

Spring 2017



# The PACOG News

Pennsylvania Association of Councils of Governments

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Intergovernmental  
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Oct. 13-14, 2017

## 2017 Local Government Excellence Awards

On April 12 the 2017 Governor's Awards For Local Government Excellence was held at the Governor's Residence. This annual event is sponsored by the Department of Community and Economic Development, the Governor's Center for Local Government Services.

The awards honor Pennsylvania's local government leaders and recognize their exceptional dedication to improving public services through innovative initiatives. There were several award categories that applicants could choose from to describe their successful projects and programs that demonstrate best management practices and/or creative approaches to address problems. Staff from the Governor's Center for Local Government Services evaluated each application and nominees were judged on general criteria and specific actions/results in each category. It is hoped that publicly acknowledging these successful local government undertakings will serve as inspiration for other officials.

Municipalities and their local government officials were recognized, as were individuals from local government associations.

Following are the award winners:

**PACOG Individual Award Winner** was Mary Trunzo from Indiana-Westmoreland COG. Mary was PACOG President in 2016 and has been Secretary/Treasurer of her COG since 2004. One of her COGs most successful accomplishment is their Universal Construction Code Program.



**Intergovernmental Cooperation Award Winners** were Danville Borough (Montour County), Middletown Township (Bucks County), and Sykesville Borough (Jefferson County).

**Building Community Partnership Winners** were Kennett Township (Chester County) and Upper Allen Township (Cumberland County).

**Promoting Community/Economic Revitalization Winners** were Castle Shannon Borough (Allegheny County) and Geistown Borough (Cambria County).

**Innovative Community/Government Initiatives Winner** was Dauphin County.

**Fiscal Accountability and Best Management Practices Winners** were Peters Township (Washington County) and Worcester Township (Montgomery County).

**Health and Wellness Initiatives Winner** was East Goshen Township (Chester County).

PACOG Congratulates all the Award Winners!

**COGs ..... start thinking NOW about your Successes ..... and Prepare to Apply for an Award Next Year.**

## COG TALK . . . WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COGs?

**Helen Jackson, past President of PACOG and a past officer of the Lawrence County COG** passed away on March 3, 2017. She served on New Beaver Borough Council for 30 years. In 2007 she was presented with the Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence by former Lt. Governor Catherine Baker-Knoll.

**Shirl Barnhart**, who is Chairman of the **Jefferson-Morgan COG**, was re-elected to serve another one-year term as President of the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS). In 2007 he received the Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence. Shirl is Vice Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of Morgan Township and also a Roadmaster; he previously was the township emergency management coordinator and chairman of the board of supervisors. Shirl also serves as a firefighter and emergency medical technician with the Jefferson Volunteer Fire Company.

**Priscilla deLeon**, Chairman of the **Saucon Valley Partnership**, was featured in the Supervisor Hall of Fame in the May 2017 Pennsylvania Township News. With almost 30 years of local government service in Lower Saucon Township, Priscilla created the Township's first website and works to preserve historic and scenic sites such as barns, bridges and homesteads. She encouraged cooperation between her community, Lower Saucon Township and nearby Hellertown Borough, which resulted in the Saucon Valley Partnership, who together, adopted a multi-municipal comprehensive plan and established a regional compost center.

The **Two Rivers Council of Governments**, which started about a decade ago, officially dissolved in April 2017. The organization consisted of the townships of Bethlehem, Palmer, Williams, and Fork; the boroughs of West Easton, Wilson, and Freemansburg; and the City of Easton. The group tried to work together to resolve problems, but it seemed that the different types of municipalities had different problems, and ultimately could not provide programs or projects that satisfied the needs of the members.

The **Beaver County Regional COG**, in collaboration with the Beaver county Association of Township Officials and the Beaver County Association of Borough Officials, is offering their 3rd Annual 2017 Beaver County Local Government Conference on Thursday, August 10, at the Community College of Beaver County. The conference offers educational session, exhibits and sponsorship and advertising opportunities.

The **Northwest Commission** has been conducting classes on General Cybersecurity (how to protect your IT system from hackers) and Cybersecurity for Federal Contractors and Subcontractors (new Department of Defense regulations required in all contracts). The Commission is also offering several Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) classes as well as a shared initiative event between Cheyney University and PennDOT to increase small business participation on federally assisted PennDOT highway contracts and subcontracts.

**Erie Area COG** sponsored a Municipal Officials Assembly in March. At this meeting, Executive Director Jessica Horan-Kunco encouraged the 38 COG members to collaborate for economic development and work together to provide, promote and coordinate business incentives. The COG assists members with grant writing and technology issues and offers training sessions and joint purchasing programs.

The **Greater Jefferson Area COG** elected Washington Township Supervisor Harold Wilson as president of the COG. At a recent gathering municipal officials were thanked for their support of recycling in the County and an update on building permits was presented. Joint advertising and bidding of stone for road maintenance will continue. COG members consists of 19 of the 23 Jefferson County townships and 4 of the 11 county boroughs.

**Capital Region COG** welcomed its newest member, Annville Township, in Lebanon County. The COG has members from three counties and both the east side and west side of the Susquehanna River. The COG continues to offer training on programs such as stormwater management, human resources, MS4 Audit, flagger, and dealing with the media.

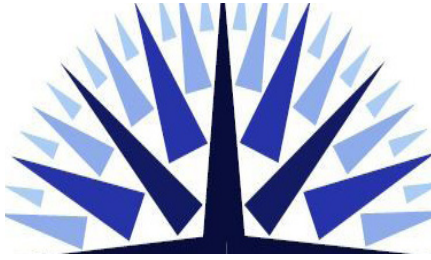
**SEDA COG** received a grant from the U.S. Appalachian Regional Commission to position reclaimed mine land as a destination for regional outdoor tourism. The project focuses on 5 counties whose economies were damaged due to job loss in the coal-related industry.

**OnePGh** is Pittsburgh's strategy to thrive in the 21st century as a city of engaged, empowered and coordinated neighbors, with the theme "Building resilience through the power of neighbors." They state their core values as People, Place, Planet and Performance. Community meetings and events are planned. Go to [pittsburghpa.gov/onepgh/index.html](http://pittsburghpa.gov/onepgh/index.html) for more details.

## 2017 PROCUREMENT EXPO

The 2017 PA Procurement Expo & Forum will be held September 6 and 7 at the Harrisburg Farm Show Complex. This event is expected to attract elected and appointed officials and procurement decision-makers from state, county and local governments, as well as schools, colleges, non-profit agencies, public safety entities and health care institutions. Current and prospective state government and COSTARS contract suppliers will be exhibiting their products and services. Educational seminars and workshops will be featured on topics such as Conducting Reverse Auctions, Best Practices in Procurement, How to Submit a Bid, Negotiation Strategies, Available and Upcoming Grants, and others. An on-site computer lab will be available. Registrations for attendees and vendors wishing to exhibit are being accepted now. More information can be obtained at [www.paprocurementexpo.com](http://www.paprocurementexpo.com).

## SPOTLIGHT ON QUAKER VALLEY COG



Quaker Valley COG (QVCOG) is a network of 15 communities along the Ohio River as it heads north from its confluence in downtown Pittsburgh. Starting at the City of Pittsburgh boundary, the COG municipalities form an uninterrupted string of boroughs and townships until they reach the Allegheny County – Beaver County line.

All 15 members of the Quaker Valley COG (3 townships and 12 boroughs) are full members and the COG's total population is just under 31,000 people.

It is Route 65 that connects the COG communities. This major transportation route and thoroughfare makes its way through the communities and is not only an interstate interchange, but also serves as an important business district and links the residential streets together. A current initiative of the QVCOG is to develop a Route 65 Corridor Study with the Remaking Cities Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. The study will focus on how to maximize the economic benefits and minimize the negative impacts of corridor development. In addition, the study will seek to answer how the integration of multimodal facilities into regional corridors would impact the sustainability and quality of life of small municipalities. The results of this study will benefit not only Quaker Valley COG members, but the neighboring Beaver County municipalities that share the Route 65 Corridor.

The COG has recently completed a strategic plan. The strategic plan process produced “QVCOG 2.0,” which has emerged as a blueprint for the future, with four main areas of mutual concern: budgets, governance, blight and infrastructure. As such, the QVCOG has committed to working together on 3 interconnected priorities: Administrative Support and Capacity Building; Public Works and Infrastructure; and Route 65 Corridor Economic and Community Development.

Other programs of the COG include: Capital Improvement Planning; Community Development Block Grant Administration; Uniform Construction Code Board of Appeals; MS4 Compliance/Clean Water Initiative; Financial Management Services; Educational and Networking Opportunities; Solid Waste & Recycling; Cable TV Franchise Representation; Public Works Survey and Foreman's Group.

The Quaker Valley COG has recently been accepted into the Local Government Academy Municipal Internship Program for Summer 2017. This program assists communities by helping to identify and fund an intern to work in the COG communities. The project is a COG-wide multi-municipal property database and GIS (Geographic Information System) internship.

Civic Engagement is important to the QVCOG and it is launching its “PI Team” this year. “PI” stands for “Project Ideation” which involves working with a committee to not only develop or field ideas for projects, but to also develop proposals and business plans for the QVCOG board to consider when setting its work plan. Committee members are drawn from the staff, elected officials and communities of the member municipalities. It is all part of the QVCOG working to make intergovernmental cooperation more relevant and impactful.

The COG has recently undergone a significant change, with the hiring of Susan Hockenberry as the new Quaker Valley COG Executive Director. Previously, Susan served the local government community in southwestern PA as Executive Director of the Local Government Academy. Prior to that she was Director of Administration and Finance for the Township of O'Hara. Her previous experiences prepared her for her work at the COG - since COGs function as local governments but their executive directors must be entrepreneurial like non-profits. Susan sees PACOG as having a vital role in encouraging that philosophy and behavior. Local government, like many fields, is experiencing a generational shift. It is a good time for communities to be looking anew at the benefits of working together.

## GRANT AND AWARD OPPORTUNITIES

- Grants for the development, rehabilitation, and enhancement of **transportation assets** to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development are available through the **Commonwealth Financing Authority's Multimodal Fund**. Application deadline is July 31. Go to [www.dced.gov/programs/multi-modal-transportation-fund](http://www.dced.gov/programs/multi-modal-transportation-fund).
- The **Governor's Award for Safety Excellence** recognizes safety and prevention programs that have an impact on reducing employee injuries and on finances. Companies can nominate themselves or be nominated by a third party. Information and criteria used to determine finalists include workplace injuries/illnesses vs. industry standards, and innovation and strategic development of safety policy and approaches. Applications are due by June 1. The award is sponsored by the Department of Labor & Industry; contact Margaret Day, program coordinator at [marday@pa.gov](mailto:marday@pa.gov) or 717-772-1917.
- **Department of Conservation and Natural Resources** is offering Peer & Circuit Rider grants to help fund projects that help municipalities, counties, multi-municipal partnerships and COGs to increase local capacity for recreation, parks and conservation. It also aides in the hiring of a full-time park, recreation or conservation professional whose services are shared by the members of a formal partnership, commission or authority. Grants are open year round. Go to [www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us) for more details.
- **Department of Environmental Protection** has numerous grants and loans available on many environmental issues. Go to [www.dep.pa.gov](http://www.dep.pa.gov), “Grants, Loans and Rebates” to view the program descriptions, eligibility requirements, and application.



PACOG  
2941 North Front Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
Toll Free: 800-232-7722, Ext. 1028  
Fax: 717-972-0690  
E-mail: [lcosta@boroughs.org](mailto:lcosta@boroughs.org)  
[www.pacog.com](http://www.pacog.com)

Linda Costa  
Executive Director &  
Newsletter Editor

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## PENDING LEGISLATION

**SB 172** creates a five-year trial program for **placing speed cameras in active work zones** on limited access highways. PennDOT would research a company to administer the program, with PennDOT stating camera locations and having signage in at least two places warning motorists of the cameras. Fines of \$100, but no points, would be given to speeding motorists.

**SB 251** would permit municipal police to **use radar/lidar for speed enforcement** and would place a cap on how much money a municipality could keep from radar/lidar. Municipalities would have to pass an ordinance allowing the use of radar/lidar and **would have to post signs in the community indicating its use.**

**SB 382** would amend the Liquid Fuels Tax Municipal Allocation Law to reduce Motor License payments in direct relation to the costs needed to provide **state police coverage to municipalities with 5,000 or more residents.**

**SB 428** the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, would **modernize opioid addiction treatment** by requiring treatment centers to follow a comprehensive and patient-centered focus for patient treatment.

**SB 560** contains details regarding the **use of body cameras by police departments** and specifies time frames for submitting a request for the videos and for responding to the request.

**HB 27** would **protect police officers and their families** by not releasing the name and identifying information of the law enforcement officer before the investigation is complete or before 30 days after the incident has occurred, whichever comes first.

**HB 99** would amend the borough municipal code to allow **emergency procurements** without going through the bidding process.

**HB 104** would amend the **Municipal Authorities Act** to require that acquisitions, selling or transferring of any authority assets be discussed at a public meeting, detailed in the meeting minutes, municipal members be directly notified, and that actions taken be posted on the public website.

**HB 266** would amend the Uniform Construction Code to allow the Department of Labor and Industry to **establish the criteria for the composition of the board of appeals.**

**House Resolution 50** would charge the non-partisan Legislative Budget and Finance Committee with conducting a study on state and local government costs related to **administration of the Right-to-Know Law.** Recommendations would be included.

## OTHER ISSUES

**Act 172 of 2016** was signed into law and took effect January 20, 2017. **It allows local governments to grant fire and emergency medical services (EMS) volunteers tax credits for local taxes.** An optional tax credit for the local earned income tax and a 20% property tax credit were optional parts of the law. The entire tax program is optional, and municipalities have to pass an ordinance to enact it. Local government associations (PSAB, PSATS, PML) have developed a sample ordinance and guidance document. Contact your local government association for details.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies** have been substantially cut in the federal government's budget proposal. These monies are critical for municipalities since they provide funding for infrastructure, economic development, affordable housing, public parks, clean drinking water, and blight demolition, to mention just a few. It is hoped that the monies will be restored.

**Governor Wolf's 2017 budget proposal** is still in discussion. Among its main controversial tenets are: a \$25 fee per person for municipalities that rely on state police coverage; raising the minimum wage to \$12 an hour; \$10 million to expand access to naloxone to revive drug overdose victims; a 6.5% severance tax on natural gas drilling; and a \$100 million increase in basic education funding and \$75 million for early childhood education funding.

## PENNSYLVANIA MINIMUM WAGE LAW NOTICE

Effective March 1, 2017 updates to the Pennsylvania Minimum Wage notice must be posted by every business in the State of Pennsylvania with at least one employee.



### 2017 PACOG Annual Conference

In conjunction with PSAB Fall Conference  
Oct. 13-14, 2017  
Kalahari Resort, Mount Pocono