

MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

A special meeting of the Board of Muhlenberg Township Authority, Water and Sewer Projects, was held on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, beginning at 6:30 p.m., at 210 George Street, Reading, Muhlenberg Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania, pursuant to notice both advertised and posted according to law.

The following members of the Board were present:

Scott Lehr
Jim Kelly
Walt LaSota
Steve Wolfinger
Rick Hoffmaster

In attendance were Authority General Manager Timothy Feltenberger, Thomas A. Rothermel, of counsel, Jamie Lorah, PE, of Spotts, Stevens and McCoy (SSM), consulting engineer to the Authority, and Scott Boehret of Transcend Business Advisors, Authority controller consultant. Also present were Nick Rapagnani of USG Water Solutions, Citizens Advisory Committee Member Timothy Bitting, Esquire, and Nathan Roush.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman Lehr. Chairman Lehr noted that the Board met in Executive Session immediately prior to this meeting to discuss matters involving personnel, real estate, and litigation.

There was no public comment.

Prior to discussion of New Business, Mr. Wolfinger presented Mr. Lehr with a plaque in recognition of his leadership and service to the MTA.¹ Mr. LaSota commented that Mr. Lehr's service helped accelerate the advancement of the Authority and provided momentum with respect to the Board's vision for the future. Mr. Hoffmaster additionally commented that Mr. Lehr's stewardship helped bring the MTA to a different level than before. Mr. Lehr thanked Mr. Wolfinger and the Board for its support and gratitude.

Under New Business, Mr. Rapagnani of USG Water Solutions (USG) presented the Board with a Water Storage Tank Renovation Priorities and Budget report. The report provides an assessment of the condition of the Authority's six (6) water storage tanks, together with recommended rehabilitation and an ongoing maintenance schedule. Mr. Rapagnani confirmed that USG is a Costars vendor. USG would serve the MTA out of its Youngstown, OH service center location, although crews and equipment are more localized to the MTA. Mr. Rapagnani further advised that USG performs similar asset

¹ At its January 20, 2025 meeting, the Commissioners of Muhlenberg Township appointed Rick Mountz to fill Mr. Lehr's expired position, effective February 1, 2025.

management services for many other municipal water authorities located in the geographic region as the MTA.

The findings contained in USG's report were formulated after an in-person tank inspection conducted on September 24, 2024. The inspection included visual inspection of the exterior of the tanks, including vents and hatches, exterior coatings, and visual inspection of the interior of the tanks, including coatings and support structures. Certain repairs that are sanitary in nature (e.g. vents, hatches) can be performed rather quickly and at lower cost comparatively. Regarding the maintenance program, Mr. Rapagnani stated that such a program serves to ensure compliance with DEP and EPA regulations, allows the Authority to reduce risk, creates financial flexibility, lowers the total cost of operation over time, and ensures 100% protection with respect to the interior and exterior tank structures. The cost of the program is dependent on the level of rehabilitation of each tank, the actual rehabilitation program undertaken by the MTA, and the number of years over which the rehabilitation costs are spread.

Ms. Lorah advised Mr. Rapagnani that the MTA recently applied for Local Share Account (LSA) grants for certain tank rehabilitation work that would overlap, in part, with the rehabilitation services proposed by USG. In response, Mr. Rapagnani indicated that the program could be modified dependent on whether and to what extent the MTA may receive such grant funds.

In response to a question posed by Mr. Kelly regarding proposed sanitary tank repairs, Mr. Rapagnani confirmed that the respective tanks would not be out of service during completion of such work. Mr. Rapagnani estimated that the sanitary repairs would cost anywhere between \$10,000 to \$20,000. The Board as a whole expressed interest in addressing the noted sanitary issues now, which would require Mr. Rapagnani to modify the proposal. Regarding the maintenance program, Mr. Rapagnani confirmed that industry standards are utilized (i.e. AWWA) such that there would not be deviation with respect to recommended repairs over time. Lastly, Mr. Rapagnani indicated that USG would be able to commence work in the summer or fall of 2025. Sanitary repairs could be started sooner than that.

After hearing Mr. Rapagnani's presentation, the Board was in consensus to further review the proposal and to engage in discussion to advance this matter forward.

Next, the Board engaged in further discussion regarding use of the quarry as a public water source. Ms. Lorah indicated that SSM was currently working on formulating new pump test protocols. To assist in this process, SSM requested DEP provide a file review for the prior data, together with materials pertaining to the status of the NGK contamination plume. Ms. Lorah anticipates that this preliminary step will take approximately 2 to 3 weeks, dependent upon DEP's level of response. Mr. Lehr questioned Ms. Lorah regarding the nature of pump testing in terms of surface water versus well water, considering in his estimation, water source extraction may prove much more cost effective. In response, Ms. Lorah confirmed that permitting would include both water sources. Ms. Lorah will update the Board as further information becomes available.

Regarding the expansion of sewer service in an area of Alsace Township (near the intersection of Pricetown Road and Elizabeth Avenue), the Board engaged in discussion regarding key proposals set forth by Alsace Township per a January 6, 2025 letter of Frederick E. Ebert, P.E. of Ebert Engineering, Inc. The expansion area would include 25 existing residential/commercial properties, 71 manufactured homes, and a proposed apartment complex known as Rowe Tract. Service to the existing 25 properties and the manufactured home park is deemed necessary by virtue of deficiencies in existing on-lot systems, as well as PennDOT's planned traffic circle at Elizabeth Avenue that would serve to eliminate the manufacture home community's on-lot system. After discussion, the Board was in agreement to work with Alsace Township on its project and do so in accordance with MTA Rules. The Solicitor was directed to respond to Mr. Ebert with respect to the Authority's respective position regarding EDUs, tapping fees, timing of connections, method of billing, and ownership of the sanitary sewer mains.

Mr. Wolfinger made a Motion to ratify the hiring of Nathan Roush as the new Director of Operations of the Authority, effective February 1, 2025. That Motion was seconded by Mr. Hoffmaster and unanimously approved.

With regard to a proposed change of the date of the Authority's monthly regular meetings to the second Thursday of each month, as discussed at the preceding regular meeting, the Board directed the Solicitor to prepare documents necessary to implement such change. This matter will be an Agenda item in February 2025. Mr. LaSota further confirmed that the Township office building meeting space is available the second Thursday each month, as proposed.

At 8:15 p.m., on Motion of Mr. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Hoffmaster, and unanimously approved, the meeting was called to recess for purposes of the Board entering Executive Session to discuss matters involving real estate and litigation. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Lehr thereafter at 8:45 p.m.

There being no further business of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:46 p.m. on Motion of Mr. Hoffmaster, seconded by Mr. Wolfinger, and unanimously approved.

The next regular meeting of the Board of the Muhlenberg Township Authority will be held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 6, 2025, in the main meeting room of the Muhlenberg Township Administration Building, 210 George Street, Reading, Muhlenberg Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19605.


Title: *SECRETARY*