

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 20, 2024

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 12:01 p.m. on Monday, May 20, 2024, Chairman Brian Nagle presiding. The meeting was hybrid via in-person and video and audio advanced communication technology ("ACT"), using the Zoom internet application, including telephone option. Each Board member and other attendees of the meeting were able to hear each other attendee and be heard by each other attendee. The public could also participate in the meeting in-person or via ACT, using the Zoom internet application, including telephone option. A Roll Call of Board members present was taken. Brian Nagle, Amir Famili, Jeff Morgan, Norma Cusick, Sean Ziller, and Marc Grammes were present for Roll Call, and remained for the duration of the meeting. Linda Rosenfeld joined the meeting at 12:06 p.m.

Attorney Kevin Reid, the Authority's Solicitor, was present along with Authority Staff, Liesel Gross, Ed Klein, Chris Moughan, Andrew Moore, AJ Capuzzi, Phil DePoe, Chuck Volk, Susan Sampson, and Lisa Miller.

Chairman Nagle announced that the Board received their electronic and hard copies of the Board packet in advance. He then asked if anyone did not receive their copy of the packet. A copy of the packet is also available online.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Liesel Gross announced that there are no changes to the agenda and noted that the April reports were distributed the day after the packet mailing. The packet has been updated on the website. Also, there will be an Executive Session after the close of the regular session to discuss a personnel matter.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 22, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Jeff Morgan noted a grammatical error. On a motion by Jeff Morgan, seconded by Amir Famili, the Board approved the minutes from the April 22, 2024 meeting as corrected (6-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Resolution No. 5-2024-1: Destruction of Authority Documents

Liesel Gross explained that the Resolution is a standard process whereby the Authority Board must formally approve the disposition of certain records in accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipal Records Act.

On a motion by Jeff Morgan, seconded by Sean Ziller, the Board approved Resolution No. 5-2024-1 (6-0).

Water Utility Benchmarking Study: Staffing Survey

Liesel Gross introduced Jim Ginley, of Jim Ginley Consulting LLC, who was hired to assist with a staffing analysis. The Authority needs to understand its future staffing needs with the growth in the capital program and new regulatory requirements. The overall purpose of the survey is to connect with other utilities to see what they are doing regarding organizational structure, staffing, and functions in key areas. Mr. Ginley provided an overview of the process and presentation of the study.

He provided a review of the areas where the Authority is well positioned and also where the Authority needs to focus. Liesel Gross added that the recommended enhancements to the organizational structure and the positions identified will be presented in more detail to the Board in June, following staff review and analysis of budget impacts, if any.

There was some Board discussion regarding Mr. Ginley's presentation in the areas of Human Resources staffing and process improvement opportunities. Amir Famili asked about opportunities to reduce future staffing requirements through improved processes. There was some discussion about the current projects to upgrade the financial software system and install new capital project management software, which will help to streamline certain processes. However, the capital project workload is increasing dramatically due to new regulatory requirements and the Authority is not able to manage that large project increase through process improvement alone. Chairman Nagle asked if there was any discussion regarding the roll of the Board and the interaction of the Board with Staff. Mr. Ginley said this was not part of the scope of work for the staffing analysis and utility survey, but the utility leaders who participated in this process would likely be willing to provide additional insight on that topic if the Authority would like to pursue it.

Water System Interconnections – Design Phase Cost-Sharing Agreement

Liesel Gross provided the background of the intermunicipal agreement between the City of Allentown and the City of Bethlehem regarding emergency water service interconnections. The City of Bethlehem has pursued having the existing system interconnections evaluated and having them upgraded to ensure they are functional in the event of an emergency. The proposed agreement is a multi-municipal agreement laying out that the Authority will pay for 50 percent of the costs for design phase work. There was discussion regarding the future work needed for the next phase of the project. Brian Chamberlain, City of Allentown Office of Compliance, commented that the reason the system interconnections were not regularly activated is due to an issue with different pressures between the two systems in certain sections.

On a motion by Linda Rosenfeld, seconded by Marc Grammes, the Board approved the Intermunicipal Water Service Agreement between Lehigh County Authority, City of Allentown, Bethlehem Authority, and the City of Bethlehem regarding design phase for the water system interconnections, authorizing the Chief Executive Officer to execute the agreement, contingent upon approval of all four parties, and allowing for any minor updates and revisions to the agreement that may be required, subject to review by the Authority Solicitor (5-0). Jeff Morgan and Sean Ziller abstained.

A roll call vote was taken with the following votes cast:

Brian Nagle – yes
Amir Famili – yes
Jeff Morgan – abstain
Norma Cusick – yes
Linda Rosenfeld – yes
Sean Ziller – abstain
Marc Grammes – yes

Pretreatment Plant – Critical Upgrades

Chuck Volk provided an overview of the design and bid phase services for near-term upgrades at the Pretreatment Plant (PTP). It is critical to address the needs at the plant to maintain performance and avoid any violations at the Kline's Island Wastewater Treatment Plant. AECOM was hired to identify and scope critical needs at the PTP and have provided the following recommendations to

address immediate areas for upgrade: Secondary clarifier rehabilitation, High Purity Oxygen plant upgrades, Aeration Deck (Bioreactor) upgrades, and Influent and Effluent Flow Metering improvements. This project will keep the plant functional until long-term upgrades are determined.

Amir Famili asked if the proposal would change if the scope of the Act 537 Plan would change. Mr. Volk said these upgrades would need to be done regardless because of the high risk for failure which could cause major problems at Kline's Island. Liesel Gross commented that there are capital funds for this project.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Jeff Morgan, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization for the Design & Bid Phase in the amount of \$254,320.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization for the Design & Bid Phase engineering services to AECOM in the amount of \$219,320.00 (7-0).

Sanitary Sewer Collection System: I&I Source Reduction Program (LCA Year 2)

Jason Peters gave an overview of the Year 2 Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) Source Reduction Program project that is required as part of the Act 537 Plan. The Year 2 project will include heavy cleaning, joint testing, joint grout sealing, and cured in-place-pipe lining (CIPP) in specific sewer basins in the City's sewer system that have been identified as having high rates of rainfall derived I&I. The work will be conducted in the St. Elmo basin. Mr. Peters stated that this project will utilize more CCTV work than the Year 1 project to assist with pinpointing repair locations.

Amir Famili asked if the Authority is locked in with Kleinfelder and will the Authority seek other comparable bids to be sure we are getting the best cost. Chuck Volk explained that competitive bids were received for the Year 1 project and Kleinfelder was cost effective. Other consultants will be recommended for the future projects to ensure competitive pricing and services.

There was some discussion regarding how the municipalities are taking care of their I&I efforts for the Act 537 Plan. Mr. DePoe commented that the municipalities are each doing different work and at different times. Quarterly reports are available and can be shared with the Board if desired.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Amir Famili, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization for Design & Bid Phase Engineering Services in the amount of \$461,771.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization for Design & Bid Services to Kleinfelder in the amount of \$436,771.00 (7-0).

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

Ed Klein gave an overview of the April 2024 financial statements, highlighting variances between actual expenses and budgeted or forecasted expenses. Mr. Klein reported that all three funds were favorable for April with both net income and cash flows performing better than forecast. He noted that the forecast was increased in all three funds in net income and cash flows resulting in favorable variances to the Budget.

MONTHLY SYSTEM OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Andrew Moore reviewed the April 2024 report and reported that there were four minor injuries and two vehicle incidents. April was a wet month with 5.56 inches of rain. Wastewater flows remain elevated due to high groundwater levels and rain events this month. As a result of the rain events, there were two bypasses: one in Heidelberg Township and the other in Lynn Township. There was also a sanitary sewer overflow on Martin Luther King Jr. Drive at manhole U-4-3. There were permit exceedances at Heidelberg for fecal coliform and at Sand Spring for ammonia and total nitrogen.

There was some additional discussion about the injuries that occurred in April and measures taken to prevent them.

STAFF COMMENTS

Ed Klein announced that a Safety Manager was hired and started today.

Liesel Gross updated the Board on the May 8 stakeholder meeting held with regional representatives to discuss the Authority's Industrial Pretreatment Plan. The meeting was well attended and there was a healthy dialogue regarding the pretreatment plant. The group will meet every three weeks to reach a recommendation for the plant. There will also be one on one meetings with the industries to help develop the recommendation.

SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / OTHER COMMENTS

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Norma Cusick asked for a current status of the internship program. Andrew Moore reported that 18 candidates applied and six have been selected and will on-board on June 6th. Liesel Gross added that there is a strong network within the Lehigh Valley and other utilities have stated an interest.

Jeff Morgan asked for an update on the meeting with the County Commissioners. Ms. Gross met with them on April 24th and provided an overview of the Kline's Island Sewer System plan and also the Industrial Pretreatment Plant.

Sean Ziller reported that he attended the general assembly meeting for the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission and a representative from PennVEST was there and was very complimentary of the Authority's leadership and spoke very highly of the Authority.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There will be an Executive Session after the regular meeting to discuss personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:36 p.m.

Jeffrey J. Morgan
Secretary