

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 2020 7:00 PM**

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held their Regular Meeting on Tuesday, August 4, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., at the Covington Township Pavilion Building, Moffat Estate, 20 Moffat Drive, Covington Township, PA.

There were present: Thomas M. Yerke, Chairman; John Brostoski, Vice Chairman; Joseph Setta, Supervisor; William Fells, Supervisor; Melissa Kearney, Supervisor; Douglas A Hein, Secretary / Treasurer and Joel M. Wolff, Esquire. Also present were David Lamm, Building Inspector; Ronald Donati, Zoning Officer; and Mary Lou Butler, Township Engineer.

1. **CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Yerke opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm
2. **AGENDA:** ON MOTION duly made (Fells), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to approve the agenda as presented.
3. **ANNOUNCEMENT:** Mr. Yerke read a thank you note from retired Township Secretary / Treasurer Kate Tierney.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no comment on agenda items.
5. **MINUTES:** Supervisor Kearney noted that the minutes from the Non-Uniform Pension Plan Amendments hearing needed to be revised to reflect a 3-1 vote, with Supervisor Setta voting against. Mr. Hein said he would update the minutes. ON MOTION duly made (Fells), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to accept the minutes of the July 7, 2020 Regular Meeting and the July 28, 2020 Public Hearings and Work Session.
6. **BILLS:** ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to accept the bill packet as submitted.
7. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to accept the Treasurer's Report as submitted.
8. **PLANNING COMMISSION:** Mr. Yerke noted that no meeting was held.
9. **BUILDING INSPECTOR:** David Lamm reviewed permits issued for July. ON MOTION duly made (Fells), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to accept the Building Inspector's report as submitted.
10. **ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** Ronald Donati reviewed permits issued for July. Supervisor Kearney read a letter she had received via e-mail from Scott VanFleet requesting Mr. Donati be removed as Zoning Officer from the complaint he has against Chairman Yerke. Mr. Donati stated he spoke with the Zoning Attorney and was advised to treat Mr. Yerke as he does any other resident. Discussion was held. ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to accept the Zoning Code report as submitted.
11. **ENGINEER:** Mary Lou Butler stated she had submitted the Langan Road Multimodal grant application to DCED and provided Mr. Hein with a copy. She stated the signal pole and traffic light maintenance agreement from Northeast Signal & Electric Company was good but to make sure they were updating PennDOT's TSAMS database for the poles. Mr. Hein was instructed to verify this. Discussion was held regarding LSA grant due September 30, 2020. Ms. Butler stated she needed Board approval to complete and submit application for the Pavilion HVAC/Lighting project and to verify cost estimates with Dean Butler. ON MOTION duly made (Fells), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to allow Ms. Butler to complete and submit LSA application to DCED. Ms. Butler said she is completing the Act 537 updates and will work with the CTSA to have it approved and submitted to the Board as well. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to accept the Engineer's report.

- 12. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS:** Chairman Yerke stated he would need a letter approving him to sign titles for vehicles being taken to auction. Supervisor Brostoski stated he had been given one; Mr. Yerke said he needed one for each auction. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to provide Chairman Yerke with a letter to sign for titles at auction. Chairman Yerke said he will be renting a boom mower when it is available from Bradco to clean roadsides. He stated the pond will need to be dredged under the bridge to keep water from pushing the bridge off its footings due to a buildup of sediment. Mr. Yerke said he dumped a 25 yard can at the Lackawanna Recycling Center on July 20, 2020 and it was rejected due to high amounts of unallowed material. He has six more containers which need to be dumped and is negotiating a way, at a cost, to empty them. Discussion was held on options for reopening the center. Mr. Yerke stated the center would remain closed until residents could be re-educated on what is allowable. He said Joyce Hatala and Nicole Shapiro from the County are willing to hold seminars. ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to accept the Director of Public Works report.
- 13. POLICE DEPT:** Officer Bastek reviewed the monthly report. Chairman Yerke asked for more enforcement of people running the stop sign at Eagle Lake. He said he has seen numerous people not stopping when he is in the area. Supervisor Brostoski asked Officer Bastek if the police department had any timing lines on Route 307; he replied there was. Mr. Brostoski stated he spoke to Chief Klocko about issues on Route 502; Officer Bastek said he would follow up with the Chief. Supervisor Seta asked if anything could be done about people parking in the fire lanes in Bill's Plaza even though it is private property. Offer Bastek stated they could be ticked but he would speak to the owner about first installing signs. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Kearney), and carried 5-0 to accept the Police report.
- 14. RECREATION COMMITTEE:** Mr. Yerke noted that no meeting was held.
- 15. SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** Chairman Yerke read the report as submitted. Mr. Brostoski brought up the issue with how Mr. Enslin (SEO) is paid and a short discussion was held. Mr. Hein stated there was an item to review this under Administrative Actions. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to accept the Sewage Enforcement Officer's report.
- 16. SOLICITOR:** Mr. Wolff stated the reassessment with RGM Hardwoods was concluded with a court order and payment had been made. ON MOTION duly made (Fells), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to accept the Solicitor's report.
- 17. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:**
- a) *Extend Emergency Declaration and open Township office:* Discussion was held; office to remain closed. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to extend the Emergency Declaration through September 1, 2020.
 - b) *Lackawanna County Tax Claim Bureau Repository Sales:* Sales were reviewed. ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to approve the repository sales.
 - c) *Acceptance of Auditor General's Liquid Fuels Tax Fund Audit Report:* Mr. Hein said this was the AG's approval of the audit already accepted by the Board. ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to accept the Auditor General's Liquid Fuels Audit Report.
 - d) *Acceptance of Covington Township Sewer Authority 2019 Audit:* ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to accept the CTSA 2019 audit report.
 - e) *Acceptance of Covington Township mid-year audit:* Mr. Hein stated this was the audit performed due to the retirement of Kate Tierney and that no issues were found. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to accept the mid-year audit.
 - f) *Northeast Signal & Electric Company 2020 Preventative Maintenance Estimate:* Engineer Mary Lou Butler said to make sure Northeast Signal would be updating the PennDOT TSAMS database on utility poles. Mr. Hein was instructed to do so. ON MOTION duly made

- (Brostoski), seconded (Fells), and carried 5-0 to approve the 2020 Preventative Maintenance Contract with Northeast Signal & Electric Company.
- g) Covington Township Volunteer Fire Company EMS full time employees' workers' comp insurance: Chairman Yerke asked Fire Chief Brad Jones when the EMTs would start; he said August 10th if this passed. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to approve adding two EMTs to the Township's Workers' Compensation insurance.
 - h) Review SEO services: Mr. Hein stated that the Township was losing money on the arrangement with Gary Enslin, the current SEO, because he is an employee being paid out the exact amount of fees he brings in and the Township must pay the employer's share of Social Security and Medicare taxes. Mr. Hein said he had worked at other townships where the SEO was a third-party contractor and the fee schedule had a percentage going to the township to cover expenses. Discussion was held and Mr. Hein was directed to schedule an Executive Session for September 1, 2020 before the regular meeting.
 - i) Lackawanna County Land Bank: Discussion was held as to the advantages and disadvantages of entering into an agreement. Mr. Wolff said all liens and delinquent taxes are forgiven but it gets the properties back on the tax rolls. Mr. Wolff was directed to contact North Pocono School District to find out if they are going to participate. The issue was tabled to the September 1, 2020 meeting.
 - j) Blue Ridge Cable Franchise Agreement request: Mr. Wolff stated that the Township entered into an exclusive ten-year franchise agreement with Comcast in 2017. He said this could be looked at again in 2027. Mr. Hein said he would notify Blue Ridge Cable.

18. NEW BUSINESS: None

19. OLD BUSINESS: Supervisor Brostoski asked Chairman Yerke if he had received any bids on repairing the Mansion roof. Mr. Yerke said no one wants to do it. Mr. Brostoski said he would contact a contractor he knows.

20. CORRESPONDENCE: None

21. SUPERVISORS COMMENTS: None

22. PUBLIC COMMENT: Open public comment:

- a. Building Inspector David Lamm requested a letter be sent to Roger Altmier to install the drainage pipe he agreed to on Union Mill Road.
- b. Barbara Havenstrite asked if the State mandated recycling for Covington Township. Mr. Yerke said only for municipalities over five thousand residents. Ms. Havenstrite asked if the Township could look at other recycling centers; Mr. Yerke said he had looked at Solomon Recycling which had been \$40/ton but is now \$100/ton. Mr. Yerke said the only option is to educate the public.
- c. Tom Hughes asked if newspaper and cardboard are still accepted. Mr. Yerke said it was.
- d. Melinda Musso asked if she should update the Township website to state that; Mr. Yerke said no.
- e. Brad Jones asked if Northeast Signal would be responsible for testing the Opticon sensors for EMS on the traffic lights. Mr. Yerke said they would be.

23. ADJOURNMENT: ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Yerke), and carried 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas A. Hein, Secretary

APPROVED: