

COVINGTON TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
MAY 13, 2025

The Covington Township Board of Supervisors held their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 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/DPW Director F. Marshall Peirce, Supervisor William Willson (arrived late), Supervisor Wanda Andreoli, Supervisor William Beavers and Attorney Joel Wolff.

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

Agenda: *There were no additions made to the agenda; however, a brief discussion was held regarding changes pertaining to the layout of the agenda by allowing the Engineer to give her report during Administrative Actions and the presenter for the data center zone change (also under Administrative Actions) arriving late.*

Announcements: *None.*

Public Comment: *Diane Smith, an Eagle Lake property owner, questioned the status of paving and repairing A.M. Hughes Blvd. Vice-Chairman/DPW Director Peirce advised that it is on the schedule for next year. The potholes will be addressed as they appear. Celia Burnett questioned the zoning request for a data center, she was advised to hold her questions until Tony Maras, the data center presenter, gave his presentation.*

Minutes: *ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Beavers) and carried (4-0) to accept the minutes of the April 1, 2025, monthly meeting, and the April 29, 2025, work session as presented.*

Bills: *ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (4-0) to pay the bills as presented. Chairwoman Kearney abstained from the bill for herself which was for reimbursement from PSATS conference and Boot Camp.*

Treasurer's Report: *The treasurer's reports showed balances of \$243,467.08 in the general checking account; \$779.32 in the payroll account; \$1,401,138.34 in the general investment account; \$12,375.66 in the capital projects account; and \$345.85 in the petty cash account. ON MOTION, duly made (Beavers), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (4-0) to accept the treasurer's report as presented.*

Administrative Actions:

Award bid for Havenstrite Road project: *The sealed bids were opened at the work session with the bid tabulations being completed and the bid bond in place. The lowest bidder is Wayco, Inc. with the total being: base bid #1 \$106,745.00 and base bid #2 \$181,178.50 for a total bid amount of \$287,923.50. Mary Lou reported on the monies remaining from the Multi-modal Dirt Road Improvement grant which included Richland Road. The remaining grant monies are \$156,938, but to use this total amount, we would need to provide a local share of \$125,365, meaning we would need to have a project cost of \$282,303 to utilize the remaining grant monies. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Beavers) and carried (4-0) to award the contract to the lowest responsible bidder, Wayco, Inc., for a total of \$287,923.50 contingent on Wayco, Inc. getting their bonds and insurances. Mary Lou has received a PennDOT project number so the monies can come from our Liquid Fuels account.*

Kosinski Road bid: *Madison Township awarded the bid for Kosinski Road to Wayco, Inc. during their monthly meeting last week. Covington Township will need to reimburse Madison Township for the Covington Township portion of the Kosinski Road project in the amount of \$81,339.70. Mary Lou advised she also received a PennDOT project number for this project, so this can also be paid out of Liquid Fuels. ON MOTION, duly made (Beavers), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (4-0) to reimburse*

Madison Township the amount of \$81,339.70, using Liquid Fuels funds, for the Covington Township portion of the Kosinski Road paving project.

Resolution #2025-07: Attorney Wolff read Resolution #2025-07, a Resolution that will amend Resolution #2025-03, Authorizing Fire Protection, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Advanced Life Support (ALS) Services, and other Public Safety Activities in the Township. Mike Chmielewski, Director of EMS for Covington Township Fire Company, thanked the Board for adopting the revised Resolution and apologized for any inconvenience it may have caused the township. He also asked the township to send a copy of the new Resolution to the Lackawanna County Communications Center, after adoption. ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Kearney) and carried (4-0) to adopt Resolution #2025-07.

Resolution #2025-08: Attorney Wolff read Resolution #2025-08, A Resolution Applying for a Lackawanna County Re-Invest grant in the amount of \$5,000 for the exterior painting of the new police station. ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Beavers) and carried (4-0) to approve Resolution #2025-08.

Application for public hearing for a zone change to accommodate data centers: Tony Maras, attorney and developer for 1778 Rich Pike LLC, presented provisions and a draft ordinance to the board and Attorney Wolff for consideration of a zone change regarding data centers, stating he would like to work with the township on coming up with an ordinance. The purpose of his presentation was to formally present their proposal for a data center complex for both Clifton and Covington Townships. He advised there is a plan for Covington Township only, but due to the cost of infrastructure and PPL's commitment to provide 1.5 gigawatts of power for this project, they are working with both townships. His presentation was based on the project going forward in both Clifton and Covington Townships. He explained the project will consist of 35 data center buildings, admin, control buildings, water towers, and a future power generation plant. Upon completion, this project will generate, providing the power generation plant is built as a gas turbine plant (like the Lackawanna energy station), an annual net fiscal benefit of over \$88 million dollars in revenue to both townships, the county, and the school district. He reviewed their plans for the project regarding water and sewer and the reasoning for why they chose the properties they have. The purpose of his presentation was simply to work with the township on coming up with an ordinance to allow for data centers and to set a public hearing date to adopt the ordinance. Atty. Wolff reiterated the reasons for the presentation and advised that no zoning permit application or land development application had been submitted. He reviewed the process of changing a zone within the township which included receiving comments from both the county planning commission and the township planning commission. The goal of the developer would be to have a proposed ordinance available for the next work session to allow for a public hearing in July. A brief discussion was held on setting the date and the timeline for review, with a tentative hearing date of July 17, 2025 being set. Atty. Ed Neyhart, attorney for the Covington Township Sewer Authority, was present and commented on the roles and responsibilities of the Sewer Authority. Mr. Maras will be reaching out to Governor Shapiro's office to schedule a meeting with them and representatives of the sewer authority to discuss the options the developer is suggesting to upgrade the township's sewer authority. Other members of the public who had questions for the developer included: Paula Perry, resident of Covington Township who also works in the township; Celia Burnett, resident of Covington Township; and Kelly Capple, resident of Covington Township. Ms. Perry's questions included what a data center is; why Covington and Clifton Townships; is the project contingent on Clifton being included; have the sites been secured; what will the zoning be changed to; have there been conversations with DEP regarding this project; timeline buildout of project; and an explanation of their (developer's) request for gray water usage. Ms. Perry also questioned the status of Clifton Township being involved and the potential of future data center development in Clifton Township if they opt out at this time. Ms. Burnett's questions included: the size of the buildings and what the site plan looks like; she questioned the cooling for the buildings; the electrical generation plant; the water tank; the current zoning of the land the developer is acquiring; the potential of residential and commercial growth within the township if the sewage treatment plant is expanded; the proximity of the

data centers to the adjoining properties; the life expectancy and decommissioning of the data centers; whether there will be community input on these plans going forward; water usage; the conditions of the roads after the construction is complete; if residents could see the plans, or where the project will be and the potential usage of SMR's (small modular reactors). She voiced concerns over emergency services and how this project would affect them. Atty. Neyhart questioned if there was greater peak flow on hotter days. Kelly Capple questioned the ordinance being proposed in Clifton Township and commented on Clifton Township's board not being onboard with this project, but Covington Township being onboard with this project. It was reported no township is onboard with the project, but Covington Township is open to discussing this project.

Hire part-time seasonal help: Applications were received, and interviews were held for part-time seasonal help for the DPW department and Moffat estate. ON MOTION, duly made (Kearney), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to hire Alexander Alt for part-time (32 hours per week) seasonal help at \$20 per hour.

Hire part-time treasurer/asst. secretary: Applications were received, and interviews were held for a part-time treasurer/asst. secretary. ON MOTION, duly made (Beavers), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to hire Joseph Loftus as the part-time treasurer/asst. secretary for a salaried amount of \$2,000 per month. Joseph will work in the office 3 days per week, for a total of 12 hours per week, and will put in additional hours as needed especially during budget season.

Hire full-time CDL licensed DPW worker: Applications were received, and interviews were held for the position of full-time CDL licensed DPW worker. ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Beavers) and carried (5-0) to hire Michael Schank as a full-time CDL licensed DPW worker at \$26 per hour with benefits.

Appoint Right to Know Officer/Alternate Right to Know Officer: Due to the resignation of Dawn Coco, previous right to know officer, the alternate right to know officer, Supervisor Willson, will assume the position of right to know officer, leaving the alternate right to know officer position vacant. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to appoint Supervisor Beavers as the alternate right to know officer. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney advised a new email address has been established for the right to know officer. This email address is righttoknow@covingtontp.org. This information has been sent to the office of open records.

Advertise Ordinance #2025-01 Setting Supervisor compensation and Ordinance #2025-02 Prohibiting the Placement of Building or Landscape Materials in Any Roadway of Covington Township: ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Willson) and carried (5-0) to advertise the consideration of Ordinances #2025-01 An Ordinance Setting the Supervisor Compensation and Ordinance #2025-02 An Ordinance Prohibiting the Placement of Building or Landscape Materials in Any Roadway of Covington Township for July 1, 2025 during the regular monthly meeting of the board of supervisors.

Zoning Code Enforcement Officer: The monthly report of the ZCEO was reviewed which included the ZCEO speaking with a resident regarding their property; a business owner regarding his property and a complaint investigation. He also issued (25) permits within Eagle Lake for various items; (1) sign permit for Eagle Lake; and (3) zoning permits within the township for (2) additions and (1) new home. ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Peirce) and carried (5-0) to accept the Zoning Code Enforcement Officer's monthly report.

Building Inspector: Dave Lamm reviewed his monthly report which included (2) permits being issued: (1) additions at Kidz Korner Day care and (1) new electrical service at a residence. ON MOTION, duly made (Andreoli), seconded (Beavers) and carried (5-0) to accept the building inspector's monthly report.

Planning Commission: The planning commission monthly report was reviewed. At the work session, a discussion was held regarding the Regional Comprehensive Plan with a presentation by Hailstone Economics; there were no agenda items for the monthly meeting. ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to accept the planning commission monthly report.

Engineer: Mary Lou reported the multi-modal grant application is due July 31st. We currently have 2 grants out that we have not heard anything about, meaning we didn't receive them. The grants were for Union Mill Road and Center Street. Mary Lou asked the board to consider if, and what, they would like to apply for. This will be discussed at the June meeting.

Solicitor: Atty. Wolff reviewed a few minor revisions in the developer's agreement for the 2025 Bochicchio Covington LLC (Wawa) project. He made the revisions and returned the developer's agreement to the developer's attorney. We are awaiting the signed copy, so this will be tabled at this time.

Richards real estate tax appeal: Mr. & Mrs. Richards of Union Mill Road appealed their tax assessment, with all taxing authorities, except the township, signing off on the new assessment. ON MOTION, duly made (Willson), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to allow Atty. Wolff to sign the Richards tax appeal on behalf of the township. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to accept the solicitor's monthly report.

Director of Public Works: Previously discussed.

Roadmaster: Roadmaster Alt reviewed his monthly report which included issuing (1) driveway report on Freytown Road. An email was received regarding Union Mill Road. Roadmaster Alt questioned the cost for electronics and tires for the Spring Clean Up. The fees will be \$10 for small televisions and \$20 for large televisions; and tires will be \$5. ON MOTION, duly made (Peirce), seconded (Willson) and carried (5-0) to accept the roadmaster's monthly report.

Moffat Maintenance: We are still awaiting the approval of the Eagle Scout project to begin spreading the mulch at the playground.

Police Department: Chief Lamm reviewed his monthly report which included a total of 363 service calls for the month of April. The service calls included: (6) arrests, (85) traffic citations, (67) traffic warnings, (0) non traffic citations, and (27) parking tickets. The police department patrolled 4,833 miles for the month. Vice-Chairman Peirce questioned the difference in parking ticket amounts. Chief Lamm advised a handicap ticket is \$50, and a fire lane ticket is \$25. If the tickets aren't paid, a filing will be made at the magistrate's office resulting in fines of up to \$200. Supervisor Andreoli commented on the traffic in the Shoprite parking lot. ON MOTION, duly made (Beavers), seconded (Peirce) and carried (5-0) to accept the police department's monthly report.

Recreation Committee: No report.

Sewage Enforcement Officer: No report.

New Business:

SEO fee schedule: An example fee schedule was given to the board members for their review of a new fee schedule for the SEO who would be employed by the township. Chairwoman Kearney asked the board to review the fee schedule for discussion at the next meeting.

ZCEO position and hourly rate: Our current ZCEO is willing to work for the township as an employee at an hourly rate of \$40 per hour; we currently pay \$85 per hour. The ZCEO is currently working 1 day a week but is willing to come in additional hours as needed. A discussion on hiring the ZCEO as an employee will be discussed at the next meeting.

Old Business:

Zoning of prior RGM property: This will be tabled as we have heard from the current developers on the land. There is a proposed warehouse for this property, and it appears they are moving forward with the warehouse plans.

Short-term rental compliance: Chairwoman Kearney asked the board to give thought on how we would like to proceed with compliance of the Short-term rentals.

Business Taxes: Chairwoman Kearney again asked the board for feedback on instituting a business tax on the businesses within the township. She asked the board to research this and give her

feedback on their thoughts. This would assist the township in knowing what businesses are currently in the township.

Correspondence: A letter was received from Milnes Engineering advising the township of Eagle Lake's application for a Phase II permit for their wastewater treatment plant. Per the letter, comments from the township were to be sent to DEP within 30 days of the date of the letter. Chairwoman/Secretary Kearney sent a comment letter to DEP with the comments provided to her by Mary Lou. Attorney Wolff questioned Ms. Perry, of Eagle Lake, on the status of their sewer project, including whether Eagle Lake had any contact with DEP.

County Wide Stormwater management plan: A letter was received regarding a county-wide stormwater management plan. This letter asks if the township would like to join this plan. Vice-Chairman Peirce advised the secretary to reach out to Mark Cordelli of the County for additional information on this, maybe he would be able to meet with a few supervisors so we can decide if we want to be a part of this or not. The Memorandum of Agreement is due back to the county by June 13th.

Grant awarded to the Senior Center: An email was received advising the North Pocono Senior Center has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$2,525.00 from the county.

Supervisor Comments: Chairwoman Kearney announced the North Pocono Regional Planning Association will hold a public meeting, tomorrow night (5/14) at the Moscow Borough Building to discuss the next steps in the regional comprehensive plan. Agendas for this meeting have been given to all supervisors and copies were placed on the table for members of the public.

Public Comment: Diane Smith commented that she is thrilled with A.M. Hughes Blvd being paved next year and asked if the potholes can be addressed this year.

Adjournment: ON MOTION duly made (Beavers) seconded (Andreoli) and carried (5-0) to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Melissa Kearney, Secretary

Approved: 6-3-25

