

**MINUTES OF THE KENNETT AREA
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES REGIONAL COMMISSION**

**Pennsbury Township Building
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
April 9, 2019**

5:00pm

		Present	Absent		Present	Absent
Municipality	Representative			Alternate		
Kennett	Scudder Stevens	X		Lisa Moore		X
East Marlborough	Cuyler Walker	X		Julia Lacy	X	
Kennett Borough	Ethan Cramer	X		Matthew Fetick		X
Pocopson	Ricki Stumpo	X		Al Davis	X	
Pennsbury	Scotty Scottoline	X		Aaron McIntyre		X
Newlin	Bennett Baird	X		Bill Kelsall	X	
Fire Company	Representative			Alternate		
Kennett	Steve Melton		X	Gina Puoci	X	
Longwood	AJ McCarthy	X		Mike Syska	X	
Po-Mar-Lin	Jason Griffith	X		Jeff Groves	X	

Call to Order

Walker called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Public Comments

Walker distributed an e-mail he received from Stevens shortly before tonight's meeting. Stevens expressed concerns about the transparency and objectivity of the functioning of the Commission and raised several questions on behalf of Kennett Township in his e-mail, including:

1. Why is the meeting place been changed to Pennsbury Township Building?
Response: Meeting in the Kennett Township meeting room on the second Tuesday of the month at times conflicted with their Planning Commission meeting that started at 7:00 pm.
2. Why have there been no elections for elected officers?
Response: Officers remain in place until their successors are elected..
3. Why is East Marlborough Supervisor not a voting member?
Response: It is under the discretion of each township to appoint their members.
4. Who is the Treasurer?
Response: Aaron McIntyre has been Treasure since initial elections.
5. Who is the Secretary?
Response: Lisa Moore has been Secretary since initial elections.

6. Why is Michael O'Brien no longer taking the Minutes?
Response: Lisa informed the Commission that Michael was unable to take the Minutes at Pennsbury Township because he had to be at Kennett Township for the Planning Commission meeting.
7. What is the status of the ad hoc group of voting and non-voting members of the Commission meeting to review corporate finances?
Response: It met in 2017 and came up with a budget proposal for 2018, which was adopted by the Commission. Since it was questioned whether this group should hold public meetings under the Sunshine Law, the group has not met for over a year and has not made any further recommendations to the Commission. The group never included a quorum of the Commission.
8. What does the Commission want to accomplish in 2019 and 2020?
Response: Walker responded that his the principal objective is to develop reasonable expectations for necessary municipal funding for the operations and capital expenditures of the three fire companies so that the municipalities can establish predictable and sustainable sources of revenue that can be available over a period of 15-20 years.
9. Is there a predictable plan for equipment replacement?
Response: Julia Lacy is working with each of the companies to determine needs and plans in the coming years and to develop an equipment replacement schedule and process for consideration by the Commission. In 2018, the Commission set aside approximately 20% of municipal funding for equipment replacement.
10. How is the Commission looking at EMS Services in light of the low utilization rate in the region?
Response: The Commission focused on ways to consolidate into a single provider. Data was received from each fire company. The Commission voted 5-1 last November to consolidate with the Longwood Company, the dissenting vote was Kennett Township. The action could not be implemented, the process ended at that time, and a time frame to resume has not been determined.

Walker offered to step out of the room, for the Commission to determine, if he should continue as Chair of the Commission due to the concerns that had been expressed. Stevens, Vice Chair of the Commission, replied that he sent the e-mail to Walker privately to discuss the items with Walker, he did not intend for it to be shared publicly. Stevens intention was not to ask Walker to step down as Chair. Walker stepped outside to allow the Commission to discuss whether he should continue as Chair. Several members voiced their opinion and recognized Walker's strong contributions to the Commission and noted that he listens to both sides and fosters open discussion. The Commission noted that Stevens questions were valid, however, they should have been presented differently. Motion was made to call Walker back into the meeting.
All in Favor.

Public Comments

A resident asked the official name of the Commission. The official name of the Commission is Kennett Fire and EMS Regional Commission, Inc.

McCarthy asked about the goals and objectives of the Commission. The Commission was created as a funding mechanism for area Fire Companies. The Fire Companies joined the Commission to provide for their equipment needs, provide information on their Fire and EMS calls and to set realistic goals for the residents of the area municipalities. McCarthy feels there may be a need to re-focus on the goals of the Commission, and tackle the problems faced by the Companies, funding for new equipment and retain volunteers, currently 38% of Longwood's budget. Funding for recent equipment purchased was not provided by the Commission, but rather by the individual Departments. The Fire Companies have boards to vote on equipment purchases.

Stevens asked if the questions were directed at him? He stated his apologies for the e-mail sent prior to the meeting, it was a private message and not intended for the Commission to contemplate. McCarthy responded that his questions and comments were directed to the Commission as a whole.

Walker responded that the Commission is working funding into the annual Operation Budget and feels the Commission has come a long way in determining what our area Companies need. He agreed that the last couple of meetings have been less substantive than last year's. This may be due in part to the overall activity, no one wants to waste anyone's time by holding meetings just for the sake of meeting.

Resident stated the Commission should focus on what services the community wants, figure out benchmarks, where money is being spent and how to address issues such as a large chemical spills, large fires etc. The metrics need to be reported to assist in determining the needs. She appreciates the members time to attend the Commission meetings and the responses from the area Fire Companies.

Resident pointed out that even within our small area, the municipalities have different expectations and needs, towns vs large rural areas. It is difficult to lump the needs into one box that fits all. Commission agreed that is complicated to figure out level of service over an area where you have different population densities and conditions, including urban, suburban and rural areas.

Cramer commented that career staff is great, but we do need to focus on recruiting and retaining volunteers. There is a deficit in funding for volunteers. For Kennett Borough, the Sewer funds could be borrowed from in the past, but is no longer an options, cuts in the police budget may be necessary. He feels a blended staff of career staff and volunteers is best and keeping the volunteers happy is the highest priority. Cramer feels we should explore every opportunity and fully supports the efforts to retain volunteers. He also stated a single EMS provider could offer savings. Walker committed to add volunteer retention and recruitment to next month's agenda, so there's an opportunity for a detailed discussion on how the Commission can support these efforts. Information on Longwood's retention program would be beneficial. The Commission discussed some brainstorming ideas, advertising tax incentives, regional efforts, explore available funding. Stevens noted that at the March meeting he had suggested working with the school in Jennersville for recruitment of volunteers for Fire Companies and EMS squads. He has contacted the school

and is waiting for a response. Kennett Fire Company is taking a firetruck to the school on 4/27/19 and has an upcoming Eagle Scout project. They will provide feedback at the next meeting to help develop more ideas.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made to approve the March 19, 2019 minutes. Stevens questioned the minutes, felt his comments on how the records of false alarms were kept was not accurate. He requested the information to determine how big an issue false alarms are to the Companies. Lisa Moore responded how Kennett Township is addressing issue. Stevens requested information on how other municipalities respond handle false alarms.

Stevens also requested information from the Municipalities on their Chart of Accounts. Po-Mar-Lin has Chart of accounts, they are not kept in Quick Books format, they use Quicken. Stevens noted it would be productive to move to similar Chart of Accounts or identify key topics in a template format. The members discussed and would prefer a template format. Stevens has volunteered to put a template or standard format for the Companies to use. The Companies will send their information and Walker will provide a template that has been used.

Motion to approve the minutes- Motion approved, all in favor.

Approval of Payments

The following distributions to Fire Companies and reimbursement to Municipalities were discussed.

Quarterly Distributions to Fire Companies
Kennett Fire Company \$ 74,000.00
Longwood Fire Company \$213,487.50
Po-Mar-Lin Fire Company \$ 36,900.00

Workers Compensation Reimbursements to Municipalities
East Marlborough \$ 4,914.00
Kennett Borough \$16,106.00

Walker noted that since Kennett Township makes an annual workers comp premium payment later in the year, it will receive reimbursement at that time.

Motion was made to approve payments.
Motion approved, all in favor

Financial Report

January 1, 2019 - March 31, 2019 report for the Commission was circulated, a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

Stevens asked where the account is held. The account is held at Wells Fargo. A Quicken spreadsheet shows the deposits and distributions. Stevens asked if the spreadsheet showed all deposits and distributions. Walker confirmed. The report was accepted.

Reports of Fire Companies

Walker agreed with McCarthy's point that activities reports could be distributed by e-mail and do not need to be presented at the meeting. Commission members can raise any questions about the reports.

Stevens had several questions for the Fire Companies. He requested Longwood Fire Company to address how they handle false alarms. Stevens also asked what happens when an EMS provider misses a call.

McCarthy responded and asked the time frame for the false alarms question and stated that the false alarm data is provided on his monthly reports. The EMS calls from Longwood are handled by importance, calls from Crossland, Kendall and Pocopson Home are priorities. EMS determines the hospital to transport patients to based on a long list of conditions. Chester County Hospital is where majority of the calls are transported.

Longwood is part of EMS task force and will host an upcoming Tactical Combat Care Class, where EMS members can earn credits to maintain their certification. Longwood is hosting in partnership with Chester County. There is a cost savings to host the training. The class is military based and includes training on how to respond to active shooter calls, both threats and incidents, at schools and care facilities.

March Activities

- Kennett Fire Company

	Fire Calls	EMS Calls
Kennett Township	13	54
East Marlborough		4
Pocopson		1
Pennsbury		1
Newlin		
Kennett Borough	13	42
Other		6

- Po Mar Lin Fire Company

	Fire Calls	EMS Calls
Kennett Township		
East Marlborough	4	
Pocopson		
Pennsbury		
Newlin	2	
Kennett Borough	1	
Other	7	

- Longwood Fire Company

	Fire Calls	EMS Calls
Kennett Township	6	48
East Marlborough	8	45
Pocopson	4	25
Pennsbury	12	30
Newlin		2
Kennett Borough	1	21
Other	8	10

Old Business

a. Meeting w/ PA EMS Bureau Director, Dylan Ferguson – April 22, 2019. Time TBD.

Dylan is available after 2pm to hold the meeting with the Commission. Lacey replied that 5:30-6 may be easier for members to attend due to the workday. McCarthy responded that he may not be available but would send a representative. Stevens also replied the he could be available at 5:30.

The Commission will suggest the 5:30 time slot and will check room availability with the Municipalities. The need to advertise the meeting will also be addressed.

b. Status of retaining CPA to prepare KFERC's 2018 audited financials

The bids received to perform an audit of the financial statements, file a 1099 Non-Profit and State filing forms for the Commission were discussed. The bids ranged from \$5,500 to \$7,500. Stevens suggested asking the CPA firm to submit a management letter with their financial statements and inquired if the firms had experience with working with municipalities or fire companies. Walker confirmed all three firms had experience working with non-profits and will provide a management letter.

Griffiths asked how the Audited Financials are being funded? Walker responded that the funds are not taken from funds available for the Fire Companies. The cost for the Audit will be taken from the \$100,000 budgeted for administrative expenses of the Commission.

Bennett made the motion to accept the first proposal, from Barbacane Thornton, which currently works with four of the municipalities.
Motion approved, all in favor.

New Business

No new business was discussed.

Next meeting will be held the 2nd Tuesday in May, the 14th at 5 pm at Pennsbury Township Building.

Motion to Adjourn Meeting was made and accepted
Meeting adjourned at 6:40 pm

Respectively submitted,
Lisa Henry
Recording Secretary