



Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes

Hybrid Meeting Via 801 Burrows Run Road

August 16, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Present: Geoffrey Gamble, Esq., Chairman; Dr. Richard L. Leff, Vice Chair (Zoom); Scudder G. Stevens, Supervisor; Eden R. Ratliff, Township Manager; 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

a. August 2, 2023

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6789

Motion to adopt the August 2, 2023, Board of Supervisor meeting minutes, was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

6. Public Comment on Agenda Items

No comments were made.

7. Business Items

a. Consider August 16, 2023, Bill Voucher

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6785

Motion to approve the August 16, 2023, Bill Voucher in the amount of \$312,698.25 and to approve total transfers in the amount of \$23,833.14. was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff. Motion passed 3-0.

b. Consider supporting joint municipal application for Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6795

Motion to support the filing of the joint municipal application for the Brandywine Valley Scenic Byway Commission Vision Partnership Program grant was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

John Haedrich (Kennett Township Scenic Byway Commission Representative): *We had the 23rd byway in PA designated in November of 2022. Recognized Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad efforts in southeastern Pennsylvania. We received a DCED grant which will be used along with the accumulated funds of the Byway Commission to take advantage of the Vision Partnership Grant and bring together all the various advocates for the Underground Railroad. What we hope to do is bring*

these groups together and work on a consensus story so it can be embodied into the website to help build a coalition of rights within the Underground Railroad. On the second page of the handout the total project is \$20,000.00 with \$12,000.00 coming from the Byway Commission. This amount qualifies it for the 40% match. The application is due September 8th but we hope to have most of it drafted by next week. We are using some consultants from the National Travel Center based in Lancaster. We have Maree Forbes on Zoom if anyone has any questions. They have been very helpful. Eden and I met with Chester County Planning with Bill Deguffroy yesterday. This is a multi-municipal project: Kennett Township will be the lead, Pocopson Township, Kennet Square Borough, and Pennsbury Township.

Gamble: The motion on the floor is a simple one, which we do support. In terms of the press, maybe you can interview John and Maree after the meeting?

Motion passed 3-0.

c. Consider approving Longwood Greenhouse Escrow Final Release

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6786

Motion to approve the Longwood Greenhouse Escrow Release No. 2 (Final) in the amount of \$195,330.16 as recommended by the Township Engineer was made by Stevens and seconded by Leff.

Motion passed 3-0

Ratliff: Congratulations to Longwood Gardens on completing the project.

8. Department Head Reports

a. Eden Ratliff – Administration

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6798

b. Amy Heinrich – Finance & HR

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6787

c. Diane Hicks – Planning & Zoning

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6782

Gamble: Is there a current noise ordinance in place?

Hicks: We have a noise ordinance that has time limitations and I believe it is 10:00PM. Our department is shut down at that time, but you can call the police and they will handle it.

d. Ted Otteni – Public Works

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6788

Gamble: On the stop bars being recessed, I questioned this a few years ago when it was done and was told that it is to allow for the school buses and trucks to make the turn. There needs to be a balance of putting it right up there and having vehicles back up in order for the bus to make the turn. Is that what is being considered?

Otteni: That is what is being considered. There are a significant number of trucks on our roads. A balance was never really found. The school bus may have to slow down to make its turn.

Stevens: I would like to go on the record by giving high praise to our Public Works crew in facing the debacle that happened with the storm and in a few minutes, I will comment on PECO. I was reminded during and after that it was taking time to clear the area, not because our team was not sufficient, but because the wires were live and were waiting for PECO. I thank you personally and professionally.

e. Matt Gordon – Kennett Township Police Department

www.kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/6791

Gamble: I saw it in the news, a town in Minnesota that an entire police force quit. They can't attract any applicants. I want to express how grateful we are here in Kennett for you and your force in addition to our Public Works Road crew. Often times when we don't need help, we ignore the fact that we have people who sprint into action who keep us safe and functioning.

Gordon: We are a small tight group that relies on each other: fire, police, EMS and road crew. I will say that we are very fortunate that the last two times we posted for jobs we received 35 applicants. Most departments are looking at me sideways because they have only received seven.

9. Public Comment

Stevens: I would like to comment on PECO. I would like to qualify, I have nothing but the greatest respect for the employees of PECO who were and are out in the storms, floods, and snow. There were several PECO trucks and the logo on the side of the truck indicated they were from Michigan which is not unusual when we have had power outages, trucks parked all over from the eastern seaboard. I have nothing but high regard for the PECO employees. I expressed a concern about PECO that we continually fail to provide the services (guidance and managerial decisions services) to our residents with the effectiveness and adequacy of the service. Many times, we suffered power outages for five days or longer here in Kennett Township and those seem to be in the winter. So, as you can imagine, no power for 5 days in the winter, we were burning firewood and melting snow to have some type of drinkable water. Rich and I (early on in Rich's first administration) had a meeting with PECO which then reached down to have a meeting with the residents who were concerned about the performance of PECO's managerial decisions and dealing with the problems that we were all experiencing. Delaware always had their electricity. PECO did do a lot of work to expand the work and facilitate more power to this area of the county. We continue to lose power due to global warming and transmission problems. I ask PECO Management why this continues? The answer seems very clear, the infrastructure and wires are all above ground and entangled in the trees. It is important to note that the pictures we saw were all on main roads, with the telephone poles and tree damage. We do not see telephone poles in developments because it is part of our building codes that we bury the wires. PECO Spends a fortune trimming trees and rewiring wires on telephone poles. I looked at a picture of NYC from 1902, there are still telephone poles and wires are still present and it still hasn't changed or kept up with the technology or better building practices. Insanity is continuing to do the same thing and expecting a different result. I will conclude with a couple of considerations. The northeast part of the US had a great power outage that reached up into Canada. The forest fires out west many of the fires were caused by the high-power lines that short out, sparked and caused the forest fire. The Hawaii fires were caused because of the wires through the trees, sparking resulting in fires. I would like to urge the management of PECO to consider my definition of insanity and let's move forward into the 21st century.

Gamble: I lived in Hong Kong for five years. After WWII it was decided to bury the wires in sidewalks and metal corrugated containers that flipped up if you had to service the wires. We lived there through several typhoons and the electricity never went out. It can be done, just a matter of will.

Haedrich (268 Kennett Pike): I appreciate the road crew. We can now see well on Hillendale and Kennett Pike, so the people making right turns on red, can do so safely now. I would also like to give a nod to the KTPD, it's a funny story but at the time it wasn't. I received a call at 1:00AM, asking where the shut off was for our electricity from a group of people who were at the top of Spruce Lane. I spoke to them for a little bit to get some information and then called the police. They were assembling out there because they were having a séance to drive the ghosts out of our house. Within 5 minutes I had the KTPD at my house, after looking around, I had another police car from Kennett Borough. The KTPD officer asked me for the phone number that they called from: turns out it was a call from an Atlanta airport hotel. It was a prank call.

Chief Gordon: We just had a similar call where we needed to call in SWAT, where they make up these elaborate stories to get everyone rolling. It's great fun for them but scares everyone else.

Haedrich: I second Geoff's comments, the last thing we want to do is defund the police.

Ellen Gay (Kendal Resident): I was here at the last meeting and brought up the issue of banning single use plastic bags. It is interesting for me to hear all the issues being brought up with the storm and the damage that was done. There is a very good argument that all of this is because of climate change. Plastics are a major problem currently. A good way to start is to ban single use plastic bags, it would clean up things considerably. This has gone through Delaware, and they are finding far less plastic on the beaches and many other places as well. I wanted to bring this up again and see if I could be in touch with you all.

Gamble: Thank you for your persistence and I hope you do stay in touch. We are conducting a survey with our neighboring municipalities and businesses. We certainly do not want to put our merchants at a disadvantage. Once we ascertain Kennett Borough, East Marlborough, and New Garden's desires we can move forward.

Gay: Can I ask if there is a way to work with the other municipalities, because I know we do not have that many merchants.

Ratliff: Hi Ms. Gay, I reached out earlier today and left you a voicemail hoping to connect with you. The Township has an Environmental Advisory Council who have been working with the Borough, East Marlborough Township and New Graden. The Borough has only just begun talks on this topic within the last 45 days or so. I am not sure where they are at now with it, but it is something they were considering. East Marlborough is further down the line with a ban than Kennett Township is. We are working with the EAC to develop survey questions to figure out the impact.

10. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eden R. Ratliff
Township Secretary