

# THE ALDAN CHRONICLE

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## 2014 PROPERTY TAX RATE INCREASE: 16.8%

### Police Budget surpasses One Million Dollars.

Aldan Borough Council voted unanimously at the December 2013 meeting to increase the borough property tax rate by 16.8% to 7.4985 mills for 2014. Included is an increase in the police budget of 9.5% (+\$93,343) to \$1,067,103. As a result, the average home, assessed at \$100,000, will pay \$749.85 in property taxes in 2014.



This increase marks the fifth consecutive year that the all-Republican Council has voted unanimously to hike the property tax rate. When added to increases for 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013, the average home assessed at \$100,000 has seen an increase of \$223.65 in property taxes, a 42.5% rise since 2008.

In addition to increased property taxes for 2014, sewer fees will rise by 2% or \$6.60 per unit to \$335.60. The increase in the sewer budget includes a 6% higher payment to DELCORA for processing the sewage and a 30% decrease (-\$22,362) for local sanitary sewer expenses.

The trash collection fee for 2014 will be \$151.30 a \$0.36 increase per unit. The

average home in Aldan, assessed at \$100,000, will pay \$1,236.75 in taxes and fees for 2014, an additional \$115.77 or 10.3% more than in 2013. Since 2008, the total increase of borough taxes and fees for the average home, assessed at \$100,000 is \$310.96 or 33.6%.

At the time of the 2014 budget passage, Aldan Borough had reserve funds (savings accounts) of \$703,494.03 in three areas (sewer: \$437,680.20; general: \$248,646.04; police: \$17,167.99) or \$163,494 more than at the end of 2012.

Those reserves equal 24.9% of the total 2014 borough budget and are not included in 2014 revenues or expenditures.

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

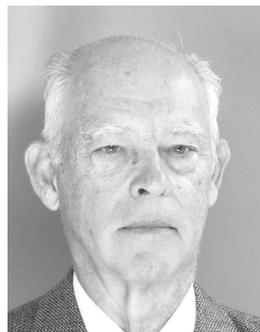
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## TAX COLLECTOR PLEADS GUILTY TO 2 OF 20 COUNTS

Former Aldan Borough Tax Collector Robert Park entered guilty pleas to 2 of the 20 counts of theft and related charges on Tuesday, February 18, 2014, as reported by numerous news organizations. The charges stem from the misappropriation of more than \$1.3 million in Aldan Borough and William Penn School District funds.

At the December 2013 Aldan Borough Council meeting, Borough Solicitor Gary Seflin stated that Aldan Borough had submitted a claim with the bonding company for the former tax

collector in the amount of \$207,268.21. This amount represents the missing municipal tax funds from the former tax collector's misappropriation. Although Mr. Seflin was unable to give a time when the claim would be paid, the solicitor said it might not be settled until 2015. The bonding company was awaiting adjudication on the criminal matter and the result of their own audit.



Robert Park pleads guilty in February.

The William Penn School District also submitted a claim for over \$960,000 in lost tax revenue to the same bonding company in the same case. The School District's Business Manager Joseph Otto also had no time line for recovery of the funds.

Mr. Park is scheduled to be sentenced on Monday, April 17, 2014 pending a presentence investigation.

## ALDAN CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS

The Aldan Boosters' Civic Association's 2013 Best Decorated Houses prizes from December were:

1<sup>st</sup> Place, the Lupica Family of 55 Stratford Avenue (second consecutive 1<sup>st</sup> place); 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, the Regan Family of 119 W. Providence Road and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place, the Perry Family of 108 W Wayne Avenue.

The Boosters' annual Christmas activities began with the placement of Santa and Troop mailboxes in front of the Aldan Borough Municipal Building on Providence Road at Clifton Avenue on Thanksgiving Eve.

Almost 200 Santa letters were answered and hundreds of cards and letters were packaged and sent to servicemen and women overseas for the holiday season. For the second



consecutive year students of the Aldan elementary school aided in this effort.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony was held on Saturday evening December 7, 2013 with Aldan resident, WW II veteran and 60 year life member of Collingdale Fire Company #1, Fred Howell throwing the switch. Santa was escorted to the event by a contingent from the Delaware County Chapter of

Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA).

Toys and monetary donations were collected for BACA's annual toy distribution to abused children in Delaware County.

Carols were lead by members of the Aldan Union Church Choir and the invocation was given by the Reverend Paul Thompson of Aldan Union Church. Santa was present at the gazebo during the night for children to



meet; to have their wishes heard and to have their pictures taken. Hot cider and cookies were served by the Aldan Historical Commission at the Trolley Stop Museum on Woodlawn Avenue at Providence Road.

On Christmas morning, Santa with the help of the Aldan Boosters' was able to visit over 200 homes and more than 350 Aldan youngsters to verify that all gifts had been properly delivered on Christmas Eve.

The next scheduled Aldan Boosters activity is the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, set for Saturday, April 12 at Noon on the fields at Shisler and Bonsall Avenues.

The rain date is Saturday, April 19 at the same time and location.

## CURBSIDE RECYCLING: 465% INCREASE

Aldan Borough residents increased their recycling from 80 tons of material in 2011 to 370 tons in 2012, the first year of curbside recycling. Prior to 2012 only the paper/cardboard bin behind the Aldan Elementary School, which is still available on Woodlawn Avenue, and the glass/plastic igloos behind the Giant Supermarket on Oak Avenue, which are also still available, could be used.

The 465% increase in recycled material diverted 290 tons of trash from the county incinerator which saved Aldan

Borough and its residents a disposal fee of \$33.00 per ton or \$9,570.00 for 2012. The lower disposal fees almost covered the cost of the additional collection expense, which will be \$9,900.00 in 2014. At the time of this article the final numbers for 2013 recycling were not available.

Curbside recycling pick-up is each Wednesday. Materials collected include plastics



(marked 1 – 5 & 7), cardboard, newsprint, office paper, phone books, junk mail, glass bottles and jars, and aluminum and metal cans. Scrap metal, plastic bags, mirrors, window panes or ceramics cannot be collected for recycling. Blue recycling bins are available from Aldan Borough at no cost to residents. Call 610-626-3554 if you need a new or an additional bin.

## 2014 RETIREMENTS AND ELECTIONS

Aldan Borough will be represented by new members of the State Senate and of the State House of Representatives in 2015. Representative Nick Micozzie of Upper Darby and Senator Ted Erickson of Newtown Square have both announced their retirements and neither will seek reelection in 2014.

Representative Micozzie (R-163) has served in Harrisburg from 1979. He currently is the chairman of the House Transportation Committee. He began his career as a Democrat elected to the Upper



John Kane

Darby Council in 1971. Senator Erickson (R-26) has served in Harrisburg since 2001 when he won a special election to fill the unexpired term of Joseph Loeper. Mr. Loeper (R) of Upper Darby pled guilty to one count of

obstructing a tax investigation and served six months in federal prison. Mr. Erickson had a long career which included serving as executive director of Delaware County.

Democratic candidates have already announced for both seats. John Kane of Ridley Township, the current business manager of Plumbers Union Local



Vince Rongione

690, was endorsed by the Delaware County Democratic Committee for the State Senate seat. Vince Rongione from the Drexel Hill section of Upper Darby was endorsed by the 163<sup>rd</sup> Democratic Legislative council for the State House seat.

Mr. Rongione was raised on Darby Road in the Havertown section of Haverford Township. He is a graduate of Villanova University and the Villanova School of Law.

Primary Election Day is Tuesday, May 20.

## SEWER AGREEMENT, WHO PAYS?

At its October 2013 meeting, Aldan Borough Council unanimously approved the adoption of the Delaware County Sewage Facilities Plan Update for the Eastern Service Area. This Act 537 plan covers 31 municipalities in Eastern Delaware County and provides for the implementation of procedures to slow the inflow and infiltration of storm water into the sanitary sewer system. The plan was updated by the Delaware County Regional Water Control Authority (DELCORA), whose nine-member board is appointed by Delaware County Council.

As part of this Act 537 plan update, DELCORA has agreed to a 15 year extension of treatment services with the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) at the Southwest Water Pollution Control Plant (SWWPCP). In addition, as part of the City of Philadelphia's Long Term Control Plan (LTCP) agreement with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), DELCORA has agreed to help fund the improvement of facilities within the City of Philadelphia at 9.44% of an estimated \$1.74 Billion or \$164 million.

According to estimates by DELCORA the additional payments by

Aldan Borough to this fund would increase from \$5,700 in year one to \$214,000 in year 15. These payments would be in addition to the current payments for sewer water treatment and do not include any money for repair or upgrades to sewer lines and facilities in Aldan Borough or Delaware County.

In addition to the estimated increase in repair payments to the City of Philadelphia, an abatement program is mandated to reduce the inflow and infiltration of storm water into the borough's system. The DELCORA plan recommends the adoption of a private property inflow and infiltration control program which would include inspection and repair of homeowners' sewer laterals at the time of property transfer. This lateral inspection and repair ordinance has been adopted by several local municipalities including Darby Township and Lansdowne Borough.

Once the Act 537 plan update is accepted by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA-DEP), local municipalities will have one year to adopt the lateral inspection and repair ordinance or to produce a written alternative to assess inflow and infiltration and to establish a framework with a timeline to implement corrective actions.



Costs to homeowners for the lateral program could run from hundreds of dollars for inspection to thousands of dollars for repair of damaged sewer lines. At the time of writing, the PA-

DEP had not yet accepted the updated Act 537 plan and Aldan Borough had not scheduled any hearings on a proposed ordinance or plan to reduce storm water inflow and infiltration.

To read the plan go to <http://www.delcora.org/> and click on Act 537 Plan Update.

## THE ADO'S FIFTH ANNUAL MLK SERVICE PROJECT

On Monday, January 20, 2014, the Aldan Democratic Organization (ADO) participated in its fifth-annual Martin Luther King Day Service Project—this year at the Friendship Circle Senior Center on the East Campus of Mercy Fitzgerald Hospital in Yeadon. Friendship Circle is part of Senior Community Services and serves over 100 Aldan residents with programs at the center and in their homes.

ADO volunteers helped the Center clean out the garden room and storage space in the basement as well as organize space on the second floor. The ADO also helped install office equipment and clean in areas which had just been painted. Following the effort, a short presentation was given about a new program called "Aging at Home" for seniors aged 60 and older in the



*Staff Members of Friendship Circle Senior Center. Christine Helmandollar at right*

communities of the William Penn School District. For more information call Christine Helmandollar at 610-237-6222 or email, [chelmandollar@scs-delco.org](mailto:chelmandollar@scs-delco.org).

Each year, the Aldan Democratic Organization organizes and/or participates in local community projects to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with a day of service.

In 2010, the ADO helped create more storage space at the St. Vincent De Paul Society in BVM Church in Darby. In 2011, they helped clear office space at the Clifton Heights United Methodist Church. In 2012 they helped start a project at Mothers' Home in Darby to convert a basement room into useable space, and in 2013 in conjunction with the Aldan Elementary Home & School Association they painted a mural for the school library.

## OPEN SPACE UPDATE: LITTLE FLOWER MANOR

The Natural Lands Trust of Broomall announced in February that it had received, with the aid of State Representative Nick Micozzie, a \$1.175 million grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA-DCNR) to help with the purchase of the property on Springfield Road adjacent to Little Flower Manor in Darby Borough. The 35 acre site, which includes the historically significant Woodburn mansion, is currently owned by the Sisters of the Divine Redeemer and was last used as a nursing facility from 1958 until 2005. The property was rezoned in 2010 and slated for commercial development.

Several town hall meetings at the Aldan Elementary School showed strong local opposition to the planned big box development. When the property is purchased by the Natural Lands Trust, plans now call for Delaware County to use the site as the southern trailhead of the Darby Creek Greenway. There may also be a playfield and picnic facilities constructed. In addition to the PA-DCNR grant, Delaware County Council

has allocated \$300,000 from the Marcellus Shale Fund to aid in the \$2.35 million appraised purchase price.



*The field on Springfield Rd. is to be purchased by the Natural Lands Trust.*

## UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS:

### Aldan Boosters' Easter Egg Hunt

At the Ball Fields  
behind Legion Building  
on Bonsall Avenue  
Saturday, 4/12/14 Noon  
Rain date: 4/19/14



### Aldan Townwatch First Aid/CPR Review

Reinl Recreation Building  
on Shisler Avenue  
Seating is Limited  
RSVP: [aldantownwatch@yahoo.com](mailto:aldantownwatch@yahoo.com)  
Monday, 4/14/14 7:30 PM

