

Austintown Township

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HAPPY FIRST ANNIVERSARY HOLLYWOOD GAMING AT MAHONING VALLEY RACE COURSE



THEN (October 4, 2013)

One year ago, Penn National Gaming opened its \$250 million thoroughbred horse-racing track and slots-only casino (Racino) in Austintown. One year later more than \$855 million credits were played.

In addition, there were 300-plus full-time employees hired in the first year with more than 100 employees hired full-time for about six months during the live horse-racing season that ran from November of 2014 through April, 2015.

Penn National Gaming paid about \$4.6 million for the



AND NOW

186-acre Centerpointe property and a \$75 million fee to the state of Ohio to relocate its Beulah Park track near Columbus and \$50 million for its licensing fee to the Ohio Lottery Commission for the VLTs.

Penn National also paid \$1 million to Austintown in 2013 and 2014 with an additional \$250,000 due to be paid this year and next. From the \$2 million already received the township has spent 1.75 million on road resurfacing in 2014 and 2015.

PERCEPTION AND REALITY

A year and a half ago, the Racino and state officials were happily announcing the funding to Racino communities, including Austintown, receiving \$500,000 a year forever.

When it came for payment, the Racino stated that their share was to come out of the \$125 Million it paid to the Racing Commission as license transfer fees. The Governor's office said that the funding was not coming from the state. Ironically, both groups said that the communities should get this money, but because the legislation was extremely vague as to the payment procedure, it looked as if no payment would ever be made.

The Austintown trustees decided it was time to take a leadership role to put pressure on everyone to receive some money. They selected Ken Carano who had state-wide experience and Administrator Michael Dockry to meet with the other communities to create an organization to lobby for the money. After months of meetings and negotiations led by the Austintown group with the cooperation and hard work of our state senator and other legislators a compromise was reached.

An amendment to the budget bill stated that each of the Racino communities would receive \$500,000 in the years 2015 and 2016. Half the funding would come from the State of Ohio and half from the Racino in each community. Austintown has received its first notice from the state of payment by September 1, 2015 of their \$250,000 share.



AUSTINTOWN
TOWNSHIP PARKS

Township Park improvements needed.

The Park Department operates primarily from revenue derived from a 0.8 levy initially approved by the township voters in 1986. Since then, as a result of inflation over the last 29 years, the 0.80 mills or rate has decreased to an "effective" rate of approximately 0.45 mills. This means that a \$100,000 homeowner in 1986 that paid approximately \$26 in annual taxes on a rate of 0.80 mills now pays approximately \$14.50 annually on 0.45 mills.

Another way of understanding what happens when inflation causes the initial voter approved millage rate to decrease is by looking at the amount of revenue the levy collects. In 1992 the Park levy collected \$267,749 in tax revenue compared to 1992 Park expenses of \$185,971. 22 years later in 2014 levy revenues collected were \$291,438, an increase of 9% from 1992. On the other hand, 2014 Park expenses were \$530,733, an increase of 285% over 1992 expenses. This \$530,733 in 2014 Park expenses comes to about \$14 per township resident. This compares to over \$42 per resident spent by Boardman Township in 2011- revenue of \$1.7 million (boardmanpark.com) divided by 40,000 residents-, and \$40 by the City of Youngstown in 2012- expenditures of \$2.8 million (cityofyoungstownoh.com) divided by 70,000 residents.

Although the tax rate has decreased since 1992 the Park itself has increased in both its size and in its facilities and activities.

First, the size of Township Park on Kirk Road was increased from its original 95.5 acres by an additional 58.5 acres purchased in the late 90's, 30 acres in 2002, 16 acres in 2003, 6.5 acres in 2008 and 12.5 acres in 2013 thereby increasing the total acreage to 219 acres.

Land purchases increasing the size of Township Park have coincided with improvements to both this newly purchased land and the original Park land. Hiking Trails were added to both the 58.5 and 30 acres and the original 95.5 acres in the 90's.

A football practice field and parking lot were constructed in 2010 on the 6.5 acres at the west end of the Park used by our youth leagues. Since 1992 The Pond and its observation deck were constructed as was Pogany Pavilion. More recently, the Splash Pad and 2 Dog Parks were installed. The original tennis courts, installed prior to 1992 were completely rebuilt and 2 full court basketball courts were constructed. As we go to publish this newsletter 2 new Tennis courts are nearing completion. Since 1992 a new roof and internal renovations were done to the enclosed Stacey Pavilion and the 4 outdoor pavilions. In the late 90's much needed improvements were made in infield grading and to the dugouts on all 5 softball/baseball fields.

Park events in 1992 outside of Concerts in the Park and AGSL softball and Pavilion use were almost non-existent. Recently, in addition to Concerts in the Park, Pavilion use and AGSL softball, the Park hosted the July 4 Fireworks and entertainment, Kid's Shine 4 A Cure kite festival, Lion's Club 5K run, YSU 5K run, Mahoning County Dog Shelter fundraiser, Civil War Reenactment, Rummage Sale, Westside Wildcats Bike Run, Austintown Night Out, Yellow Brick Place Color Run, Girl Scout pumpkin carving, Dog Trials over 2 weekends, 2 Austintown School Cross Country meets, Austintown Pony Boys Baseball League Saturday morning games, dog shows, soccer practices, Boy Scout camping and much more.

TOWNSHIP ELECTIONS



Election Day is Tuesday November 3. Throughout the State all townships, including Austintown, will elect one (1) Trustee and one (1) Fiscal Officer, both for four (4) year terms. In the last township election in November 2013, upwards of 7,523 Austintown voters went to the polls according to the vote totals listed on the Mahoning County Board of Election's website. The polls are open from 6:30 AM to 7:30 PM.

You can look up your voting location by going to votemahoningcountyoh.gov and click on Sample Ballots and enter your house number and street name and then click on Submit.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

FITNESS OF MACHINES AND MEN PRIMARY IN FIREFIGHTING

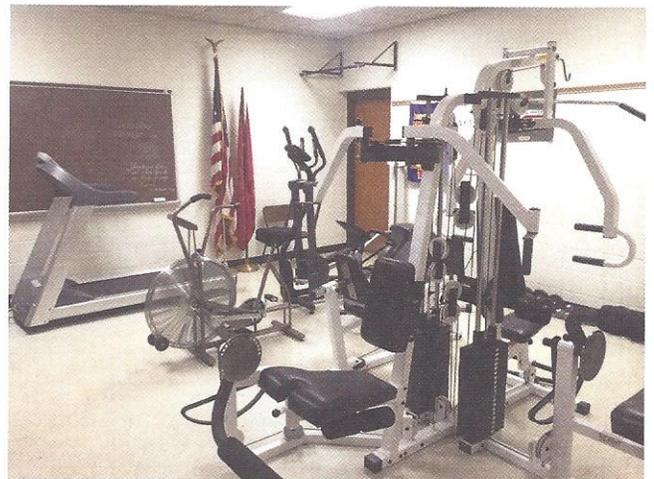


Fire crews respond to an average of 10 to 12 emergency calls a day. These calls include Fire related incidents, auto accidents and Medical calls. When the Fire crews are not answering emergency calls they still have other duties to perform. They start their 24 hour shift at 8:00 AM. With a discussion with the crew going off shift to find out about any ongoing problems or issues. Next is a shift meeting in which the Officer lays out the plan for the day. Then the crews begin their daily, weekly and monthly checks of their trucks and equipment. There are 5 engines/pumpers, 3 aerial trucks, 3 grass fire trucks/jeeps, and 1 ambulance. These vehicles cost anywhere from a Grass fire truck at \$100,000 for the Truck and fully equipped at \$125,000 to an engine/pumper at \$390,000, the Truck only, to a fully equipped one at \$525,000 to an aerial at \$990,000, the Truck only, to a fully equipped one at \$1,115,000. All of these trucks have a Life expectancy of 20 years.

The crew also has to check their equipment whose costs range from a Set of fire gear – Coat, pants, boots, helmet, etc. at \$2,700 per Firefighter-AFD has 70 sets-with a Life expectancy of 10 years to Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus – Breathing air tanks worn on the backs of Firefighters so they can breathe in fires- at a cost of \$6,500-AFD has 52-with a Life expectancy of 10 years to Cardiac Monitors at \$30,000-AFD has 5-with a Life expectancy of 10 years to a Complete set

of Jaws of Life at \$42,000-AFD has 3 complete sets-with a Life expectancy of 15 years. Because of the high costs of our equipment we stress cleaning and maintenance so that the equipment remains in working order for as long as possible.

After checking their trucks and equipment the Firefighters will move on to any station maintenance and cleaning that is required. They will follow this up with training and conduct continuing education on firefighting and emergency medical issues. They may also leave the station to pre-plan commercial buildings or conduct school or pre-school educational programs to our Austintown School students. They also clean their trucks at least once a day and more depending on the weather and the use of the truck that shift. Once a month the rigs are waxed and all equipment is removed, cleaned and put back in place. The crew also will try to find time to work out. Fitness equipment is maintained at the stations in order for the crews to keep up on their workout routines. Finally, there is always paperwork that needs done to document their emergency call outs. The last thing they do the next morning before they leave is to report to the new incoming crew as to any outstanding issues.



AUSTINTOWN POLICE

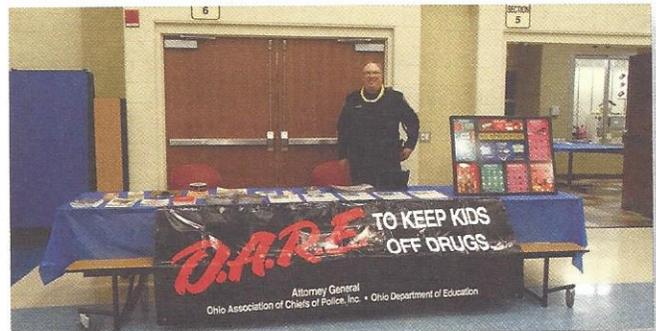
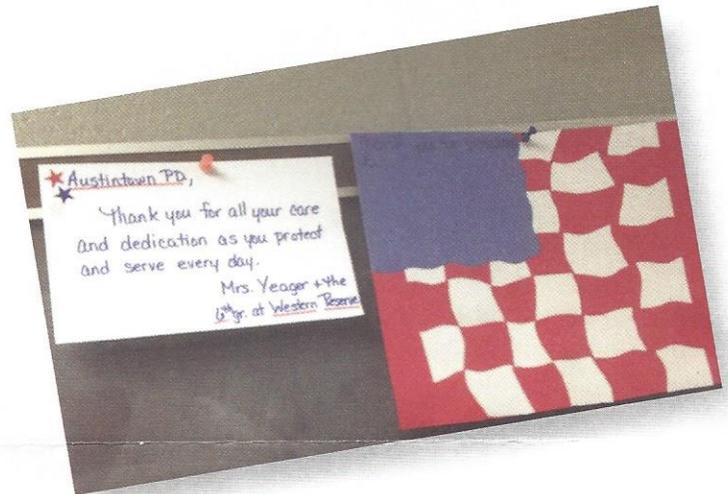


Grants help maintain budget for police department

The Austintown Police department has received many grants over the past few years toward purchasing equipment and staffing. In 2013, they received a \$250,000 grant for placement of two officers in the schools as School Resource Officers. In 2014, they again received the same \$250,000 grant to hire two additional patrol officers with the stipulation that one of them was a post 911 military veteran. With these two grants the police department was able to place three officers in the Austintown Schools. Over the past few years the police department and Austintown Local School District have worked closely together in the creation and maintenance of a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff. The grants pay for two Resource Officers and a DARE Officer who enhance rapport between youth, law enforcement, school administrators and parents. The DARE Officers educate the students not only on the dangers of drugs but many other safety topics.

Another grant that the Police department received was awarded on 9/21/2015 from the US Department of Justice, COPS Office. This COPS grant is the third such grant they received over the last three years. This grant will pay up \$125,000.00 of a new officer's wages over a three year period. This grant is earmarked to replace a retiring officer to keep the staffing level the same and at the same time reduce the burden on the budget.

These grants have helped the police department maintain a balanced budget, form new units that target specific crimes and increase the department's knowledge on Community Oriented Policing. They have also helped them to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing which contains focal points on building community trust, operational transparency and community oriented policing to mention a few areas that the publication addresses.



ZONING:

SO YOU'RE GOING TO BUILD! WHAT TO DO.....

Under the provisions of Article II-Section 202: "Zoning Permits", of the Austintown Township Zoning Ordinance, a zoning permit is required prior to the construction, erection or alteration of any building costing or valued at \$50.00 or more. Within the Business B-1, B-2, Industrial I-1 and I-2 Districts, zoning permits are required for new buildings, additions to existing buildings, accessory buildings, fences, billboards, pylon signs, and monument signs. Zoning permits are also required for new sign inserts advertising newly located businesses opening within existing buildings.

Within residential districts, zoning permits are required for new dwellings, additions to dwellings, additions to attached garages, detached garages, sheds, fences, decks, gazebos, above-ground swimming pools and below ground swimming pools. Zoning permits are not required for basic property maintenance items such as replacement windows, doors, garage doors, and roof shingles. When structures such as fences or sheds are razed zoning permits are required prior to replacing them with new fencing or sheds.

NEW CONSTRUCTION



TIM HORTONS/SUBWAY



**GREENWOOD
CHEVROLET
ADDITION**



NEW BP STATION



HILTON WORK SITE

The Zoning Office is located at 90 Westchester Drive and can be contacted at 330-799-3241 or e-mail at dcrivelli@austintowntwp.com.



AUSTINTOWN SENIOR CENTER **happenings**

The Austintown Senior Center passed another milestone with its 1700th signed member. The Center averages about 100 people each day. Most members participate in more than activity each day. Our activities are designed to stimulate the mind, body, and socialization. These are essential exercises to keep seniors healthy and mentally fit which leads to a longer, healthier and mentally active life. Our goal is to enhance the lives of our members by offering a variety of stimulating programs. As an example, the number of entries by our members in the Canfield Fair, in art, photography, quilting, wine making, needle arts, beans, and others, has more than doubled since last year.

In the 5 years since the Senior Center opened the staff is often approached by members and their families complementing us on how much coming to the Senior Center has changed their or their loved ones lives and health.

In other news Mr. Fluffy, the Senior Center dog passed his AKC Canine Good Citizen test and his Therapy Dogs International therapy dog exam. He continues to alternate with Phoebe, his older companion, in greeting members at the door. They both provide unconditional love to every member who will take a moment to pet them.

We continue to look for diverse and stimulating activities for our members and are currently investigating fencing classes, shooting classes, and Silver Sneakers. We are always open to suggestions for activities and will generate an interest sheet for people to sign and if enough do we will try and provide it. Please, if you or your spouse are over 60 years old and tired of your routine life, come to the senior center and see what we offer, you will be pleasantly surprised..



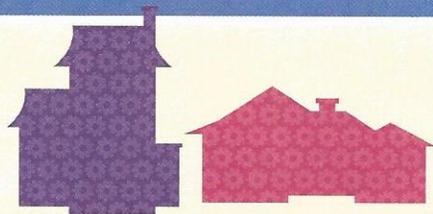
ROAD DEPARTMENT

Like the Park department the Road department receives most of its funding from 2 Road levies that are older than the Park levy. In 1976 the voters first approved a 1.5 mill Road levy and 5 years later in 1981 the voters approved a second Road levy of 1.0 mill. Today, those 2.5 mill voter approved levies are only assessed at 1.0 mill because of the increase in property valuation caused by inflation. This reduction of 1.5 mills in the assessed rate to the 1.0 mill "effective rate" is necessary to prevent a property's real estate taxes from increasing as the result of inflation. Therefore, in 1981 the \$100,000 homeowner that was assessed 2.5 mills and paid approximately \$80 in taxes today pays approximately \$32 a year because they are only assessed at a rate of 1.0 mill. Another way to look at the effect of a reducing tax rate caused by inflation is that in 1981 a \$40,000 homeowner whose home value has increased to \$100,000 today pays the same \$32 today as he paid in 1981.

As is also the case with the Park levy this decrease in the assessed millage rate results in revenue that does not keep up with expenses. In 1992 Revenue from both Road levies totaled \$932,095 compared to expenses of \$993,659. By 2014 levy revenues had increased to \$1,147,959, or about an average of one percent a year. Expenses had increased, however, by about an average of 3.2%, reaching \$1,732,670 in 2014.

Another reason why Road expenses were increasing more than 3 times as much as revenue was as a result of the large increase in new residential single family new homes during this 1992-2014 period. During this period the township had 1886 newly built single family homes, an average of 82 homes a year. These new subdivisions and roads over these 23 years increased the townships total road mileage by approximately 14%. That means 14% more lane miles to plow, potholes to patch, catch basins to maintain and surface area that needs paved.

The only other revenue source for Road expenses, or Park expenses for that matter, is the General Fund. With the elimination of the Personal Property Tax and the Estate tax and the reduction in the Local Government Fund, General Fund revenue is down approximately \$500,000 a year when compared with 2010 and therefore has less ability to support Road and Park operations.



Change in House Districts

The most recent change in Ohio House Districts resulted in 2 different districts for Austintown. District 58 includes the great majority of the township and the Representative is Michele Lepore-Hagan. The other Austintown District is the 59th and the Representative is John Bocchieri.

The boundary between the 58th and the 59th, with the 59th to the west of the 58th, is as follows: Ohltown Road south to Silica, then west on Silica to Victoria, south on Victoria to Mahoning, east on Mahoning to Wilcox and Fairview to S. Turner, then south on S. Turner to New Road, east on New Road to State Route 46 (SR 46), south on SR 46 to Kirk and then west on Kirk to the township's western boundary where the 59th's line turns south along the township's western boundary into Canfield Township.

The Senate District 33 of Joe Schiavoni includes all of Austintown as it includes all of Mahoning County (and Columbiana County).

Austintown Historical Society



The Austintown Historical Society oversees two National Register of Historic Places, Strock Stone House (circa 1831) and the Austin Log Cabin (circa 1814), and gives tours of each from 1 to 4 on the first Sunday of the month. The Strock Stone House is located on the south side of Mahoning Avenue just east of the Meander Reservoir. The Austin Log Cabin is located at the corner of S. Raccoon and Burgett Road, approximately a ½ mile south of Kirk Road. The township's Park department is responsible for the outside maintenance of the Austin Log Cabin.

The Mahoning Valley Sanitary District (MVSD) owns the Strock Stone House and this past summer gutted the kitchen removing all cupboards, the sink and interior plaster board and installed new cupboards, a sink and interior plaster board and painted it. A big thank you to the MVSD for their commitment to this National Register of Historic Places and to all the volunteers of the Austintown Historical Society who contribute to the Open Houses, Free Tours and other activities at each site. Check out the Austintown Historical Society on Facebook and consider becoming a volunteer.



MAHONING COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE

The County Engineer's Office is responsible for nearly 485 miles of roadways which makes Mahoning County the 5th largest in the State of Ohio when it comes to road miles. There are only 4 other counties with more road miles to maintain than Mahoning County. The County also has nearly 300 bridges and thousands of culverts to maintain as well. County Engineers are funded through License Plate Registrations and Motor Vehicle Gas Tax which is distributed equally among Ohio's 88 counties. The Mahoning County Engineer's Office does not receive any sales tax, income tax, property tax or levy. The Motor Vehicle Gas Tax has declined or remained stagnant over the past decade.

The Engineer's Office is always seeking grant funding from the State of Ohio, the Federal Government and the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) for construction but along with these grants comes a local matching share usually equaling 20% of the total cost. It is often difficult to come up with the local matches due to stagnant budgets and increasing operating costs. As another County Engineer stated earlier this month, "Funding has been near crisis level for years. This is making it very difficult to repair the aging infrastructure, allowing the County Engineer to only pave between 10-15 miles per year, which is not nearly enough."

Another struggle the county is faced with is construction costs and material costs on the rise and with stagnant budgets, we are all forced to do more with less. The cost to pave a mile of road in 2014 was approximately \$107,000 compared to approximately \$42,000 in 2004. The county was somewhat fortunate in the fact that most of the bridges are in good condition and not in need of major repairs, but that could change very quickly with the severity of winters and overloaded vehicles running over them, weakening the already aging structures. The Mahoning County Engineer's Office is dedicated to solving the problem with our current infrastructure but it will take time and money.

Township Hall
 82 Ohltown Road
 Austintown, Ohio 44515
 Phone: 330-792-8139
 Fax: 330-793-9919
 Hours:
 Monday-Friday 8 A.M. to 4 P.M.
 Voice mail also available
 Website:
www.austintowntwp.com

Austintown Phone Numbers:
 Emergency911
 Trustees.....330-792-8139
 Police: Non-Emergency
330-799-9721
 Fire-Business330-799-8502
 Road:.....330-792-2602
 Park Pavilion Rentals
330-792-8584
 Park Department ...330-793-0718
 Zoning330-799-3241

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Pictured:
Seated:
Laura Wolfe,
Fiscal Officer
Standing:
Trustees
Rick Stauffer,
Jim Davis
Ken Carano

Trustees meetings are on the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:00 P.M. and on the 4th Monday of each month at noon at Township Hall, 82 Ohltown Road.

PRESORTED STANDARD
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 YOUNGSTOWN, OH
 PERMIT NO. 214

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