



Board of Supervisors Minutes

February 17, 2021 | 7:00 p.m. | Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Present: Dr. Richard L. Leff, Chairman; Whitney S. Hoffman, Vice Chair; Scudder G. Stevens, Supervisor; Eden R. Ratliff, Township Manager; Amy Heinrich, Finance & HR Director; Roger Lysle, Public Works Director; Matt Gordon, Interim Police Chief; Dave Sander, Solicitor

1. Call to Order

Chair Richard Leff called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., explained how this virtual Board of Supervisors Meeting would be conducted, and offered a COVID-19 update. Hoffman cited a recent article that suggested the reason Chester County's numbers were declining was due to how much the community cared for one another. She said the recent successful blanket drive and the outpour of support in the wake of the Victory fire was evidence of that. Both she and Leff encouraged everyone to continue to wear masks.

2. Township Recovery Update

Manager Ratliff did not have any updates, but said he expected to have updates in the month of March. Leff commented that updates would be good considering it is almost the two year anniversary.

3. Executive Session Announcements

Solicitor Sander announced that the Board of Supervisors met on Friday, February 12th to discuss a matter of acquisition of real property.

4. Meeting Minutes

a. December 2, 2020

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4590)

Motion presented by Hoffman to adopt the Board of Supervisor Meeting minutes from December 2, 2020. Stevens seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

5. Old Business

There was no old business.

6. New Business

a. Consider February 17th Bill Voucher

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4583)

Motion presented by Hoffman to approve the February 17th Bill Voucher in the amount of \$94,621.39 and approve total transfers in the amount of \$24,757.66. Stevens seconded. Motion passed 3-0 after the following discussion.

Discussion

- Stevens asked what was different on the most recent Bill Voucher compared to what was circulated previously in the Board Packet. Heinrich explained the difference was highlighted in yellow and it was a correction to a decimal point in the Spar Hill tax entry paid to the Chester County Treasurer.
- There was discussion between Heinrich and Sander about the process of applying for exemption on those taxes. Sander said he believes March is when Spar Hill will become tax exempt.

b. Consider ARLE Bid Award

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4584)

Motion presented by Hoffman to award the Rt 1 & Rt 82 Intersection Improvements Project to the low bidder, Wyoming Electric and Signal, Inc. in the amount of \$669,804.75, and to authorize the Township Manager to execute the agreement subject to receipt of the required bonds and any outstanding bid documents. Stevens seconded. Motion passed 3-0 after the following discussion.

Discussion

- Stevens recounted his efforts on this project which began prior to 2017 and said he was very pleased with both the cooperation between East Marlborough and Kennett Townships and that this was coming to fruition.
- Leff and Hoffman thanked Stevens for his work on this project, which will allow for left-hand turns and a crosswalk for future trail projects.
- Ratliff thanked Kennett Township Procurement Specialist Denise Serino, who wrote the memo (available in the link above) and helped complete this project after minor design changes were made to allow for the Kennett Greenway to eventually cross this intersection. Serino said that if this is approved, the award letter will go out tomorrow and we will be looking for bonds within the next 10 days.
- Leff asked when the project would be completed. Serino answered October 1st, but upon further research, there may be some delays which would require asking for a five- or six-month extension. She said PennDOT is fine with this. She will know more once the award letter goes out. Heinrich explained that the extension Serino referred to was for a grant as most of this project (~\$670,000) is being covered by a grant. Kennett and East Marlborough Townships only had to put in ~\$61,000 each.
- Stevens needed clarification on the accidental duplicate copies of the memo and letter from TPD in his Board Packet, which Heinrich provided.
- Stevens asked for details about the grant match. Heinrich answered that the match can be met any time throughout the project and that pretty much all of our match was met last year on engineering. Some grants limit how much of the match can be spent on engineering costs, so if that is the case, there will have to be adjustments made. This will not be known until all costs are submitted.
- Richard Gaw (Chester County Press) congratulated the Township on the bid award, wished them luck with the construction, and asked for clarification on the exact work to be done at this intersection and if there would be detours during construction. Serino offered to get back to Gaw with specifics and Gaw was sent the memo with many of the details he was looking for. Stevens then summarized the background of this project that includes adding a stoplight coming off of Rt 1 southbound onto Rt 82, adding a left turn coming out of Cedarcroft Rd onto Rt 82, and adding the crosswalk.

c. Consider Resolution 2021-6

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4585)

Ratliff explained that the County has changed the process in which we notify them about our emergency service providers. They want this information in a specifically written resolution. While all this action was taken in January by the Board of Supervisors, the County asked Kennett Township to comply with this resolution to match all other municipalities. None of this information is different or new.

Motion presented by Hoffman to adopt Resolution 2021-6 designating emergency service providers for Kennett Township effective March 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021. Stevens seconded. Motion passed 3-0 after the following discussion.

Discussion

- Stevens commented that this was not the same as what was adopted in January because this resolution states that Longwood Fire Company would provide ambulance services and advanced life support (ALS) services

for Kennett Township. He said he thought that was split between Kennett Fire Company and Longwood Fire Company. Ratliff clarified that a resolution was adopted by the Board in January which stated that effective March 1st, the basic life support (BLS) would be provided by Longwood Fire Company for the entirety of the Township and to change that, the Board would have had to have taken subsequent action.

- There was discussion between Leff and Ratliff surrounding the language used in the Resolution. Ratliff explained “ambulance services” referred to BLS.

d. Consider Resolution 2021-7

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4586)

Motion presented by Hoffman to adopt Resolution 2021-7 to endorse the Kennett Area Park Authority’s (KAPA) application for a Park and Trail Improvement Grant through Chester County’s Round 33 Preservation Partnership Grant Program. Stevens seconded. Motion passed 3-0 after the following discussion.

Discussion

- Ratliff provided a summary of this project based on the memo provided by KAPA available in the link above. He said KAPA needs support from both municipalities the park sits on and last night, the Borough of Kennett Square adopted the same resolution in support of this grant opportunity. There is no financial commitment required from Kennett Township.
- Leff asked if the park he referred to is Anson B. Nixon Park and Ratliff confirmed, explaining that KAPA is the appointed governing body over Anson B. Nixon Park.
- Hoffman said she hopes they get the grant.

7. Department Head Reports

(Due to the incoming snow, Chairman Leff altered the order to allow Public Works Director Roger Lysle to go first.)

d. Roger Lysle – Public Works

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4581)

Lysle presented his monthly department head report that is available in the link above which included repairs to potholes, the repaired sink hole at Davenport, the newly dedicated pump station at Sinclair Springs, the snowstorms so far this year, repairs to the Bucktoe Road shoulder, an update on Yard Waste Lot grinding and mulch deliveries to Township residents, a down tree on Walnut Street, the upcoming co-op bid for materials, and PennDOT’s current and upcoming work on Old Kennett Road.

Discussion

- Stevens wished Lysle luck with the upcoming storm. Lysle asked everyone to stay home to help their efforts. There was discussion of expected snow totals.
- Hoffman recounted her experience riding with Lysle during one of these storms and said it was eye opening how much work goes into clearing the roads.

a. Eden Ratliff – Administration

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4587)

Ratliff summarized his monthly report which is available from the link above. He spoke about the Kennett Greenway along Chandler Mill Road project including dates for upcoming meetings with the public and the impacted neighbors, updates from the Kennett Fire and EMS Regional Commission, Indoor Agriculture, and COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

Discussion

- At Stevens request, Ratliff explained why there would only be one Supervisor present at some of the upcoming Kennett Greenway meetings. The Sunshine Law prohibits the Supervisors from meeting together if it is not publicly advertised meeting. He also said due to the number of meetings, which were designed to get public feedback, they hoped to reduce the burden on the Supervisors by proposing to not have them all attend every meeting. Discussions continued between the Supervisors, Ratliff and Solicitor Sander surrounding the Sunshine Law and how best to proceed with the upcoming Kennett Greenway meetings.

- Leff asked if all of the meeting dates would be distributed to the community and Ratliff said yes. Leff also asked how the impacted neighborhoods would be reached and Ratliff said they are still working on that.
- Hoffman commented that she was looking forward to the meetings and Leff said it was good to get in touch with the different stakeholders.
- Peter Doehring (5 Nine Gates Rd) asked via Zoom chat, “Thanks for the hard work on this project. My impression from earlier discussions was that a request for an extension for the grant supporting this work needed to be submitted by the end of February to the funding agency, together with a detailed scope of work. What has changed?” Ratliff answered that an application for the extension has not yet been submitted, but we are working with Harrisburg grant writers GMS Solutions on that application. He said the original plan was to submit the scope of work and a decision by the Board, but the decision timeline has changed a couple times, which has impacted the strategy.
- Doehring also asked, “In an earlier email exchange, Eden you had indicated that several different options would be presented to the public to comment on. Is this still the case, and does one of those options include an Edge Lane Road on at least part of Chandler Mill?” Ratliff said that he is not prepared to discuss specific options because the development process is still ongoing. It was also noted that the upcoming meetings were all discussion-based and that no decisions would be made in those meetings.
- Harry Luzetsky (102 Round Hill Rd) asked via Zoom chat, “Is the township actually going to consider any oppositions to changing anything about Chandler Mill Road and possibly not make that a part of the Kennett Greenway or is it definitely going to be a part of it and changed in some way?” Ratliff said that would be up to the Board of Supervisors.

b. Amy Heinrich – Finance & HR

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4588)

Heinrich stated that her full report along with a year-to-date P&L are available on the Website at the link above. She offered updates on the new General Ledger System, the audit schedule, and she explained the full P&L including an update on revenues impacted by COVID-19. She thanked Dina McIlvaine for her efforts to locate the two payroll errors that resulted in recovering \$331,000 of earned income.

Discussion

- Leff also thanked McIlvaine for her hard work to discover the missing revenue.
- Stevens asked if there was going to be an informational session with the Board of Supervisors and the auditor prior to the planned public presentation. He also stated he was pleased to see the level of reporting Heinrich and her team presented. Heinrich, Ratliff, Sander, and the Board discussed further the option for an informational session. After that discussion, it was agreed that an informational session would be arranged with the Board in advance of the public presentation.

c. Diane Hicks – Planning & Zoning

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4580)

Ratliff presented Hicks’s report in her absence – which is available in the link above – that included updates from the Planning Commission who met on February 10th to consider a new proposed subdivision plan at 610 Cope Road, a Zoning Hearing Board update from their January 21st hearing regarding a sign at Christiana Care, and updates from the Historical Commission. He also presented the permits report.

Discussion

- Leff asked about the large ~3 M Penn Medicine job listed on the permits report. Ratliff said that Penn Medicine is planning on removing the current temporary trailer and replacing it with an MRI center.

e. Matt Gordon – Kennett Township Police Department

(www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/4582)

Gordon presented his report available at the link above and broke down the incidents the Police Department worked on in the past month. He gave Lysle recognition for the great work he and his crew do on the roads during snowstorms and recounted an automobile accident in the ice that Lysle assisted with. Gordon spoke of the newest police officer hired, Brian Bolt, and provided his background. Lastly, Gordon shared an update to an ongoing home burglary investigation from 2016 that Detective Wenrich was instrumental in solving which led to the arrest and conviction of multiple career burglars.

Discussion

- Leff thanked Wenrich for her years of hard work, said it was good to hear of the new patrol officer to help the KTPD, and asked how the activity from this January compared to last January. Gordon said the numbers are down because COVID-19 is still affecting things, but they are still steadily busy.
- Stevens asked if, given the recent hire of Officer Brian Bolt who has K-9 training, the Township would be hiring a dog. Gordon said that is a conversation to be had in the future as it is a possibility given Bolt's background. Stevens then congratulated both Bolt for joining the KTPD and Wenrich for her outstanding detective work.

8. Public Comment

Discussion

- Hoffman shared work that she has been doing with Jim Mercante and Joan Holiday through the Southern Chester County Opportunity Network to try to improve the Township's digital infrastructure. There have been meetings with local school districts and municipalities to figure out how the school districts can use the funding from the CARES Act funding (so that the Township Budget would not be affected) to study dead zones in the Township. Comcast and Verizon are also involved, and she is excited to see this move forward to help not only kids in school, but also seniors get online for vaccine appointments, those telecommuting, and ultimately the long-term economic development. Leff thanked Hoffman for her efforts and Stevens said he hopes if outdated infrastructure is replaced, that it will be done so with the latest options such as 5G. Hoffman said this is one of the things a study will help identify in addition ensuring new developments are properly wired.
- Harry Luzetsky (102 Round Hill Rd) asked via Zoom chat, "Since it is up to the Board of Supervisors, when will they decide? It just seems like things are moving in the direction that Chandler Mill Road will definitely be part of the Kennett Greenway and changed in some way. Does the public really have any say in this? It sure doesn't seem like it." Ratliff apologized if his earlier answer was not sufficient but again said it was a Board matter. Leff said that obviously public comments are important, and they are listening. He said if a decision had already been made, there would not be upcoming meetings to engage with the public. Heinrich added that plans to do something along Chandler Mill Road have existed since 2016 and that we are now figuring out what those plans will look like.
- Mike Scott (103 Round Hill Rd) commented via Zoom chat, "I am watching live with some neighbors at 117 Round Hill. I am wondering why the email alert for this meeting was sent out only 2.5 hours before it started. The traffic pattern regarding the greenway is important to me and I have more questions than answers. Is there a better way for me to get information?" Ratliff stated that we attempt to send out a reminder at least a day in advance but the holiday interfered with that schedule. He noted the regular meeting schedule of the first and third Wednesday every month at 7:00 p.m. and said that there was not a robust discussion planned for tonight's meeting regarding Chandler Mill Road. Leff asked if there was Chandler Mill Road discussion planned, would additional communications from the Township would occur. Ratliff confirmed and it was said that we are currently gathering contact information for the upcoming public engagement meetings with neighbors of Chandler Mill Road, Falcon's Lair and Round Hill.

9. Adjournment

Motion presented by Hoffman to adjourn. Stevens seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eden R. Ratliff
Township Secretary