

**DOVER TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
AUGUST 23<sup>RD</sup>, 2021**

The Dover Township Board of Supervisors for Monday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021, was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairperson Stephen Stefanowicz in the Dover Township Board of Supervisors meeting room. Supervisor’s present were Stephen Parthree, Charles Richards, and Robert Stone. Michael Cashman was absent from the Work Session. Other Township Representatives in attendance were Laurel Oswalt, Township Manager; Charles Rausch, Township Solicitor; and John McLucas, Zoning Officer. There were no members of the public present.

This meeting is being recorded for the purpose of minutes only.

The purpose of tonight’s Work Session is to discuss the development of a Rental Inspection Program. Chairman Stefanowicz requested J. McLucas; Zoning Officer begin the discussion. J. McLucas reported the 2020 Dover Township Comprehensive Plan featured a Chapter on “Housing”. The plan highlighted that 80% of Dover’s housing stock will be over 50 years old in the next 10 years, leading to an increase in maintenance concerns. One of the main goals or objectives was to adopt a rental inspection program to reduce blight and ensure quality housing for all residents. This program is intended to be instituted in Dover Township and possibly should the Borough be interested, in their community as well.

The Board’s packet for this work session contained the following information:

- a. Example Ordinance
- b. Notification to Landlords
  - i. Registrations
- c. Inspections – Every 2 years
  - i. Scope of Inspections – Per International Property Maintenance Code (IMPC)
  - ii. Example Inspection Checklist
  - iii. Tenant Complaint Form
  - iv. Follow up Inspections & Example Fee Chart

ANNUAL LICENSE w/ 2 YEAR INSPECTION FEE	1 <sup>ST</sup> REINSPECTION FEE	2 <sup>ND</sup> REINSPECTION & EACH ADDITIONAL REINSPECTION
\$100/1 <sup>st</sup> Unit + \$50/each unit at same location (short-term rental or multiunit complex)	Free	\$100

J. McLucas reviewed the Program Budget. His research has indicated that we have approximately 2000 units to get enrolled in the program in 2022, which should bring in \$115,000

annually. Inspections would occur on a bi-annual basis. He arrived at this number by looking at properties in several Township databases including the utility billing. J. McLucas stated that there would be an opportunity for exemptions.

S. Parthree asked about what exemptions there might be.

J. McLucas indicated hotels and farm leases may be exempt, but short terms leasing inspections are possible.

R. Stone had concerns about governmental over-reach with this program.

J. McLucas stated the program was recommended by the Comprehensive Plan and is intended to protect property values and ensure a better quality of life for residents that rent.

S. Parthree stated he could understand how exterior property maintenance concerns could affect quality of life but was less sure as to how the interior issues really impacted this matter.

L. Oswalt commented that certain life safety issues, such as smoke detectors or the lack thereof, could be concerning to neighborhoods with homes that are in close proximity to rental units. Verifying that property owners are maintaining their structures will ensure the housing stock is not deteriorating. It was also noted that the new hire in the Planning Department was hired with the intent to cover these inspections as part of the job duties.

Attorney Rausch questioned why the Township would want to get involved in landlord/tenant disputes, as there is a civil procedure for these types of matters.

J. McLucas commented Dover Township does receive calls about these matters now and cannot do much of anything to help the situation. Many times, the tenants do not have the ability to handle these disputes. Providing a better quality of life and ensuring that the housing stock does not deteriorate are the main advantages for the Township.

C. Richards wanted to know if there was a way to reduce the number of inspections necessary based on high scores of, say, 90% compliance or above.

J. McLucas state he could look into this concept further.

Generally, the Board felt more time for review of the materials was necessary and another work session should be held prior to the September 13<sup>th</sup>.

**With no further discussion on this matter, Chairman Stefanowicz adjourned the Work Session at 6:45 PM to be followed by the regular Board of Supervisors meeting at 7 PM.**

Respectfully submitted by: Laurel A. Oswalt

Laurel A. Oswalt, Township Manager