

COVINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
MONTHLY WORK SESSION
JUNE 27, 2023

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held their monthly work session on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 7 p.m. at the Covington Township Municipal building, Moffat Estate, 20 Moffat Drive, Covington Township, PA 18444.

There were present: Chairwoman Melissa Kearney, Vice Chairwoman Vicki Williams, Supervisor Marshall Peirce, Supervisor Wanda Andreoli, Supervisor William Willson, and Attorney Joel Wolff.

Also present: Police Chief Robert Bastek.

Agenda: There were no changes to the agenda.

Announcements: There were no announcements.

Public Comment: There were no public comments made.

Minutes: The minutes of the June 6, 2023 monthly meeting were given to the Board of Supervisors for review.

Bills: The bill list will be available at next week's monthly meeting.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's report will be available at next week's monthly meeting.

Administrative Actions:

Community Bank presentation: Jacky Mizele, Susan Pitoniak, and Lynn Mercatili were present to speak about the services and rates offered by Community Bank. They gave a brief history of the bank and reviewed the pros of banking with Community Bank. They presented the board with a packet explaining the services the bank offers, their current rates, and a transition plan if the board decides to move to Community Bank. Supervisor Willson recommended that Diana (treasurer) review the packet and possibly meet with the bank to discuss our options.

Lackawanna River Conservation Association: Bernie McGurl, Missy Welshko-Williams, and Tara Jones of the Lackawanna River Conservation Association were present. Bernie stated the reason for his visit was to give a brief report on the conservation easement since there has been a change in leadership within the township and because the year 2022 marked the 20th anniversary of the conservation easement with the Moffat Estate. He gave a brief history of why the conservancy was established and the creation of the conservation easement with the Moffat estate. He mentioned the conservancy has a monitoring program, where they visit the estate once a year to look at the buildings and the grounds. He was very pleased with last year's visit, commending the work that had been completed on the stone pillars at the main entrance and the trees that had been planted to replace some of the ash trees that had been removed. He stated the conservancy is very pleased with the work that has been done at the estate. He suggested the board consider establishing a committee or board to help with the financials of the estate going forward, something like "The Friends of the Moffat Estate". Chairwoman Kearney informed Bernie that the seniors had recently moved out of the gate house at the front of the estate. She asked for suggestions on what would be allowed, or not allowed, to move into the gate house. She questioned what would be allowed to occupy this space. He stated he would need to speak with Joel and the conservancy's attorney to discuss some options. Bernie also spoke briefly about the possibility of expanding the trail network between Moscow and Hollister. The LRCA would be interested in working with the township in the future to assist in expanding the trail network. This is in the preliminary planning stages, but he will reach out as this project develops.

Resignation of Bill Beavers, auditor: A resignation letter was received from Bill Beavers in his position as auditor since he was recently hired as the pavilion manager. This will need to be accepted at next week's meeting.

Proposal for scanning/creating electronic records of ordinances: Dawn and Missy met with a gentleman from Reynolds Business Systems to begin the process of putting all municipal records in electronic format. A quote has been received for creating electronic records of the ordinance filing cabinet. Missy advised she will be meeting with one more company to receive a quote from them also.

Resolutions for destroying records/recordings: Chairwoman Kearney advised she would like to adopt a resolution to allow for the destroying of meeting recordings after the minutes have been approved. She stated the office staff is attempting to clean up and remove old records that are no longer needed or required to be stored and this would help with that effort. She also advised the destruction of any municipal records would need to follow the Municipal Records Manual put out by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. A lengthy discussion ensued on the destruction, creating, and storing of records of the municipality, the need for keeping the maps even after creating digital files of them, and the cost involved. Atty. Wolff advised the use of cloud storage should be decided prior to starting the process of digitizing.

Inspection report of the wind turbine: The inspection report of the wind turbine was received. We are still waiting for the invoice for this inspection and the estimates for either repairing or removing the wind turbine. The blades of the turbine were tied off to prevent further damage. Supervisor Willson asked if it was ever a functioning windmill. The records of when it was first installed would need to be reviewed to see the cost effectiveness of it.

Traffic Study, Center Street: Supervisors Kearney and Peirce met with John Hand of Baillie Lumber and Rick Tanfield to discuss the traffic study for Center Street. At this meeting, it was questioned whether the township would be willing to split the cost of the traffic study three ways. John Hand stated they are willing to ask the truck drivers to respect the township by not using their jake brakes and abiding by the zoning ordinance for the hours of operation. A lengthy discussion ensued on how the traffic study came about, the possibility of splitting the cost three ways, the zoning ordinance and non-conforming uses, and the safety of traffic on Center Street. Supervisor Williams asked if there could be a letter drawn up that the cost of the traffic study will be split 3 ways with the understanding of some conditions from the township.

Peddler's Permit fee schedule: The township has been receiving calls about food trucks. Per the peddler's permit fee schedule, it appears that the fee would be \$600 per month. One call was for a hot dog cart and the other call was regarding the North Pocono Band Parents who will be hosting a one-day food truck/craft fair event in September. Our current fee schedule is for a monthly fee only. Chief Bastek recommends that we have a separate fee for daily and weekly. He also suggested that we create an actual peddler's permit, as at this time, there is only an application that gets completed and approved. Supervisor Willson suggested the fee be broken down per day at a rate of \$20.00.

Planning Commission: Chairwoman Kearney advised the Planning Commission will be holding their meeting on Wednesday, July 5th since they did not have a quorum at their last meeting and Mavis Tire and Nammo Pocal will be coming before the Planners for recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. Per the County Planning Commission, both plans will need to be approved by the township zoning officer, however, our zoning officer is currently out due to personal reasons. Missy advised that she has spoken with Dave Lamm, who has been reviewing the current zoning permits, about this and he stated that his assistant building inspector, Jason of BHW consultants, may be able to look at these plans. Atty. Wolff reviewed the comments of the county planning commission for Mavis Tire and advised that the county is saying that the township zoning officer needs to decide whether Mavis is retail or a vehicle repair operation. Supervisor Peirce also commented on how in the past, the Board of Supervisors would send a letter to the Planning Commission advising that they are not to recommend any plans to the Board of Supervisors with contingencies. It was discussed that a reminder letter should be sent to the planning commission advising that the board of supervisors will not accept recommendations that have outstanding contingencies. A further discussion ensued.

Building Inspector: No report.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer: Zoning solicitor, Robert Sheils, sent a recommendation for someone who can assist with re-writing our zoning code. It was discussed that the county will be attending the North Pocono COG meeting on July 12th to discuss the status of the county comprehensive plan. Chairwoman Kearney will attend the COG meeting since Supervisor Peirce will be working the Fire Co. picnic.

Engineer: A letter was received from Mary Lou Butler with a recommendation for the Developer's Agreement for Nammo Pocal. Atty. Wolff will prepare this for the meeting in the event the plan is recommended to the board for approval. Supervisor Peirce questioned if this plan was for the work that had already been completed without the proper permits, the answer was yes.

Solicitor: Atty. Wolff spoke with Dan Walsh from TransUnion who advised they have reached an impasse with NorthPoint on the purchase of the property. TransUnion does not want to purchase the property from NorthPoint until it is decided that they will need this property. They are still waiting to hear from DEP regarding testing for their water.

Director of Public Works: No report.

Roadmaster: No report.

Moffat Maintenance: No report.

Police Department: No report.

Recreation Committee: No report.

Sewage Enforcement Officer: No report.

New Business: None.

Old Business:

Correspondence: A letter was received from the North Pocono Minisink Lions seeking a donation for their annual fireworks display.

Supervisor Comments: None.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Adjournment: ON MOTION duly made (Williams) seconded (Kearney) and carried to adjourn the work session at 8:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Melissa Kearney, Secretary

Approved:

