

PSATS Executive Board Nominations 2023-24

Meet Your Nominees for Office

Get to know your Executive Board nominees in preparation to vote at the Annual Conference, April 23-26 in Hershey.

When describing the PSATS Executive Board, one word comes to mind: family. “The Executive Board is more than an Executive Board: We call it our PSATS family because that’s how we consider each other,” Second Vice President Steve Hess says. “When one of us is sick, we all reach out. Everybody I’ve ever worked with on the board has worked extremely well together.”

Voting delegates from member townships and county associations will vote on five officers and three Executive Committee members at PSATS’ 100th Annual Conference, April 23-26 in Hershey. The candidates will serve as members of the PSATS Executive Board, which consists of the five Association officers and seven-member Executive Committee. The Executive Board meets a minimum of four times a year to manage Association business and plan new projects that will benefit member townships.

The candidates, proposed by the Nominations Committee at its November 17, 2022, meeting, were evaluated on the following criteria: service to their township and state and county associations and service to their community as a leader for an advisory body, civic organization, religious institution, or other group. The size of the nominee’s community and the board’s regional balance are also considered.

Let’s get to know the Board members better, including why they decided to run for the PSATS Board, how their local government experience helps them in that role, and their favorite parts about working with townships.



Andrew J. Boni

Perry Township,
Fayette County

Population: 2,336

PRESIDENT: Andrew J. Boni

Up for a second one-year term, President A.J. Boni says that PSATS has helped him as a local official since the first day of his 24-year tenure as supervisor.

“The State Association goes above and beyond,” he says. “The staff there are incredible. You’re new and come in with new ideas, but there are also the legal things you can and can’t do. If you just stay within your township, you learn over time and rather quickly that so many townships have the same problem you have, whether bigger or smaller.”

During his more than two decades of local government experience, Boni, a foreman by occupation, has served as a supervisor, board chair, emergency management coordinator, and roadmaster of Perry Township. He has also been president, vice president, and second vice president of the Fayette County Association of Township Officials.

Beyond his work as an elected official, Boni is also a member of the Pennsylvania Sewage Advisory Committee and past member of the Governor’s Local Government Advisory Committee, serves as chief of the Perry Township Volunteer Fire Department, and has been involved in multiple community and civic organizations.

Boni is also a member of PSATS’ Salary Board, the board liaison to the MS4 Work Group and Finance Committee, and a conference workshop moderator. He has also served on several standing committees.

“Everyone on the board is going to help you do what you need to do,” he explains. “It’s an extension of your family. No one on the board has a personal agenda. We look at what’s best for local government and try to get more done with less.”

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT: John “Jay” Wilkes Jr.



John “Jay” Wilkes Jr.
Jackson Township,
Luzerne County
Population: 4,761

Jay Wilkes, first vice president and chair of the PSATS Executive Board, has been a supervisor for Jackson Township in Luzerne County for 32 years and strives to share that knowledge with others.

“The executive board is an opportunity to learn and help those who are starting out,” he says. “I think that networking is a major focus, since as a PSATS and executive board member, I get to network with supervisors from all over the state.”

In addition to his job as a firefighter and engineer for Edwardsville and Larksville boroughs, Wilkes is also the chair of the board of supervisors, roadmaster, and recreation and parks director. Previously, he was chief of several regional fire and emergency management agencies, chair of the Back Mountain Community Partnership, a planning commission member, and an elected township auditor. He is also president of the Luzerne County Association of Township Officials.

His other civic engagements include

the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency’s Interstate Action Committee and 911 Advisory Board, and board vice chairman of the Luzerne County Conservation District.

Wilkes’s work with the Association over the years has allowed him to share knowledge and experience with his peers, as he serves on the Salary Board and Annual Conference Planning Committee, and as a conference workshop moderator, Boot Camp panelist, and past sergeant at arms at the Annual Conference.

Wilkes appreciates that his fellow Executive Board members are from different areas of the state, as it allows him to better serve his township and all townships that PSATS represents.

“I love getting the opportunity to not just talk to the other board members but also listen to them,” he says. “It’s a great opportunity to go back and forth and discuss some of the issues,” he says. “And then we look at these things legislatively, and we realize that they really affect us all.”

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT: Steven D. Hess Sr.



Steven D. Hess Sr.
North Centre Township,
Columbia County
Population: 2,039

PSATS Second Vice President Steve Hess was involved with the Association long before he was elected to the Executive Board. Serving as a conference workshop moderator, Boot Camp panelist, member of several standing committees, and member of the Governor’s Advisory Board on Rural Affairs, Hess says those past experiences have helped him as an Executive Board member.

“I was on a lot of different committees,” he says. “It helps a lot to get involved with committees because seeing how all those committees work gives you a better handle on how PSATS works in general. It makes you appreciate how much work goes into all of this, which looks seamless. When you go to the conference in April, it seems like everything goes smoothly, but in the background, there’s lots and lots of work that goes into that.”

Hess is also dedicated to his township, which has a population of just

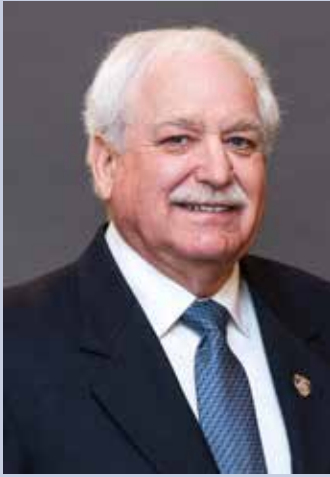
over 2,000 people. He serves as vice chairman, roadmaster, and emergency management coordinator. He is also an active member of his community, serving as vice president of the Columbia County Sanitation Inspection Office and president and firefighter with the Lime Ridge Fire Company.

“Your township experience is what you bring to the board,” Hess explains, “whether it be small or large. I work for a small, rural township, so that’s the experience I bring, but we also have people on the board that have 20,000 people in their township.”

Hess says that his favorite part of being a PSATS member is the networking opportunities.

“I love talking to everybody from around the state and getting their different perspectives,” he says. “It’s always nice to talk to everybody else from around the state, and I just wish most people would want to get involved because getting involved with PSATS.”

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Charles O. Stowe
Allegheny Township,
Butler County
Population: 641

SECRETARY-TREASURER: Charles O. Stowe

Charles “Chuck” Stowe was initially appointed to the Executive Board to fill a vacancy. A previous member of the Nominations, Finance, Audit, and Rules committees, Stowe was an ideal candidate to finish the open term.

A supervisor for Allegheny Township in Butler County for 44 years, Stowe got his start in local government because of his father’s involvement. Now chair of the board of supervisors, Stowe brings his extensive municipal government experience to the PSATS Executive Board — and enjoys hearing about township issues from across the commonwealth.

“I enjoy working with the other board members,” he says. “You get to hear about what other board members are facing and how they are handling that situation.”

In addition to his role as supervisor, Stowe also serves on Butler County’s Advisory Board and as director of the

Butler County Conservation District, president of the Municipal Code Association, and member of the Butler County Community Partners Board, Butler County Transportation Improvement Program, and the Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Advisory Board.

Stowe says his favorite part about being a PSATS Executive Board member is the Annual Conference.

“You get to meet a lot of new people and find out what problems they face and the solutions they have,” he says.

Like other Board members, Stowe says he considers the group his family.

“Before [Past President] Bill Hawk passed away, he always said we were family; we look out for each other,” he says. “When we get together, it isn’t just showing up for the meeting time and then going home. Everybody gets together in the evening to talk, get to know each other, and become friends.”



Robert B. Heffelfinger
Richland Township,
Cambria County
Population: 12,233

ASSISTANT SECRETARY-TREASURER: Robert B. Heffelfinger

PSATS Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Bob Heffelfinger serves as deputy chief of the Richland Township Fire Department, president of the Cambria County 911 Advisory Board, president of the Cambria County Association of Township Officials, member of the Cambria County Metropolitan Planning Organization, and president of the Highland Community Library. However, the executive vice president of Advanced Office Systems, Inc. says that PSATS is one of his favorite gigs.

“I feel like I’m part of something greater,” he says as he seeks a second one-year term on the board. “The value that PSATS offers in its membership is phenomenal. To be able to be a part of that is very satisfying.”

Heffelfinger relies on his nearly two decades of experience as a township supervisor to help the Association, and relies on his peers’ knowledge and experiences to help him better serve his township.

“We’re all in the same business as second class township supervisors,” he explains. “What I do every day in my community is what PSATS is all about.”

Even before Heffelfinger became a board member, he took advantage of the networking opportunities PSATS affords while helping his fellow township supervisors — and legislators — understand the full value of PSATS.

“I’ve always tried to be a resource for new members, especially at the conference,” he says. “I try to help them better understand the educational opportunities that PSATS offers. I’ve helped out plenty of newbies, and I’ve been very interested in and instrumental in our grassroots efforts and building and maintaining relationships with local legislators.”

“I think last year’s Legislative Reception at the conference was a super hit,” he adds, “and I think this year is already lining up to be bigger and better.”

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Mary Jo Campbell



Mary Jo Campbell
Washington Township,
Erie County
Population: 4,406

Mary Jo Campbell, who is up for a second three-year term on the Executive Committee, enjoys the role because of the geographic diversity of her colleagues.

“Being on the board enhances my knowledge of township government, and I’ve learned a lot about different townships and the ways they do business,” she says. “Because all of us on the board are from townships of different sizes, it gives me a bigger picture of what other townships look like. We have a township of 4,400 residents, but we also have a mayor and a vice mayor, which is a little unusual.”

Campbell, currently the mayor of Washington Township and professor emeritus at Edinboro University, has much experience with local government. She has been a council member of her township since 2007, an Erie County Association of Township Officials representative since 2009, and serves on her township’s Personnel Committee.

“Being involved from the local level

is extremely beneficial because it gives you a foundation,” she says. “The fact that I have 16 years of experience has been more than helpful.”

Campbell’s civic engagement extends beyond the township, as she has been the assistant secretary of the Erie County Association of Township Officials for nearly a decade, served on the County Convention Committee since 2011, and previously served on several other committees. In fact, the county association even dedicated its 2022 yearbook to her.

Campbell is also an active member of PSATS, serving as a Power of One volunteer and conference workshop moderator and previously serving on the Townships with Populations between 2,000 and 5,000 Committee and as a conference mentor.

“The experience has been wonderful,” she says. “Everyone on the board is extremely helpful, supportive, and funny, and we get along very well. It’s been a real eye-opener for me.”



Samuel F. Cressler
Southampton Township,
Franklin County
Population: 8,566

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Sam Cressler

As someone who has worked for himself for most of his life, PSATS Executive Committee member Sam Cressler, who is running for a second three-year term, has helped to develop a culture of financial discipline in his township.

“I’ve been self-employed most of my life, so I only had so much money to spend,” he explains. “There was no borrowing and going further and further into debt. Local government has that same feel. When I became a supervisor back in 1998, we had a history of just spending what we had, but over the 25 years I’ve been a supervisor, we’ve had a surplus budget—except during COVID, and we still broke even that year.”

Cressler uses his experience in civic engagement to better serve both his township and PSATS. Chair of the Southampton Board of Supervisors, he has also served as president of the Franklin County Association of

Township Officials and member of the Governor’s Local Government Advisory Committee, Boot Camp panelist, conference workshop moderator, chair of the Franklin County Municipal Planning Organization, and vice chair of the Franklin County Council of Governments.

“I’m a big fan of local government,” Cressler says. “I believe local government is the backbone of all government in America. In big governments, people fall through the cracks, and I know there’s been a battle to eliminate local government as it’s easier to control bigger governments, and I’m against that.”

“If you have good ingredients,” he continues, “you can usually make a pretty good meal, and I think that’s what we have as PSATS members. Virtually everybody in local government is concerned about their community and the people, and that certainly holds true with the members of the board.”

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:: **Corey J. Lucas**



Corey J. Lucas
Dunnstable Township,
Clinton County
Population: 1,013

As candidate for a three-year term on the Executive Committee, Corey Lucas wants to join the board to expand his experience in local government.

"I am currently second vice president for the Clinton County Association, and it just really broadened my horizons about how important local government is for Pennsylvania and the country as a whole," he explains. "Everything starts with local government, and I was interested in furthering my horizons to a state level. I'm 26 years old, and with my background, I thought I could bring some new ideas to PSATS."

Lucas, who has been a supervisor since 2019, says he was always drawn to township work because his father served as a Dunnstable Township supervisor for three decades. The younger Lucas is now the township roadmaster, vice chair of the board of supervisors, dirt and gravel coordinator, and police liaison. His township experience, coupled with his career with PennDOT, make him the go-to expert for solving road problems.

"Being able to work for the commonwealth, when someone at a township has a complaint, question, or

concern regarding roads or road maintenance, nine times out of 10 they'll come to me just because I have a lot of knowledge," he says.

Lucas's service to his county association has opened his eyes to issues facing other townships in Clinton County.

"We as a township are relatively small," he says, "but when you realize that Clinton County holds 22 townships plus seven boroughs and you're involved in your county association and see what all the other townships do, it's a big eye-opener. It's good to see what other elected officials are doing in their townships."

As an Executive Board Board member, Lucas wants to try to get other young people involved in their communities.

"If they realized how important local government is, I think we could get a lot more people involved," Lucas says. "People just get deterred when they read bad articles or news stories. Of course, you have your bad lemons in the cart, and every township does something wrong at some point, but it shouldn't deter young faces from getting involved in local government."



Along with voting on five officers and three Executive Committee members, PSATS members can get to know the Board at PSATS' 100th Annual Conference, April 23-26 in Hershey.