

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**PUBLIC HEARING for ORDINANCE 2021-01 SHORT TERM RENTALS**  
**TUESDAY MAY 25, 2021 AT 6:00 PM**

*The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., at the Covington Township Municipal Building, 20 Moffit Drive, Covington Township, PA 18444 and via Zoom to consider Ordinance 2021-01 Short Term Rentals.*

*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. Michelle Smolskis, court reporter was also present.*

*Vice Chairman Setta called the hearing to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:10 pm. Vice Chairman Setta turned the hearing over to Solicitor Wolff.*

*Solicitor Wolff entered the following exhibit into the record: Affidavit of publication of tonight's hearing in the Tri-County Independent along with the ad, which he labeled Township-1. Solicitor Wolff turned the meeting back to Vice Chairman Setta.*

*Vice Chairman stated the hearing is being held to discuss the proposed Covington Township Ordinance #2021-01 Short Term Rentals. He told those present in the audience would be sworn in and would need to state their name and address if they wished to speak.*

*June Ejk, 103 West Creekview Drive, Clifton Township, PA, who is a Clifton Township Supervisor, stated she does not have any short term rentals and does not benefit any way from them. She asked the Supervisors to consider excluding the Big Bass Lake community from this ordinance. They regulate their rentals internally for the last 50 years with no problems. There are only five Big Bass Lake streets in Covington Township. They have their own regulations and security. She had issues with section 9 with how the enforcement officer would be responding.*

*Greg Bonawitz, 45 Wildflower Circle, Gouldsboro, PA, who has a rental property in Big Bass Lake, understood the need for the ordinance. However, he questioned the need for the two hour response time coupled with an owner or manager living within a 50 mile radius. He complained that section 15b on page 10 regarding two violations within a year resulting in the suspension of the owner's permit for a year could result in monetary losses of \$10,000 or more. He questioned what a regular resident would be fined for two violations of ordinances. He believed that the notice to violators on page nine should not only be posted on the property but should also definitely be sent certified mail to the owner so that the owner is made aware of the violation.*

*Patricia Zajackowski, 50 Bunea Vista Drive, Covington Township, PA stated she has a short term rental property next door to her house and has had to listen to loud music all weekend. She wants to know who will be watching out for residents and is concerned about the problems at night. Vice Chairman Setta said for now, residents have to bring it to the Township's attention. Solicitor Wolff said property owners who want to rent would have to apply for a permit and if residents have a concern about a property, they can call the Township to inquire if there is a permit on file. If there are problems, the police should be called but the Township will appoint an enforcement officer if the ordinance passes.*

*June Ejk asked if Covington Township had a current noise ordinance. Supervisor Brostoski said no, but the police can be called. Vice Chairman Setta said permits would be sent out if the ordinance passes. Supervisor Wolf asked Ms. Ejk if she was appointed by her board to attend this meeting and if she had property in Covington Township. She responded no.*

*Kathleen Werner, 49 Bunea Vista Drive, Covington Township, PA had concerns about the property on her street. She said Big Bass Lake and Eagle Lake are communities where short term rentals are expected. She and her neighbors have had to call the police on this house and there is a lot of garbage. She wanted to know who to call for non-emergencies. Solicitor Wolff said a person would be appointed under this ordinance if it passes. He said the ordinance has teeth that the Township can use as enforcement. Mr. Hein stated the ordinance would be posted on the website along with the contact information for the enforcement officer if it passes.*

*Supervisor Brostoski asked how many rentals were in Big Bass Lake. Maksim Kunin, 441 Main Street Gouldsboro, PA said there were 120 per year with 30-40 being full time. He does not participate in rentals and understands the task the Board is dealing with. He supports excluding Big Bass Lake from the ordinance because it would create a hardship for their residents. They may end up with three ordinances from three townships. He said littering and noise are not a short term rental problem; they could be from a resident also. He said people renting big houses, it is a business for them, but the small renters would be hurt with the violations. Supervisor Brostoski said the harsh penalties in the ordinance are there to place the onus on property owners to make sure problems don't happen.*

*Roz Davis, 226 Old Schoolhouse Road, Covington Township asked why Eagle Lake was excluded. Solicitor Wolff said the provisions of the ordinance relating to lot size, room size, parking, etc. would not be enforceable on the trailers in Eagle Lake. She asked if background checks on the owners and their property managers could be done. She was told the Township didn't have that authority.*

*Discussion went back and forth between the Supervisors, Ms. Ejk, Mr. Bonawitz, Ms. Zajaczkowski, Mr. Kunin about strangers in the neighborhoods, noise, trash, etc.*

*The Supervisors called an executive session from 7:15 to 7:28 pm.*

*Ms. Zajaczkowski asked how there could be someone running a business in a residential zone. Vice Chairman Setta, Supervisor Brostoski and Solicitor Wolff said they would let her know after researching it.*

*ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 4-0 to adopt the Short Term Rental Ordinance as amended to exclude Big Bass Lake.*

*ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried 4-0 to adjourn the hearing at 7:32 pm.*

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

*Approved:*