

**SUSSEX COUNTY COUNCIL - GEORGETOWN, DELAWARE, JUNE 24, 2025**

**A regularly scheduled meeting of the Sussex County Council was held on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, at 1:30 p.m., in Council Chambers, with the following present:**

<b>Douglas B. Hudson</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Jane Gruenebaum</b>	<b>Councilwoman</b>
<b>Matt Lloyd</b>	<b>Councilman</b>
<b>Steve C. McCarron</b>	<b>Councilman</b>
<b>Gina A. Jennings</b>	<b>Finance Director</b>
<b>J. Everett Moore, Jr.</b>	<b>County Attorney</b>

<b>Call to Order</b>	<b>The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led by Mr. Hudson.</b> <b>Mr. Hudson called the meeting to order.</b>
<b>M 284 25 Approve Agenda</b>	<b>A Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum, to approve the Agenda as presented.</b> <b>Motion Adopted: 4 Yeas, 1 Absent</b> <b>Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea; Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent; Mr. Hudson, Yea</b>
<b>Minutes</b>	<b>The minutes from June 17, 2025 were approved by consensus.</b>
<b>Correspon- dence</b>	<b>There was no correspondence.</b> <b>Public comments were heard.</b>
<b>Public Comment</b>	<b>Ms. Jill Hicks spoke about preserving natural infrastructure.</b> <b>Ms. Janet LeDigabel spoke about abandoned trailers in the County.</b>
<b>M 285 25 Approve Consent Agenda</b>	<b>A Motion was made by Ms. Gruenebaum, seconded by Mr. McCarron to approve the following items under the Consent Agenda:</b> <b>Use of Existing Wastewater Infrastructure Agreement</b> <b>Route 24 Waves Car Wash, West Rehoboth Area</b> <b>Use of Existing Wastewater Infrastructure Agreement – IUA 711-11</b> <b>Walden III, Herring Creek Area</b> <b>Motion Adopted: 4 Yeas, 1 Absent</b>

**Vote by Roll Call:** Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
Mr. Hudson, Yea

**Adminis-  
trator's  
Report**

Mrs. Jennings read the following information in the Administrator's Report:

**1. Holiday and Council Meeting Schedule**

A reminder that County offices will be closed on Friday, July 4<sup>th</sup>, to observe the Independence holiday. In addition, Council will not meet on Tuesday, July 1<sup>st</sup> or Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>. The next regularly scheduled Council meeting will be on Tuesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>.

[Attachments to the Administrator's Report are not attached to the minutes.]

**Compreh-  
ensive Plan  
Annual  
Report**

Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented the annual update to the Office of State Planning and Coordination on the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan was completed by the County in 2018 and at the end of June each year, staff prepares a report to the Governor's Advisory Council on Planning.

Mr. Whitehouse highlighted some of the new initiatives that were implemented in the last year that were included in the report for the time frame of 2024-2025.

(The full report was included in the Council packet for this meeting.)

**M 286 25  
Approve  
Compreh-  
ensive Plan  
Report**

A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum, that the Sussex County Council accepts the recommended report to the Governor's Advisory Council on Planning for the period 2024-2025.

**Motion Adopted:** 4 Yeas, 1 Absent

**Vote by Roll Call:** Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
Mr. Hudson, Yea

**Sugar Maple  
Farms**

Mark Parker, Assistant County Engineer, presented election results and project authorization for Sugar Maple Farms Road improvements for Council's consideration.

**M 287 25  
Approve  
R 014 25/  
Sugar Maple**

A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Mr. McCarron, to Adopt Resolution No. R 014 25 entitled "A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SUSSEX COUNTY ENGINEER TO PERFORM IMPROVEMENTS, AND THE SUSSEX COUNTY ENGINEER AND FINANCE DIRECTOR TO DETERMINE A UNIFORM ASSESSMENT RATE FOR BILLING, UPON

**Farms**                    **SUBSTATNTIAL COMPLETION OF THE IMPROVEMENTS, FOR THE SUGAR MAPLE FARMS CHAPTER 96 SUSSEX COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT”.**

**Motion Adopted:        4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call:       Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
                                 Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
                                 Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**On-Call Contract/CO No. 2**            **Mark Parker, Assistant County Engineer, presented change order no. 2 for Stormwater BMP O&M services on-call contract for Council’s consideration.**

**M 288 25**                    **A Motion was made by Ms. Gruenebaum, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, that be it**  
**Approve On-Call**            **moved based on the recommendation of the Sussex County Engineering**  
**Contract**                    **Department that change order no. 2 for contract G24-03 on-call stormwater**  
**Stormwater**                **BMP maintenance and operations be approved in the amount of \$20,000,**  
**CO No. 2**                    **thereby increasing the total contract to \$338,000.00**

**Motion Adopted:        4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call:       Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
                                 Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
                                 Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**James Farm CO No. 6**            **Patrick Brown, Project Engineer, presented change order no. 6 for James Farm Ecological Preserve for Council’s consideration.**

**M 289 25**                    **A Motion was made by Ms. Gruenebaum, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, that be it**  
**Approve CO**                **moved based on the recommendation of the Sussex County Engineering**  
**No. 6/**                        **Department that change order no. 6 for contract C23-21 James Farm**  
**James Farm**                **Ecological Preserve be approved increasing the contract by \$3,049.66 and**  
                                 **granting substantial completion as of March 15, 2025 and any held**  
                                 **retainage released with the contract documents.**

**Motion Adopted:        4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call:       Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
                                 Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
                                 Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Farm Leases**                **Hans Medlarz, Project Manager, presented farm leases for Double H Farms and M&M Farm for Council’s consideration.**

**M 290 25**                    **A Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Mr. Lloyd, that be it**  
**Approve Farm**                **moved based upon the recommendation of the Sussex County Engineering**  
                                 **Department, that the Sussex County Council approve the reauthorization of**

**Leases/  
Double H &  
M&M**                    **the Double H Farm Lease and the M&M Farm Lease as presented with a term of 10 years with an annual fee increase based on the Philadelphia area CPI index.**

**Motion Adopted:        4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call:       Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
                                 Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
                                 Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Proposed  
Ordinance  
Introduct-  
ions**                    **Mr. Hudson introduced a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO ALLOW FOR A STORAGE BUSINESS (6 UNITS) TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 1.07 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” filed on behalf of Sean Vermillion.**

**Ms. Gruenebaum introduced a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING MAP OF SUSSEX COUNTY FROM AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO A C-2 MEDIUM COMMERCIAL DISTRICT FOR A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 1.529 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” filed on behalf of Oscar & Thelma Warrington Trustee.**

**The Proposed Ordinances will be advertised for a Public Hearing.**

**Council  
Member  
Comments**

**There were no Council Member comments.**

**Public  
Hearing/  
Hocker  
Property  
Annexation  
into  
SCUSSD**

**A Public Hearing was held for the Hocker Property Annexation of the Sussex County Unified Sanitary Sewer District (Millville Area).**

**John Ashman, Director of Utility Planning & Design reported that County Council granted permission to prepare and post notices on May 13, 2025. The Engineering Department received a request from Davis, Bowen and Friedel, Inc. on behalf of their client Hocker Millville, LLC owners of parcels 134-12.00-370.00 & 370.02 adjacent to the existing Millville Area of the SCUSSD. Parcels are located along Route 17 (Roxana Road) and are located in State Planning Level 2. The project received preliminary site plan approval from the Town of Millville on June 13, 2024. The project will be responsible for system connection charges in place at the time of connection. To date, there has been no correspondence received in support or opposition to the application.**

**There were no public comments.**

**The Public Hearing and public record were closed.**

**M 291 25**  
**Adopt**  
**Resolution**  
**No. R 015**  
**25/**  
**Hocker**  
**Property**  
**Annexation**  
**into**  
**SCUSSD**

**A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Mr. McCarron to Adopt Resolution No. R 015 25 entitled “A RESOLUTION TO EXTEND THE BOUNDARY OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY UNIFIED SANITARY SEWER DISTRICT (SCUSSD) MILLVILLE AREA, TO INCLUDE THE HOCKER PROPERTY PROJECT LOCATED IN THE BALITMORE HUNDRED, SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE AND RECORDED IN THE OFFICE OF THE RECORDER OF DEEDS, IN AND FOR SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE”.**

**Motion Adopted: 4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Rules** **Mr. Moore read the rules of procedures for zoning hearings.**

**Public**  
**Hearing/**  
**CU2571**

**A Public Hearing was held on a Proposed Ordinance entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL FOR A FIELD OFFICE TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 3.80 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” (property is lying on the north side of Round Pole Bridge Road [S.C.R. 257], approximately 3,910-feet north of Cave Neck Road [S.C.R. 88]) (911 Address: 27167 Round Pole Bridge Road, Milton) (Tax Map Parcel: 235-15.00-29.00) filed on behalf of The Nature Conservancy.**

**Jamie Whitehouse, Planning & Zoning Director, presented the application.**

**The Planning & Zoning Commission held a Public Hearing on the application on May 21, 2025. At the meeting of June 4, 2025, the Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of the application for the 4 reasons and 8 recommended conditions of approval as outlined.**

**The Council found that Mr. Jon Horner, spoke on behalf of the Applicant; that The Nature Conservancy is a global environmental nonprofit with a mission to conserve land and water; that the Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval for the application; that the application is for the existing house on the property to be turned into a field office for The Nature Conservancy for them to have a better presence in the area; that Schell Brothers and Ocean Atlantic have partnered with The Nature Conservancy to undertake the rehab and renovation of the office; that there has been some concerns about trespassing on neighboring property; that this small piece of land is in the larger piece which includes walking trails that is open to the public; that the gate remains open; that it was requested for the gate to be closed; that there is not enough staff to get the gate opened and closed each day to allow public access; that there were**

**Public  
Hearing/  
CU2571  
(continued)**

concerns about fencing; that the expense would be a lot to a non-profit organization such as this; that staff will be on site more regularly if this is approved.

Ms. Natasha Wezel, the stewardship manager for The Nature Conservancy, spoke on behalf of the Applicant; that they manage and restore lands in Delaware; that there is currently an equipment barn on this property that acts as a home base for a lot of the operations throughout Delaware; and that there are currently two (2) full-time employees who would be working from the office and allow for more of a presence on the property; that there are signs already around the property about “leashing all dogs” and with the presence of the employees this would limit this concern that was brought up by public comments.

There were no public comments.

The Public Hearing and public record were closed.

**M 292 25  
Adopt  
Ordinance  
No. 4004/  
CU2571**

A Motion was made by Mr. McCarron, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum to Adopt Ordinance No. 4004 entitled “AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE OF LAND IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL FOR A FIELD OFFICE TO BE LOCATED ON A CERTAIN PARCEL OF LAND LYING AND BEING IN SUSSEX COUNTY, CONTAINING 3.80 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” for the reasons and conditions given by the Planning & Zoning Commission as follows:

1. This land was previously donated to the Nature Conservancy, and it has been maintained as open space ever since.
2. There is an abandoned home that currently exists on the property. This application seeks to allow the renovation of that home into a field office for the managers of Nature Conservancy properties throughout Sussex County.
3. The office will not generate any significant additional traffic on area roadways, and its location on this property will enable better supervision of the public’s use and access to this property. This location is appropriate for this use as a field office.
4. There is no evidence in the record that the use would have any adverse effect on area roadways or neighboring properties. And the stewardship of open-space properties in Sussex County by the Nature Conservancy is a benefit to Sussex County and its residents and visitors.
5. This recommendation is subject to the following conditions:
  - a. The use shall be limited to use as a field office by the Nature Conservancy. This use shall be in addition to the existing public access to the property for use and enjoyment as open space.
  - b. One unlighted sign shall be permitted. It shall not exceed 32 square feet per side.
  - c. The applicant shall comply with any DelDOT entrance and

**M 292 25  
Adopt  
Ordinance  
No. 4004/  
CU2571  
(continued)**

**roadway improvement requirements.**

- d. Parking areas for all vehicles and equipment associated with this use shall be shown on the Final Site plan and clearly marked on the site itself.**
- e. Any dumpsters shall be screened from the view of neighboring properties and roadways.**
- f. All security lighting shall be directed downward so that it does not shine on neighboring properties or roadways.**
- g. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the revocation of the Conditional Use approval.**
- h. The Final Site Plan shall be subject to the review and approval of the Sussex County Planning and Zoning Commission.**

**Motion Adopted: 4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**M 293 25  
Adjourn**

**A Motion was made by Mr. Lloyd, seconded by Ms. Gruenebaum to adjourn at 2:09 p.m.**

**Motion Adopted: 4 Yeas, 1 Absent**

**Vote by Roll Call: Ms. Gruenebaum, Yea; Mr. McCarron, Yea;  
Mr. Lloyd, Yea; Mr. Rieley, Absent;  
Mr. Hudson, Yea**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Tracy N. Torbert  
Clerk of the Council**

***{An audio recording of this meeting is available on the County's website.}***