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Learn How Development is Done

Ever wonder how your community leaders decide how to spend your tax money? Or how that lot down the street got rezoned? Or maybe you're a municipal worker who wants to know more about how local government works.

The 2018 Lehigh Valley Government Academy courses may be your ticket to knowing more about how your community works – and how you can work within your community.

This year's schedule of courses begins in September with Community Planning. The 10-hour course will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on three successive Thursdays September 6, September 13 and September 20, at the offices of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. Those sessions give a crash course in the PA Municipalities Code, the policies behind land use decisions and how to have a voice in your community. You can find more information and the registration form at <http://www.lvpc.org/lvga.html>.

Hayden Phillips of Lower Nazareth Township had already been a Northampton Councilman for two years when he enrolled in the in the Community Planning class last year.

"I wanted to be a more informed councilman and if you don't know the Municipalities Code then you are missing a lot," said Phillips, whose council term ended in December. "I learned a lot of things I hadn't even considered."

A second course, Zoning Administration, will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the LVPC on three successive Tuesdays beginning October 16, and classes in Subdivision and Land Development Review, also from 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m., will be held at the LVPC on three consecutive Thursday beginning November 1. The cost of each course is \$105, or \$280 for all three. Any questions can be directed to LVPC Community Planning Director Amanda Raudenbush at araudenbush@lvpc.org or 610-264-4544.

In 2017, more than 60 people took Government Academy courses, including eight people who were named citizen planners for taking all three classes.

Some were public officials looking to better understand their leadership role, some were professional planners bolstering their expertise and a few were private residents who were curious about how their community is run.

