

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2020 7:00 PM**

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held its Regular Meeting on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., at the Covington Township Municipal Building, 20 Moffat Drive, Covington Township, PA.

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

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** *Vice-Chairman Brostoski opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm*
- 2. AGENDA:** *ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to accept the agenda as presented.*
- 3. ANNOUNCEMENT:** *There were no announcements.*
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT:** *Roz Davis questioned the times listed in the minutes for the meetings and executive sessions. Bill Willson questioned the three payments to Reliance Standard Insurance and the refund from Nationwide Insurance. Mr. Hein stated Nationwide was getting out of the life insurance business and Reliance Standard took it over. The three payments were for September, October and November and the refund was for September. Mr. Willson also asked the weight for the scrap metal sold to Anthracite Auto. Mr. Hein said he would get the tonnage.*
- 5. MINUTES:** *Supervisor Kearney stated the October 6, 2020 minutes should reflect Atty. Wolff's request for a motion to draw up the revised lease for Wonderful. The motion was made by Supervisor Kearney and seconded by Supervisor Peirce and passed. Supervisor Kearney said the October 6th minutes should also reflect Roz Davis' question as to why Administrative Actions are not brought forward from the Work Sessions to the Regular Meetings and under the Zoning Officer Report it should state that the Zoning Officer gave Mr. Demarco and Mr. Sheridan 30 days to clean up their properties. She also noted she was not at the October 27 Budget Work Session. ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Setta), and carried 4-0 to accept the October 6, 2020 Regular Meeting minutes; the October 19, 2020 Budget Work Session minutes; the October 27, 2020 Budget Work Session minutes; and the October 27, 2020 Work Session minutes as amended.*
- 6. BILLS:** *Supervisor Kearney asked what locations the Comcast bill was for; Mr. Hein stated it was for the Estate and Police station. Bill Willson asked what the PPL bill was for; Mr. Hein said he had the breakdown for all the facilities, street lights and traffic signals. Bill Willson also asked why there was no rent received from Occhipinti Dance Studio; Mr. Hein said he received an e-mail that morning from the Studio owner stating the rent and utilities payment was sent out. Roz Davis asked about the rent from Wonderful; Mr. Hein said the lease was being signed and the rent would be paid. She also asked how many cell phones were on the Verizon plan; Mr. Hein stated 6 or 7. Supervisor Kearney found her list and stated it was 8. ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried 4-0 to accept the bills as submitted.*
- 7. TREASURER'S REPORT:** *ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Kearney), and carried 4-0 to accept the Treasurer's report as submitted.*
- 8. PLANNING COMMISSION:** *No report*
- 9. BUILDING INSPECTOR:** *Dave Lamm reviewed his report. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to accept the Building Inspector's report as submitted.*
- 10. ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** *Ron Donati reviewed his report. He stated that the issue of Airbnb rentals needs to be addressed in the Zoning Ordinance because he has received several calls in the last month from owners and Realtors asking if they are allowed in the Township. He is working with other zoning officers from neighboring municipalities to find out what they have done on this; the Zoning Solicitor is also involved. Discussion was held as to how the Board would like Mr. Donati to proceed on the three warning letters he has outstanding for properties to clean up. It was decided that he would speak with the owners this week for*

one final warning and then proceed with notices of violation and court action. Bill Willson asked him to look at the Art Smith property on Skyline Drive because there are multiple 55 gallon drums at the rear of the property. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 4-0 to accept the Zoning Officer's report as submitted.

11. ENGINEER: Mary Lou Butler reviewed her report. She asked for a motion authorizing her to have the Act 537 Plan advertised stating that the Board was ultimately responsible for the report even though it was for the Sewer Authority. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to authorize the Engineer to have the Act 537 Plan advertised. Ms. Butler asked if the Board wanted her to look at the Naro property before their escrow account was closed out. The Board said she should coordinate with Chairman Yerke to take one final look. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to accept the Engineer's report as submitted.

12. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: No report

13. POLICE DEPT: No report

14. RECREATION COMMITTEE: No meeting was held

15. SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER: No report

16. SOLICITOR: Solicitor Wolff stated he is making progress on the Kost Tire agreement. He stated he was in touch with Joe Lorah from Blue Ridge Cable and asked him to clarify some things in the franchise agreement. He also asked Mr. Lorah to include the 5% franchise fee in the agreement so that it was on par with the Comcast franchise agreement. He will have a revised agreement for the Board to consider at the next meeting. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to accept the Solicitor's report as submitted.

17. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:

- a) Kost Tire Land Development Application – Robert Mendola was present representing Kost Tire. Mary Lou Butler reviewed her outstanding items with the proposed development. One item that came up recently was the removal of a fire suppression system from the plans. She wants Fire Chief Brad Jones to review the new plans to see if he has an issue with this. Atty. Wolff asked about the fact the agenda listed it as Jack Williams Tire. Mr. Hein stated it was an error and should state Kost Tire. Mary Lou said the developer's agreement and bond can be worked on quickly, but the Planning Commission had wanted the fire suppression system. She does not want to recommend the plan without it and wants to hear from the Fire Chief. She reiterated it was the owner who took it out of the plan. No decision was made.
- b) Service Request Brian Cebulko-road signs in front of property @ 100 Golden Oak Drive – Supervisor Brostoski said Chairman Yerke, although not present tonight, is addressing this. It is a question of location of the sign.
- c) Union Mill Road drainage problems-William & Jill Sweeney – The Sweeneys were present and distributed pictures of rainstorms and flooding on their property. A lengthy discussion was held. Atty. Wolff said he is reviewing the documents and has requested the plans from Mr. Hein. It was agreed to have Mary Lou Butler and Tom Yerke visit the site to determine what needs to be done. Dave Lamm presented his recommendations as well. Mr. Hein was directed to get contact information for the Sweeneys after the meeting.
- d) CivicPlus web design agreement – Supervisor Kearney said she had concerns about approving this for next year when the budget was not yet approved. She requested representatives from CivicPlus and Computer Visionaries (the Township's current web hosting provider) to give presentations at the December 1st Board meeting. Mr. Hein said he would set it up.
- e) Lackawanna County repository sales – Sales were reviewed ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried 4-0 to approve the repository sales.
- f) Lackawanna County Land Bank – Atty. Wolff will get in touch with NPSD solicitor to see if the School District approved this. This will be on the December 1, 2020 Board meeting.
- g) Extend Emergency Declaration – Discussion was held to extend the Declaration to January 4, 2021. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to extend the Emergency Declaration to January 4, 2021.

18. NEW BUSINESS: None

19. OLD BUSINESS: None

20. CORRESPONDENCE: *None. Bill Willson asked if he sends in an e-mail to the Township, is that considered correspondence to be addressed? He said he saw Township employees doing personal business and being paid and asked why the Board is not taking action on it. Mr. Hein stated his e-mail was distributed to all Supervisors. Bill Willson said he saw Chris Balish and Tom Yerke taking items from Mr. Yerke's property on Township time and it was not Township equipment they were taking to the auction. He saw Chris Balish at the school on Township time. Supervisor Brostoski said the work was approved by the Board and his complaints are reviewed. Supervisor Setta said the answers were received and approved. Heated discussion ensued. Supervisor Setta told Bill to ask Chairman Yerke at the next meeting. Bill said he didn't need to; Supervisor Setta asked if he was afraid of Mr. Yerke. Bill said maybe he would bring a weapon to the next meeting. Supervisor Brostoski told him not to say that. Atty. Wolff told him not to mention bringing weapons to a public meeting; Bill denied he said it. Atty. Wolff emphatically told him he did and not to say anything about bringing a weapon to a public meeting; Bill said we have a Board member doing it. Atty. Wolff again told him not to bring it up again. Supervisor Brostoski said he could bring up his concerns at the next meeting.*

21. SUPERVISORS COMMENTS: *Supervisor Kearney stated that with the COVID-19 correspondence that was passed out to the Board a few months ago that we need to finalize something so that the Township Office can be reopened to the public. Supervisor Brostoski stated the receptionist had contact with someone COVID-19 positive so she was quarantining at home with her computer for 14 days and would be back in after that. Ms. Kearney asked if the office would be open then and Mr. Brostoski said as far as he was concerned, yes.*

22. PUBLIC COMMENT: *Roz Davis asked if the newsletter would be sent out anymore. Discussion was held and Mr. Hein stated nothing official was decided but that it would be on the website and sent out to anyone who requested it, with a few copies being printed and available at the front desk. Roz also asked if Zoom would be used for the meetings if there were too many people to attend in person. Supervisor Kearney stated we have a year subscription for Zoom and that we could use it for remote and in person using Melinda to administer it if we decide to go that route. Roz stated she asked in a Right to Know request for the Personnel Manual and amendments to it, including the one in July. She did not get the one from July; Mr. Hein said he would send it to her.*

23. ADJOURNMENT: *ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 4-0 to adjourn at 8:10 pm.*

*Respectfully submitted,
Douglas A. Hein, Secretary*

APPROVED: