Township Manager/Secretary
Pocopson Township, Chester County

Pocopson Township, Chester County, Pennsylvania (population 4,455) seeks an experienced, hands-on professional to serve as its next **Township Manager/Secretary**.

The Community
Pocopson Township encompasses approximately 8.4 square miles in the heart of Chester County. It is a rural-residential, agricultural, and historic community with a strong, long-standing commitment to open space preservation. Formed in 1849 and named for the Pocopson Creek, the Township has retained not just individual historic buildings but whole landscapes of creek valleys, villages, and farm fields along the Brandywine. The Northbrook and Trimbleville Historic Districts, the Lenape Bridge, and the Wilkinson House are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A majority of Pocopson's residents live here because of its rural quality of life. They are concerned about overdevelopment and want to maintain the status quo, especially low taxes, excellent passive recreation, and protecting Pocopson's natural and agricultural resources.

The municipal complex shares its grounds with Wawaset Road Park and the restored Barnard House, known as Barnard Station, the home of abolitionist and Township founder Eusebius Barnard. Construction of the Township office was completed in 2022 on the site of the original Barnard House barn. Materials from the barn were repurposed throughout the municipal building, including beams in the construction, foundation stones in the meeting room wall behind the dais, and the wood wall in the downstairs foyer.

The Township's population includes approximately 1,000 residents of the Pocopson Home and the Chester County Prison, both County facilities located in the Township. Residents are served by the Unionville-Chadds Ford School District, ranked 15th of 495 districts in Pennsylvania and 2nd of 12 in Chester County.

The Government
Pocopson is a Township of the Second Class governed by a three-member Board of Supervisors elected at large to six-year terms. The Township adopted the manager form of government in 2024. The Board sets policy and the Manager/Secretary serves as chief administrative officer.

The Township operates with a small staff including the Township Manager/Secretary, an assistant secretary, a bookkeeper, a project assistant, and a small public works crew. Building inspection, zoning, engineering, and legal services are provided on a contracted basis, and the appointed Treasurer is a third-party provider. Police protection is provided by the Pennsylvania State Police; fire and emergency medical services are delivered through the Kennett Fire & EMS Regional Commission. The Township workforce is non-union.

The Township is in strong financial condition. The 2026 general fund budget is approximately $2.2 million, and the Township holds a general fund balance of approximately $4.8 million with approximately $7.4 million in total across nine fund balances. The real estate tax rate is 2.2 mills, which is divided into 1 mill for open space, 0.585 mill for general Township operations, 0.45 mill for fire and 0.165 mill for ambulance and emergency services.

The Position
The Township Manager/Secretary is appointed by and reports to the Board of Supervisors. The Manager/Secretary oversees day-to-day operations and staff, prepares and administers the annual budget, prepares Board agendas and attends all Board meetings, manages contracts and consultants, and keeps the Board informed on the Township's finances and needs.

This is a working manager's position in a small organization. With no department heads beyond Public Works, the Manager/Secretary is directly involved in finance, personnel, planning and zoning, grants, and resident service. The successful candidate will be as comfortable drafting a resolution or a grant application as coordinating the Township's engineer, solicitor, and planning consultants.

Opportunities, Priorities and On-going Projects
The next Manager/Secretary will step into a substantive and well-defined agenda, including:

- **Comprehensive Plan update.** The Township is updating its Comprehensive Plan with the Brandywine Conservancy, with adoption expected in fall 2027. The Manager/Secretary will guide the process through public engagement and adoption.
- **Open space program.** The Township is reviewing its open space program, a central part of its identity.
- **Modernizing communications.** The Township is launching a new website and wants to strengthen its marketing and outreach to residents. The Manager/Secretary will develop a communication protocol to guide how the Township shares information with the community.
- **Organizational development.** The Township is revising its employee handbook, and there are opportunities to continue building the systems and practices of a manager form of government that is still relatively new.

Qualifications
The Board seeks candidates who offer a combination of the following:

- A bachelor's degree in public administration, political science, or a closely related field, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. A master's degree in public administration or a related field is preferred.
- At least five years of progressively responsible experience in local government management.
- Experience preparing for and taking an active role in public meetings, including presenting information and making recommendations to the Board.
- Demonstrated experience in municipal budgeting, financial management, and capital planning.
- Experience in human resources and personnel policy.
- Working knowledge of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, including comprehensive planning, zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances, and statutory review timelines, as well as the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.
- Familiarity with the duties of a Township Secretary, including meeting minutes, legal advertising and public notices, records management, and Right-to-Know Law compliance.
- Experience with open space preservation, conservation easements, and land stewardship.
- Experience with grant procurement and administration, including DCNR, DCED, and Chester County programs.
- Strong written and oral communication skills and a commitment to transparency and community engagement.

Compensation
The anticipated salary range is $145,000 to $165,000, depending on qualifications and experience, with an excellent benefits package.

To Apply
Interested candidates should submit a cover letter, resume, and salary expectations in one attachment by noon on Monday, December 14, 2026 to:

Jennifer W. Smethers, Associate Director for Municipal Services
Meyner Center for the Study of State and Local Government
smetherj@lafayette.edu

Pocopson Township is an Equal Opportunity Employer.