



801 Burrows Run Road
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
(610) 388-1300 Fax (610) 388-0461
Website: www.kennett.pa.us
Email: Kennett.twp@Kennett.pa.us

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

To: Kennett Township residents and friends

From: Rich Leff, Chair, Whitney Hoffman, Vice Chair, and Scudder Stevens Supervisor
Eden Ratliff, Township Manager

RE: **Lisa Moore pleads guilty, sentenced to state prison; pays \$1.27 million toward restitution**

On Monday afternoon, October 4, 2021, former Kennett Township manager Lisa Moore appeared in Chester County Court and admitted she stole \$3.249 million from township residents. The admission came in response to questions from Common Pleas Court Judge David Bortner during Moore's sentencing hearing.

Monday was Moore's day of public reckoning. The township's once-trusted employee admitted to all that she had violated the trust placed in her. Her judicial presumption of innocence was removed by her guilty plea to five criminal counts, theft by deception, dealing in unlawful proceeds, forgery, tampering with public records and access device fraud.

At the conclusion of the hearing, felon Lisa Moore was placed in handcuffs and led away by members of the county's Sheriff's office to begin her 3-to-10-year prison sentence and five years of probation. There were other conditions placed upon her, including forfeiting her pension and not being able to ever hold a fiduciary position for a government or non-profit entity.

Importantly, Moore was ordered to repay the full \$3.249 million amount she stole from the township. On Monday, she submitted a check for \$1.27 million to repay a portion of the amount she stole. \$82,000 being held in escrow was also released for a total recovery from her of \$1.352 million on Monday. Proceeds from the sale of her township home will be added to that total when it is sold. In 2020, Kennett Township Supervisors engaged a professional recovery team from Philadelphia law firm Blank Rome to track down and recover additional funds from other sources. The Supervisors will report on their progress as negotiations conclude.

The Board of Supervisors and members of our staff attended Moore's sentencing in West Chester. Vice Chair Whitney Hoffman read a victim impact statement approved by all three members of the Board of Supervisors.



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In part our statement read, “This betrayal by Moore plunged the township government into a crisis of trust and uncertainty. Lisa Moore’s embezzlement and deceptions did not merely steal taxpayer money – her crimes upended lives and careers, destroyed trust in our local government and smeared the good names of innocent volunteers, public officials and service providers.

“Since the day the embezzlement was first discovered, we, as public officials, have all felt betrayed, angry and devastated. Nearly three years later, we still do. Regaining the public’s confidence will take decades, if it ever happens. *Once betrayed, trust returns slowly.*

“We once believed that Lisa Moore was reliable and honest. She was not.”

Additional comments by the Supervisors included:

Supervisor Chairman Dr. Richard Leff: “Since the very first day that Lisa Moore’s embezzlement and coverup began to unfold, the Kennett Township Supervisors started building an extraordinary team of experts – forensic accounting investigators, stolen funds recovery attorneys, specialists in local government management and hiring, and many others. Their objectives included getting to the bottom of all the crimes committed, establishing full responsibility, fixing each part of the problems, rebuilding township management, and recovering every dollar possible. Together, we worked every day to determine the full extent of Moore’s crimes and deceptions and rebuild the Township government, its systems and create greater security for our funds.

Supervisor Scudder Stevens: Before the crimes were brought to light, the Supervisors and many people throughout Kennett Township were colleagues and friends of Lisa Moore. It’s important to understand that none of us – and no one I know – takes pleasure in seeing Lisa now disgraced and in prison. If she had put her responsibilities to the Township first and performed with integrity, everything would have been different. Instead, she put herself first and destroyed her future and brought so much pain and damage to Kennett Township.

Supervisor Whitney Hoffman: The days surrounding the early revelations of Lisa’s thefts of township funds were horrible. Our once-trusted Township Manager – someone we believed in and relied upon as so many did – had created a web of deception, betrayal and lies that we are still unraveling and fixing. The brazenness was shocking. The impact on the Township – our staff, volunteers, and residents alike – was so difficult to see unfold.

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