

**DOVER TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
April 11, 2016**

The Dover Township Board of Supervisors Work Session for Monday, April 11, 2016, was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairperson Matthew Menges in the Meeting Room of the Dover Township Municipal Building. Supervisors present were Matthew Menges, Charles Richards, Stephen Stefanowicz, Stephen Parthree and Robert Stone. Other Township Representatives in attendance were Laurel Oswalt, Township Manager; Michael Fleming, Township Public Works Director; Attorney Charles Rausch, Township Solicitor; Bradley Hengst; Township Sewage Enforcement Officer and Tiffany Strine, Recording Secretary. There were two citizens present. This meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minutes only.

**The purpose of this work session was to review and discuss the Township On Lot Septic Ordinance.**

**TOWNSHIP ON LOT SEPTIC ORDINANCE DISCUSSION**

Manager Oswalt provided a brief overview of the current Dover Township On Lot Septic ordinance. An ordinance was adopted in 2005 for the On Lot Septic program. Manager Oswalt provided information on the Dover Township On Lot Septic ordinance and an excerpt from the Pennsylvania Code pertaining to the ordinance. Manager Oswalt also provided information from the Department of Environmental Protection; herein referred to as D.E.P. pertaining to understanding septic systems, establishing the legal structure, treatment tank pumping and excerpts from the Dover Township 537 Plan.

Bradley Hengst; Township Sewage Enforcement Officer, added his expert knowledge on the On Lot Septic ordinance. Mr. Hengst stated that D.E.P. offers guidance to and approves municipal On Lot Septic ordinances and the time frame in which tanks should be pumped. Dover Township's On Lot Septic ordinance establishes a pumping program on a four-year time increment. Mr. Hengst added that when the tanks are pumped, the tanks are to be inspected as well to prevent foreseeable malfunctions. Mr. Hengst stated that there are pros and cons to sewage management programs but he feels as though the current On Lot Septic ordinance is very beneficial to the Township and its residents. Mr. Hengst stated that when on lot septic systems are pumped and inspected, on lot septic systems function more effectively and the inspections are finding and repairing any issues the on lot septic system may contain.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**DONALD HARLACHER – 6440 DAVIDSBURG ROAD**

Donald Harlacher voiced personal concerns with the Township On Lot Septic Ordinance. Mr. Harlacher inquired as to if there were precipitating matters or a compelling reason that led to the institution of the Township On Lot Septic Ordinance. Mr. Harlacher voiced issue with water contamination due to agricultural issues and not do to routine pumping of on lot septic systems. Mr. Harlacher stated that on lot septic systems should be maintained solely by the property

owner and that the Township not mandate the amount of years that residents have their on-lot septic systems pumped.

Mr. Hengst stated that the majority of nitrate contamination in wells occurs due to agricultural fertilizers. A connection is made when the septic system is considered for specific areas and if a septic system needs to be added, thus potentially adding another element of nitrates.

S. Stefanowicz asked Mr. Hengst if a septic system is not pumped on the time scale declared by the Township On Lot Septic Ordinance, will the septic system function improperly or fail?

Mr. Hengst stated that if one does not pump their tank, overtime septic sludge will build up and potentially leach into your drain field and create problems. Mr. Hengst stated that these problems may occur in various time frames beyond the ordinance pumping requirement pending the household volume and use of the septic system. Mr. Hengst stated that with D.E.P.'s guidance, the Dover Township On Lot Septic ordinance instills and maintains the four year pumpage requirement for accurate and good measure. The ordinance does allow for exceptions that are therein stated within the ordinance as well for special pumping interval exceptions due to such measures as a low volume household and etc. This process is maintained to best regulate and not micromanage the Township's on lot septic systems.

M. Menges inquired if D.E.P. approved our Township 537 plan which dictates the maintenance and ordinance of the Township On Lot Septic ordinance agreement. Mr. Hengst stated that D.E.P. did approve the Township's 537 plan. This plan included an implementation schedule.

C. Richards inquired if the on-lot's systems are pumped more frequently, does that take away the good bacteria the system needs to thrive. Mr. Hengst stated that the very next time that the septic system is being utilized after pumping, the required bacterial action is taking place to maintain a healthy system.

M. Menges stated that due to prior malfunctioning and improper sewer system functions, a Township ordinance system should remain in place and abided by to instill proper order and maintenance of these systems.

### **MADelyn SHERMYER– 3771 ADMIRE ROAD**

Madelyn Shermyer stated that she was a Dover Township Board of Supervisor member when the Township On Lot Septic ordinance was passed. Mrs. Shermyer stated that the Township experienced many issues with overflowing and malfunctioning sewer systems in which the Township needed to have something in place to address these issues.

Mr. Hengst stated that malfunctions are found every year within the Township and these malfunctions are found during the home sale process, resident inquiries on back-ups of the systems and/or pumpage reports listing an issue when a tank is pumped. Mr. Hengst stated that over half of the malfunctioning septic system problems are revealed by pumping manifests that are submitted to the Township. The current Township ordinance requires the time frame regulation for pumping; during the pumping process, inspections are always completed.

S. Parthree inquired as to currently how many on lot septic systems are in use today within the

Township. Mr. Hengst stated that there are an estimated 2,000 on lot septic systems currently in use within the Township.

M. Menges reinstated that D.E.P.; over the last thirty years, has taken an aggressive approach to the maintenance of on lot septic systems and has educated municipalities on what should be done. M. Menges clarified that the Township must retain balance with the priority of complying with regulations and maintaining necessary means of proper order and function of Township on lot septic systems for the betterment of all residents and the residents properties. The current Dover Township ordinance fulfills these standards.

The work session was adjourned at 7:00PM.

Respectfully submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Tiffany Strine, Recording Secretary