



Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Meeting

May 3, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Present: Geoffrey Gamble, Esq., Chairman; Scudder G. Stevens, Supervisor; Eden R. Ratliff, Township Manager; Amy Heinrich, Finance & HR Director; Ted Otteni, Director of Public Works; Matt Gordon, Chief of Police; Dave Sander, Solicitor

Absent: Dr. Richard L. Leff, Vice Chair; Diane Hicks, Planning & Zoning Director

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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. April 5, 2023

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6464

Motion to adopt the April 5, 2023, Board of Supervisor meeting minutes was made by Stevens and seconded by Gamble.

Gamble: I have one comment from last time that I made about traffic lights on state roads. 30% of our roads within the Township are state roads. Unfortunately, every complaint that I have received in the last year is on state roads, which are terribly maintained. Our Township roads seem to be rather beautiful. Motion passed 2-0.

6. Public Comment on Agenda

7. Business Items

a. Consider May 3, 2023, Bill Voucher

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6462

Motion to approve the May 3, 2023, Bill Voucher in the amount of \$605,911.45 and to approve total transfers in the amount of \$74,015.89 was made by Stevens and seconded by Gamble. Motion passed 2-0.

b. Consider adopting Ordinance 301- Police Pension Plan Amendment

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6461

Motion to approve Ordinance 301- amending the Kennett Township Police Pension Plan administered by the Pennsylvania Municipal Retirements System was made by Stevens and seconded by Gamble.

Ratliff: Last month the Board moved to advertise Ordinance 301.

Motion passed 2-0.

c. Consider Kennett Township Police Association Collective Bargaining Agreement

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6463

Motion to adopt the Kennett Township Police Association Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) expiring December 31, 2027, was made by Stevens, and seconded by Gamble.

Ratliff: I am going to give an overview. One thing we wanted to do is make sure that our police department was in line with the rest of Chapter County municipalities. We negotiated with the goal of bringing benefits in line with other municipalities to aid in the financial sustainability of our Police force, while still maintaining positive morale in the department. Key changes include a 5% contribution by officers to their pension plan, contribution to healthcare in line with non-uniform contributions, introduction of healthcare opt-out incentive, reduction to chart-day treatment, adjustment to holiday compensation, reductions in vacation allotment, and reductions in payouts permitted for unused vacation and sick time. These changes offer a significant benefit to the Township. The Police Pension fund is estimated to be underfunded by \$400K. Therefore, this contribution is essential to the long-term health of the plan and long-term cost savings for the Township. In exchange, the contract includes a 9% increase in salary and a desired improvement to the Pension Plan (discussed further below). The 9% raise equates to an average raise of 2.65% before tier increases given the 5% pension contribution and the 1.35% equivalent healthcare contribution. 2024-2027 includes 3% annual raises along with any applicable step increases. Additionally, we introduced a second salary tier structure for any newly hired officers. The prior contract included 5 steps, which means new patrol officers would get to the top salary level after their fourth full year of experience. This quickly escalated costs. New officers under the new tier system will start at a lower salary than 2022 and get to the top salary level after 7 full years of experience. Note, an experienced officer can join our force with prior credited experience, which remains unchanged.

Lastly, officers will be enrolled in our pension plan as of their start date. This eliminates a prior one-year lag that meant officers became vested after 13 years of service and eligible to receive benefits after 26 years of service and age 50 vs. the Act 600 intent of vesting after 12 years of service and eligible to receive benefits after 25 years of service and age 50.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Total salary and benefits under baseline assumptions of the old contract for the current officers in 2027 would have been \$2.56M per year. The estimated analogous costs under the new contract in 2027 are a run-rate of \$2.32M per year, for a run-rate cost savings of \$244K per year by the end of the contract. The 5-years savings for the life of the contract will be \$846K.*

Additionally, under the new contract, if we hired a new officer in 2023, the additional five-year savings versus hiring under the baseline would be \$153K and a run-rate of \$43K per year in 2027.

Gamble: Eden, congratulations to you and your team, special thanks to Amy Heinrich and Dina McIlvaine. Motion passed 2-0.

8. Public Comment

Gamble: I hate blank walls. We need some history on our walls, and the one thing that has always concerned me is that we nearly committed genocide a couple hundred years ago and wiped out the Leni Lenape and I wanted to give recognition to those who lived here. We have Colonel Taylor on one wall in the back, I would like to see Dr. Fussell on the other side who went out of his way to educate women doctors. Again, I would like to encourage public comments that are not just complaints but also what is being thought about in the Township.

Richard Gaw (Chester County Press): Eden, you had mentioned in the beginning when you stated you had been more generous in the past for this Collective Bargaining Agreement, can you elaborate a bit more?
Gamble: Richard, that may be better if you want to conduct an interview with Eden. The public comment portion is best suited to rattle off quick questions, so as not to get into the weeds and history of it all.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Stevens and seconded by Gamble. Motion passed 2-0.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eden R. Ratliff
Township Secretary