

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2021 AT 7 PM**

**IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM AT: <https://zoom.us/j/99987900797>**

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held its Work Session on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., in person at the Covington Township Municipal Building, 20 Moffit Drive, Covington Township, PA 18444 and via Zoom.

There were present: Joseph Setta, Vice-Chairman; John Brostoski, Supervisor; Melissa Kearney, Supervisor; Marshall Peirce, Supervisor; Douglas A. Hein, Secretary / Treasurer; and Joel M. Wolff, Esquire. Chairman Thomas M. Yerke was absent.

1. **CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Vice Chairman Setta called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm.
2. **AGENDA:** Supervisor Kearney asked for the following to be on the May 4, 2021 agenda since they are not on tonight's agenda: Roofs at the Estate, Ken Comcowich's job and phone, auditor recommendations, PTO, camera system quotes and Pavilion Manager pay.
3. **ANNOUNCEMENT:** Vice Chairman Setta said there was an Executive Session held on April 12, 2021 for employee disciplinary action.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** No comments on agenda items
5. **MINUTES:** April 7, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes and March 22, 2021 public hearings minutes were presented for review. Mr. Hein asked for any corrections by the end of the week so they would be in the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting packet.
6. **BILLS:** Vice Chairman Setta said the interim bills list was General Fund \$4,264.89 and Payroll Account \$4,628.35.
7. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Vice Chairman Setta stated the Treasurer's Report will be submitted at the May 4, 2021 Regular Meeting.
8. **PLANNING COMMISSION:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report because the April work session was cancelled due to no applications being submitted.
9. **BUILDING INSPECTOR:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
10. **ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
11. **ENGINEER:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
12. **DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
13. **POLICE DEPARTMENT:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
14. **RECREATION COMMITTEE:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
15. **SEWAGE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER:** Vice Chairman Setta stated there was no report.
16. **SOLICITOR:** Solicitor Wolff stated that Exeter 100 1<sup>st</sup> LLC is looking to sell their property. They have a developer's agreement that requires the consent of the Township to be transferred. They want to get this done as soon as possible. Solicitor Wolff asked Melinda Musso to let him know if there are any outstanding zoning issues because he has been in contact with lawyers for the seller and buyer. He said it is the Maytag building, Lot 1 and he is not aware of any issues; Ms. Musso will let him know. Solicitor Wolff reported that the McDonald's property tax assessment appeal had lawyers switched on it.
17. **ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:**

- a. *Fire Tax referendum – Vice Chairman spoke with the Board of Elections; the Board of Supervisors must approve a resolution for this at a public meeting with the draft going to the Board of Elections by August 24<sup>th</sup> in order to be on the November ballot. He would like to get it to the County by July; it was agreed to be put on the July agenda. Roz Davis asked if it would apply to the residents at Eagle Lake and was told it would.*
- b. *Zoning map update – Mr. Hein stated this was for the change for NorthPoint along with the change last year on Rt. 435 that wasn't printed. Vice Chairman Setta said he agreed we should have it. Supervisor Kearney asked the cost; Mr. Hein said he would ask Mary Lou Butler what it would cost. Solicitor Wolff said she may be able to do it in house.*
- c. *Sign ordinance – Vice Chairman Setta reviewed documents from 2017 and Mr. Hein said it was suggestions from then, but nothing was passed. Vice Chairman Setta recommended the Board review it to see if they wanted any changes and have it on June's meeting. Mr. Hein asked if he wanted it on the May Work Session; he said yes, then also on the June Regular Meeting. Supervisor Kearney suggested that any changes should be given to Ron Donati and Melinda Musso before the May Work Session. Solicitor Wolff asked if the authorization to advertise should be given at the June meeting; that was agreed.*
- d. *Pocono Spray Patching estimate – Vice Chairman reviewed the estimate of \$2,000 per load with four loads needed. This was moved to the May 4, 2021 meeting for approval.*
- e. *Payroll services – Mr. Hein said he was bringing this up again for an outside company to process payroll, payroll taxes, W-2's and provide an interface to QuickBooks. He reviewed two quotes: ADP – year 1 cost \$959.07, year 2 and forward cost \$1,167.26 per year. PayChex – year 1 cost \$2,216.53, year 2 and forward cost \$2,116.53 per year. Supervisor Brostoski asked if the timecards would be read by the systems. Mr. Hein said he would enter the timecards into their online system, and everything would be calculated based on how the employees are set up. Supervisor Brostoski asked what the advantage is of a system like this. Mr. Hein stated that the payroll company takes the liability of processing payroll taxes off the Township; also, there is no fee for direct deposits. He said QuickBooks is now charging a monthly fee that is coming close to what the monthly fees would be for these companies. Supervisor Peirce asked who ADP was, if it was a local company. Mr. Hein said they were both national companies, but ADP had a local office. Solicitor Wolff said there is a local company on Olive Street called We Pay that might be worth looking into. Vice Chairman said he is familiar with ADP from his former employer, and it is a good system. Mr. Hein said he has used both companies in the past with no problems. Supervisor Kearney said she didn't like it; she had suggested it in the past as an auditor and as a supervisor but was told it wasn't worth it and that Mr. Hein said it wasn't cost effective. She didn't see the advantage of doing this because it is part of the Secretary / Treasurer's job. She said there was a question on the chat from a resident, asking if employees would be able to clock in from their phones. Mr. Hein said no, and that he believed that wouldn't be something the Township would want anyway.*
- f. *Credit card services – Mr. Hein said he is asked by residents if they can pay permits and taxes online with credit cards and the answer is no. He looked into Interware Development, a company he has used at other townships and is waiting to get information from FNCB on their product. He explained there would be one card reader in the office for permit and pavilion fees with an online portal for the receptionist to enter the information and the customer would swipe their credit card. He said there would also be an online portion with two icons, one for permits and fees and a second for real estate taxes. The permits and fees would go to the Township's account and the taxes would go to the Tax Collector's account. There would be a notice of processing fees the customer would have to agree to before completing the transaction. He said it was just something for the Board to consider. Vice Chairman Setta suggested reaching out to the Tax Collector to see how many requests she gets for credit card payments. He asked Ms. Musso how many requests she receives for payment of permits by credit card; she said not many, possibly 2 or 3 a year. Supervisor Kearney feared that taking credit cards for permits that the application may not be complete, and the acceptance of a credit card is giving a person the permit. Mr. Hein said he had received requests to pay taxes by credit card and had spoken to Kate, who was in favor of it. Supervisor Kearney said she was afraid of credit card fraud. Mr. Hein said we would not take credit cards over the phone and would only have it online for the customer to do themselves or in person at the office where we would see them using the card. He also suggested having a statement put on the website that would say the permit would not be issued until everything was complete, and that Solicitor Wolff could help craft that. Ms. Musso asked what the turnaround time was for the credit card payment; Mr. Hein said one to two days. Ms. Musso asked if the person would have wait that two days for their permit. Mr. Hein said we get notice immediately that a payment has been made online, but it takes one to two days to receive the funds in our bank. Supervisor Kearney noted it would raise the cost of a permit. Ms. Musso asked about a bounced card; Mr. Hein said we would follow up on any charge backs that we*

get. He noted that the fees are separate because we legally can't pay for them and that a lot of businesses pass through fees. Roz Davis asked how long it would take to get a chargeback notification. He said one or two days and that safeguards would be put in place for this. She asked if it could be tabled until the web design was finished. Mr. Hein said this was just for discussion and the web design is almost complete, that he and Melinda have been having meetings on it. They had one today and will be presenting it to the Board shortly. He said the credit card company would work with the web designer. We would not be collecting any credit card information or creating any kind of database to worry about cybercrime. Ms. Davis said she used her credit card on the phone and the company was put on hold until she entered her card number; Mr. Hein said we wouldn't be taking any payments on the phone, just online or in person.

- g.** Approve updated Police Department Policy Manual – Mr. Hein said Chief Klocko asked it to be put on the agenda for approval because the updated policy was put in place last year but not approved. Vice Chairman Setta said to put it on the May 4, 2021 agenda. Chief Klocko said it included a few updates that were reviewed by Supervisor Brostoski.
- h.** Eagle Lake Police 2021 agreement – Mr. Hein said they are proposing a rate of \$40/hour with the coverage being Friday and Saturday 6 pm-2 am and Sunday 6 pm-10 pm extending to midnight if there is a holiday on Monday. It would be for Memorial Day weekend then June 18, 2021-September 6, 2021. Vice Chairman Setta asked Chief Klocko if he was okay with this. He said when it started it was geared toward supplemental income for the Township to provide part time officers with extra shifts. Now it is become an extra duty that is not needed; they go in there anyway. The officers would like to be compensated at time and a half similar to Officer Grube for school functions. He requested that if the contract is entered into, that the officers be paid time and a half. Supervisor Brostoski asked if Eagle Lake would pay more than this; Chief Klocko said not now because this is what they have budgeted. They would have no issue raising it if it went to the officers. Supervisor Peirce asked if we would be losing money by paying time and a half. Chief Klocko said no because there is not an officer who makes near that. Supervisor Peirce asked about when the payroll taxes are added in. Supervisor Brostoski it would be covered but we wouldn't be making as much money. The officers are in there anyway. Chief Klocko said it's a different time now with the way the people are. Discussion was held as to arrests, reports and court. Supervisor Brostoski said it won't cost us any more money because the officers will be in there, but it may cost more if they are not. Supervisor Kearney asked Chief Klocko if the time and a half was only for when the officers were in Eagle Lake, not in court or writing reports. He said only when on duty in Eagle Lake. Solicitor Wolff asked if there is an arrest in Eagle Lake, why we couldn't charge for the court appearance. Chief Klocko said that was discussed a while ago but Eagle Lake felt that was on the Township because we would have arrested them anyway if called in. He recommended meeting with Eagle Lake in September to negotiate a new rate. Supervisor Kearney asked if anyone has ever attended one of their budget meetings and was told no.

**18. NEW BUSINESS:** There was no new business.

**19. OLD BUSINESS:** There was no old business.

**20. CORRESPONDENCE:** Mr. Hein stated there was a letter sent by the North Pocono Trails Association looking for a letter of support for a grant application related to a project to construct a handicapped access trail from Market Street in Moscow to the newly dedicated Roaring Brook Grove. It was agreed that Mr. Hein would have a draft letter ready for the Board Meeting on May 4, 2021.

**21. SUPERVISORS COMMENTS:** Supervisor Kearney received a complaint that the road department phone was called, and nobody called back. She asked if the phone could be given to the road crew. Mr. Hein said the phone is turned off in the safe because he was not given direction on what to do with it. Supervisor Brostoski said complaints should come into the office. Mr. Hein asked if it should be put on the May 4, 2021 meeting and was told yes.

**22. PUBLIC COMMENT:** Roz Davis thanked Chief Klocko for bringing to light the problems in Eagle Lake because in the past the question was raised about negative activity there and the answer was not really. She would like the Board to reconsider the limiting of PTO since there is no short term or long term disability. Mr. Hein said we have short term disability through the life insurance policy. She said she meant if an employee got hurt at home there would be something so they wouldn't lose their job.

*Barbara Havenstrite said she has never had a response from the Police Department whenever she has called them. She is going to go around the Township with a petition to get rid of the Police Department. It is a good part of the budget and she has never made a call that was answered. Chief Klocko said that was not true. Vice Chairman Setta asked her what number she called. She sent in an email about parking on Center Street and was told nothing could be done. She called about her son's dog being hit they didn't respond because they were on a call in Spring Brook. When the person was caught, no restitution was made. She's had windows broken and her son's car broken into with his cell phone stolen. She spoke to the District Magistrate and was told the Police have made ten complaints to the Magistrate since January 1<sup>st</sup>. She complained about the lack of traffic tickets and lack of enforcement of speed signs. Chief Klocko said she didn't understand law enforcement and her claims were not true. Supervisor Brostoski suggested reviewing her claims with the first one. He said it's difficult for senior citizens to walk from the parking lot to games. Chief Klocko said there are more signs up now and will be enforced; he talked to the school district and the SRO. Supervisor Brostoski asked about the dog; Chief Klocko said there was never an arrest made because there was never a suspect. Ms. Havenstrite said there was a suspect who told four people he hit the dog; she didn't want them arrested for hitting the dog but wanted something done about them riding on the roads with four-wheelers. He said as he remembered it, the person on the quad drove by, the dog was on a leash, chased the quad and got to the end of the leash and died. She said the quad hit the dog. Ms. Davis said she had issues with a dog coming on her property and she called the police. They responded or the State Police did when Covington was not available. She has called and not received a response, but they usually call within twenty-four hours to follow up. Chief Klocko asked Ms. Havenstrite to give all her documentation to Supervisor Brostoski and he would sit down with him to compare it to his records and reports. Vice Chairman Setta asked Ms. Havenstrite who would be called if the department was disbanded. She said the State Police. He said when his daughter was in high school, she had a minor car accident and they had to wait on the side of the road for the State Police for four hours because it wasn't a priority. He said there is not the coverage with the State Police. She said we are not getting what we pay for. Vice Chairman Setta asked if she had called the non-emergency number for these types of issues. She said she had but was laughed at. Chief Klocko said that was not true. Dispatch calls them and they respond. Supervisor Brostoski asked Chief Klocko to have Officer Grube sit on Center Street for the next home baseball game to move people along so they don't park there; he said he would. Supervisor Kearney asked if Officer Grube is able to enforce the parking. Chief Klocko said yes, and he will ask him to make an announcement at the next game.*

**23. ADJOURNMENT:** *ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Peirce), and carried 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm.*

*Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas A. Hein  
Secretary / Treasurer*

*Approved:*