



Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Meeting Via 801 Burrows Run Road

August 2, 2023

7:00 p.m.

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

Absent: None

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/Presentation

a. July 5, 2023, Meeting Minutes

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6758

Motion to adopt the July 5, 2023, Board of Supervisor meeting minutes was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

b. July 19, 2023, Meeting Minutes

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6759

Motion to adopt the July 19, 2023, Board of Supervisor meeting minutes was made by Stevens and seconded by Gamble.

Leff: I was not there so I do not believe I can second it or vote. I abstain.

Motion passed 2-0.

c. Brandywine Valley Wayfinding Presentation

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6764

Gamble: *I am pleased to introduce Susan Hamley, Executive Director of Chester County Tourism.*

Susan Hamley: *This project started about 9.5 years ago when I got here. It has been a long process with complications, since COVID and we had to start over. This is a replacement signage program. Many of these signs are faded, too many characters, on the wrong side of the road. They are Miami Vice colors and are not Chester County'esque. Technology helps us discover destinations that we may not be aware of. Some say what about GPS. You use that to go from point A to point B. While driving you may notice a winery or museum, a place to come back to. That is what we are trying to get people to do, is come and enjoy our county, treasure it, spend the night, and come back again. There was \$1.2 billion dollars in economic impact in Chester County back in 2019. It dropped a little bit back in 2020 but it is getting back to that. The color we are proposing is blue, which also is the county's color. The program is about \$800,000.00 we have a \$200,00.00 grant from PennDot. I must get enough in the ground by March 2024 or we lose the extension on the grant.*

Stevens: What is being proposed with the maintenance of the signs? The signs that will be placed within the Township are they the responsibility of the Township?

Hamley: The signs have been around for 30+ years, and we carry the insurance on them. If something happens to them, we call the company and they come out to take care of it. We 100% manage it. The Township has to sign an agreement with PennDOT, but we will send the information into PennDOT saying: "Here are all the municipalities that have signed, we will continue to be the ones to manage it." It is a delegation agreement that we drafted.

Leff: If we agree to this today, would we be in the first batch of signs going in?

Hamley: You absolutely will be in the first group. We want to focus on the Route 1 corridor down to Oxford and up to West Chester. I have meetings scheduled with West Goshen and West Chester. I think that will make a nice connection system. Since Greater Wilmington's signs are already in the ground this connects us.

Leff: This is great that there is a similar pattern but a color difference.

Gamble: Is this going to cost the Township anything?

Hamley: Nothing.

Gamble: Is there a commercial use, if a business donates to the Tourism Board to put up a sign for their business? For example, a medical marijuana dispensary.

Hamley: We have criteria that has to be met.

Stevens: Your answer is specific to the question; you have wineries which are commercial.

Hamley: The difference may be that the winery you can go to and get a tour, hear music or concerts. I am not sure if a dispensary would have a tour on hold to make it?

Gamble: I do not mean to hold them up for opprobrium, I was using it as an example. Scudder makes a point here, but it has to be more cultural so to speak.

Hamley: More cultural and we have some smaller historical assets that are only open two days a week for four months of the year. They would not be getting a sign because that causes more clutter. They have to meet certain criteria which we have put a lot of thought into.

Gamble: Lastly, I noticed in one of the pictures with the swirls at the top of the sign there is room for a medallion. Is there any chance for the Township Logo to go in that space?

Hamley: We thought about that route, but it was going to get too complicated, it doesn't mean I can't talk to John Bosio at MERJE and get a sense. I referenced America250 but I have not presented it yet to the public, I would like to tie it into that and reserve the right to put medallions for all our historical markers. There would be historic markers that would be connected.

Ratliff: Great presentation there were a few questions that we had internally that Ted can review later. We are excited to support the program.

Richard Gaw (Chester County Press): The color looks cobalt blue. Do you have more specific information on the color blue.

Hamley: I can certainly get that for you. There is a list of specific PennDOT approved colors that we are allowed to use.

Gaw: Our neighbors in Delaware, their colors are crimson or red. Can you be more specific in terms of what their color is?

Hamley: It all depends on how you want to describe crimson. It could be wine, maroon, burgundy, a deep dark red. It coordinated well with our logo and Greater Wilmington Tourism's logo.

Gaw: You talked about the cost of the signs being \$800,000.00 and up. The \$200,000.00 grant is from where?

Hamley: We have not received it yet, but it would be from PennDOT, it is \$204,000.00. We have to reach our match by March or that goes away.

Gaw: How many signs is the tourism office looking to place?

Hamley: About 100 signs. Our goal is to declutter and not to add more signs.

Gaw: What will the signs be made of?

Hamley: I can certainly get back to you on that. I rely on our consultant, John Bosio.

Jen Samuels (Daily Local): Thank you for all you have done for local businesses during the shutdown. Would federally preserved parks be part of it? How do you decide which parks?

Hamley: Yes, I believe Red Clay Park is a part of it, I love Anson B. Nixon, but it is too small to get a sign within this system. We are offering this system design to other municipalities and if they want to carry the design into their towns, they can do that. It has already been designed but it is not part of this plan.

Samuels: As I was driving north on Route 1 towards the shopping center, on the right you see an old gas station that is raised there are National Registrar markers, but a lot of those within Chester County are bent over or placed roughly around the same time period (30 years ago) would that be something that you would look into and be an advocate for within the community for our national historic markers?

Hamley: We would be an advocate, we would look to the organization to run it, fund it and go through all the criteria. I have met with the Scenic Byway, and we are supportive of them as well.

6. Public Comment on Agenda Items

7. Business Items

a. Consider August 2, 2023, Bill Voucher

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6760

Motion to approve the August 2, 2023, Bill Voucher in the amount \$337,607.53 and to approve total transfers in the amount of \$125.50 was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

b. Consider adopting Ordinance 302- Non-Uniform Pension Plan Amendment

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6761

Motion to adopt Ordinance 302: Non-Uniform Pension Plan Amendment was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Heinrich: We discussed this at a prior meeting, we have done the advertising and now we are ready to authorize it. It is a small alteration to our pension plan. We made the same modification on the uniform pension plan which is eliminating the 12-month lag before we are part of the plan. We are being consistent across police and non-uniform and consistent with our peer organizations that don't have a lag on top of their vesting period. Now we will just have the normal vesting period.

Stevens: Has this been approved and reviewed by our employment counsel and secondly is this to make Kennett Township more consistent with the practice within the broad stretch of the county in employment practices regarding pensions?

Heinrich: When we went through the police process and contract negotiations our specific employment counsel was involved. For this the same concept as involved it was just not specialized, but it has been reviewed by legal counsel in accordance with PMRS. It is also consistent with what other municipalities do too.

Sander: This makes it consistent with the uniformed pension plan.

Motion passed 3-0.

c. Consider approving the Delegation Agreement for Wayfinding Signage

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6762

Motion to approve the agreement between the Township and the Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau for Tourist-Oriented Signs in the Township and to authorize the Township Manager to execute the finalized Exhibits was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Leff: I think it is great that they are being updated and there is a Chester County style so that people know where they are when they enter Chester County especially if we will be on the leading edge of this.

Motion passed 3-0.

d. Consider approving 580 Rosedale Road Escrow Release No. 4

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6763

Motion to approve 580 Rosedale Road Escrow Release No. 4 in the amount of \$145,363.00 as recommended by the Township Engineer was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Motion passed 3-0.

8. Public Comment

Peter Doehring (5 Nine Gates Rd.): I would like to make some statements on some of the information regarding the Chandler Mill Trail that could be distracting residents about the true cost involved. Many of these comments stem back from previous Board of Supervisor meetings. For example, when I asked Rich if some of the funds could be used to make Chandler Mill safer and comfortable for cyclists using elements that were already recommended. You stated you were “comfortable with the design with the current limited traffic going across the bridge since we rebuilt the bridge and closed it to through traffic.” The primary design of this trail is to make it safe and comfortable for all users. I do extensive research and between 90-93% of cyclists are less confident in cycling in/with traffic. We do not need these elements for the advanced cyclist, we need them for the 90-93% who are not comfortable. Geoff, in response to the sections that are disconnected, you suggested that “we need to be patient, we might have to wait 50 years for it to be complete.” This goes back to having the Board of Supervisors sign a design contract for over \$600,000.00 before the Right of Way was secured. I have spoken to other designers, and they have stated you do not commit dollars until a Right of Way has been secured. My 3rd comment has to deal with repeated references to “We have a Plan.” I really must question what that plan is, there is no way to fit 2-way traffic, 10-foot Greenway into a 33ft easement without significant costs. The plan could be to seize private land. The other option is to squeeze the existing roadway with a 6ft side path and a guard rail. I’m concerned with this continued discussion “We have a plan,” is putting off the time, where we have to be frank and acknowledge that the trail designed by the designers will not happen.

Stevens: There are an infinite number of possibilities, and you only speculated upon three. Two meetings ago we spent a great deal of time providing visuals of what the plan is and what plan has been approved and is moving forward. If you would like to show up and enjoy it when it is finally committed and open, let us know, because all I hear now is you are not interested. There is a plan, and you know what the plan is.

Gamble: Peter thank you as always, your comments are always challenging but also something we should consider seriously.

Ellen Gay (212 Kendal Drive): I would like to ask if there are plans to move toward banning non-reusable plastic bags in the Township. West Chester has done so; the state of Delaware has done so; Philadelphia has done so. I am a resident at Kendal/Longwood and represent 200 or so residents who are concerned about the issue. What can be done?

Gamble: we take the issue of waste very seriously; we have undertaken a survey of the merchants in Kennett Township as a starting point to see what they think and how it would impact the businesses. We are reluctant to put anything in Kennett Township that disadvantages our merchants until there is a more regional approach including the commercial areas of Kennett Square, East Marlborough, and New Garden. Ultimately if anything were to be done it would be on a regional level where it is fair. We are not going to sacrifice our merchants if others are not going to go along with us.

Ted Otteni (Director of Public Works): As a staff liaison to the Environmental Advisory Council this has been a topic on the agenda. The Council is working with the adjacent municipalities to have this move forward in a unified sense. One of the concerns we saw in the EAC, within the municipal limits of Kennett Township, there is not a lot of commercial businesses compared to East Marlborough and Kennett Square Borough. We have reached out to the other municipalities, and they are interested in moving forward. There is a movement afoot.

Gay: *What can we do to help?*

Stevens: *That is very gracious, Ellen, thank you.*

Gamble: *I would suggest getting in touch with Eden when he is back to talk about specifics. I do not think any of us here tonight are prepared to talk about it in detail. We very much appreciate it as this does not drop.*

Ratliff: *I will be in touch early next week to discuss.*

Leff: *If you have been successful at not using plastic bags at Kendal, and how you did that, it would be a great learning experience for others.*

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Eden R. Ratliff

Township Secretary