

**DOVER TOWNSHIP**  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

The Dover Township Board of Supervisors for Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021, was called to order at 6:11 PM by Chairperson Stephen Stefanowicz in the Dover Township Board of Supervisors meeting room. Supervisors present were Stephen Parthree, Charles Richards, Rob Stone and Michael Cashman. Other Township Representatives in attendance were Laurel Oswalt, Township Manager; Charles Rausch, Township Solicitor; John McLucas, Zoning Officer and Brooke Scarce, Recording Secretary.

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

**Continuation of the discussion on the Development of a Rental Inspection Program**

J. McLucas began the discussion by noting that the inspection sheet was located on the white board this evening and he was hopeful that the Board would be able to call out the items on the inspection sheet they wanted to keep.

Chairman Stefanowicz proposed that the name of the program should be changed to Rental Property Code not an Inspection Program.

C. Rausch questioned if we think the grass is too high or the front yard has a lot of trash, will we allow them to not rent the property.

J. McLucas stated that we would make the landlord and tenant aware of the new ordinance, so they are both aware of the requirements.

Chairman Stefanowicz questioned if the tenant at the property would receive the check list that we are expecting and if the tenant would call us to schedule an inspection.

Manager Oswalt stated if we are going to have a program, we need to have a list to provide the landlord and tenant, so they are aware of what the expectations are.

S. Parthree stated that as a landlord they are not aware of what the expectations are unless they read the ordinances or if they are notified by the Township once a complaint has been filed. If a new ordinance is created the landlords and tenants should be sent a letter stating the expectations.

R. Stone stated that as a resident it is their responsibility to look at the ordinances, we should not have to notify them about the changes or updates regarding ordinances.

Manager Oswalt questioned if smoke alarms are required in each sleeping purpose.

C. Richards stated that according to the Fire Chief, smoke alarms are not required in each bedroom. The smoke alarms can be on the ceiling outside of the bedrooms.

R. Stone stated that if we are going to make a new regulation, every resident should comply.

J. McLucas stated if you did a renovation to a property you be required to bring your home up to code, you are grandfathered under the code that existed at the time otherwise.

R. Stone questioned if there is already an ordinance stating that as a tenant there has to be functioning basic utilities.

J. McLucas stated that functioning basic utilities is addressed in our Property Maintenance Code, but when a tenant files a complaint, we have no way to verify the issue without going into the home. The new ordinance would allow the Township access to inside the rental properties to verify the issues.

C. Rausch stated that under Pennsylvania law the landlord is required to provide a habitable living space for the tenant. If it is uninhabitable the tenant has certain rights.

Manager Oswalt stated that through this program, although there would be some landlords who do not like the program, both the landlord and tenants would know what the rules are to get a license and agree to allow the Township into their homes every couple of years to do an inspection.

J. McLucas questioned if a tenant would call into the Township filing a complaint about having no heat inside the home, are we allowed to site the landlord if the tenant is willing to testify in court.

C. Rausch stated that if the Property Maintenance Code states there must be heat in the home, then we can site the landlord.

M. Cashman suggested that we launch a PR Campaign about landlord/tenant rights.

C. Rausch stated that if tenants give us access inside the home, the tenants will have to notify the landlord stating they are giving the Township permission to access the home.

S. Parthree stated he would like to table the issue and continue the discussion at a later date. He would like J. McLucas to keep track of all the tenants that call in with complaints for next three months.

Consensus of the Board is to promote a PR Campaign about landlord/tenant rights and wait on J. McLucas's update in three months.

**With no further discussion on this matter, Chairperson Stefanowicz adjourned the Work Session at 7:00 PM to be followed by the regular Board of Supervisors meeting at 7:02 PM.**

Respectfully submitted by: Brooke Scarce

Brooke Scarce, Recording Secretary