

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
REGULAR MEETING**

**MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 2021 VIA ZOOM ONLY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING 7 PM ORGANIZATION  
MEETING**

*The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held its Regular Meeting on Monday, January 4, 2021 at 8:10 p.m., via Zoom.*

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

- 1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** *The meeting was opened by Chairman Yerke at 8:10 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.*
- 2. AGENDA:** *Mr. Hein asked to have the web design proposals to be added to Administrative Actions. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to as amended.*
- 3. ANNOUNCEMENT:** *Chairman Yerke announced that an Executive Session was held December 15, 2020 for personnel and legal issues.*
- 4. PUBLIC COMMENT:** *None*
- 5. MINUTES:** *ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Yerke), and carried 5-0 to accept the December 1, 2020 Regular Meeting minutes as submitted.*
- 6. BILLS:** *Supervisor Kearney asked Mr. Hein to clarify the credits listed on the Bills Report. He stated they were to clear up items from prior years and that he had discussed it with the auditors. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 5-0 to accept the bills as submitted.*
- 7. TREASURER'S REPORT:** *Mr. Hein reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Supervisor Kearney asked Mr. Hein why the balance forward for the General Fund on the report being presented was different from the ending balance on the December report she had. Mr. Hein reviewed his reports and said they were the same. Supervisor Kearney said she would review it with him after the meeting. ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Setta), and carried 4-1 with Supervisor Kearney against to accept the report as submitted.*
- 8. PLANNING COMMISSION:** *No meeting was held*
- 9. BUILDING INSPECTOR:** *Dave Lamm reviewed his report on permits issued during the month. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to accept the report as submitted.*
- 10. ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:**
  - a.** *Report as submitted – Chairman Yerke read the report of permits issued during the month.*
  - b.** *Short-term rental ordinance – Discussion was held on how to proceed with an ordinance to ensure compliance with regulations that are being proposed. Ron Donati reviewed what he had done so far. Solicitor Wolff recommended passing an ordinance listing the zone, procedures, licensing, procedures for violations, contact information, etc. Jane Casagrandi and Greg Bonawitz of Big Bass Lake (where there currently are short-term rental properties) spoke and said Big Bass Lake Association was getting together a committee to discuss this and would be inviting the townships involved. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Kearney), and carried 5-0 to accept the report as submitted.*
- 11. ENGINEER:** *Mary Lou Butler and Chairman Yerke reviewed the report. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 5-0 to accept the report as submitted.*
- 12. DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS:** *Chairman Yerke read a letter from DPW Director Ken Comcowich requesting a Township phone and use of the Township pick-up truck full time, including to and from home. Discussion was held as to who should have a phone and what the policy was for Supervisors having Township phones. Supervisor Kearney stated Mr. Comcowich should get Chairman Yerke's phone he used as DPW Director. Mr. Yerke said he had that number for 25 years and would not give it up and there would be no*

detailed cell phone bill itemizing calls and data usage. Supervisor Brostoski said that Supervisors were in the past given the option to have cell phones. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney) and failed for a lack of a second, to give Mr. Comcowich Chairman Yerke's cell phone he used when he was DPW Director. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Yerke), and carried 4-1 with Supervisor Kearney against to give Mr. Comcowich an existing spare phone with a new number. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 5-0 to allow Mr. Comcowich to use the pick-up truck for Township business only. Supervisor Kearney brought up a service request about 55 Havenstrite Drive being flooded. Mr. Hein said he received the request and gave it to Mr. Comcowich who will look at it tomorrow. Chairman Yerke said it will be looked at tomorrow. Supervisor Kearney proposed a motion to audit DPW equipment to protect the outgoing and incoming DPW Directors and change the locks. Supervisor Brostoski asked Supervisor Kearney if she wanted an inventory. It was clarified she was looking for an inventory; Mr. Brostoski said he requested Mr. Comcowich to do it and the DPW employees should do it. Mr. Brostoski said Mr. Hein can get the inventory sheets to DPW. Chairman Yerke said Mr. Comcowich is too new to know what is here. He also stated that items sold at auction need to be deducted from the inventory list and that he still has items on his property that will be returned once rental payment is made to him for storage. The motion failed for lack of a second.

**13. POLICE DEPT:** Chief Klocko reviewed the December 2020 and year-end reports. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to accept the reports as submitted.

**14. RECREATION COMMITTEE:** No meeting was held

**15. SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** Chairman Yerke reviewed the report of permits issued/actions taken. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to accept the report as submitted.

**16. SOLICITOR:** Solicitor Wolff said he entered his appearance on behalf of the Township in the real estate tax appeal of SADG/Rite Aid. Mr. Wolff stated Supervisor Peirce asked about another appeal sent to the Township by Hourigan, Kluger & Quinn filed by LDA NCC XXIII for a building in the Industrial Park, Lot 4. Chairman Yerke said it was the Sears Building and he believed it was fought out a couple years ago. Mr. Wolff said it was a new appeal and recommended he enter an appearance on behalf of the Township. Discussion was held. ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to authorize Solicitor Wolff to enter an appearance on behalf of the Township on this tax appeal. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Peirce), and carried 5-0 to accept the report as submitted.

**17. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:**

- a. CPA for 2020 Financial Audit – Resolution 2021-02 – Chairman Yerke read the resolution. Supervisor Kearney stated the elected auditors also submitted a request to perform the 2020 audit and it would be cheaper. Supervisor Brostoski asked about the cost of the prior year's audit. Vicki Williams, audit board chairwoman, said the audit committee would do an unbiased audit. Supervisor Brostoski said the CPA came in for an audit in June to audit the books when Kate Tierney retired, and the books are in order. He stated the elected auditors can put in for up to \$1,000 each for doing the audit. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Yerke), and failed 2-3 with Supervisors Peirce, Kearney and Brostoski against to hire George Marciniak, CPA to perform the 2020 audit. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Peirce), and carried 3-2 with Chairman Yerke and Vice-Chairman Setta against to allow Vicki Williams and the auditing committee to conduct the 2020 audit.
- b. SBA Properties, LLC Tower Permit Dorantown Road – Resolution 2021-03 – Chairman Yerke read the resolution; a brief discussion was held. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to grant the ten (10) year tower permit.
- c. Extend Emergency Declaration – Discussion was held on the declaration as well as reopening the Township office to the public. Roz Davis stated she believed the Township should have its COVID policy up and running before reopening the office. Vicki Williams said residents should call in to schedule appointments. It was decided and agreed upon to put a statement on the Township website stating the office is open by appointment only, face masks are required, and temperatures will be taken. ON-MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to extend the Emergency Declaration through March 2, 2021.
- d. Release of San Cataldo / Naro performance bond – Chairman Yerke and engineer Mary Lou Butler both stated they had reviewed the site, and everything was in order. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to release the performance bond.
- e. Set mileage rate for use of personal vehicles for Township business – IRS rate for 2021 \$.56/mi. – Chairman Yerke was going to make a motion to set the rate, but Audit Board Chairwoman Vicki Williams

*said that was the Audit Board's responsibility and they would do it at their organization meeting the next night.*

- f. Numbers Made Easy QuickBooks service estimate – Mr. Hein explained this was to consolidate files and make sure the chart of accounts matched the DCED chart of accounts. The consolidated files will still be available for the Treasurer but only 2019-present will be in the current file. The consultant uses QuickBooks Accountant edition with more capabilities than the one used by end users. The cost is \$995. ON MOTION duly made (Setta), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 5-0 to*
- g. Web design proposals – This was tabled until the January work session.*

**18. NEW BUSINESS:** *None*

**19. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. Township Newsletter – Discussion was held on how to distribute the newsletter in the future. It was decided the next newsletter would include a question in it with a response requested as to whether or not the resident wanted a mailed copy. The newsletter would be online after that with those requesting a printed copy receiving it.*
- b. Camera system for Municipal Complex – This was tabled until the January work session.*

**20. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- a. North Pocono Public Library – Chairman Yerke read a letter of thanks for the Township's \$1,000 donation.*

**21. SUPERVISORS COMMENTS:** *Supervisor Brostoski commended Chairman Yerke on his tenure as DPW Director and said he always kept the roads open. Chairman Yerke stated he always took great pride in his work and all that was accomplished. Supervisor Kearney read a prepared statement.*

**22. PUBLIC COMMENT:** *None; it was announced that the scheduled three hour time limit for the meeting was being reached.*

**23. ADJOURNMENT:** *ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Setta), and carried 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 PM.*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas A. Hein, Secretary*

**APPROVED:**