

JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP BIOGRAPHY

Jefferson Township was created in 1854 (along with some of our neighboring townships) by an Act of the Legislature. Jefferson Township is one of 33 Townships in Butler County and one of 1,457 townships of the 2nd class in Pennsylvania. The township “building/garage” used to be located at Jefferson Center near the one-lane bridge on Saxonburg Rd. In 1971 the new municipal building was dedicated. It and several other buildings are located along Great Belt Rd. between Saxonburg Rd. and Rt. 356. We have 3 full-time road men, a full-time secretary/treasurer, a 3-member Board of Supervisors, a 9-member planning commission, a 3-member building code appeals board with an alternate member, and a 7-member recreation committee.

Jefferson Township is 14,840 acres or about 25 sq. miles. Our road department maintains about 47 miles of road. Roads maintained by the State are: Dinnerbell, Rt. 356 (Freeport Rd/North Pike Rd.), Rockdale Rd., Saxonburg (Butler) Rd., and Winfield Road. Our first and so far only, traffic light was installed on Rt. 356 at Marwood Rd. using funds from the Community Development Block Grant program.

Jefferson Township was split into two voting districts in 1995. Residents living east of Saxonburg Rd./north of Hannahstown vote at Jefferson Township I, which is the municipal building at 157 Great Belt Rd. Residents living west of Saxonburg/south of Hannahstown Rd. vote at Jefferson Township II, which is the Jefferson Grange at 211 Bullcreek Rd. (near the intersection with West Jefferson Rd.) Call the Butler County Election Bureau to register or to verify your voting location.

CENSUS AND TAXES

The 2000 Census resulted in a population count of 5,690. That is an increase of 878 since 1990 (which was 4,812) or 1,913 since 1980 (which was 3,777.) We are growing! It is estimated that the current (2007) population is about 5,890. The 2010 census is in progress.

The Township Real Estate tax rate (which has not changed in over 25 years) was 1.33 mills until 2009. *The Township real estate tax rate for 2009 was reduced to 1 mill to accommodate the County of Butler’s assessment ratio increase from 75% to 100% of the 1969 values.* This “reduction” is actually income neutral to the township. The bulk of our annual income comes from the 1% earned income tax. The budgeted 2009 combined income totals over \$1,000,000.00 (one million dollars). This income includes the \$52.00 Local Services Tax, which includes the \$5.00 Occupational Privilege Tax already paid to the School District. The Township adopted “cable franchise ordinances” in 2008 with Consolidated Communications and Armstrong Utilities. This has helped increase the annual income for 2009 without raising the real estate taxes. The 2010 Township Real Estate Tax is still 1.00 mill. The 2010 County Real Estate Tax is 29.628 mills. The 2010 School Real Estate Tax is 89.675 mills (a 2-mill increase from 2009.)

RECREATION

The 80+ acre Laura J. Doerr Park is located in Jefferson Township between Rt. 356 and Hannahstown Rd. It was originally set up to be under the control of the Southeast Butler County Parks Assn. It was a multi-municipal park with members appointed from Clinton Township, Winfield Township, Jefferson Township & Saxonburg Borough. It was gradually disbanded and in 2001 was finally conveyed to just Jefferson Township. There are four organizations licensed to use the park. The Southeast Butler County Pool Association, the Saxonburg Area Baseball Association, the Saxonburg Area Girls' Softball Association, and the Knoch Area Soccer Association. These four organizations have representation on the Jefferson Township Recreation Committee along with three members 'at large' from the Township.

In 2006 the Phase I of the Pool Renovation was completed using a Dept. Of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Grant and Community Development Block (CDBG) funds PLUS local donations and township funds. The Recreation Committee and Pool Association applied to DCNR for a Phase II grant for 2007, which has recently been approved. The Butler County Parks & Recreation Department administers this grant. A "master site plan" grant was also awarded in 2006 and the study was completed in November 2008.

The Butler Freeport Trail runs through a portion of Jefferson Township. The trail and its acquisition had been under litigation and currently Jefferson Township officials still do not promote the trail. Their address is P.O. Box 533, Saxonburg, PA 16056 or you may contact the Buffalo Township office for questions about the trail or visit www.butlerfreeporttrail.org.

The Cooper Cabin, a 185 year-old log house is located in Jefferson Township on Cooper Rd. Contact the Butler County Historical Society for more information at 724-283-8116.

AG SECURITY AREA

Jefferson Township was one of the first "agricultural security areas" in the county. First authorized by the Supervisors in Dec. 1991, it was renewed in Dec. 1998. The most acreage under one property owner is 353+ acres. There were about 3,402 total acres in the agricultural security area. Al Maurhoff, Kathryn Foertsch, and Ed Thiele are the current agricultural security committee members.

BUSINESSES

Penn United Technology, Concordia Lutheran Ministries and the South Butler Co. School District are the three largest employers in the township. But, we have lots of other businesses that can tend or mend your pets, fix your car, bus you around, repair or build your house, heal your aches and pains, fix your teeth, exercise your body, and process your deer. We have a few food establishments to 'feed your stomachs' and many churches to 'feed your souls'. Some of these businesses have sponsored the 2007 newsletter and directory, as well as past directories, and we urge you to patronize these businesses.

LIBRARY

Jefferson Township donates to the Saxonburg Area Library annually. In 2008 the donation was \$5,500.00. In 2009, the Supervisors budgeted \$6,000.00 for the library donation. Contact the library at 724-352-4810 for hours and membership information.

SCHOOLS

As of the fall of 2002, ALL of the South Butler Schools are located in Jefferson Township along Knoch Rd. and Dinnerbell Rd. The South Butler County School District High School (Knoch High), South Butler Middle School and South Butler Elementary School were already there, but with the closing of Jefferson Elementary, Winfield Elementary, Clinton Elementary and Penn Twp. Elementary came the new **South Butler Primary Center**. The previous South Butler Elementary has become the **South Butler Intermediate Elementary School**.

The old Jefferson Elementary was sold to Summit Presbyterian Church and houses their private school. The old Winfield Elementary was sold to Cabot United Methodist Church and houses their church, Sunday school, and food bank. The old Penn Township Elementary was sold to the North Main St. Church of God and now houses the Penn Christian Academy. Two other area churches (St. Luke's on Hannahstown Rd. and Calvary Baptist on Great Belt Rd) also offer private schools. There are also two monasteries in Jefferson Township: St. Elias off Dinnerbell Rd. and Holy Trinity on Mushrush Rd. Besides the Cabot United Methodist Church, there are food-banks at "The Lighthouse" on Rt. 8 in Penn Township; Summit Presbyterian Church on Saxonburg Road; and Saxonburg Presbyterian Church on Main St. in Saxonburg. They provide services based on need and location.

PA UNIFORM CONSTRUCTION CODE

In 2004, all 2,566 municipalities across Pennsylvania had to decide to administer the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code themselves or let the state do it. Jefferson Township chose to administer it themselves. The code established minimum uniform construction standards for most building projects and they require a building permit. Contact the township office at 724-352-2324 to verify the need for a building permit for any project you are considering.

SUBDIVISION and LAND DEVELOPMENT

Jefferson Township has had regulations governing subdivision and land development within its borders for over 25 years, with subsequent revisions over the years. A subdivision is *basically* a division of land. A land development is *basically* any improvement to land or property (including but not limited to structures) other than a single family dwelling. Both Subdivision Plans and Land Development Plans must be prepared by a certified surveyor or engineer and must be presented to the Jefferson Township Planning Commission, the Butler County Planning Commission (*please note that the County of Butler adopted review fees that take effect in 2009*), and finally to the Jefferson Township Board of Supervisors for approval. These plans must be accompanied by either a Subdivision Application or Land Development Application, and in most cases sewage facilities modules, septic testing, storm water management proposals/studies, etc. must also accompany a plan before approval can be given. Instruction sheets and applications are available at the Township office at no charge. A copy of the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations is available for purchase at the township office for a fee.