

WALKING AND BIKING SAFETY

- Use designated crosswalks and sidewalks
- Wear visible clothing
- Avoid distractions

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP ETIQUETTE

- Follow school traffic patterns
- Stay in your vehicle unless instructed otherwise
- Never double-park or block crosswalks

BUS SAFETY BASICS

- Arrive early at the bus stop
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop
- Stay seated and follow bus rules

SCHOOL ZONE AWARENESS

- Slow down
- Avoid phone use while driving
- Watch for crossing guards and student patrols

SAFETY STARTS AT HOME

- Review emergency contacts and procedures
- Talk about bullying and peer pressure
- Check backpacks for weight and fit

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Why Supporting our Schools Should Support the Taxpayer

Educating our children is one of the most important responsibilities we have in state government and should not be taken lightly. This responsibility is a duty clearly defined in our state's constitution. Article III, Section 14 reads: "The General Assembly shall provide for the maintenance and support of a thorough and efficient system of public education to serve the needs of the Commonwealth."

As your state senator, I have consistently advocated for strong state investments in our public schools. Over the years, the Commonwealth has made significant progress in increasing education funding, particularly through the Basic Education Funding

(BEF) line item. This is the primary source of annual state support for our public schools. By increasing the state's share of funding, we help stabilize local school budgets and reduce the need for local resident funding and the need for school boards to raise property taxes. From the 2020-2021 budget through the 2026-2027 budget, we increased funding for K-12 public schools by \$5.1 billion, or 40.4 percent.

When school districts plan their budgets, they rely on three main sources: federal funds, state funds and local property taxes. Increasing the state's contribution is a tool I have to help remove the pressure off local taxpayers.



That is why I have consistently advocated for fair and appropriate increases in Basic Education Funding dollars, so that local school boards can spend more time improving education and reducing your local tax burden, your property tax bill. However, how the school boards spend this money and the further decisions they make will determine how these funds are utilized to the best capacity.

It's no surprise to many of you that some residents in my district pay the highest school property taxes in the state. My office hears consistently from residents about this inflated burden, and I wholeheartedly agree! While the state does not set local school district

tax rates, I believe the increased state investment, that I have supported, should be used to help offset these rates and relieve pressure on local families. You can find more information about individual school district spending, student enrollment trends, teaching staff numbers, special education, average yearly progress and more by visiting their website here.

Positive Local School Funding Trends:

Below is a breakdown of the Basic Education Funding (BEF) increased state allocations for school districts in the 40th Senatorial District. This chart compares state support from ten years ago, five years ago, and today.

Carbondale School District : 2016: \$8,534,917; 2021: \$9,740,592; 2026: \$13,172,257

East Stroudsburg Area School District: 2016: \$14,982,944; 2021: \$18,273,860; 2026: \$26,771,761

Mid Valley School District : 2016: \$4,146,660;

2021: \$5,144,477; 2026: \$7,647,572

North Pocono School District: 2016: \$8,496,461; 2021: \$9,517,924; 2026: \$11,142,316

Pleasant Valley School District: 2016: \$22,269,473; 2021: \$23,052,649; 2026: \$26,731,338

Pocono Mountain School District: 2016: \$26,847,312; 2021: \$29,761,380; 2026: \$37,498,240

Stroudsburg Area School District: 2016: \$13,718,063; 2021: \$15,879,729; 2026: \$21,767,221

Valley View School District: 2016: \$7,837,080; 2021: \$8,441,594; 2026: \$10,509,261

Wallenpaupack School District: 2016: \$5,187,357; 2021: \$6,243,856; 2026: \$8,964,029

Wayne Highlands School District: 2016: \$8,265,425; 2021: \$9,148,459; 2026: \$11,674,698

Western Wayne School District: 2016: \$5,044,171; 2021: \$5,475,927; 2026: \$7,383,176

These figures demonstrate the continued upward trend in state funding and my commitment to fighting for our schools and taxpayers alike. As always, I will continue working to invest in the quality of education our students deserve while also pushing for smarter, fairer tax policy that supports families across our region. In the meantime, stay connected to your school boards and be sure they are spending productively and responsibly as this is where your school property tax bill is determined.

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Includes one parent.

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✓ All disciplines welcome

✓ Helmet and negative Coggins required

✓ Riders must wear appropriate riding attire and footwear

✓ Lead line riders must be accompanied by an adult

✓ Horses should be suitable for a busy and active event atmosphere

✓ Good horsemanship and sportsmanship are expected at all times

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3 ADVANCED FIELD CHALLENGE
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4 TRADITIONAL HUNT CHALLENGE
2" not to exceed 24". Obstacles will consist of things you would find in the wilderness in the hunt field. To be judged on obstacles and ideal time.

5 Minus Race

6 Rope Pairs

7 Lead Line Simon Says

8 Lead Line Egg and Spoon

9 Lead Line Musical Stalls

10 Ride a 50"

11 Red Light, Green Light

12 Dead Man

13 A Race to Collect Your Partner

14 Surprise Games

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SCHOOL

Continued from page 1

while being serenaded by local teen musician Sol Mars. Transportation for patrons was provided by the Stocker Bus Company.

“We are pleased to be able to help both parents and children to prepare for a successful school year at the annual Back-to-School Fair,” commented Deborah Berry-Toon, Executive Director at Project Self-Sufficiency. “We commend all of the social service agencies, health-care organizations, businesses, and volunteers who have taken the time to lend a helping hand to local families in need.”

In addition to games, refreshments, school supplies, and children’s activities, the Back-to-School Fair featured seminars about early childhood development questionnaire and introduced parents to the services available at Project Self-Sufficiency’s Career Center.

Informational exhibits and interactive activities for parents and children were provided by Abilities of Northwest Jersey; Behavior Bee Solutions, LLC; Brain Alliance of New Jersey; Care Plus New Jersey Kinship Navigator Program; Caring Partners of Morris & Sussex; Center for Family Services; Center for Prevention & Counseling; Child Mind Institute; Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center Burn Unit; Crossroads 4 Hope; DASI; DAWN Center for Independent Living; Family Promise of Sussex County; Gin-

nie’s House Children’s Advocacy Center; Mental Health Association, NJ4S; New Jersey Department of Health/Office of Minority & Multicultural Health; New Jersey Pediatric Psychiatry Collaborative; Newton Volunteer First Aid & Rescue Squad; NORWESCAP Child & Family Resource Services; Sussex County Special Child Health Services; Sussex County Community & Youth Services; Sussex County Library; Sussex County YMCA; Zufall Health Center; and others.

Patrons also learned about household safety and burn prevention from the Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center Burn Unit, toured the Newton Volunteer First Aid & Rescue Squad ambulance, enjoyed the Triple A Mobile Gaming Truck, and were invited onboard the Sussex County Library System’s bookmobile.

Founded in 1986, Project Self-Sufficiency is a premier, comprehensive social services organization offering a wide range of services including job training, counseling, case management, high school diploma preparation, basic needs assistance, home visitation for new and expectant parents, in-person and virtual training, recreational programs for parents and children, and mobile services delivered via the Journey RV and the Food Project van. For more information about services available to individuals and families at Project Self-Sufficiency, visit www.projectself-sufficiency.org.

Kean Introduces Bipartisan Bill to Fund Mental Health Support for First Responders

Congressman Tom Kean, Jr. (NJ-07) introduced the Lifeline for First Responders Act with Representatives Andrea Salinas (OR-06), Gabe Evans (CO-08), and Sharice Davids (KS-03). The bipartisan bill would create the first federal grant program dedicated to mental health care for firefighters, paramedics, and dispatchers, addressing a gap in support that EMS workers have faced for years.

“Emergency medical professionals sacrifice so much to serve our communities. This bill would provide critical access to mental health support for those on the front lines who are at risk of higher rates of trauma and mental health struggles than the general population. Ensuring they have the resources they need will strengthen the safety and well-being of both those in EMS agencies and the communities they serve,” said Congressman Kean.

“This has been Oregon’s most devastating wildfire season on record. Our firefighters and paramedics have felt every bit of it. Just as we ask our first responders to be there for us, we need to be there for them,” said Congresswoman Salinas. “Up to a quarter of firefighters suffer from PTSD, and 37 percent of fire and

EMS professionals have contemplated suicide, yet there is no federal program to address it, the way there is for law enforcement. My bill changes that. I’m proud to introduce the Lifeline for First Responders Act with the support of Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue and NAMI Oregon to ensure our emergency personnel get the support they deserve.”

“As a former law enforcement officer, I know firsthand the toll that serving on the front lines can take on our first responders and emergency personnel. For too long, stigma has kept too many of our nation’s heroes from seeking the support they need. I’m proud to co-lead the Lifeline for First Responders Act to help break down those barriers and ensure the men and women who answer the call for us every day have access to the mental health resources, peer support, and confidential care they deserve,” said Congressman Evans.

“Firefighters and EMS professionals in Kansas and across the country can face more accidents, injuries, and tragedy in a single shift than most of us will experience in a lifetime. But too often, we treat their mental health as an afterthought. This bipartisan effort would make long-overdue investments in mental health services



for first responders and make sure they know they don’t have to struggle in silence,” said Representative Davids.

Every day, first responders witness accidents, injuries, and devastation. That exposure can lead to burnout, PTSD, depression, and anxiety. Up to a quarter of firefighters suffer from PTSD, and 37 percent of fire and EMS professionals have contemplated suicide. In 2018, Congress recognized this need for law enforcement, authorizing the Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act to fund mental health prevention and treatment programs for police. No comparable program currently exists for fire and EMS personnel. The Lifeline for First Responders Act would close that gap.

Specifically, this bill would:

- Establish a new EMS and First Responder Wellness Grant Program at the Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic

Safety Administration, through its Office of Emergency Medical Services;

- Authorize \$7.5 million a year, through fiscal year 2032, to fund evidence-based mental health and wellness services for fire, EMS, and dispatch personnel;

- Fund suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention services, along with confidential counseling, peer support, and behavioral health care;

- Fund family support services for the spouses and children of first responders; and

- Fund outreach, stigma reduction, education, training, and technical assistance for fire departments, EMS agencies, and 911 dispatch centers building their own wellness programs.

To read the full bill, visit: salinas.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/salinas.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/lifeline-for-first-responders-act-119th-text.pdf

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Additional Farmers Market Vouchers Available for Northampton County Seniors, Last Chance for September Vouchers

Northampton County has received an additional supply of Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers. Vouchers are available on a first-come, first-served basis and must be distributed by September

15 or until supplies run out.

Northampton County residents age 60 or over who meet income eligibility (example: \$29,526/yr. for a single person in 2026, and \$40,034 for a couple) may receive the vouchers. For married couples, both spouses may obtain vouchers. Participants must present a valid photo ID showing a Northampton County address in order to receive vouchers.

Pickup Location: Northampton County Department of Human Services Building, 2801 Emrick Blvd., Bethlehem, PA

Dates: Available June 2 - September 15, 2026

Times: Tuesdays: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. AND Thursdays: 12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

*CLOSED on County Holidays

The Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides eligible seniors with vouchers that can be used to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs from participating farmers markets. Persons may only receive vouchers once during the program, which runs from June 1, 2026 until September 15, 2026.

For more information, contact Northampton County Department of Human Services at 610-829-4540.

Boscola Applauds Gov. Shapiro’s Executive Order, Urges Permanent Data Center Protections

State Senator Lisa Boscola made the following statement in response to Governor Shapiro’s Executive Order on Data Center Protections:

“Governor Shapiro is right to act, and I applaud his decision to issue this Executive Order today.

As Democratic Chair of the Senate Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure Committee, protecting ratepayers from unfair costs and ensuring our utilities remain reliable and affordable are central to my work. That is why in January of this year, I proposed a six-bill data center consumer protection package founded



on many of the same principles reflected in Executive Order 2026-05.

Data centers must pay the costs they create, utilities must not shift those costs onto existing customers, the PUC must have the tools to protect grid reliability, and local communities must have a meaningful voice before development moves forward.

I especially support the Governor’s insistence that developers secure local approvals before state permitting advances, provide detailed reporting on their energy and water use, and make binding GRID commitments to qualify for favorable permitting

treatment and the state’s data center sales tax exemption. Local residents and officials deserve to know who is proposing a project, what resources it will consume, and how it could affect utility bills and surrounding neighborhoods before key decisions are made.

This Executive Order is an important and necessary step. Now, the General Assembly should work together to codify these protections into law so they are clear, consistent, and durable for Pennsylvania ratepayers and communities. I stand ready to work with Governor Shapiro and colleagues in both parties to get that done.”

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STAND-UP COMEDY SHOW

AUGUST 28TH

Garden Dilemmas? Ask Mary!



Mary E. Stone
Stone Associates
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Hello fellow readers,

Last Sunday, I found myself looking at a section of my vegetable garden I never developed this year. Japanese stilt grass had taken advantage of my neglect, filling the space where vegetables might have grown. Despite my best intentions, the garden never found its stride, and the season got away from me.

Spring was extraordinarily dry, and my snow peas produced little. But the Red Baron beets I planted in April have given me such pleasure—and a new love of beet greens.

The seed packet says about 55 days to harvest. Having sown them on April 15, they are well beyond maturity. But that doesn't mean they all need to come out. Beets are happy sitting in the ground as we move toward cooler weather, which can make the roots sweeter.

So, I harvested the big guys over 2 inches wide, letting the smaller ones keep growing. The spring dryness may have

stunted them, so perhaps recent rains will help them size up before becoming woody.

Meanwhile, the greens from the big boys were yummy; the insect holes didn't bother me. "If they're good for the critters, they're good for us," Mom used to say when we took home cast-aways from the produce stand where we worked. I snagged a few greens from the smaller beets, too, leaving enough for the roots to keep growing.

Beets tolerate frost, their roots protected by the soil. Before a hard freeze, I'll harvest the rest or mulch them with leaf mold to extend the season.

By mid-August, it would be easy to call it the end of planting season. Then I came across my leftover snow peas and wondered if it was too late for a fall crop. A little research brought a clarification that made me smile: Did I mean edible garden peas or sweet peas (*Lathyrus odoratus*), those wonderfully fragrant annual flowers?

The question took me back to a story I wrote eleven years ago, almost to the day. A client, Melanie of Newton, asked whether the perennial sweet peas covering her pool fence were edible. They sure looked it—dead ringers for peas in our veggie gardens. But sweet peas are mildly toxic, so I'd stay clear.

Lathyrus latifolius, called Perennial Sweet Pea, Everlasting Pea, or Pea-vine, is native



to Europe and escaped from gardens. You see it blooming along roads all summer. Unlike its annual relative, it has no scent. The annual sweet pea enchants us with delicate fragrance and beautiful bouquets.

It's funny how "Sweet Pea" became a term of endearment. You may recall Sweet Pea is the baby found on Popeye's doorstep whom Popeye adopts and calls "boy-kid."

Hey Sweet Pea, why not plant edible peas you can safely eat? Although not everyone may like peas, they are packed with nutrients. They

Shortening days and cooler fall temperatures can slow maturity. But we eat snow pea pods when they are young and flat, so picking before full maturity is fine. And peas bring protein, fiber, micronutrients, and antioxidants to the table. Popeye would be proud.

Of course, before planting them, I must reclaim that neglected patch from the stilt grass. Perhaps that is the real lesson: sometimes the season gets away from

us, but that doesn't mean the opportunity has passed. We clear a little space, plant again, and see what happens. Just as with the Garden of Life, before anything new can grow, we have to clear a little space.

Garden Dilemmas? AskMaryStone.com or tune in on your favorite podcast app.

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TURNING DIRT INTO JOBS: Shapiro-Davis Administration Highlights \$20 Million Investment Secured in the 2026-27 Budget to Clean Up Hazardous Sites Throughout the Commonwealth

Lieutenant Governor Austin Davis, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary Jessica Shirley, state, local, and county officials highlighted the success of an Act 2 Land Recycling Program project at Hazelwood Green, the former site of the Jones & Laughlin / LTV Steel Hazelwood Coke Plant in Pittsburgh.

The 2026-27 budget signed into law by Governor Josh Shapiro included a one-time \$20 million transfer to support the HSCA program, allowing DEP to continue critical state-led site investigations and remediation projects while the Commonwealth works toward identifying a permanent funding source for this important environmental and public health work.

The Hazelwood Green redevelopment is one example of what can happen when contaminated and abandoned industrial properties are cleaned up and returned to productive use — creating a major hub for manufacturing and technology, new jobs, recreational opportunities, and community investment. DEP’s technical review of the site was supported by staff funded through the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act (HSCA) program.

“The Shapiro-Davis Administration believes environmental protection is both a responsibility and a constitutional obligation, and we’re putting real resources behind that commitment,” said Lt. Governor Davis. “We’ve invested more than \$100 million to support over 800 completed Act 2 cleanups, and now the one-time \$20 million investment will help the Department of Environmental Protection continue critical, state-led site investigations and remediation projects. This work doesn’t just protect our environment — it creates opportunities for economic growth, producing more jobs in manufacturing, construction, conservation, and environmental

services.”

“Hazelwood Green is a success story right here in the heart of historic industrial Pittsburgh, emblematic of the good work possible when community leaders, planning organizations, and members of the public share a vision for how these unused industrial sites can be revitalized and reimagined as something new that creates jobs, fosters innovation, and strengthens community,” said Secretary Shirley. “Thanks to HSCA funded DEP staff from the Land Recycling Program, what was once an unused and hazardous ghost of Pittsburgh’s rich industrial history has been redeveloped into the latest example of the city’s incredible revival.”

Since 2023, the Shapiro-Davis Administration has invested more than \$100 million to support over 800 completed Act 2 cleanups and investigations and remediation projects at more than 150 hazardous sites across Pennsylvania — protecting public health, restoring communities, putting contaminated properties back to productive use, and creating new opportunities for economic growth across Pennsylvania.

“RIDC has done many brownfields redevelopments, from the Pittsburgh Technology Center, which prompted Act 2, to the old US Steel sites that are now City Center of Duquesne and Industrial Center of McKeesport, where Governor Ridge actually signed it into law,” said Tim White, Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) Business and Development Strategy Senior VP. “And we’re here today at Mill 19, another project that depended on Act 2, which has been a catalyst for job creation and economic activity at Hazelwood Green. Properties that could otherwise be rusting eyesores have been transformed into centers of technology, manufacturing, life sciences and much more. Thousands of jobs exist today because of projects made possible because of Act 2.”

For more than a century, the Hazelwood site supported steelmaking and coke production along the Monongahela River. Decades of industrial operations created significant environmental and redevelopment challenges, including historic soil and groundwater contamination, complex subsurface conditions and historic fill materials, barriers to safe public access, and the need for long-term engineering controls and environmental oversight.

DEP oversight supported by HSCA-funded staff helped ensure the cleanup was protective of public health and the environment. Cleanup and redevelopment activities included completing comprehensive Act 2 investigations and risk assessments; placement of engineered “deep fill” and clean soil cover systems across the property; use of pavement, buildings, and engineered barriers to prevent exposure pathways; long-term environmental covenants and land use controls; site-specific evaluations for temporary public events and redevelopment activities; and extensive soil sampling and risk evaluation to support safe reuse of the property.

Throughout the process, the remediators and developers for the area employed a strategy of inclusivity, transparency, education, and careful design. The result is a major manufacturing and technology hub and green space creating new economic opportunities on formerly inaccessible industrial land.

The HSCA program conducts initial investigations into land and water pollution to identify responsible parties. When none can be found, HSCA funding supports cleanup solutions such as land remediation and water treatment. The program also drives economic development by supporting redevelopment through Pennsylvania’s Act 2 program, which has approved 13,688 cleanups across all 67 counties since 1995.

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Potential Agreement With Data Center Developer Still On Table For Upper Mount Bethel, As Zoning Challenge Looms

Article by: Steve Althouse, 69 News, from WFMZ.com

The Upper Mount Bethel Township Board of Supervisors on Monday night discussed an agreement that would pave the way for a proposed data center complex and also signed off on legal representation to defend itself against the developer's zoning challenge.

The proposed memorandum of understanding, between Slate Belt Holdings and the township, would end the applicant's legal challenge to township zoning laws and would include up to \$50 million in nonprofit donations by the applicant to Upper Mount Bethel.

In return, township officials would agree to collaborate with the developer on zoning changes and eventually approve the project. Talen Energy is one of the partners involved with Slate Belt Holdings. River Pointe Logistics is the other entity involved in the joint venture.

On July 23, Slate Belt Holdings filed a validity challenge in which

the company said the township's laws are exclusionary with respect to data center uses. If the company proves successful in making the case for its validity challenge, it could potentially proceed in building data centers as a permitted zoning use.

However, if the township agrees to the terms of a memorandum of understanding, the developer would drop its legal challenge and work with the township "to maximize the design, economic and educational benefits of the Proposed Development for the Township and its residents, businesses and community stakeholders," the proposed MOU states.

It also states that Slate Belt Holdings purchased 753 acres of industrially zoned property in the township and that the company plans to build data center buildings, access drives, substations, stormwater management facilities, and other associated infrastructure.

On Monday night, there was debate among supervisors over which version of an MOU was being vot-

ed upon, as a revised one "came in" to the township Monday afternoon, according to Solicitor Ronold Karasek. Details of that updated agreement were not disseminated during Monday night's meeting.

Amid discussion about the two versions of the MOU, Supervisor David Friedman made a motion to reject any version of an MOU. That motion was defeated by a 3-2 vote, which means an agreement with the developer still has the potential to be adopted.

"I get why everybody's upset with the MOU, but this is really going to stop any negotiation and letting them make changes," Secretary Cori Eckman said, urging consideration of an agreement. Eckman noted that if the township does not sign an MOU and the developer succeeds in its validity challenge, the developer could move the project forward without working with the township on protections beyond those in the current zoning ordinance.

While specific environmental protections

were not indicated in the original MOU, both sides would agree to "reasonable environmental protections." Those protections include noise, parking, utilities, height, security, outdoor lighting, construction hours and requirements.

Chairman John Bermingham said the revised version of the MOU would be made available for public review on the township website and during his office hours.

During Monday night's meeting, the board also approved having Karasek represent the township for the purpose of defending against the applicant's validity challenge. That case is expected to be heard by the zoning hearing board sometime in mid-September, according to township officials.

In addition, Bermingham directed township staff to seek a 60-day extension from the applicant regarding its validity challenge.

At the meeting's outset, a motion to limit public comment to 90 minutes and to prioritize comments from Upper Mount

Bethel Township residents was rejected by a 2-3 vote. The meeting was well attended and garnered significant public comment.

Most of Monday night's meeting involved public comment. The board delegated about 25 minutes to discussing or acting on the actual MOU and other business before the meeting ended after about three hours.

Some residents who spoke had a simple message for supervisors: There's no way they should approve the MOU or any data center. Others cited reasons as to why the data centers should not be built. These included noise, electricity and water usage, environmental concerns, and ethical concerns about artificial intelligence.

Delaware Riverkeeper Maya van Rossum told the board it should prioritize passing a data center ordinance instead of approving the MOU, which in her opinion compromises the board's independent decision-making authority.

Another person, Robert Dunning, said the proposal would transform the township into an industrialized factory town. He said the corporation would have too much power.

Township resident Courtney Gilmour said the MOU was not one is-

sued by a corporation operating in good faith and said in her opinion the applicant's intention was to hold the community hostage.

Not everyone who spoke was against the MOU or the project. Resident Martin Pinter asked the board what type of future they want for Upper Mount Bethel. He said every generation faces a defining decision and urged the board to separate fact from assumption. He then listed various attributes associated with approving the data centers.

(Article by: Steve Althouse, 69 News See details at - www.wfmz.com/news/area/lehighvalley/northampton-county/slate-belt/potential-agreement-with-data-center-developer-still-on-table-for-upper-mount-bethel-as-zoning/article_45068fea-c70f-40dd-9bfe-f734414babdb.htm?utm_source=SN&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=WFMZ-Facebook&fbclid=IwY2xjawT6qlBwZG9mAWV4dG-4DYWVtAjExAHNydg-MGYXBwX2lkEDlYmJ-AzOTE3ODgyMDA4O-TIAAR4FQqO-2NSRQuimnoShnisvpJS6Ex-uU5XLj9v7sTXwdbAX-Wbn2cl0ckBEv6tg_aem_KkmU247nvlvtcJ51lp58kA)

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PA Game Commission, Fish and Boat Commission Seek Public Input on PA Wildlife Action Plan

The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) announced today that public input is being accepted related to the agencies' draft 2025-2035 Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan. This is a non-regulatory plan that encourages all Pennsylvanians to participate in fish and wildlife conservation.

The draft Plan and public comment form are available online. Comments may be submitted through September 19, 2026.

First developed in 2005, the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan has been the Commonwealth's blueprint "to conserve Pennsylvania's native fish and wildlife, maintain resilient habitat, and protect and enhance Species of Greatest Conservation Need." As required by Congress, State Wildlife Action Plans must be revised no less than every 10 years.

Over the past decade, the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan and associated funding from State and Tribal Wildlife Grants have been crucial for protecting and recovering at-risk species and their habitats.

A Wildlife Action Plan approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required for states to receive State & Tribal Wildlife Grant Program funds. The Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan is scheduled to be delivered to the USFWS by October 1, 2026.



Director Tim Schaeffer. "Our state is home to an incredible diversity of fish, invertebrates, reptiles, and amphibians, and we are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring their sustainability for generations to come. This Plan will help guide our agencies' efforts and empower our partners to work collaboratively alongside us to advance common goals."

To compile the Pennsylvania Wildlife Action Plan, the PGC, PFBC, and conservation partners, work together to gather and analyze information related to native species, habitats, threats, conservation actions to address the threats, and monitoring of these species and habitats.

The revised draft plan has 858 Species of Greatest Need including 86 birds, 21 mammals, 19 amphibians, 18 reptiles, 47 fishes and 667 invertebrates that require attention.

"This Plan reflects our responsibility to protect Pennsylvania's remarkable variety of wildlife," said Pennsylvania Game Commission Executive Director Steve Smith. "In that responsibility, we must do more than just express our commitment to conservation. We must be active stewards to carefully manage and protect the Commonwealth's natural resources. This Plan provides the framework to fulfill that responsibility while keeping our efforts aligned with the federal government and other states."

"The Wildlife Action Plan is a call to action to help protect, conserve and enhance Pennsylvania's fish and wildlife," said PFBC Executive

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Important Tips For Back-To-School Safety for the Whole Family

As summer draws to a close and children start heading back to school, family life can get pretty hectic. It's important to remember – and share with your children – some key tips that will help keep them safe and healthy throughout the school year.

Transportation Safety Tips:

Whether children walk, ride their bicycle or take the bus to school, it is extremely important that they take proper safety precautions. Here are some tips to make sure your child safely travels to school:

-Walkers: Review your family's walking safety rules and practice walking to school with your child.

• Walk on the sidewalk, if one is available; when on a street with no sidewalk, walk facing traffic

• Before you cross the street, stop and look left, right and left again to see if cars are coming

• Make eye contact with drivers before crossing, and always cross streets at crosswalks or intersections

• Stay alert and avoid distracted walking

- Bike Riders: Teach your child the rules of the road and practice riding the bike route to school



with your child.

• Ride on the right side of the road, with traffic, and in a single file

• Come to a complete stop before crossing the street; walk bikes across the street

• Stay alert and avoid distracted riding

• Make sure your child always wears a properly fitted helmet and bright clothing

- Bus Riders: Teach your children school bus safety rules and practice with them.

• Go to the bus stop with your child to teach them the proper way to get on and off the bus

• Teach your children to stand 6 feet (or three giant steps) away from the curb

• If your child must cross the street in front of the bus, teach him or her to walk on the side of the road until they are 10 feet ahead of the bus; your child and the bus driver should always be able to

see each other

• Get the facts on bus safety from Injury Facts

- Driving Your Child to School: Stay alert and avoid distracted driving.

• Obey school zone speed limits and follow your school's drop-off procedure

• Make eye contact with children who are crossing the street

• Never pass a bus loading or unloading children

• The area 10 feet around a school bus is the most dangerous for children; stop far enough back to allow them to safely enter and exit the bus

- Teen Drivers: Car crashes are the No. 1 cause of death for teens. Fortunately, there is something we can do.

• Teens crash because they are inexperienced; practice with new drivers every week, before and after they get their license

• Set a good example; drive the way you want

your teen to drive

• Sign the New Driver Deal, an agreement that helps define expectations for parents and teens

- School Safety Tips: Many school-related injuries are completely preventable. Follow these steps to ensure your child's safety at school.

- Backpacks: Choose a backpack for your child carefully; it should have ergonomically designed features to enhance safety and comfort.

• Ask your children to use both straps when wearing their backpack to evenly distribute the weight on their shoulders

• Don't overstuff a backpack; it should weigh no more than 5% to 10% of your child's body weight

• Rolling backpacks should be used cautiously since they can create a trip hazard in crowded school hallways

- Playgrounds and Sports:

• To reduce strangulation hazards on playgrounds, have your child leave necklaces and jackets with drawstrings at home

• A few bumps and bruises can be expected when your child plays sports, but head injuries should never be ignored

(Article from www.nsc.org)



POLO

Continued from page 1

cuisine, and signature drinks catered by Andre's Lakeside Dining while tailgaters will welcome their guests to their elaborately customized spaces, and general admission ticketholders will set up their viewing areas. The match will get underway at 1:15 p.m. with the singing of the National Anthem by Senior Airman Gianna Perez, United States Air Force.

During half-time, spectators will be encouraged to take part in the treasured tradition of divot stomping, smoothing the field

for the second half of the polo match. During the divot stomp, all are invited to enjoy a festive performance by the Mike Lawlor Band. Throughout the event, other activities will include competitions for best hat and best tailgate, a silent auction, and naming of the match MVP and Best Playing Polo.

Teams bearing the names of sponsors First Hope Bank and Lakeland Construction will be participating in a spirited competition for the winners' circle. Additional sponsorships for the Polo Classic are available at a variety of levels, from \$2,500 - \$25,000.

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