



Eyes on County Council – September 22, 2026



SUSSEX COUNTY
D E L A W A R E

Highlight Events:

- **PLAN TO ATTEND!** Officials from Sussex County and the state are set to meet Monday, Sept. 28, to discuss issues such as an ongoing Route 9 study and two state laws passed in June (SB23 and HB450) that will drastically change development rules. The joint meeting will be held at 1 p.m. in the County Public Safety Complex next to the county-owned Delaware Coastal Airport in Georgetown. It is open to the public.
[Sussex, state officials to discuss transportation issues Sept. 28 | Cape Gazette](#)
- **PLEASE LISTEN!** Candidates for County Council District 5, Jill Hicks and John Rieley, debated this week. Click on this link to listen to the forum conducted by the League of Women Voters.
[Sussex County Council District 5 Candidate Forum – 9/24/2026](#)
- **PLAN TO ATTEND or LISTEN!** Candidates for County Council District 4, Justine Cuccia and Doug Hudson, will debate this week on Tuesday, September 29 at the Selbyville Public Library, 11 West McCabe St., Selbyville. You can watch it via livestream here: [\[LINK\]](#)

Public Comments: None

Consent Agenda: Use of Existing Wastewater Infrastructure Agreement, IUA 1264 Sycamore Chase Expansive Miller Creek Area – No discussion and approved by unanimous vote.

Presentation: John Wellons, President Boys and Girls Club of Delaware provided the Council with some history of their current programs in Georgetown, which he described as aging and limited in services. Their 2026 campaign includes construction of a new facility to be located near the Rts. 113 and 9 intersection. A 36,000 sq. ft. building with classrooms and sports facilities plus outdoor play areas with a cost of \$12 million (\$7 million committed to date) is planned. This could double the level of services for up to 150 children - providing safe places for education and recreation. Wellons asked for Council's support including a \$125,000 donation. No action taken by Council at this time. Project is proposed to be completed by September 2027.

Todd Lawson, County Administrator:

1. **Recognition of Retiree Kelly Kruger** – nearly 41 years of excellent service for the EMS in the Public Safety Center.
2. **Delaware Opioid Commission Appointment** - County Council unanimously approved the appointment of Todd Lawson for another two year term to represent the County on this Commission.
3. **Discussion related to upcoming Delaware Department of Transportation – Sussex County Workshop** - County Council and P&Z members will meet with DelDOT leadership on September 28, 2026, 1:00pm at the Sussex County Emergency Center - Delaware Coastal Airport. This is a critical discussion related to major transportation projects including the Rt. 9 corridor study plus the impact of recent state legislation (SB23 and HB 450).
4. **Administrator's Report** – Lawson reported on specific projects receiving substantial completion and shared the Delaware State Police Activity Report, which report indicated 195 troopers were assigned to Sussex County for the month of August.

Gina Jennings, Finance Director:

Nanticoke Crossing Park Outdoor Recreation Parks and Trails (ORPT) Resolution – Jennings introduced a proposal for enhancements at Nanticoke Crossing Park, a 41 acre nature preserve managed by Sussex County Land Trust (SCLT). \$250,000 is estimated for outdoor recreation and an observation deck in the park. This is 75% eligible for state funds, or \$187,500. The balance will be funded from other SCLT sources. No additional county funding is requested. Sara Bluhm, Executive Director of SCLT, described the improvements including a boardwalk and observation deck in the natural landscape/habitat. County Council unanimously approved the resolution to support this grant proposal. The project is planned for completion by summer of 2028. [Nanticoke Crossing - Sussex County Land Trust](#) (click on Master Plan for additional information)

Andrew Harton, Director of Economic Development:

Delaware Coastal Business Park Lease Assignment – Council approved the request of Copper Bearings Inc. tenant in the Delaware Coastal Business Park to assign their lease to PRD Realty Holdings LLC. Click on the link to learn more about this business park managed by the county. Economic development for Sussex is an important initiative. [Delaware Coastal Business Park | Sussex County Economic Development](#)

John Wright, Deputy Director of EMS:

Roxana Medic Station 109 Lease – Council approved a new temporary location for this EMS station, terminating a temporary construction trailer lease. The new location on Breakwater Run off of Route 54, Selbyville, is located within a residential community. The community HOA granted approval with condition EMS vehicles will refrain from sirens/lights within the community. Plans are in progress for a permanent location.

Paul Mauser, Assistant County Engineer:

1. **Briarwood Estates Septic Elimination, Project S23-11, Change Order No. 1** –motion to add \$70,587.42 for additional sewer pipes to better serve the existing properties. The total project was budgeted for \$3 million with the original bid of \$2.2 million by the vendor. This

project remains significantly under budget and is on schedule for completion in six months. This project alone will eliminate 1,200 pounds of nitrogen from entering Love Creek waters annually! Council voted unanimously to approve the motion contingent on DNREC approval.

2. Bethany Forest Septic Elimination, Project S26-16 - Approval of George, Miles & Buhr, LLC – Amendment No 5 – This overall project was recently approved. Mauser introduced a motion for the design work phase for a base contract not to exceed \$395,000. This phase was budgeted for \$421,000. The Council voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Bob Bryant, Airport Manager: Taxiway B, Bid Package 1, Project A24-15 Substantial Completion – Bryant sought retroactive approval of a declaration of substantial completion of the project. This approval was omitted from earlier business. This allows County to make final payments to vendors. Council voted unanimously to approve the motion. The final close out package was submitted to the FAA June 18, 2026 and County is awaiting final approval from the FAA so remaining grant monies are released.

Grant Requests:

Council made appropriate donations to the following organizations:

1. Encore Creativity Corporation for their creative aging through song program
2. Greater Millsboro Chamber of Commerce Inc. for their Greater Area Millsboro Visitor's Guide
3. Chamber of Commerce for Greater Milford, Inc. for their Riverwalk Freedom festival
4. People's Place II Inc. for their Little Connects, Growing Connections program

Newly Introduced Conditional Use applications: Four projects were identified – two auto repair type businesses, specialty trade contractor business and existing borrow pit request for processing, preparation and storage of materials.

Council Members Comments:

- McCarron asked for information of any affordable housing project applications since the pause related to SB23/HB450 actions. Lawson will provide.

Public Hearings:

- **Bellmead Farm, LLC Annexation into the Sussex County Unified Sanitary Sewer District (West Rehoboth Area)** – this motion was to extend the boundary for sewers to enable access for the Belle Mead project – which application was approved by Council earlier but the decision has been appealed and remains in litigation. The sewer annexation action was approved by P&Z and would allow the applicant to start construction – however, it was argued that any developer would wait until the litigation was finalized in their favor before they would spend any money. Judy Rose Siebert representing the Route 24 Alliance spoke against the motion explaining the project was in litigation and should be delayed while Mike Rieman spoke in favor describing that the project was approved and should be allowed to proceed. Gruenebaum asked for some clarity regarding the timing and McCarron stated that this was a proposed annexation in a growth zone and should be approved – noting that the developer would not proceed until litigation was cleared. Council approved 5-0.

- **Cedar Creek Station Annexation into the Sussex County Unified Sanitary Sewer District (Ellendale Area)** – request to extend the boundary for sewer service for a parcel located at the west intersection of Routes 113 and 16. No comments heard and Council approved 5-0.
- **Conditional Use No. 2536 filed on behalf of John Whitby, Jr. AR-1 AN IN LAND USE OF A GRANT TO ORDINANCE “AN CONDITIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR A WELDING BUSINESS TO BE LOCATED at 16423 Diamond Farm Road, Milton** – applicant requested approval for his business location to be officially approved by Council. His welding activities are mainly conducted offsite with equipment storage and small truck parking the main on site elements. His parcel is large enough to be screened from neighbors. Council approved 5-0 with conditions assigned by P&Z.
- **Conditional Use No. 2561 filed on behalf of Frank Miranda: GRANT A CONDITIONAL USE IN AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT FOR COMMERCIAL DOG KENNEL AND VETERINARY CLINIC on 2.52 ACRES, MORE OR LESS” at 33049 & 33053 Lighthouse Road, Selbyville** – owner is requesting 1. cancellation of the current special exemption status (which requires five year renewals) and 2. new permanent approval for his businesses. The kennel has operated for forty years while the vet business has for ten. No comments were heard following a short presentation by the owner and Council approved 5-0.
- **Change of Zone No. 2042 filed on behalf of NVR (Lantern Cove) “AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING MAP OF SUSSEX COUNTY FROM AN AR-1 AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT TO AN MR RPC MEDIUM-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL-RESIDENTIAL PLANNED COMMUNITY DISTRICT (179 UNITS) LAND CONTAINING 57.10 ACRES at 35987 & 36159 Daniel Way, 35379 Bayard Road, 35400 Lantern Lane, Frankford** - applicant's lawyer (David Hutt) made a lengthy presentation of this proposal, offering extended arguments to counter P&Z's recent denial of the application. The major reason for approval according to Hutt was the consistency of this proposal with existing developments in the area already approved by Council. He cited several positive factors: located in level 2 growth area, water/sewer connections available, added traffic minimal, density of 3.56 units/acre within guidelines, provides extended buffers, protects trees/wetlands, encourages broader styles of housing (59 single family/120 multi-family townhomes), superior living design, etc. He held that P&Z's rejection was “arbitrary and ad-hoc” with respect to land use rules. He proceeded to address all of the 10 reasons P&Z gave to support their vote. Hutt repeated the factors mentioned above to offset P&Z's positions. His strongest position was the likeness of this project with existing communities in the vicinity. Hutt also criticized P&Z for not having supporting evidence for several of their claims.

Several local residents spoke in favor of the project – some who sold portions of their land for this site. They felt the evolution of the area from agricultural to development was inevitable and this proposal fit with the area. One individual offered mild opposition suggesting that the project lacks adequate transportation infrastructure – mainly a pedestrian/biking path from the site to the main intersection (Route 54).

There was mention from McCarron regarding the future effect of HB450 on these type projects. According to that legislation (which takes effect next year), this proposal would not have required a public hearing and would have been approved.

Council voted unanimously to defer the project for further consideration.

Council Meeting Upcoming Schedule: Tuesdays – check agenda for timing and location

- Future meetings schedule:
 - September 29 [092926.pdf](#)
 - October 13, 20, 27. No meeting October 6.

Council Meeting Broadcast

[County Council Meeting - September 22, 2026](#)

Related Articles:

[Sussex approves forest preservation ordinance | Cape Gazette](#)

[State, local governments work to comply with SB 23, HB 450 | Cape Gazette](#)

[Consultant plans to visit all libraries in Sussex during funding study | Cape Gazette](#)

[Sussex offers municipalities use of assessment data | Cape Gazette](#)

[Business park proposed on Route 9 near Georgetown | Cape Gazette](#)

Note: Eyes on County Council makes every effort to render events at public meetings accurately. It either explicitly quotes speakers, or paraphrases their statements as accurately as possible. If any representation in these notes is inaccurate, please contact us.