

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS  
MONTHLY WORK SESSION  
OCTOBER 31, 2023**

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held their monthly work session on Tuesday, October 31, 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 William Willson, Supervisor Wanda Andreoli 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:** Fire chief Brad Jones was present and gave an update on the Knox Box ordinance. He reported there are currently (8) businesses that are non-compliant with the Knox Box Ordinance. There are 42 businesses that have ordered but not installed the Knox Boxes yet; they will be sent one final reminder letter prior to being issued fines. He questioned the process for fining the offenders, per the ordinance.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the October 3, 2023 monthly meeting and the October 23, 2023 budget workshop 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:**

**Emergency Response Payment Reimbursement Ordinance:** Attorney Wolff questioned the fire chief for clarification on the tools and equipment reimbursement section of the ordinance. The hearing is scheduled for November 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm with the Property Maintenance Ordinance hearing to follow immediately after the Emergency Response Payment Reimbursement Ordinance. The hearings will be advertised by the end of this week.

**Statewide LSA grant:** The township will be applying for the statewide LSA grant on behalf of the fire company in the amount of \$698,762.14 for the purchase of a new fire engine. Mary Lou Butler has completed the application and will have copies at the monthly meeting. A resolution (#2023-14) will need to be adopted at the November monthly meeting requesting the grant monies.

**Kieselowsky subdivision:** This subdivision has been recommended for approval by the planning commission, however, there are outstanding contingencies. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney will check with Mary Lou Butler to be sure the contingencies have been met prior to this being added to the agenda for next week.

**Resignation of Richard Lanzoni, CTSA:** A letter of resignation was received from Richard Lanzoni as a member/vice-chairman for the Sewer Authority. This will need to be accepted at the November monthly meeting.

**Advertise proposed 2024 budget:** The budget has been balanced and will need to be advertised prior to approval at the December meeting.

**Planning Commission:** The monthly report of the planning commission has been received. A recommendation has been received for the building addition of Joe Bonacci (Keystone Steel Erectors, Inc) with the new contingencies stated in the engineer's letter dated 10-4-2023. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney will confirm Mr. Bonacci's attendance at the November monthly meeting.

**Building Inspector:** No report received prior to work session.

**Zoning Officer:** No report received prior to work session.

**Code Enforcement Officer:** Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney will reach out to the code enforcement officer to remind him of the monthly report for next week.

**Engineer:** No report received prior to work session.

**Solicitor:** Atty. Wolff spoke on the driveway ordinance. A discussion was held on keeping this an Ordinance or updating the current ordinance with a resolution. The tower lease agreement calls for a 50-year lease with the county. The county will update the current tower at a cost of \$27,000.00 and continue to maintain the tower for the term of the lease. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney will contact the wind turbine company to be sure the original cost of the repair has not changed.

**Director of Public Works:** No report at this time.

**Roadmaster:** Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney reported she received a call from Jim Pierre who would be willing to meet with the Supervisors to discuss coming up with a plan to cut the dead trees that are alongside the township roads. Supervisor/DPW Director Peirce stated he would be willing to meet with him.

**Moffat Maintenance:** No report.

**Police Department:** Chief Bastek advised that he spoke with the applicant for the part-time police position who has already taken a full-time job elsewhere.

**Recreation Committee:** Chairwoman Kearney advised the Recreation Committee held their meeting in October and decided they will be holding the annual Christmas at the Mansion event on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> and Sunday December 10<sup>th</sup> from 12-3. They will be asking for a budget at the next meeting. She also stated the Holiday Tea will be held on January 7, 2024. More details to follow.

**Sewage Enforcement Officer:** Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney will reach out to KBA to remind them to send in their monthly report.

**New Business:**

**ZHB hearing decision:** The zoning hearing board denied the sign variance for Kost Tire.

**In Service Distribution:** Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney advised that Treasurer Patton spoke with PMRS who sent an email to both the treasurer and the secretary advising that our current retirement plan does not allow for employees, who are retiring, to remain a part time employee, they would only be allowed to be a 1099 contractor; however, there is a plan that would allow a retiring employee to remain as a part time employee (receiving no benefits nor paying into retirement). This plan is called the “In Service Distribution”. The Board of Supervisors has the right to change the current retirement plan to allow the In Service Distribution Plan. Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, PMRS would complete a cost study to determine the actual additional cost of the plan. If the Board of Supervisors were to allow the In Service Distribution, the township would vote on this at a public meeting, then they would notify PMRS who would then have their legal counsel take the lead and begin the cost study to determine the actual cost of the plan. PMRS’ legal counsel would develop an Ordinance for the Board of Supervisors to adopt allowing the In Service Distribution Plan for its employees. This ordinance can be retroactive to the beginning of the year that the ordinance is adopted in. Atty. Wolff questioned whether this would also work for uniform employees. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney will check with PMRS on uniform vs. non-uniform employees.

**Dual-use Roads:** Chairwoman Kearney advised that she was approached by a resident questioning the possibility of allowing ATVs on certain township roads. A discussion ensued on the pros and cons of allowing ATVs to ride on certain township roads. There are state laws currently in place that give the township the authority to allow ATV use on township roads, with requirements of registration, insurance, and age. Some concerns of the Supervisors were parking of trucks and trailers bringing ATVs to the township to ride the roads, illegal riding, and liability. Section 7722, Title 75 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes and DCNR give further details on the designation of ATV roads. This topic will be discussed more in the future.

**Nex-Trex Recycling Challenge:** The Nex-Trex Recycling Challenge/Grassroots Movement is a recycling program that allows for the recycling of polyethylene films that are not currently accepted with the township’s recycling program. The township would become a centralized drop off location. Nex-Trex would come and pick up the recyclables (either by the truckload, 40 bales, or ½ truckload, 20 bales) and

would pay the township \$0.14 per pound. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney has reached out to the coordinator of this program but has not heard anything yet. She will follow up and hopes to have more details for the meeting next week.

**Text My Gov:** This is a program that would allow township residents to sign up to receive updates of township issues via text, i.e. road closures, office closures, etc. The cost of this would be \$3,500 per year with a one-time fee of \$1,750. A discussion was held on getting information out to our residents outside of the website. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney would like to begin sending township calendars, quarterly, to the residents of the township, but we don't have a good address list. She stated that she spoke with the sewer authority who informed her that they would be willing to put the quarterly calendars in with their quarterly bills. The only issue with this would be that it would only go to the residents who are on central sewer, we would need to get the information to the residents who are not on central sewer.

**Old Business:**

**Property Maintenance Code Ordinance:** The hearing for this is scheduled for November 14<sup>th</sup> immediately following the Emergency Response Payment Reimbursement Ordinance. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney was questioning who the appeals board would be for this. She will investigate this further prior to the hearing date.

**County Comprehensive Plan:** The county will be sending a resolution to be adopted at the December meeting opting into the County Comprehensive Plan.

**Independence Ridge Roads:** The two (2) roads in Independence Ridge are now included in the township's inventory for liquid fuels. This increases our liquid fuels road inventory by 0.69 miles to a total of 25.89 miles. This will be reflected in our payment beginning in 2024.

**Knox Box Update:** This was discussed earlier in the work session.

**Correspondence:**

**Boot Camp:** PSATS sent out the flyer for the Boot Camp which begins in December.

**Road Closure:** State Route 435 Southbound will be closed for a maximum of 332 days beginning on November 21, 2023. Atty Wolff also mentioned the bridge in Elmhurst on Route 435 will also be closing for repairs.

**Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Event:** The county will be hosting a household hazardous waste disposal event on November 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. This disposal event includes batteries, paint cans, etc.

**Supervisor Comments:** No Supervisors comment.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Adjournment:** ON MOTION duly made (Peirce) seconded (Kearney) and carried to adjourn the work session at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Melissa Kearney, Secretary

Approved: 11-7-2023

Wanda Andreoli