

**COVINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
MARCH 4, 2025**

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at the Covington Township Municipal building, Moffat Estate, 20 Moffat Drive, Covington Township, PA 18444. Chairwoman Kearney opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge to the Flag.

Present were: Chairwoman/Secretary Melissa Kearney, Vice-chairman F. Marshall Peirce, Supervisor William Willson, and Attorney Joel Wolff.

Also present were: Building Inspector David Lamm, Engineer Mary Lou Butler, Roadmaster Arthur Alt, and Police Chief Jeff Lamm.

Absent: Supervisor Wanda Andreoli

Agenda: ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to accept the agenda as presented.

Announcements: An executive session was held on Friday, February 28, 2025, at noon to discuss the supervisor vacancy.

Public Comment: No public comment.

Minutes: ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Willson) and carried (3-0) to accept the minutes of the February 4, 2025, monthly meeting, and the February 25, 2025, work session as presented.

Bills: Chairwoman Kearney asked that (2) additional bills be approved with the current bill list, as these invoices were not given to the treasurer even though they were received in time. The invoice for Wolff Law, (Atty. Wolff) in the amount of \$3,500 and ESC Design (engineer Mary Lou Butler), in the amount of \$2,775 (2 invoices totaling this amount). Vice-chairman Peirce questioned the TRM bill, asking what it was for. Chief Lamm reported it is for the upfits on the Chevy Tahoe using funds from the 2024 budget, previously approved. Supervisor Willson questioned the Krason bill, confirming it was for police uniforms, and the Lackawanna Recycling bill. This bill was for the haul in February. ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to pay the bills as presented to include the invoices for Wolff Law and ESC Design.

Treasurer's Report: The treasurer's reports were available for the public's review. The treasurer's reports, as of February 4, 2025, included the following:

General Checking account: \$9,326.10

Payroll Checking account: \$25,100.35

PLGIT General Investment account: \$1,401,138.34

PLGIT Capital Projects account: \$12,375.66

State Fund account: Not reported this month

Petty Cash: \$345.85

The total for all accounts is: \$1,448,286.30. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney) and carried (3-0) to accept the Treasurer's report as presented.

Administrative Actions:

Appoint William Beavers as Supervisor: Three (3) letters of interest were received for the vacancy left by Vicki Williams' resignation. Letters of interest were received from William Beavers, Wayne Gavin, and Mac Walsh. The supervisors met with all (3). ON MOTION, duly made (Kearney), seconded (Willson) and carried (3-0) to appoint William Beavers as township supervisor. The term for this position will end on the 1st Monday in January. William will take office once his oath of office is taken.

Promote Officer Juan Baizan to full time: Police Chief Lamm reported officer Baizan was originally hired as a part-time officer who has been doing a great job. He will fill the vacancy left by the termination of Officer Destiny Frisbie. His starting pay will be \$30.00 per hour, and he will need

medical benefits. *ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Willson) and carried (3-0) to promote Officer Baizan to full-time effective immediately.*

Hire George Dobson, part-time officer: Chief Lamm would like to hire George Dobson to fill the part-time vacancy left by the promotion of Officer Baizan. Mr. Dobson has many years of experience as a police officer. His starting pay will be \$25.00 per hour with no benefits. *ON MOTION, duly made (Kearney), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to hire George Dobson as part-time police officer.*

Hire Brandon Long, part-time officer: Chief Lamm also explained that Brandon Long is ready to be hired as a part-time police officer. Mr. Long was originally going to be hired in January, but he needed to get re-certified as a municipal police officer, which he has now completed. Mr. Long's starting salary will also be \$25.00 per hour with no benefits. *ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to hire Brandon Long as part-time police officer.* Chief Lamm stated that with the hiring of these 2 additional officers and the promotion of Officer Baizan, the police department is now fully staffed.

Authorize payment to County land bank for past due taxes: Chairwoman Kearney explained an email she received from the county land bank of an oversight on their behalf, along with the township's, regarding the tax monies due to the county for the sale of land bank properties. When the township agreed to join the county land bank with the school district, it was agreed that the land bank would receive 50% of all taxes received by placing abandoned properties back on the tax rolls for a period of five (5) years. This has not happened since joining the land bank, so Tax Collector Kate Tierney, along with assistance from the land bank, has come up with the monies due for each property sold by the land bank. The total for the past due taxes is \$2,060.77. Supervisor Willson commented that all properties listed are located in Eagle Lake. *ON MOTION, duly made, (Willson), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to authorize payment of the past due tax amounts to the county land bank.*

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer: The ZCEO's report was reviewed. There were (5) permits issued for Eagle Lake which included (3) decks and (2) sheds; (1) sign permit was given; and (3) zoning permits, (1) storage container, (1) single family residence, and (1) pole barn. *ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney) and carried (3-0) to approve the ZCEO's monthly report.*

Building Inspector: Dave Lamm reviewed his monthly report which included (1) electrical extension to finish a basement; (1) pole barn; (1) single family residence; and (1) detached garage. Supervisor Willson questioned the electrical extension asking if that was the new home on Skyline Drive; the answer was yes. *ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Willson) and carried (3-0) to accept the building inspector's monthly report.*

Planning Commission: The planning commission did meet in February, however, there are no recommendations at this time. Tabled from last month are the following:

B&B Realty Co. minor subdivision (also known as the Wawa minor subdivision): Mary Lou Butler reviewed her comments for the minor subdivision stating that everything has been met with the exception of the signatures that can't take place until the subdivision is approved. *ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to approve the minor subdivision of B&B Realty.* Mary Lou advised the developers of Wawa of the number of plans the township will require for signatures and recording purposes.

Waivers for Wawa land development (also known as 2025 Bochicchio Covington, LLC): Mary Lou Butler advised there are three (3) waivers currently being sought: (1) a waiver to permit a combined preliminary/final application ~ this is the preferred way of the township; (2) a waiver to permit for (1) foot and (5) foot contour intervals in lieu of the required (2) foot contour intervals on the Land Development plans ~ this will give more definition on the plans; and (3) a waiver to permit site disturbance between November 1st and April 1st ~ as long as the NPDES permit is received this will be ok. Mary Lou recommends approval of all (3) waivers. *ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Willson) and carried (3-0) to approve the (3) waivers of 2025 Bochicchio Blvd, LLC.*

Wawa land development (also known as 2025 Bochicchio Covington, LLC): The approval of the county planning commission has been received for this land development plan. Atty. Wolff opened the discussion by reviewing the plans that were received by the township, showing the minor subdivision (previously approved), the entrance/exit on Bochicchio Blvd and Route 435, the parking spaces, the building layout and the location of the gas pumps and the retention ponds. He clarified there will be 16 fueling stations and 57 parking spaces. Atty. Von Spreckelsen advised there will be 8 multi-product fuel dispensers that will be double-sided. The corner of Route 435 and Bochicchio Blvd is owned by a different owner, so this property is not being addressed. The proposed building square footage is 6,049 SF. This project has been before the planning commission and has received a recommendation for conditional approval. In the beginning there were 32 contingencies, some have been addressed while others will be addressed with the approval and recording of the minor subdivision. The remaining contingencies contain items that include approval from outside agencies, the developer's agreement which will be drafted upon approval, the construction guarantee and a maintenance guarantee, and a few items the supervisors have concerns about, including the access road onto Bochicchio Blvd, the traffic signal at Routes 502, 435, and Bochicchio Blvd and the sidewalk for pedestrians to Route 435. Atty. Wolff advised that Bochicchio Blvd is a sole purpose road, being the only purpose of that road is to access the high school, which represents some concerns with the board of supervisors. The developers of 2025 Bochicchio Covington have taken some action to address the board's concerns. Atty. Jenna Tuzzi, and Asst. Superintendent Ian Farr, representatives of the North Pocono School District, were present to speak about their concerns. Atty. Tuzzi advised the North Pocono School District feels this is a positive project for the township, however, they have concerns over the access road onto Bochicchio Blvd from the Wawa. Their concerns with the access onto Bochicchio Blvd, are: (1) that Bochicchio Blvd is a sole access road used solely by the students, faculty and parents of the school and that the right turn lane into Wawa will be used primarily by those drivers. Additionally, more concern is that the students will utilize this access road as a short-cut to divert the traffic signal at the end of Bochicchio Blvd. The school districts other concerns are (2) the cutting off of the pedestrian access from the school to Route 435, which has been used by students since the school has been constructed; and (3) motorists may believe they can enter Wawa from Bochicchio after exiting Route 435, leaving the traffic to continue to the school parking lots to turn around to be able to access Wawa via the right turn in access road; this will increase the amount of traffic going onto school property. Assistant Superintendent Farr also advised this is a positive project for the community, however, the increase of traffic on Bochicchio Blvd will be a concern for the school district, both during school hours and after school hours for after school activities. The increased traffic will cause issues for the school buses and traffic on the school property. Superintendent Farr also commented on the school traffic utilizing the Wawa access road to divert the traffic signal at Bochicchio Blvd. Supervisor Willson commented that the safety of the students is of the utmost importance to the board of supervisors. He spoke about the number of buses exiting at the end of the day and the number of students that walk to Route 435, sharing his concerns about the sidewalk. He also spoke about the traffic when there is a special event held at the school and how additional increased traffic will affect this. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the location of the access drive onto Bochicchio Blvd regarding where the exit from Rite Aid is located. The developers advised they will continue the sidewalk to the end of their property and will be placing a crosswalk across the Wawa access road for pedestrians. Atty. Wolff mentioned this is where the problem begins. He advised the pedestrians currently must cross Bochicchio at the Rite Aid access because the sidewalk ends at that location. They will then continue their walk on the side of Rite Aid to the pedestrian crossing on Route 435. The new plan is calling for a sidewalk to continue along the Wawa property, but then come to an end, with no sidewalk to continue to Route 435. Atty. Von Spreckelsen stated the developer agreed to continue the sidewalk to the end of their property line, but that is where the problem lies. To extend the sidewalk to Route 435, they would need an easement from the other property owner (Woehrle) to construct a sidewalk on his property because there is not enough room in the right-of-way. In addition to the easement for the sidewalk, the developer would also need a temporary construction easement from Mr. Woehrle for the construction of the sidewalk. Atty. Von Spreckelsen also commented on the cost associated with the construction of a

sidewalk to Route 435. She addressed the school's concerns with regards to the school traffic using the Wawa access road as a short-cut to Route 435 by advising the developer will be placing speed bumps on the Wawa access road in addition to installing a dedicated right turn lane on Bochicchio Blvd. at the intersection of Route 435 to help with traffic congestion and a concrete median will also be added to assure no left turns out of the Wawa access road occur. Brian Terry, representative of the developers for the Wawa project, also feels they have put in extra security measures to assist with any cut through traffic. Many overlapping discussions were held, with members of the board speaking with representatives of the Wawa project. Atty. Von Spreckelsen asked for the township's help in getting permission from Mr. Woehrle to allow the developers to extend the sidewalk on his property to continue it to Route 435. Chairwoman Kearney disclosed that she (and the board) is not against the Wawa project, but she is very concerned with allowing an access road from Wawa to Bochicchio Blvd. Vice-chairman Peirce questioned the developers about placing light up pedestrian signs on both Bochicchio Blvd. and the access road to alert drivers of a pedestrian crossing in the crosswalk. A discussion continued about receiving permission from Mr. Woehrle to continue the sidewalk and if permission is not granted, they (developers) would continue the sidewalk to the end of the Wawa property and pick back up where the right of way allows, leaving the Woehrle property undisturbed. A discussion was also held on the curb cuts they will be installing for the Woehrle property. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that Vice-Chairman Peirce would speak with Mr. Woehrle about granting permission for a sidewalk on his property to continue the sidewalk to Route 435. Brian Terry and Rob Hoffman will also be present to help show Mr. Woehrle exactly how much property they will need and where they wanted to continue the sidewalk. Chairwoman Kearney advised she is not comfortable voting in favor of the project, because of the access road to Bochicchio Blvd, so it was decided that an extension will be granted for 30 days. Atty. Wolff asked if there were any other outstanding items remaining, with Mary Lou Butler mentioning the pipework being installed on Route 435. She asked if there would be an agreement stating that Wawa will maintain those pipes. Atty. Von Spreckelsen agreed that Wawa would enter into an agreement to maintain the pipes along Route 435. The vote for the Wawa project will be placed on the April 1st monthly meeting agenda for the board of supervisors. Supervisor Willson asked if they would mark Bochicchio Blvd to show where the access road will be coming out along with showing where the additional right turn lane will be starting. All interested parties will meet at the site after the meeting with Mr. Woehrle. Chairwoman Kearney again advised she is not against the project, and is looking forward to the Wawa, she is just against the access road onto Bochicchio Blvd. because of safety reasons.

Engineer: Mary Lou Butler reported that she has begun the bid advertisement for Havenstrite Lane and will get it to the secretary for advertising. ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Kearney), and carried (3-0) to accept the engineer's monthly report.

Solicitor: Following the discussion on the Wawa project, there was nothing further to report.

Director of Public Works: DPW Director Peirce advised the electrical work at the Senior Center has been completed. He also advised the board will need to decide what they would like to do about the old police department's location. Vice-Chairman/DPW Director Peirce would like to speak with Barbara Belasky, senior center coordinator, to see what her intentions would be if the board granted her the entire building. A decision will be made after speaking with Barbara.

Roadmaster: Roadmaster Alt reviewed his monthly report. ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Peirce) and carried (3-0) to accept the roadmaster's monthly report.

Moffat Maintenance: No report.

Police Department: Chief Lamm reviewed his monthly report which summarized 260 service calls which included: (3) arrests, (36) traffic citations, (43) traffic warnings, (2) non traffic citations, and (23) parking citations. Chief Lamm also reported the police department is now fully working out of the new station. They anticipate being completely out of the old station by the end of the month. Chairwoman Kearney also reported that a compliment was received from a resident of the township who was very

grateful to see the police out on the streets. Supervisor Willson questioned the police chief about drivers using the Wawa access as a short cut.

Recreation Committee: Bill Beavers, chairman for the recreation committee, was present and reported the committee approved new member Carl Wegforth, who has some great ideas for the recreation committee. A thank you was posted to Facebook for all donations received for the hall of trees, which had a total of 30 trees. These trees were donated to members of the community and a veteran's home. An Easter Egg Hunt will be held on April 6th. The recreation committee is asking for a budget of \$1,500 from the township. They will also speak with Heather Kishel-Shield to see if she would like to donate \$1,500 as in the past. The recreation committee is also planning a Memorial Day Service on May 26th, with a budget of \$500. Vice-Chairman Peirce questioned the budget and cost for last year's Easter Event. Member Brandy Krzan has a couple dozen eggs and a tote full of candy being donated by Big Bass Lake for the event. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Kearney) and carried (3-0) to approve a budget of \$1,200 for the Easter Egg Hunt. A discussion on the budget for the Memorial Day service will be held next month. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Willson) and carried (3-0) to approve the recreation committee's monthly report.

Sewage Enforcement Officer: No report.

New Business:

Towing Rotation: A letter was received from RLE asking to be placed on the township's towing rotation. Attorney Wolff advised they are only looking to be added to the towing rotation and asked if there were any criteria to be on the rotation. A representative from RLE was going to be present for this evening's meeting, but they were unable to attend due to work. This will be tabled until next month's meeting and discussed at the next work session.

Old Business: Chairwoman Kearney provided an updated list from Preferred Management and stated the list hasn't change much from the list she received in October. She presented the board with a proposal she received from a company regarding Short-term Rentals. She spoke with and watched a presentation from this company and asked that the board review it. She also commented on the ordinance she would like to adopt regarding debris in township roads. She questioned Atty. Wolff if the board would be able to adopt an ordinance at a regular monthly meeting instead of holding a separate hearing. The adoption of ordinances can be done at a regular monthly meeting, but the advertising requirements will still need to be met. This is something the board will consider when looking to adopt simple ordinances. Chairwoman Kearney also advised the township was not awarded the Kosinski Road grant, but we are able to re-apply for this in July.

Correspondence: An email was received and read regarding Union Mill Road. Chairwoman Kearney spoke about the poor condition of our township roads and asked that the road department begin working on them. A service request was also received regarding the Short-term rental on Skyline Drive. Per the request, the requester has made several attempts to contact Preferred Management about this but has not had any reply.

Supervisor Comments: Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney stated an estimate was received from Northeast Signal & Electric Company for the 2024 Preventative Maintenance of the traffic signals. The estimate is in the amount of \$39,385.91 and noted that the board can pick and choose any repairs we would like to have made.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: ON MOTION duly made (Kearney) seconded (Kearney) and carried (4-0) to adjourn the meeting at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Melissa Kearney, Secretary
Approved:

