

REBUTTAL TO EPTDEM MASS MAILING

The recent EPTDem mass mailing has certainly exposed them for what they are - dishonest mudslingers with no real history of accomplishment or understanding of planning. The made-up disinformation about a phantom or stealth building plan is like a cheap dime store novel, not worth the time or energy spent to read it much less take it seriously! It certainly tries hard to distract from the history of waste and partisan decisions about everything from hiring practices to making quality improvements for their partisan supporters and paying lip service to everyone else, the local Dem leaders who have historically led our Township have misled their blindly loyal constituency. Very sad it has come to a head with this latest negative venture into the world of make-believe vilification.

Even when they have a kernel of truth for their exaggerated make-believe conspiracies there is evidence of our transparency on the Township website. Any resident can and should read about where we get how much revenue and where it is spent. From the tiny sliver of funds the municipality gets compared with the rest of the tax money and inflation rates, we have made hundreds of large and small sacrifices to ensure our firefighters and police officers are well equipped - always top of mind for these Commissioners. Everyone and every organization is coping with surging inflation thanks in large part to insane partisan national politics and frenzied irresponsible spending - like national Dem partisans holding all Americans hostage to their demands to hand them \$1.5T to end the federal budget shutdown... when we are already over \$30T in the hole!

Happy reading EPT residents!

https://www.eastpennsboro.net/Admin/General%20Fund%20Budget%20Article_4.11.2025.pdf?t=2025052314171...

Cost of Living Index (US Inflation Rate)
Increase over past 8 years = 32%

0.4 mill = 2025 Municipal tax increase
(\$100K assessed = \$40/year or
\$3.33/month)

Trash fee rates set by lowest contractor bid cost

2022 = \$66/Qtr 2024-2028 = \$115/Qtr

Stormwater fee rate
(Chesapeake Bay Commission)

2021 (initial) = \$22/Qtr 2025 = \$34/Qtr

Park Pavillion Rental

2023 = \$50/day 2025 = \$75/day (*under review*)

(MISLEADING)

MORE TAX INCREASES & HIGHER FEES

Just in the past 8 years alone, they've doubled township real estate taxes by \$2 million; **21% increase** in 2025 alone.

Historic 69% increase in trash rates, with restricted options for residents.

Stormwater (rain tax) fee, increased by over 50% to \$136 this year alone, one of the highest in the region (Hampton Townships \$53/year)

Pavilion rentals increased by 50% for TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS.



Did you know

the current township commissioners have a SECRET PLAN to build an unnecessary and taxpayer-crushing new township building

What else are they hiding?

THERE IS NO SECRET PLAN to build, only inattentive people. All decisions have been and continue to be made in public Board meetings (which these people clearly refuse to attend or read about in public records posted on eCode repository accessible from the township website)

The only actions/planning remotely related to a possible new building is an information gathering effort underway to compile the past and expected costs. We can only limp forward in continuing to overcome historically deferred maintenance and upgrades that has left us using a building on reactionary maintenance and operations life-support of the 100+ year old building. This historical and projected data will inform the cost-benefit evaluation of building a new facility. The effort to gather public input on preferences along with best recent design features in other municipalities will be key to creating the current the non-existent plan for a new facility.

Many thanks are owed to previous Democrat led BOCs for deferring necessary maintenance and upgrades that continue to consume taxpayer dollars. Some examples of the deferred maintenance and ignored upgrade opportunities are the sanitary sewage system connections, stormwater management, roof leaks, ancient heating/cooling systems and diesel backup power that were never changed over to more efficient and less expensive natural gas solutions.



If they are RE-ELECTED, current Twp. Commissioners – DIEHL, MAGARO & MAGARO – will cost you even more!

History has shown this is not only inaccurate. It's a completely indefensible statement without any real examples of any capricious or intentional fiscal waste (unless you count the George DeMartyn influence over his son-in-law, the former Township Manager). In short, unsubstantiated scare tactics... and as usual, no examples of what the Democrats seeking office will do other than going back to "the old days" when they had no plans to maintain infrastructure, obtain grants, and giving jobs to friends and family. Then there are the instructions not to collect over a \$1M in delinquent fees for trash and sewer services and only enforcing codes and permit processes to residents of the opposing political party – you know the "good ole days" but only for people they liked. Now it is a level playing field of legal compliance for everyone.

To the contrary, Commissioners seeking re-election pursued a private-public partnership with the solar company has not only hasn't and won't cost the taxpayers money, but it will also end up offsetting enough costs to prevent budget increases for minor inflation in the electric utility bills. The annual Township electricity bill is substantial for wastewater treatment processes/equipment, public works industrial grade power, Township facility convenience power, streetlights and traffic signals – all must pay lines for budgeted necessities and mandated safety costs. The solar field will generate as much energy into the grid as the Township uses as well as generating income to back to the Township – further proving the current Commissioners commitment to environmental concerns. This solar partnership was innovative and aggressively pursued by the Commissioners seeking reelection and has received several accolades from the State for using the Township landfill property that was contaminated with the 1972 flood damage cleanup. This is literally making a silk purse from a sow's ear and will save taxpayers money now and far into the future – limiting tax increases.

Another way they are squeezing every penny out of tax revenue is through State and Federal matching grants for equipment and community services. The grants are being found and awarded to the Township through Commissioner advocacy and enormous staff effort. There are many examples of how this makes a real difference in the community that would not be possible with tax money alone. Examples are improvements like the Adams-Ricci Pedestrian Bridge, new playground equipment making parks safe, replacing the heavy equipment for public works, bridge/culvert work, handicapped accessible curbing upgrades, stream restoration and many other initiatives that make our Township a ***Great Place to Live, Work and Raise a Family!***

NO MORE TOWNSHIP TAX & FEE INCREASES. Making East Pennsboro Township more affordable is a prime objective.

They (Gilbert, Franchek, DeMartyn) will reopen the budget on Day 1 and look for saving to reduce costs and **NOT ONLY HOLD THE LINE ON TAXES AND FEES BUT CUT THEM IF POSSIBLE.**



Only Jon DeMartyn has even attended any BOC budget meetings and has never spoken during public comment periods to express any reservations about the budget or to identify what he believes is waste that the current Board should be looking at.

The draft budget has been posted on the Township website for all to view and not only do they not participate in BOC meeting during public comment opportunities, they also hold their tongues in this document and in any campaign materials **THEY HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY CAN CUT AND HAVE NOT TOLD THE RESIDENTS ANYTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT HOW THEY WILL FIND THOSE CUTS.**

TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY



Make it easier for today's busy residents to find out what's going on in the Township by livestreaming township commissioner's meetings and archiving so residents can watch in the comfort of their own homes and whenever they want.



Eliminate unnecessary restrictions and limits on public input at township meetings.

Whoever wrote this appears to have no plan or even a rudimentary understanding planning or the technical and legal requirements of delivering government web services. It certainly does sound easy when you just declare something be done with no appreciation for what it takes to do it and don't care about quality and reliability! There are critical dependencies that have to be understood and addressed: funding, IT technical staffing and compliance with federal law (28 CFR Part 35 2024 ADA accessibility mandate for web services). A strawman framework is in development to make this service a reality, but the network and special feature dependencies are the primary limiting factors that will determine the time needed to comply with

the required Web Content Accessibility Guide ADA accommodations (presently unknown).

Odd that there is a such exaggerated concern for money spent on almost everything else but the increase in costs to make "streaming" services happen is ignored. We can't even get the lone Democrat on the Board to consistently use the in-room audio system so the people in the room can hear him conducting official business!

The Township wants time for everyone to be able to provide comments about current business on the agenda as well as a second time in the agenda to address ANY issue that a person in attendance desires to make known to the commissioners. The time limits were put into effect to ensure everyone in attendance can have an equal opportunity to speak in a focused and respectful manner. When everyone has had a chance to speak, there is an opportunity to finish a point that ran over the time limit and speak a second time. The speaking time limits may be extended for a speaker if the Commissioners feel the topic and focus of the comments need more time, more time will be afforded. Without the time limits and the structure to ensure the comments to the Commissioners, it was found that some people were not communicating as much as expressing vague frustration and others were insisting on having a argument/debate and demanding answers in an official meeting without time to consider the issue being brought to the attention of the Commissioners.

RESTORATION OF RESPONSIVE CUSTOMER-FRIENDLY SERVICE.



“Tear down the wall” so that residents can once again conduct business with the township without unnecessary physical restrictions



Reform the Housing and Community Development Department to make it more efficient, more helpful to residents and to speed permit approvals. Direct the department to enforce property maintenance requirements and eliminate the suspension of the rental property inspection ordinance to make sure landlords, especially absentee landlords, are keeping their properties maintained, safe and up to code.



Review all administrative and in-house job positions to determine necessity.



Consider new policy to require all new township employees to live in the township so they know first-hand the wants and needs of our community.



Township **tax break for volunteer firefighters** to bolster recruitment & retention. The county and many surrounding municipalities implemented this years ago.

FIREFIGHTERS - The inference that the Commissioners are not supporting every avenue to support our volunteer firefighters is complete disinformation and contemptible. The Twp actions are on par with actions of any municipality for benefits like these tax offsets as well as funding the best equipment available. This commitment to the firefighters is repeatedly proven with the implementation of a dedicated fire tax that has allowed for replacement of several million dollars of fire apparatus, updates to state of the art communications gear, and over 400% increase in resident tax money in past 10 years to each Volunteer FD that can be used in line with the rules of the Fire Tax.

“**The WALL**” - aka customer service window, is being portrayed as an obstruction to infer residents are ignored or disrespected and is simply dishonest. A service window was built during COVID restriction period but was the result of a formal physical security risk assessment that determined what mitigations were needed to address known security vulnerabilities common to all government facilities. There was a consideration to creating a new entry structure that would have replicated best new admin building practices in other municipalities (like Hampton Twp). The estimated cost was over \$500K and because the Manager was opposed to a separate structure for the 2d floor, a single wall was built and staff take turns working at the service window. This provides a continuous evaluation of ways to ensure walk-in customers get better assistance and more timely responses at the window to accept payments and if the need is for a particular department, the right person to meet with the person is summoned to handle the more involved needs ASAP.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - The HCD Department has already instituted regular outreach programs and are looking at expanding hours to times when residents would be able to get help outside regular business hours and budgeting for ways to expand work hours to include some times on weekends to provide residents better access to HCD staff to get individual help or ask questions about codes, zoning and permitting actions. The practice of performing rental property inspections was suspended by the 4:1 Democrat Board in 2014-15 when they insisted the person hired for that work be moved to another job and then did not have the Manager fill the vacancy. The staff has been compelled to take a reactive approach based on complaints to address poor rental property management practices. With the hiring of a new Manager proactive approaches like inspections are being looked at for how to resource and complete those actions.

HIRING – The Commissioners are required by statute to live in the Township specifically because they are the direct representatives to the residents and make their judgements based on understanding the wants and needs of the residents. The Commissioners give every resident the opportunity to speak at every BOC meeting to ensure there is always a way for the community to

let them know what is on their minds. We strive to hire the most competent and technically qualified people for every position with the understanding they have to be at work and provide timely quality services to the community every day. It is standard practice to conduct recurring performance reviews and feedback sessions to improve the workforce and address any issues with how they interact with the residents. As to employees that are “in-house”, it’s unclear what that is. Every position is related to a need and a performance standard and the “Good ole days” when there was a standby general workforce are long past.

UNNECESSARY NEW TOWNSHIP BUILDING  Without any public input or discussion, they have already needlessly spent \$750,000 of your hard-earned tax dollars to purchase several acres of land for their SECRET PLAN to build a new multimillion-dollar, taxpayer-crushing township building. Hold on to your wallet!	NO NEW TAXPAYER – COSTLY TOWNSHIP BUILDING  GILBERT, FRANCHAK and <u>DeMARTYN</u> ARE COMMITTED TO PUT THE BRAKES ON THIS SECRET PLAN THAT WOULD UNNECESSARILY COST TOWNSHIP TAXPAYERS UNTOLD MILLIONS. » The current township building, the revamped historic former Enola High School, is easily accessible with plenty of parking. It houses <u>all</u> of the important departments of the township, the tax collector’s office, senior citizens center, EP Branch Library, and is directly adjacent to the District Judge office » We don’t need a new township building for the purpose
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The land EPT purchased is in a Commercial Zone and next to Adams-Ricci Park. Any business developer could have and eventually would have purchased the land and built any business they chose on the land “by right”. Like with the Brashear Farm and the Enola Miller homestead, the current Board is committed to preserving as much of the history of Enola preserving what dwindling green space reserves remain. Redevelopment will continue, but efforts to limit the impact are always front of mind.

Further, the Board and staff diligently negotiated the purchase cost with the previous owner (Hempt family). The total land purchase transaction was for double what was originally offered and cost less than the initial asking price for the small tract by the Park. The purchase was funded through a Bond issuance with extremely favorable interest rates.

Inventive wordplay to say the least but without substance. How does one ethically threaten impending “TAXPAYER-CRUSHING” when there is no plan or cost estimate for a new building. The requirements are not yet defined that would be needed for a cost estimate! The leap to UNTOLD MILLIONS is half right – because it isn’t known and therefore it is also untold but NOT A SECRET. The more important UNKNOWN is the MILLIONS that are being spent and will have to be spent to heat, cool, repair, maintain, and renovate the current building to keep it viable – the IGNORED COST that is not being considered in this disinformation!

The budget reality is that the UNKNOWN MILLIONS could be the same money needed to build a more functional and fiscally sustainable building instead of endlessly triaging and maintaining the current building. Those taxpayer dollars could be saved in capital reserves while the approach begun in 1984 is continued to be invested in a new, purpose-built facility that would provide decades of future service to the community.