

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2021**

The June 15, 2021, Special Meeting of the Covington Township Board of Supervisors was called to order with a Pledge of Allegiance at 5:01 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 20 Moffat Drive, Covington Township, PA 18444, by Supervisor John Brostoski.

PRESENT: Melissa A. Kearney, Supervisor; John Brostoski, Supervisor; Marshall Peirce, Supervisor; Joel M. Wolff, Esquire; Melinda Musso, Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ANNOUNCEMENT: Supervisor Brostoski announced that an Executive Session was held on Friday, June 11, 2021 to discuss personnel issues regarding resignations.

AGENDA:

C.C. Young Insurance Quote: Mr. Mark Young from C.C. Young & Henkelman Insurance Agency was present and gave a presentation regarding township insurance that did not include workman's compensations. Currently, the township is with Hudson (renewal rate \$38,786), however, Mr. Young advised another company, Trident, has a rate of \$35,991. Mr. Young advised that both policies provide the same overall coverage. There were discussions on council selection with litigation and adequate coverage for replacement cost.

ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried to stay with Hudson.

Resignations: Supervisor Brostoski read the resignation letters from Thomas Yerke, Joseph Setta, Douglas Hein, and John Bauman. He commented on their nice work and wishes them well.

ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried to accept Mr. Yerke's resignation with regret.

ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried to accept Mr. Setta's resignation with regret.

ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried to accept Mr. Hein's resignation with regret.

ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried to accept Mr. Bauman's resignation with regret.

Vacancies:

ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Peirce), and carried to appoint Melissa Kearney as Chairman.

The meeting was turned over to Chairman Kearney.

ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried to appoint John Brostoski as Vice Chairman.

ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Peirce), and carried to appoint Melissa Kearney as Open Records Officer.

ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Peirce), and carried to appoint John Brostoski as Alternate Open Records Officer.

Chairman Kearney stated that any employee should be able to talk to any supervisor even with a Human Resource Liaison. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Peirce), and carried to appoint John Brostoski as Human Resource Liaison.

ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried to appoint Marshall Peirce as Road Liaison.

The following appointments were tabled until next month when the vacancies on the Board can be filled: Sewer Authority Liaison and Lackawanna County Tax Collection Committee's 1st Alternate.

ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried to appoint Marshall Peirce as Recycling Coordinator.

ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski), and carried to appoint Melinda Musso as CDL Drug & Alcohol contact person.

A letter of interest for the Sewer Authority Board was received from George Walz, along with a letter of support from Robin Smerdon, Chairman & Heather Zielinski, Secretary-Treasurer of the Sewer Authority. ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Brostoski), and carried to appoint George Walz to the Sewer Authority Board.

Wages:

Fred DePew, part-time Road employee, is currently making \$15.54/hour and was left out of the yearly wage assessments back in January. ON MOTION (Peirce), seconded (Kearney), and carried to increase Fred DePew's wages to \$20.00/hour.

Advertise for letters of interest for Supervisor:

Chairman Kearney announced that the Board is welcoming letters of interest for the two open seats on the Board of Supervisors that will be appointed at the July meeting. ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Peirce), and carried to advertise on the township website that letters of interest will be accepted until June 22, 2021 for the Board of Supervisors.

Recreation Committee:

The next meeting will be held Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. Chairman Kearney advised only three people attended the last meeting and asked if the meeting should be cancelled and possibly advertise on our website for letters of interest. ON MOTION duly made (Brostoski), seconded (Peirce) and carried to advertise on the township website for letters of interest for the Recreation Committee. ON MOTION (Brostoski), seconded (Peirce) and carried to cancel the Recreation Committee meeting on June 17, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Bill Beavers asked if there is someone to fill Mr. Bauman's position or will it remain an open position. There was a brief discussion on the multiple job duties. ON MOTION duly made (Kearney), seconded (Brostoski) and carried to advertise the Caretaker's position in the newspaper.

Roslyn Davis pointed out in Mr. Yerke's resignation letter, he mentions four wood working machines and asked what kind of machines they were. Scott VanFleet explained when Mr. Yerke and he were friendly, Mr. Yerke agreed to repair his grandfather's wood working machines, however, when things went sour between them, he hasn't seen his grandfather's machines since then. Mr. VanFleet asked if he would be able to look at the machines to see if they were his grandfather's and did not understand why they were with the township. Chairman Kearney informed the Board that Mr. Bauman was unable to find the paint sprayer wand Mr. Yerke referred to in his letter of resignation; Mr. Bauman did mention the wood working machines that were brought to the township by Mr. Yerke shortly after he started working for the township, with the instruction to fix the wiring on them. Officer Grube advised Mr. VanFleet that it is not a township issue since they were brought to the property by Mr. Yerke, and he would have to pursue it through legal action with a magistrate.

Roslyn Davis asked why Mr. Yerke mentioned in his letter that his property is commercial when she thought he had a residential property. There was a discussion on the zoning and Vice Chairman Brostoski advised Mr. Yerke has certificates for his property. Mr. VanFleet advised Mr. Yerke's are out of date. Mr. VanFleet stated his own property is grandfathered in since he never stopped operating his business, but it does not make it a commercial property. Vice Chairman Brostoski advised that what the Board was shown by Mr. Yerke was sufficient for them.

Ms. Davis asked if by accepting his resignation, does that mean the Board is accepting and removing Mr. Yerke from the Zoning violations. Vice Chairman Brostoski advised that they only accepted the resignation from township office.

Mr. VanFleet asked Vice Chairman Brostoski if he thought Mr. Yerke's property was not in violation because he's commercial. Vice Chairman Brostoski advised they reviewed the certificates, and the zoning officer went to the property. Mr. VanFleet asked if they were the same certificates he received with his Right to Know request. Chairman Kearney said they should be. Ms. Davis asked if the certificates are referring to conforming use and what was Mr. Yerke given permission to do. Mr. Brostoski stated it was for vehicles and junk vehicles Mr. Yerke would work on and advised this should be brought up to Mr. Donati, Zoning Officer, at the next meeting.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS:

Supervisor Peirce wanted the taxpayers to know the Board doesn't have the experience with all of these resignations. The Board is trying their best to get things back on track and is hoping that the taxpayers can be patient with us as we go through this transition.

Supervisor Peirce asked for permission for himself and Vice Chairman Brostoski to talk to the Road crew and Mr. Bauman before he leaves in order to have a plan moving forward with the vacant position. Chairman Kearney agreed.

Roslyn Davis feels it was a great blow to the township to lose John Bauman. He is very dependable, trust-worthy, and highly skilled and hopefully he may know someone who is as skilled that may be able to apply.

Bill Willson advised it is to the Board's credit that they are looking for people to fill those two seats rather than just appointing someone and feels transparency is paramount. Ms. Kearney advised those positions are only for six months until the end of the year since they will be voted upon in November's election. Supervisor Peirce is hopeful to appoint both Board positions at the July meeting. There was further discussion on the swearing in process.

ON MOTION duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney) and carried to adjourn at 5:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Melinda Musso, Secretary

Approved: