



801 Burrows Run Road
Chadds Ford, PA 19317

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING via ZOOM MINUTES

April 15, 2020
7:00 p.m.

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; Diane Hicks, Planning and Zoning Director; Roger Lysle, Public Works Director; Matt Gordon, Acting Chief of Police; Dave Sander, Solicitor

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Leff called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and explained how this Zoom meeting would proceed. Leff also outlined the COVID-19 events that now allows the Board of Supervisors to conduct this type of public meeting in addition to other COVID updates.

Vice Chair Whitney Hoffman provided updates for the PPE Drive that is currently ongoing for Kennett First Responders and offered suggestions for how to acquire cloth masks.

Planning and Zoning Director Diane Hicks reminded anyone proposing to do work at this time to contact the Township prior to beginning so that the appropriate permits can be reviewed. Currently, there are no permits being issued due to the Governor's orders.

2. TOWNSHIP RECOVERY UPDATE

Township Manager Ratliff confirmed that the preliminary hearing for the former Township Manager is still scheduled to take place Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. via video. Ratliff said he is working to get the information on how to view that and will be posting it to the Township's website. Conversations regarding the Surety Bond mentioned in previous meetings are still progressing.

Discussion:

- Hoffman commented that she is happy that these proceedings will be recorded and can be watched.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENTS (ACTION ITEM)

Solicitor Sander announced that the Kennett Township Board of Supervisors met in executive session on April 2, 2020 to discuss matters of litigation.

4. MEETING MINUTES (ACTION ITEM)

Motion presented by Stevens to accept the February 5, 2020 meeting minutes with corrections. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Stevens had one change regarding the spelling of Stephens Gardens; the correct spelling is “Stephens”. Hoffman added that the cleanup process at that property is looking great.
- Leff commented that these minutes are more detailed than in the past to help document discussions.
- Stevens added his appreciation for the new presentation of the minutes.

5. OLD BUSINESS (ACTION ITEMS)

Leff and Ratliff explained that these items in the agenda reflected action that the Board of Supervisors took in March in accordance with the Disaster Emergency Declaration and now require public discussion and ratification.

a. Approval of Public Works Materials Bids

Motion presented by Stevens to ratify the approval of the public works material bids as outlined in a March 27th memo for black top (\$15,500), stone (\$42,823.25), line painting (\$30,107.00), and road oils (\$38,850.00). Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Ratliff reminded everyone that this process takes place annually.
- Hoffman asked about the rates. Ratliff clarified that the Township is locked into the rates as stated in these contracts regardless of if any actual prices change, and that if the work does not get done, the Township will not owe for the unused materials.
- Stevens asked if there was anything different with these contracts. Ratliff said no, they were the same contracts. The dates, contracts, and prices on them were the only updates made.
- Ratliff thanked Roger Lyle and the entire Public Works Department for their work in compiling these contracts.

b. Approval of March Bill Voucher

(March Bill Voucher can be found at: <https://kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/3962>)

Motion presented by Stevens to ratify the approval of the March 2020 Bill Voucher in the amount of \$575,116.26. Total transfers equal \$650.19. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Leff commented how the Township was still able to conduct business in accordance with the Disaster Emergency Declaration.
- Heinrich added that the Board did sign checks (checks get two Supervisors’ signatures) and the Bill Voucher offline.

c. Approval of Disaster Emergency Declarations

Motion presented by Stevens to ratify the issuance of two (2) Disaster Emergency Declarations on March 13, 2020 and March 24, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Ratliff explained that the importance of ratifying these Declarations is derived from Second Class Township code, which states that the authority to issue such Declarations rests with the Board of Supervisors. He also clarified that the second Declaration only added the specification that this Declaration would remain in effect until the Board repeals it.
- Hoffman commented on the Township's effort to keep everyone informed via the website and social media.

d. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding for Police Services with Kennett Square, Southern Chester County Regional, and Oxford Borough

Motion presented by Stevens to ratify the approval of the Memorandum of Understanding for police services with Kennett Square, Southern Chester County Regional, and Oxford Borough Police Departments. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Ratliff explained that this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was initiated by the Borough of Oxford and it formalizes a process that allows each police department to provide back up to each other in the event of an emergency. This is not a contract and there are no funds exchanged. In the event a department experiences a COVID-19 outbreak, this will become especially helpful. Ratliff also thanked the other municipalities involved and their attorneys who put this together. Kennett Township Solicitor Dave Sander has also reviewed the document.
- Stevens asked about how this MOU differs from what currently happens. Ratliff explained that this was formalizing the backup that does happen so that administrators, elected officials and the public are on the same page. Should an event start in one municipality and go into another, the municipality where it started would maintain jurisdiction.
- Acting Police Chief Gordon commented that mutual aid is normal even when there is not a pandemic. On this occasion the MOU came up with the pandemic in mind, so it essentially "killed two birds with one stone." The Township was able to formalize prior agreements and officially add the Borough of Oxford.
- Leff commented that Kennett Township receives the same type of aid as they would offer in the event backup is needed.
- Hoffman added that these mutual aid agreements work to the benefit of everybody involved.
- Stevens commented on the structure of this agreement requiring that the request "shall be made by the chief (or his or her designee) to the chief (or his or her designee) of the assisting party," which is contrary to how these events typically happen. Gordon confirmed that typically, the chief is not involved unless it is an extended call for services from outside agencies. If there was a breakout of COVID in one department which depleted their officers, the chief would be involved to supplement personnel. Stevens also asked if our Solicitor reviewed this MOU and commented that Ratliff already stated that Sanders had reviewed it.

6. NEW BUSINESS (ACTION ITEMS)

a. Consider the April Bill Voucher

(April Bill Voucher can be found at: <https://kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/3963>)

Motion presented by Stevens to approve the April Bill Voucher in the amount of \$146,153.83. Total transfers equal \$34,192.51. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after no discussion.

Discussion:

- There was no discussion.

b. Consider the Sewer Process Improvements

Amy Heinrich presented a memo that highlighted four areas of improvement for the sewer billing process including: 1) adding the Flexibill automatic payment module, 2) utilization of the Harris Print and Mail service, 3) implementing a Lock-box process at a bank to receive payments, and 4) waiving credit card fees. The full memo can be found at: <https://kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/3965>.

Motion presented by Stevens to implement items 1-4 on the presented memo to improve the efficiency, timeliness, and accuracy throughout the sewer billing process at a total cost not to exceed \$12,000 for 2020; additionally, to authorize Eden Ratliff to sign any required documents to purchase the add-on module required to upload payments into Harris's Flexibill software at a cost not-to-exceed \$3,500 and any other agreements related to these process improvements. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Stevens wanted to confirm that this motion was not addressing Kennett Borough's ability to send the Township usage reports so that the township can get bills to the residents in a timely manner. Heinrich confirmed that this is a separate issue, and that Kennett Township is working with the Borough and Chester Water Authority to improve that side of the equation as well. Stevens asked about the turnaround time of three (3) to six (6) months. Heinrich confirmed that habitual turnaround time, and that while the Township was close to getting the 4th quarter bills out, COVID set that back.
- Leff asked how many bills go out per quarter that used to be manually entered. Heinrich answered around 700 bills per quarter.
- Hoffman commented that no longer relying on manual entry will help increase accuracy and that even though financially, this is a break-even scenario, the Township would benefit from having more free hours to focus on many the other tasks at hand.
- Leff asked regarding waiving the credit card fee of \$2.50 if there would be an additional percentage the township would have to pay. Heinrich clarified that the flat fee of \$2.50 is not an exact amount, as it is dependent on the type of credit card plus other criteria, and that the township was paying slightly more than \$2.50 currently.
- There was discussion between Leff, Heinrich, Ratliff and Hoffman regarding the policy of whether or not the Board of Supervisors wanted to pass the \$2.50 convenience charge onto the residents or absorb it.
- Beth Thomas (126 W Hillendale Rd) commented via Zoom chat: "Even though I don't have to pay for sewer or water I would rather [have] them pay the bill then have to pay legal fees to chase the money down." Heinrich added that if someone is struggling financially, they may pay with a credit card.

c. Consider the Purchase of a General Ledger Software

Heinrich presented a memo recommending Sage Intacct as the Township's new general ledger software. Sage Intacct is a modern, cloud-based company that is good for small to medium companies and nonprofits. This general ledger system is more efficient than other municipal specialty systems. Some of the many functions that Sage Intacct will help the Township with beyond core accounting include support for fund accounting, a grant tracking module, process automation, interfacing capabilities, and dashboard-style reporting that is role specific. The full memo including screenshots can be found at: <https://kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/3966>.

Motion presented by Stevens to authorize Eden Ratliff to execute the necessary contracts with Sage Intacct for a general ledger comprehensive accounting system for a cost not to exceed \$17,250 in 2020 and \$23,000 per annum thereafter; further, to expend sufficient funds not to exceed \$32,000 in 2020 to implement the system. Motion seconded by Hoffman. Motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Hoffman stated that the dashboard system will go a long way in improving the transparency of the Township’s finances.
- Stevens added that they have waited a long time for the Board to have the kind of access to the financials that this new ledger system will afford them.
- Leff asked if this system had an audit trail. Heinrich confirmed that yes, there are audit trails and other features that were lacking in QuickBooks. For example, you will have to reverse a transaction verses simply deleting a transaction. Everything is tracked.
- Leff asked about approval processes and Heinrich explained that the approval process can be set up however the Board sees fit. There was also discussion about signing off on the paper bill vouchers and electronic approval by the Board, policies that the Board will have to decide on.
- Leff asked how long it would take for implementation. Heinrich explained after the signatures of approval, there is a three (3) to four (4) month window for everything to be up and running. Heinrich added her slight concern with that timeline due to COVID. The time and cost of implementation will be dependent upon how much configuration the Township chooses during that window.
- Stevens asked if there was any additional hardware that would be necessary for this. Heinrich answered that because this system is 100% cloud-based, there would be no additional hardware required. Stevens also asked if the Wi-Fi was sufficient and if the computers would be able to adequately utilize whatever was pulled off of the cloud. Heinrich commented that the laptops that would be utilizing Sage Intacct were new and sufficient, though she could not speak for what the Board had from a hardware standpoint. She also said she checked with the Township’s IT provider, who said our current bandwidth was good, but that she could check again. Discussion continued around the current VPN set up verses the cloud.
- Ratliff commented his excitement about bringing this new general ledger system to fruition, adding his appreciation for all the hard work put in by the Finance Department to ensure the best decision was made.
- Heinrich added that from a cost perspective, Sage Intacct was comparable to other systems to meet the Township’s needs.
- Stevens commented that his only concern involved the security of working in a cloud system, which he pointed out that Heinrich addressed in her full memo.
- Linda Carter (822 Starvegut Ln) had this comment via Zoom chat: “so many things left in air no final proposal yet [for ledger software]. Good work done. But you get what you pay for which must thought through a bit more. Budget drives product. Not necessarily bad. Kudos to Amy. But no final proposal. I did not hear much about security. Perhaps my own audio. I’m behind in reading proposal. So I’m perhaps not updated enough. My fault?” Leff and Heinrich clarified that this was the official proposal and agreed to get Ms. Carter the links for the full 16-page memo detailing this proposal. Heinrich added that security can be looked at from a process and control standpoint and/or an IT standpoint. She commented that this program has all the cyber security and backups necessary.
- Lori Stewart (543 Bayard Rd) asked via Zoom chat: “how secure is this system since it’s in the Cloud. Is that industry standard now?” Heinrich commented that yes, this was standard, and Sage Intacct was one of the best. She offered to post statistics with those specifics.

d. Consider the Approval of the Frick Subdivision Plan as Submitted

Motion presented by Stevens to approve the Frick subdivision plan as submitted. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Hicks gave an overview of the project and stated that the Planning Commission is ready for this plan to move forward. The main page of the plan can be viewed at: <https://kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/3967>.

e. Consider the Authorization of an Indefinite Extension for Fairville Friends Land Development Plan

Motion presented by Stevens to grant an indefinite extension for the Fairville Friends Lot Line plan. Hoffman seconded the motion. After the following discussion, the motion was amended by Stevens so that the extension expires 90 days after the Emergency Declaration the Township declared is lifted. Hoffman seconded the amended motion. The amended motion was passed unanimously.

Discussion:

- Stevens wanted to confirm what was typical in granting extensions, as he recalled a specific amount of time verses an indefinite time. Hicks commented that while most municipalities grant 90- or 180-day extensions, the history of Kennett Township is that they have granted indefinite extensions. Solicitor Dave Sander also offered clarification, and that ultimately the decision lies with the Board as to the duration of the extension.
- Stevens asked why Fairville Friends requested this indefinite extension, to which Hicks clarified that it is the Township that was requesting the extension. She went on to explain the timeline of this plan and how COVID has disrupted that.
- Sanders suggested that the Board agree to an extension of 90 days after the Emergency Declaration the Township has declared is lifted. Hicks agreed to that.

f. Consider Awarding Preliminary Approval for the Enterprise Land Development Plan

Motion presented by Stevens to grant preliminary approval for the Enterprise Land Development plan conditioned on completion of any outstanding items in AECOM's review letter dated February 20, 2020. Hoffman seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously after the following discussion.

Discussion:

- Hicks gave the overview of the plan, located at 623 Millers Hill Road. The full plan can be viewed at: <https://kennett.pa.us/DocumentCenter/View/3968>.
- There was discussion between Leff and Hicks surrounding a limited disturbance area and a potential loading dock that is highlighted on page 15 of the plan.
- Hoffman confirmed that this is the preliminary plan and that the Board will still have to approve the final plan.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Ratliff thanked the staff, who have kept the Township running in these COVID times.
- Stevens commented that he appreciated the state legislature and Governor for allowing this meeting format to count for public meetings in these times.
- Hoffman reminded everyone about the resources that are available on the Township's website and the different loan relief programs that have become available.
- Beth Thomas (126 W Hillendale Rd) commented earlier via Zoom chat: "Whitney it has been great the messages that you have been putting out"
- Linda Carter (822 Starvegut Ln) asked via Zoom chat: "how are bills doing in respect to budgeting i.e. outgo vs budgeting/inflo" Heinrich answered that every approved item that is spent is represented under the umbrella of the budget. The finance department has also been working to complete a P&L Report, however COVID has postponed that.
- Victor Abdala (Stan Ab) said via Zoom chat: "Thank You"
- Lori Stewart (543 Bayard Rd) commented via Zoom chat: "thanks to ALL!! I wish more of the community was here to participate in community affairs."

8. MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion presented by Hoffman to adjourn. Stevens seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously with no discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Eden R. Ratliff
Township Secretary