

MUHLENBERG TOWNSHIP AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD

A regular meeting of the Board of Muhlenberg Township Authority, Water and Sewer Projects, was held on Thursday, June 6, 2024, beginning at 7:00 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:

Walt LaSota
Rick Hoffmaster
Jim Kelly

In attendance were Authority General Manager Timothy Feltenberger, Thomas A. Rothermel, of counsel, and Jamie Lorah, PE, of Spotts, Stevens and McCoy (SSM), consulting engineer to the Authority. Also present was Jeff Krick, Assistant Distribution Superintendent, and Jim Bobeck as a member of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Vice Chairman Kelly. Mr. Kelly announced that the Board had met earlier in executive session to discuss matters involving personnel and real estate.

There was no comment under the first public portion.

Under the Engineer's Report, Ms. Lorah of SSM provided a formal report of the Authority's consulting engineer for work completed May 2, 2024 through May 30, 2024. Ms. Lorah referenced a seven (7) page report, which attachments, that SSM circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting. The report provides a narrative of the status of each of the twenty (20) projects of the Authority on which SSM is currently engaged.

Regarding the DEP/EPA System Inspection Report, Ms. Lorah advised that significant progress has been made regarding the DEP checklist. She estimates that overall, approximately 70% of the upgrades and enhancements have been completed. Of those remaining items, work is either pending or in the planning phase, contingent on availability of parts and vendor installation schedules. SSM plans to update DEP yet again in the next couple of weeks to confirm the added progress that has been made. Regarding further system-wide improvements, Ms. Lorah noted that the MTA will need to consider budgeting in the next year or two to account for further pump station upgrades and enhancements. SSM will prepare a report that sets forth recommendations in that regard.

Mr. LaSota made a Motion to approve payment to Mumford-Bjorkman Associates, Inc., a Costars vendor, in the amount of \$21,000.00 for ROV tank inspections conducted at six tank locations in the MTA water distribution system. That Motion was seconded by Mr. Hoffmaster and unanimously approved.

With regard to PFAS sampling, SSM circulated a map of the Township that depicts MTA's wells and those that contain detectable PFAS levels. Additional data was compiled and analyzed regarding those affected wells in relation to the gallons per day they produce. Overall, in 2023, MTA wells produced approximately 3.8 million gallons per day. Of those wells that have detectable levels of PFAS, they account for approximately 50% of such production. In reviewing the data, Ms. Lorah made it abundantly clear that MTA remains in full compliance with current PA DEP regulations with respect to both PFAS testing and PFAS levels. While the US EPA has recently promulgated regulations regarding PFAS, the PA DEP regulatory process will not go into effect for at least another two years. Until such time, current PA DEP regulations remain in effect, which again, the MTA is in full compliance at PFAS levels below prescribed limits.

Regarding the MTA offices and potential relocation to available space at the Township building, Ms. Lorah confirmed that Beers + Hoffman prepared conceptual layout options regarding configuration of the office space. She advised that Beers + Hoffman would be available to meet to review and discuss any questions or concerns regarding the conceptual plans. Mr. Hoffmaster made a Motion to approve payment to Beers + Hoffman in the amount of \$3,288.08 for services rendered in connection with preparation of the conceptual plans. That Motion was seconded by Mr. LaSota and unanimously approved.

Ms. Lorah reported that the developer for the Milkulin residence has restarted this project. SSM will work with the developer's engineer to finalize plan approval. The Solicitor will then proceed to prepare an agreement that will set forth key terms of the municipal improvements that are impacted by such development.

With regard to the Eagles Landing development, and ongoing efforts to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) throughout the Township, Ms. Lorah confirmed that MTA crewmembers installed manhole inserts (dishes) in eleven (11) manholes upstream of the Eagles Landing pump station. She also confirmed that twenty-five (25) bolt-down manhole covers were already installed in low-lying areas along River Road, as well as at select locations throughout the Township. In addition, Mr. Lorah reported that flow meter equipment was pending installation, which will enable operations staff to monitor data in real time, and react to changes in flow at all pump stations.

Ms. Lorah reported that the MTA's involvement in the County Ebling Memorial Bridge project was completed with finalization of the water line replacement. Payment was previously approved to the contractor, Wexcon, Inc, a Costars vendor, but the total amount was subsequently reduced by \$12,500 to account for paving work that the County now plans to undertake. Mr. Hoffmaster made a Motion to approve final payment to Wexon, Inc. in the reduced amount of \$204,709.00, which Motion was seconded by Mr. LaSota and unanimously approved.

Mr. Lorah advised that a new round of LSA Grants are expected to be released in September 2024. Should that hold true, submission would be due in November 2024. The Board was requested to provide SSM with any projects that it may seek to include for grant submission.

With regard to the River Road pump station, Ms. Lorah confirmed that permitting has been secured for the pump upgrade project. The pumps are currently in transit, with delivery expected in the next week. A field meeting with the contractors, Blooming Glen and OCC, is scheduled on June 12, 2024. Ms. Lorah will report on the progress of this project at the next Board meeting.

Ms. Lorah reported that revised permits for the Laurel Run water pipe repair and Laurel Run manhole repair projects were resubmitted to DEP. Once permit approval is received, work will be scheduled at both sites.

SSM continues to review plans and a Planning Module submitted by the Muhlenberg School District for a new building to be erected on the site adjacent to the high school. The Solicitor advised that if water and/or sewer improvements are planned, an improvements agreement will be needed prior to commencement of construction.

There being no further active projects on which to report, and no additional questions posed by the Board, the report of the Ms. Lorah concluded. Mr. Hoffmaster made a Motion to accept the Engineer's Report as presented. That Motion was seconded by Mr. LaSota and unanimously approved.

Mr. Feltenberger presented the Operations Report for the preceding month, a full copy of which has been appended to these Minutes. There were no main breaks to report for the preceding month. Thus far in 2024, there have been a total of five (5) Type-I main breaks, all resulting in no interruption in service, and one (1) Type-II main break, which resulted in brief interruption in service. Mr. Feltenberger further reported that crews were busy performing a variety of miscellaneous tasks such as leak detection, curb box maintenance, trunk line cleaning on Red Oak Road, and sewer trunk line jetting at the mall area and near Clover Farms. At the request of the Fire Department, a hydrant was installed at 4th and Darby. In addition, hydrants were flushed and one hydrant was repaired at Jim Dietrich Park. A new 2" water service was installed at 4822 Kutztown Road, which required the assistance of Schlouch, Inc. due to the location of the water line. Sewer laterals were cleaned or checked at multiple locations throughout the Township, ten (10) of which were customer owned. Mr. Feltenberger reported that the vacuum truck was used a total of forty (40) man hours over the past month, at an equivalent labor cost of \$14,200. To date, the vacuum truck has been used the monetary equivalent of \$118,650, excluding the cost of disposal fees that the Authority no longer pays. The Operations Report then concluded.

Engineering bills for the preceding month were reviewed. Mr. Hoffmaster made a Motion to approve the engineering bills for payment. That Motion was seconded by Mr. LaSota and unanimously adopted.

The accounts payable for both the water and sewer departments for the preceding month had been distributed prior to the meeting, a full listing of which has been appended to these Minutes. Mr. LaSota made a Motion to approve payment of the accounts payable for both the water and sewer departments, as presented. That Motion was seconded by Mr. Hoffmaster and unanimously adopted.

Under the Solicitor's Report, regarding the proposed interconnection with Maidencreek Township Authority, Mr. Rothermel advised that he was awaiting a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from Maidencreek's Solicitor that sets forth the principal terms of the parties' agreement. Mr. Rothermel expects to have the revised MOU for review at the July 2024 Board meeting.

With regard to status of the City of Reading IMA, Mr. Rothermel advised that he continues to await receipt of an executive summary that the City was to circulate following the meeting that took place on May 6, 2024. The executive summary report is expected to set forth the City's formal position with respect to the reconciliation figures. Upon receipt, the Board will be expected to review the City's report, and SSM's report, and then proceed to take appropriate action to finalize this matter with the City. No further questions were posed to Mr. Rothermel. The Solicitor's Report was approved by Motion of Mr. Hoffmaster, seconded by Mr. LaSota, and unanimously approved.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Mr. Feltenberger, a copy of which is appended to these Minutes. The water division realized a net gain of \$73,227.40 over the past month; the sewer division realized a net loss over the past month of \$1,091,461.27, which accounts for a quarterly payment made to the City of Reading IMA escrow account. Across both accounts, the Authority realized a net loss of \$1,018,233.87. Compared to this time last year, the water and sewer divisions realized a positive increase in cash flow totaling approximately \$2,500,000. The sewer escrow account, maintained by funds per the City of Reading IMA, as amended, currently totals approximately \$19 million, of which the Authority has continued to earn interest.

With regard to payroll, Mr. Feltenberger reported that the newly implemented Paychex payroll system is expected to be utilized for the next payroll. Mr. Feltenberger also reported that all CDs were renewed for a period of three months, as authorized the month prior. Regarding the rate study, which the Board previously commissioned, Mr. Feltenberger reported that he was working with Mr. Boehret to compile the information requested by PFM Financial Advisors, LLC. Mr. Hoffmaster made a Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. That Motion was seconded by Mr. LaSota and unanimously adopted.

Under New Business, discussion regarding the MTA office location was tabled until next month, or possibly at an interim special meeting. Mr. Feltenberger reported that photo-eye sensors were recently installed on the two large rollup doors at the maintenance building and garage. Mr. Feltenberger reminded the Board that a photo session for new Board members has been scheduled for July 11, 2024.

A series of proposals was submitted by Runwell, Inc. for IT maintenance and upgrades. The proposal followed a recent IT audit that was conducted at the MTA offices. One of the proposals pertained to increased security measures for the SCADA system, at a total cost of \$5,400.00. Mr. LaSota made a Motion to approve that standalone proposal in the amount stated. Discussion ensued. The Board indicated that it would further review the other series of proposals submitted by Runwell at a later date. Mr. Hoffmaster seconded the Motion and it passed unanimously.

Mr. Feltenberger reported that ongoing efforts were being made to reduce the amount of document storage at the MTA office. Mr. Feltenberger retained a local shredding company, VCR, to assist with this project, at a total cost of \$975.

Mr. Feltenberger advised that bids were submitted for trench restoration work for 2024. Sloan Paving, Inc. was the lowest bidder for repairing the existing trenches, at a contract amount of \$24,862.50, which was lower than last year. Sloan Paving, Inc. was also the lowest bidder for repairs at a price per square yard of \$127.50, which was price was lower than in 2023. Mr. LaSota made a motion to accept the Sloan Paving, Inc. bids for existing trench work and trench work on a per square yard basis in the amounts stated, and to authorize Mr. Feltenberger to issue a notice of intent to award. That motion was seconded by Mr. Hoffmaster and unanimously adopted. Mr. Feltenberger will also secure insurance certificates from the contractor.

Lastly under New Business, Mr. Feltenberger confirmed that he will take action to extend offers of employment to fill two crewmember positions.

There were no comments under the second public portion.

Under Member and Staff Comments, Mr. Hoffmaster conveyed appreciation on behalf of the Fire Department for installation of the new hydrant. He also suggested that the Board tour the MTA systems. The Board was receptive to Mr. Hoffmaster's suggestion – Mr. Feltenberger will coordinate a date for an operations tour in the upcoming month.

There being no further business of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m. on Motion of Mr. Hoffmaster, seconded by Mr. LaSota, 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, July 11, 2024, at the main meeting room of the Muhlenberg Township Administration Building, 210 George Street, Reading, Muhlenberg Township, Berks County, Pennsylvania 19605.


Title: _____