



Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

In Person Meeting Via 801 Burrows Run Road

April 5, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Present: Geoffrey Gamble, Esq., Chairman; Dr. Richard L. Leff, Vice Chair (via phone); Scudder G. Stevens, Supervisor; Eden R. Ratliff, Township Manager; Diane Hicks, Planning & Zoning Director; Ted Otteni, Director of Public Works; Matt Gordon, Chief of Police; Dave Sander, Solicitor

Absent: Amy Heinrich, Finance & HR Director

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Gamble: First order of business is to say a few words about former Supervisor Bill Hewton who passed away at the age of 92. He was a former member of the Kennett Township Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission for 22 years and a representative to the Regional Planning Commission. It would be a good idea to write a letter of condolence to his son and daughter. We pray for their family and more people who are devoted to our Township for the future.

I would now like to welcome with great honor our Representative, Christina Sappey who is visiting us tonight.

Rep. Sappey: Good Evening, thank you for giving me a few minutes. I try to get around to every municipality at least once a term to say hello, meet the public and answer any questions to make sure you know I am here for you and the Board. I am very aware of the issues that our municipalities are facing not just here in Southeastern PA but across Pennsylvania. I am available to discuss grant funding and infrastructure issues, I feel very strongly about my role to connect people to their local and state government when appropriate. If anyone comes to you that something may not be within your wheelhouse, feel free to direct them to our Unionville office and we will see that they are taken care of.

Stevens: I had the pleasure of working with you on various issues in Kennett Township and it has been a real pleasure and you have been very responsive. Welcome to Kennett Township.

Richard Gaw (Chester County Press): You are sponsoring a walk in April through the Stroud Water Research Center: could you talk a little bit about that?

Rep. Sappey: It is the third Saturday of April. We did this event last year and I was looking to have another family friendly event and an educational event, by getting outside and letting everyone know about this amazing resource. We had a ball last year; we were in the streams and just had an overall great time.

Gamble: As Scudder stated you are always welcome here, but we are especially hoping you will join us at the Grand Reopening of Spar Hill.

Rep. Sappey: I just received the invitation and look forward to attending.

Gamble: I would also like to welcome Former Supervisor, Whitney Hoffman who will be presenting this evening on Digital Infrastructure. I was going to have you go first, our business meeting will be rather short.

3. Embezzlement Recovery Update

There were no updates to provide.

4. Executive Session Announcements

There were no Executive Sessions to announce.

5. Meeting Minutes

a. March 15, 2023

<https://www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6278>

Motion to adopt the March 15, 2023, Board of Supervisor meeting minutes was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

6. Public Comment on Agenda

7. Business Items

a. Consider April 5, 2023, Bill Voucher

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/5633

Motion to approve the April 5, 2023, Bill Voucher in the amount of \$235,208.72 and to approve total transfers in the amount of \$28,609.14 was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Gamble: Why are we spending money on a traffic signal in Kendal? Isn't that a state road?

Ted Otteni (Director of Public Works): We own and maintain all traffic signals in the township. In addition to that, we are not allowed to do anything to the signals without PennDOT's permission.

Gamble: My second comment, we are spending some money on an engineer for a trail. Can you explain? It stood out, I am sorry I do not have it in front of me.

Ratliff: The Longwood Connectors Project- it is an old concept. Years ago, they came up with this concept called the Ruby Mile to try and connect trails in Kennett Township up Route 52 and along Longwood Property, so you could walk or ride a bicycle there. This grant is a planning grant to try and figure that out. We were the lead applicant and oversee expending it and filing for reimbursement.

Motion passed 3-0.

b. Consider Avello Escrow Release No. 6

<https://www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6313>

Motion to approve the Avello Escrow Release No. 6 in the amount of \$99,632.67 as recommended by the Township Engineer was made by Gamble and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0

c. Consider approving Resolution 2023-7 Kennett Woodlands and Trails Acquisition Grant Resubmission

<https://www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6314>

Motion To authorize Resolution 2023-7 Kennett Woodlands & Trails Acquisition Grant Resubmission to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

Ratliff: This is a grant resubmission for the 22-acre Schutt property which is across the street from Spar Hill and Lord Howe. We applied for this in the fall, and we were not awarded. Crebilly Farms received a lot of money as it should, we understand this is competitive which is why we are working with BRC.

Richard Gaw (Chester County Press): What is the amount you are seeking?
Ratliff: \$300,000 but I will clarify that for you by the end of tonight.

d. Consider approving Resolution 2023-8 “April is Safe Digging Month.”

<https://www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6315>

Motion To authorize Resolution 2023-8, supporting that “April is Safe Digging Month” in Pennsylvania was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Ratliff: This is what we call an awareness resolution. If you are going to dig on your property, please dial 811. This is the Board expressing its support.

Stevens: I will point out, we are not talking about sticking a shovel in the ground, we are talking about backhoes and other machinery that can hit electric and gas lines. This service is important. These utilities are marked and maintained in a database. If you are going to be doing anything besides sticking a spade in the ground, do your due diligence by calling.

Otteni: I would like to add on to what Scudder stated that it is a FREE service. If you don’t call and you do dig and hit something, it is going to cost you A LOT of money. Motion passed 3-0.

e. Consider approving the final minor subdivision plan titled Mastrippolito/Maurer

Motion to approve the Final minor subdivision plan titled Mastrippolito/Maurer along with the requested eleven (11) waivers conditioned upon resolving any open comments found in the AECOM, review letter of February 14, 2023, including compliance with the Right of Way request and that no change to lot configuration is required to address DEP sewage planning requirements was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Diane Hicks (Director of Planning & Zoning): This is a 20 plus acre lot that has two dwellings on it and is being subdividing it into two lots. There are 11 waivers, the township engineer has reviewed them and is in favor of them. The PC recommended approval at their March 14th meeting.

Jim Fritch (Regester Associates): Everything Diane said I agree with, the plans have been revised and resubmitted to the Township as of this morning. The right of way request has been put on the revised plan. I think we have addressed the comments, hopefully AECOM thinks the same. We are fine with tonight’s motion with the comments addressed in AECOM’s letter.

Hicks: There is one open item, back when the two houses were constructed there was a letter that was sent to DEP and they will require another submission and I think that is the only item that is open.

Leff: I was glad to hear about the additional right of way on Rosedale. Can you explain the advantage of that.

Hicks: It is always a good idea to get an additional right of way because you never know when you need to widen roads, whenever we can get it we take it.

Motion passed 3-0.

f. Consider Resolution clarification

Ratliff: There was a clerical error at the end of last year. When we reapplied for the grant that we voted on a few minutes ago we assigned it a resolution number to that which was Resolution 2022-20, later the Board passed the tax resolution which we gave the same number to. You can’t have two resolutions with the same number. It does not change the effectiveness or legality of what was adopted but for clerical reasons in the book we want to straighten it all out. What the Board is going to do tonight is reassign the grant submission to 2022-24, which will be the last resolution of the year. The reason we are doing that one and not the tax resolution is because if there historical

research done one day, someone is more likely to look up a tax resolution instead of a grant application.

Motion to reassign Kennett Woodland & Trail Acquisition grant submission Resolution that was previously adopted on October 26, 2022, to Resolution 2022-24 was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

Ratliff: Just to clarify earlier, I was correct in what I stated, the grant application resubmission for the Schutt property was \$300,00 which is 1/3 of the cost.

Digital Infrastructure Presentation by: Former Supervisor Whitney Hoffman
<https://www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6318>

Whitney Hoffman: I came to the Board and asked if I could continue doing work on digital infrastructure, as you can imagine some of this stuff is a little complicated. We have different problems here in Kennett Township, we have some places that don't have good, wired access out to their house and then we found out during the pandemic that when kids were issued Wi-Fi hot points for their online classes, we realized that we could not get good cellular access though the township and it is a real problem. (19:36) This is a map of hot spots and dead zones. Where there is red there is where there is not great connectivity.

Pat Muller (22 Deer Pond Lane): Whitney, where is the Township building on the map?

Whitney: The Township building isn't on this map. I wish it was, this is the slide I have. The ISP is not too keen about sharing some of the maps of their areas that have low connectivity. (19:41)

Richard Gaw (Chester County Press): Is that supposed to be 36.2%?

Hoffman: 36.2 million Americans.

Ratliff: We will also acknowledge that we received communication on the grant opportunity from Rep. Sappey's office.

Whitney: Does anyone have any questions?

Matt Gordon (Chief of Police): I know the county was working on the connectivity a while back to the south of Baltimore Pike. Did the study come back?

Hoffman: Yes. That study came out in 2022 and we have been in contact with them, and it has gone to the county and the state.

Pat Muller (22 Deer Pond Lane): From a development standpoint how do you see this going into development code? Would this be written into the SALDO so the burden goes to the developer?

Hoffman: It should be how they put in sewer. It should be dealt with like a utility and put in the SALDO.

Ratliff: It is not a utility that is regulated by the NPC, is it? That will have to be a change that will have to happen before the Township can get involved.

Rep. Sappey: This will have to be regulated by the State. It is important to note that we are very different from the rest of Pennsylvania. In Chester County we are trying to serve those who are having issues with connectivity. We still have far more resources than the rest of the commonwealth and there are some parts of Pennsylvania that do not want this.

Ratliff: I managed in Franklin County and Port City Borough before I was in Kennett Township, and it is far different there than it is here. They do not want growth and are not having these conversations.

Rep. Sappey: It is going to be provided by the private sector. We must be careful too that we don't give people the impression that it is going to be affordable. Comcast and Verizon will emerge with programs to make it more affordable, but what is affordable is relative to where you live.

Hoffman: There is a reason why it is called the information highway. Municipalities have a burden to get information out to residents. How do you do that when there are tornado watches just the other day and so many of us didn't get those?

Gamble: What can the Township do to support your efforts?

Hoffman: If you let the committee keep going with what we are currently doing and updating the Township. As long as it's on the Township's radar and making this a formal department at some point. I would love to continue to do this.

Stevens: I am sensitive about what Rep. Sappey and Eden said about parts of our world that do not have and do not want this. Nevertheless, I think that our Township, with support, will look to the future and stay at the cutting edge of the technologies to function at a new level, medicine, government, communication as you have given us an extended overview.

Richard Gaw (Chester County Press): Will you or Jim or Joan be giving the same presentation to other municipalities?

Hoffman: This is obviously my home municipality, and they are the ones I said I would report back to on our findings. We want everyone to know about this. It was part of the big town hall meeting we did back in December and part of the outreach. We would like to make sure everyone knows what is going on. The smaller municipalities may not have the bandwidth to take this type of project on. It really depends on the spot that everyone is in.

Gaw: To your knowledge are there other county-based offices that are currently or have been established to address this?

Hoffman: Jim would have a better idea of that as he travels out to Harrisburg and some of the offices are non-profits. I am not sure if they are sanctioned by the counties. The municipalities that we have in Pennsylvania just do not have the expertise or if they are applying for grants have the matching funds to get projects. The minimum grant is \$500,000.00 up to \$20 million dollars. That is a lot and not something that Kennett Township can match a \$20 million dollar grant.

Gamble: I am thinking High Priestess of Infrastructure, what do you think?

Dine Hicks (Director of Planning & Zoning): In your program, do you have built into it an educational format for the residents? There are many residents in the area who do not want this. It is not about affordability, but more fear based.

Hoffman: I think part of it is trying to educate people. Is public safety more important than the number of studies that say this is going to be a risk here. I understand there is a lot of skepticism about money and information. Some of the education is what people can do with it. But from an emergency standpoint, it is critical.

Rep. Sappey: When I brought this up, I wanted to make you aware of the landscape across the state. I think more people are on your side. It is important to know who is advocating for this. Some people are just wondering what is going to be encroaching on us.

8. Public Comment

Gamble: We are hoping to see Public Comment as more aspirational in addition to what we have done wrong. Last meeting Scudder brought to our meeting an article. We are going to be receiving an award from the American Heraldry Society on our Coat of Arms and seal. We didn't even apply, and we won. We are going to be developing a policy to naming streams within the municipality, as we believe it is our right that we should be the one naming them. We will have a consistent approach.

A question for Chief Gordon, is there a way for parents to get DNA kits to take home to identify their children (and they keep the kit, as a matter of privacy).

Chief Gordon: That program has been around for a while. The kits are commercially made. You take a picture of your child and if they are lost, you can bring in the picture and it can be run through facial recognition. With the DNA, there is a shelf life, same goes for our DUI kits. They expire within months.

Gamble: For example, on Ancestry.com you can do a saliva swab and find out.

Chief Gordon: It is all timed. When you are thinking about exploring your ancestry, you get a sealed kit, do the swab, put it back and send it out for results. The DUI kits have an expiration date on them. I will look into it.

Gamble: Where do we stand on an SRO (School Resource Officer)?

Ratliff: We have partnered with the Kennett Consolidated School District and received a small grant. The funding will be for the (3) police departments that provide services that go above and beyond normal patrol duties: Kennett Township, Kennett Borough and Southern Chester County Police Department. We are going to receive \$18,000 for this school year and \$24,000 for next year for work that we are already doing. Our police officers are present at Greenwood Elementary in the morning when the students are being dropped off and at the end of the day when they are dismissed as well as irregular routine patrols through the school. It is not an SRO program; it is more of a police presence situation. I think the goal of the school district is to ramp that up over time.

Gamble: Is the Chief going to have some input when they go ahead and do a new Greenwood school and New Garden School, with the security that is built in?

Ratliff: The Greenwood School will go through the land development process within our team through the Township: Diane, Matt & Ted along with the fire companies and we will be able to influence that.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Gamble and seconded by Stevens. Motion passed 2-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eden R. Ratliff
Township Secretary