

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2022**

*The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held their monthly Work Session on Tuesday, September 27, 2022, at 7:05 p.m., at the Covington Township Municipal Building, Moffat Estate, 20 Moffat Drive, Covington Township, PA.*

*There were present: Melissa Kearney, Chairwoman/interim secretary; Vicki Williams, Vice Chairwoman; Marshall Peirce, Supervisor; William Willson, Supervisor; and Joel M. Wolff, Esquire. Wanda Andreoli, supervisor was absent. Also present were David Hall, zoning code enforcement officer; David Hess, planning commission member; Roz Davis, zoning hearing board member; and Police Chief Robert Bastek.*

*The meeting was opened with a Pledge of Allegiance led by Chairwoman Kearney.*

*The agenda was available for review.*

*Announcements:*

*Chairwoman Kearney announced Vice Chairwoman Williams, Supervisor Peirce and Supervisor Willson held an executive session this evening at 6:00 p.m. to discuss the secretarial position. An executive session was held at 6:30 p.m. to discuss legal issues.*

*Public Comment:*

*Although Chris Kelly from the N.P. Public Library was on the agenda, he will be here next week for our regular meeting.*

*Minutes:*

*The minutes from the September 6, 2022 regular monthly meeting were available for review. Chairwoman Kearney asked the supervisors to review the minutes and let her know of any revisions.*

*Bills and Treasurers Reports:*

*The bills and treasurer reports will be available next week.*

*Administrative Actions:*

*Christmas Event at the Mansion: Chairwoman Kearney will be asking for a budget of \$500.00 for a small Christmas event to be sponsored by the Board of Supervisors. She has spoken with Santa and decided on a date of December 10, 2022 from 12-3 p.m. for pictures with Santa. She would like to offer a small snack like in the past. We already have bags to give to the children, so the only expense will be for the refreshments.*

*Probation periods ending: Justin Musgrave's probation will end on October 18, 2022 and Dawn Coco's probation will end on October 5, 2022.*

*Act 57 Resolution: This resolution is required and needs to be adopted between October 10, 2022 and January 9, 2023. It amends the Local Collection Law to direct the tax collector to waive additional charges for real estate in certain situations*

*M-1 Zoning: A discussion was held regarding the RGM property on Route 307 and solar energy. Dave Hess spoke about a webinar he attended regarding solar energy. He reviewed a sample ordinance passed by Montour County; although he feels this ordinance is not sufficient for use by us. Atty. Wolff questioned the need to allow for solar panels and where they would be permitted. Dave stated we would have to allow them and that the ordinance didn't break it down by residential and commercial but instead broke it down into a power plant that provided use for onsite and offsite uses. He described the differences of the two. He gave a very detailed description of the ordinance including where the solar panels could be located, along with concerns from residents. Chief Bastek questioned if there was an interest for this on the RGM property as he has noticed a survey crew on the property. A discussion ensued on the zoning of an M-1 property, the reasons for initially changing the zoning to an M-1 zone and the possibility of changing the zoning back to a C-2 zone. David Hall said he would review the minutes of the public hearing to see exactly how the zoning change was made in the event there was a contingency regarding the NorthPoint project. Atty. Wolff asked that the interim secretary reach out to the court stenographer to get a transcript of the public hearing. A discussion was held regarding the activity that has been taking place at the property. David Hall stated that the township can place restrictions on an M-1 zone. Chairwoman Kearney informed everyone that the reason for the change in topic was because of a conversation held between herself and Supervisor Peirce regarding restricting a solar farm to an M-1 zone (RGM property). Dave Hess doesn't believe a solar farm will work on this property due to the location and distance from the high grid capacity. Supervisor Peirce recommends that, at this time, we decide whether to reverse the zone to return it to the original zoning or place restrictions on the M-1 zone. Atty. Wolff stated that the ordinance and advertising could be done quickly, but we would need to have MaryLou get*



the revised map, which may take some time. A further discussion was held on what would need to be done to get the hearing properly advertised and the properties posted. Roz Davis questioned there being 2 different parcels that had zoning changes. Chairwoman Kearney reported that there was a small area that was originally an R-2 zone that was also changed to the M-1 zone. This will be added to the agenda. We will look into the advertising and posting requirements so we can set a date at the regular meeting. The discussion reverted back to solar energy and the need to re-vamp our zoning. Atty. Wolff stated this may be a good time to begin the work on this as it would be great to include the solar energy aspect. Dave Hess has reached out to a professor at Penn State in Carlisle who has been working on a zoning template for solar. He has not heard back from him yet, but will follow up with him to see if he is still working on it. A discussion ensued on the possibility of larger buildings in our township using the solar panels on their roofs to power their facilities. David Hall mentioned the zoning solicitor will be bringing him new versions of zoning to review. These new versions are for larger municipalities but he will be able to review the books to see which ones we can implement for our township.

Five C's conditional use will be presented to the board of supervisors at the monthly meeting. It has already gone to the planning commission. Chairwoman Kearney mentioned that the conditional use hearing needs to be held before Oct. 22, 2022, because the application had been received on August 25, 2022. The main building and the ice cream barn have already been converted to an apartment building. David stated that the main building has already been inspected by the building inspector, but after the conditional use hearing (if approved) it will then go back to the building inspector for possible UCC codes. A discussion was held on how we can get this building legal in the shortest amount of time by either having a conditional use hearing under a garden apartment use or by grandfathering this property in as a non-conforming use.

Tanfield Lumber: David has spoken with the owner of Tanfield, who stated that he has a non-conforming use and is doing everything in his power to help with the noise from trucks. With this non-conforming use there is nothing that the zoning officer or township can do. David also stated that there is nothing that we (township) can do about the "jake break" issue as this is a PennDot law since there is more than a 4% grade change on this road. His only suggestion for the trucks that are coming in late at night would be to put a sign up where Center Street meets Jubilee Road that states "No Commercial Use during the hours of 9:00pm to 6:30 am over 21,000 GVW". Supervisor Willson questioned where a non-conforming use would come from because it has been a sawmill/lumber yard for many years, even before the zoning was changed in 1989. Chairwoman Kearney reported that the truck traffic has not been an issue in her opinion lately. A discussion was held on issues with staging areas for the trucks if there are limited hours for trucks and placing signs on PennDot roads. Supervisor Peirce questioned sending a letter to Tanfield to ask him to curtail the hours that trucks are entering to unload. Atty. Wolff sent a letter a month ago asking for their assistance in this matter. The issue appears to be that the trucks that are coming in late at night or early morning have their own way of unloading the trucks, so there is no one to stop them. Even if the police were called, they would be gone before they got there. David stated that Rick Tanfield will be calling him next week to see if they are able to come up with an amicable solution.

New Zoning map: David requested a budget for a new updated zoning map. Atty. Wolff mentioned that it might be changing in a month, but David would like to have the map sooner since the map he currently uses is outdated and difficult to read.

Zoning Solicitor: Chairwoman Kearney mentioned that we have hired a zoning solicitor. This will be mentioned at the meeting. Supervisor Willson questioned David about the road department removing a sign at the corner of Havenstrite Lane and Jubilee Road. A letter was sent to the owner of the sign informing them that the sign needed to be removed. Since the sign had not been removed, David asked the road department to remove the sign. He mentioned a property on Bay Drive that will need to go before Magistrate Adcock about cleaning up. He stated that if the road department has to go out to clean up a property, a lien can be placed against the property for the cost of the clean-up. We may need to look into hiring outside help to complete the clean-up, if necessary. David also mentioned that he has started the condemnation process for the Sheridan residence. He stated that he will need the township to send a letter of intent, but he is waiting for his Attorney. Supervisor Willson commented on the clean-up that has taken place at the Sparrow property. Roz Davis mentioned that Pampered Pooch asked her to inquire about placing a sign on Route 502 directing traffic to the shopping center. She stated the owners of Pampered Pooch are asking about because people are stopping in their shop looking to use the bathroom. David stated that he will call PennDot for her



as this would be an issue for them. Chief Bastek reported that there was once a sign on Route 307 directing traffic to the shopping center, but it was damaged and never replaced.

Appoint/hire secretary: Supervisor Williams asked to have this put on the meeting agenda for next week.

Planning Commission: No report for this work session

Building Inspector: No report for this work session

Engineer: No report for this work session.

Solicitor: No report for this work session.

Director of Public Works: No report for this work session.

Roadmaster: No report for this work session.

Moffat Mansion: No report for this work session.

Police Department:

David Burrier: This was a typo on the agenda. An application was received from David Burrier for his interest in working part-time for the township. Chief Bastek reported that David was a part-time police officer in Covington for many years, who worked the picnic and covered shifts when needed, however, he resigned from the township in December 2021. He is now interested in coming back to work part-time for the township on a per diem status.

Police Secretary: Chief Bastek asked if the board would consider increasing the amount of hours for the secretary to 32 hours a week from the 28 hours she is currently working. He is also asking that her pay be increased from \$15 per hour to \$17/\$18 per hour.

Recreation Committee: No report for this work session. There will be a report at the meeting.

Sewage Enforcement Officer: No report for this work session.

New Business: The auditor's recommendations will be read at the meeting.

Supervisors Comments: No supervisor comments.

Public Comment: Roz Davis had the following comments: The right to know officer (Dawn Coco) needs to be appointed. Roz stated she went thru the minutes and Dawn was not appointed as previously stated. The CDL person also needs to be appointed. This position has always been appointed in the past, so it needs to be appointed now. Supervisor Willson feels that it is not necessary as all correspondence will go to the secretary anyway. Roz asked if there were any applications received for the secretary position. Supervisor Williams answered, yes there were a lot. Roz also asked that since there have been no announcements about the meeting on the website, she would like the time to be placed on the agenda for when it is advertised on the website. She also questioned the probation period of the police secretary and the raise that is being requested. Chief Bastek explained that the secretary is currently looking for another job, and he would hate to lose her. He stated that it takes a lot to train an employee for what she does, i.e. background investigations, child clearances, FBI, etc. Roz mentioned Melinda would go there for 8 hours a week and Chief Bastek reported that Melinda did the UCR's while Mary does UCR's, payroll, monthly reporting, and the other items mentioned. All of this frees him up to patrol the roads more.

The work session adjourned at 8:30p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Kearney, Chairwoman Board of Supervisors/Interim Secretary

APPROVED: 10/4/2022