



KENNETT TOWNSHIP

TO: Kennett Township Board of Supervisors
FROM: Eden Ratliff, Township Manager
SUBJECT: June 2021 Department Head Report

1. Chief Matthew Gordon

As was mentioned at the last Board of Supervisors meeting, on June 2nd the Board of Supervisors and Kennett Township had the privilege of hosting the Swearing in Ceremony for our Police Chief, Matt Gordon. In attendance to celebrate Matt's promotion were officers from over 20 different police departments, 5 fire departments, 7 different county and national offices, plus family and friends. Dr. Leff and I shared remarks on Matt's amazing career and character, Judge Jacqueline Carroll Cody administered the oath, and Matt brought it home with a heartfelt list honoring those who helped him get to where he is today. We look forward to many years of Matt's continual leadership of the Kennett Township Police Department.



2. Office Reopening

The Township Office has been closed in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and protect the Township staff and residents. The Township has continued to be accessible to the residents by phone, email, and appointment.

Effective June 21st, the Township Office will resume normal operations and be open to the public from 8:00am to 4:30pm Monday – Friday. Township staff will work a combination schedule of remote and in person and be accessible to residents as they were before and during the pandemic. The staff continues to be appreciative of the patience, understanding, and support of the community as we have navigated the complications of COVID-19.

3. In Person Meetings of the Board of Supervisors

The Township Staff is investigating with the Board of Supervisors options for resuming in person meetings of the Board of Supervisors. The Pennsylvania Legislature has adopted Joint Resolution (HR 106) which has terminated Governor Wolf’s Emergency Disaster Declaration issued March 6, 2020. Per the Township Solicitor, the Board of Supervisors are permitted to continue virtual meetings in accordance with the Second Class Township Code. The Township desires to resume in person meetings while still providing a virtual meeting attendance and participation option. This will require technology upgrades to the Township’s Public Meeting Room which are currently being investigated. When the technological upgrades are completed and a hybrid meeting is able to be facilitated, the Board of Supervisors will resume in person meetings at their discretion.

4. Spar Hill Update

The Township continues to receive input from the community about desires for Spar Hill Farms. A common theme is to preserve the viewshed, mainly, the look of the farm including the buildings. Joe Duffy, a member of the Township Land Conservation Advisory Council (LCAC), has submitted a report and recommendation on the silo that sits on the farm. His report is attached and recommends further investigation into the preservation of the silo. Township staff is researching the costs of preservation and maintenance of the silo.

5. Juneteenth Festival

Journeying Toward Freedom, a Chester County Juneteenth Festival, is a county-wide program that will take place the weeks of June 12th-July 5th, 2021. Four partners ---the Chester County Historic Preservation Society, Voices Underground, the Chester County History Center, and the Chester County Planning Commission are working together to promote African American cultural heritage in Chester County, nurture community collaboration, expand the community’s narrative about itself, and to leaven national conversations about African American cultural history. And the animating values out of which we seek to pursue these goals are: collaborative creation, comprehensive equity, financial transparency, creative excellence, and community benefit.

Last year, Kennett Township was honored to host a Juneteenth event at the Pines House that was organized by Kennett High School student Isabella Hanson. She is back this year as a keynote speaker for one of the Juneteenth Festival events on Saturday, June 19th at 5:00 p.m. at Cheyney University. The Kennett Underground Railroad will be offering walking tours from 10:00 a.m. through 2:00 p.m. along with a host of other community and keynote events. Please go to <https://www.vuproject.org/juneteenth> for ticket information and details on these and other events planned – including one at Longwood Gardens on Friday, June 18th.



6. Kennett Greenway

Kennett Township has received a draft task order for final engineering and design on the South Street portion of the Kennett Greenway. The Board of Supervisors previously voted to continue the Kennett Greenway project on both South Street and Chandler Mill Road. The draft task order for South Street will be reviewed by the staff and Trails and Sidewalks Committee and will appear on a future agenda of the Board of Supervisors. The South Street corridor, later connecting with Scarlett Road in New Garden, is an essential pedestrian thoroughfare and critical link for the Greenway. Township staff is also investigating potential grant opportunities for construction of this link.

7. Township Wastewater

The Township staff and engineers are working with the Borough of Kennett Square to address joint sewer challenges we both face. The challenges include aging infrastructure, a dwindling capacity, and growth pressure that adds to the total volume. This culmination of challenges has led to a joint investigation into how we can make upgrades to the joint system to allow for additional capacity, address failing infrastructure, and accommodate requests for additional volume. The Borough staff continues to be a valuable partner in

sorting through these challenges which will have monetary impacts to both the Borough and the Township.

8. Public Works Foreman Recognition

Kennett Township Public Works Foreman was seen on the front page of the Daily Local News last month as he saved a cat from a significant fire. P.J. Groff is a volunteer and Officer at East Brandywine Fire Company where he serves his community and their pets.



Respectfully Submitted.

Eden R. Ratliff
Township Manager