

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

January 27, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, January 27, 2025, 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, Ted Lyons, Jeff Morgan, Linda Rosenfeld, Norma Cusick, Marc Grammes, and Sean Ziller were present for Roll Call, and remained for the duration of the meeting. Kevin Baker entered the meeting at 12:02 p.m. and was present for the duration of the meeting.

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

Chairman Nagle announced that the Board received their electronic and hard copies of the Board packet in advance. A copy of the packet is also available online.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Liesel Gross stated that no Executive Session is planned; however, the LCA Strategic Plan – Progress Reporting item under Finance and Administration will need to be postponed until the February 10, 2025 meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Jeff Morgan noted grammatical errors. On a motion by Jeff Morgan, seconded by Linda Rosenfeld, the Board approved the minutes from the January 13, 2025 meeting as corrected (8-0). Brian Nagle abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

Resolution 1-2025-1: Omnibus Resolution – Delegation of Authority Responsibilities

Liesel Gross provided an overview of the Resolution. The Resolution is designed to consolidate prior Board actions delegating certain responsibilities to the staff. The Board's prior actions in this area were set forth in multiple resolutions spanning approximately 50 years... The proposed Resolution also seeks to remedy inefficiencies and introduce certain new delegated powers that are consistent with current needs. The Governance Committee has reviewed draft versions of the Resolution and provided input, and recommended that the Resolution be prepared for review and adoption by the full Board. Kevin Reid commented that the Resolution provides efficiencies for the Board and staff and is aligned with the Municipality Authorities Act. He highlighted and reviewed the three new areas of delegated responsibility that were added to this Resolution including the sections related to operations purchasing approval thresholds, the approval of intermunicipal operating agreements, and real property acquisition thresholds.

There was some discussion regarding the financial thresholds included in the Resolution for staff of Board approval and the impact these changes would have on what projects will come before the

Board for approval. Liesel Gross noted that the prior approval thresholds were established at least 30 years ago, and the cost of the Authority's projects and contracts has risen significantly in this time period, so the increase in the approval threshold is more aligned with current costs and would not greatly impact the number or type of projects that would be brought to the Board for approval.

Amir Famili referenced the section of the Resolution that related to hiring decisions for new staff and commented that the Board should participate in the decision-making process for critical positions. He stated his primary concern lies with the hiring of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), due to the impact on the Authority's finances and the relationship to the Board's fiduciary responsibilities. Liesel Gross commented that it has always been the practice of the Authority to include Board in the hiring process of the CFO and Solicitor, noting that the Solicitor position has certain duties that relate specifically to the Board. There was additional discussion regarding the role of the Board in the hiring process. It was agreed that the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for making the hiring decisions, but the Board's participation in reviewing candidates for the CFO and Solicitor positions should be included in the Resolution. Solicitor Kevin Reid proposed adding language to the Resolution to specify Board representation on the hiring team for select positions such as the CFO and the Solicitor as determined by the Board.

On a motion by Linda Rosenfeld, seconded by Jeff Morgan, the Board approved Resolution 1-2025-1 with the modification set forth by the Solicitor (9-0).

Jeff Morgan asked if there would be a change to the Monthly Project report with the threshold changes. Liesel Gross said the projects list displayed in the report is generated by the projects that are brought to the Board for approval and, therefore, would not change much with the new thresholds in place. She also noted that AJ Capuzzi and the Engineering and Asset Management team are working to develop new project reporting mechanisms with the implementation of project management software.

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

Brian Nagle – yes
Amir Famili – yes
Ted Lyons – yes
Jeff Morgan – yes
Linda Rosenfeld – yes
Norma Cusick – yes
Marc Grammes – yes
Sean Ziller – yes
Kevin Baker – yes

Suburban Division – NBMA / North Whitehall Division Water System Interconnection

Chuck Volk explained that this project is a result of the source water study performed by Gannett Fleming to enhance flow capacity and fire flows within the North Whitehall Division. Amy Kunkel provided further detail explaining that the study concluded that a second interconnection with Northampton Borough Municipal Authority (NBMA) would be the most feasible option to provide redundancy of supply. The current agreement with NBMA can supply up to 1 million gallons per day and has excess capacity if needed in the future. The design includes the construction of a meter pit and related mechanical and electrical work.

The Board suggested providing a map to be able to visualize the location of the project and also providing the consultant proposal.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Sean Ziller, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization for the Design Phase – NBMA / North Whitehall Division Water System Interconnection in the amount of \$340,600.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Gannett Fleming, Inc. for design and bid phases in the amount of \$240,600.00 (9-0).

Allentown Division I&I Program – Programmatic Support – Trout Creek & Eastside Basins

AJ Capuzzi introduced the project that is part of the regional Act 537 Plan for the Kline’s Island Sewer System (KISS), noting that the Authority is leading the effort to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) in the City of Allentown sewer collection system. This new program will evaluate two basins in the system along with providing programmatic support. Stephen Boone provided details of the scope of the project noting that this will include flow monitoring, using meters and rain gauges, during wet weather and high groundwater conditions. The flow monitoring will occur both before and after sewer rehabilitation work is completed so the Authority can quantify the amount of leakage removed. In addition, level sensors will be installed in manholes throughout the Trout Creek and Eastside sewer basins. This is necessary to determine exactly where the I&I is coming from and narrow down the necessary rehabilitation work to each street in the basins. He stated that the Pa. Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) wants mathematical proof as to the effectiveness of I&I work that is being completed, and this project will provide the data proofs DEP requires.

Mr. Boone described the selection process, noting that there was a discrepancy during the final review between AECOM and Arcadis as they assumed different lengths of CCTV inspections. The Authority prepared a standardized cost comparison spreadsheet to eliminate the discrepancy.

There was some discussion about the location of the Trout Creek and Eastside basins and their size relative to the full City sewer collection system. Phil DePoe noted that the City is broken out into eight basins, and this work covers two of them. The Board commented that a map would be helpful to visualize the project, and the consultant’s proposal would provide additional detail. Chairman Nagle asked if this approach will work for the remaining six basins and streamline the process. Mr. Boone said that each basin is unique and will have to be looked at individually, but this project will help to streamline the process of identifying the I&I projects in each basin and quantifying the leakage removed. AJ Capuzzi added that the Authority is purchasing the level sensors so they will be used in the remaining basins in the future.

There was further discussion regarding the discrepancy in the proposals between AECOM and Arcadis.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Amir Famili, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization for the Allentown Division I&I Program – Programmatic Support, Trout Creek & Eastside Basins in the amount of \$3,141,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Arcadis, Inc. – SSES – Trout Creek & Eastside Basins, Programmatic Support in the amount of \$2,641,000.00 (9-0).

Sewer Operations Agreement – Upper Macungie Township Sewer Pump Stations

Liesel Gross provided an overview of the operations contract with Upper Macungie Township for their six sewer pump stations. A map was displayed to show where the pump stations are located in relation to where the Authority is already providing services in the Township. The Township sought a proposal from the Authority, which is attached to the agreement. The Township Board of Supervisors approved the proposal at a meeting earlier in January. The proposal includes the operation and maintenance of the six pump stations, and the Authority will charge the Township for the actual hours worked and other expenses incurred. The work includes routine operational inspections, emergency response capabilities, and scheduled generator maintenance. Additional expenses, such

as generator maintenance fees and materials, will be billed directly to the Township. The term of the agreement is for one year. Andrew Moore provided additional information as to how the stations will be operated.

There was some discussion regarding the resources needed to operate these pump stations. Ms. Gross noted that the 2025 Budget included the addition of one new employee to allow the Authority to manage these additional facilities. Andrew Moore noted that there is a crew at Upper Macungie Township that will also do a weekly inspection at each pump station, and this contract approach was driven in part by the retirement of the Township's lone certified operator.

Kevin Reid commented that the insurance section needs to have the limits added into the agreement.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Sean Ziller, the Board approved the operations agreement between the Authority and Upper Macungie Township for the operation of six pump stations, subject to the Solicitor's final review and resolution of the insurance information (9-0).

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

Brian Nagle – yes
Amir Famili – yes
Ted Lyons – yes
Jeff Morgan – yes
Linda Rosenfeld – yes
Norma Cusick – yes
Kevin Baker – yes
Marc Grammes – yes
Sean Ziller – yes

MONTHLY SYSTEM OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Andrew Moore reviewed the December 2024 report and reviewed two safety incidents that occurred. One was a near miss regarding improper strapping down of a load and another was a foreign object in the eye of an employee which occurred while the employee was cleaning a surface. Marc Grammes commented that report shows the root cause for the second incident incorrectly, and the root cause should refer to the employee not wearing safety glasses. He said employees should be wearing safety glasses at all times, and this needs to be reinforced.

Mr. Moore reviewed the remainder of the report and highlighted the improved performance of the Sand Spring Wastewater Treatment Plant. He presented a graph showing the improvements in nitrification during cold weather as compared to prior years. The treatment process improvement that was installed in 2024 appears to be working well, and more information will be available as the winter weather continues.

STAFF COMMENTS

None.

SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / OTHER COMMENTS

Erin Kintzer from Bethlehem Sewer & Excavating Service commented that her company uses the Authority's Industrial Pretreatment Plant (PTP) for waste drop-off, primarily grease collected from local restaurants. She stated that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find places to drop off the grease, and municipalities are becoming more stringent with requirements for grease traps and disposal, so the need for this service is increasing. Ms. Kintzer asked if there is a regional plan for grease. She also asked if the Authority is considering prioritizing grease drop-off from the Lehigh Valley for restaurants or other customers such as herself. Liesel Gross said she would like to follow up with Ms. Kintzer after the meeting to provide more detailed responses to her questions. She noted that the waste hauler program is important to the region and the Authority is aware of the need for this service. This was discussed at length during the 2024 stakeholder involvement process associated with developing a long-term plan for the PTP. Ms. Gross provided her direct contact information so Ms. Kintzer may follow up directly after the meeting.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Norma Cusick asked for an update on the recently acquired property on Brookside Road. Liesel Gross reported that the property has been incorporated into the Building Master Plan project that Stephen Boone is overseeing. Mr. Boone reported that he has been in contact with Lower Macungie Township zoning officer and was informed that a change of use permit is needed because it is changing from a residential use to a commercial use. Ms. Gross added that the property is in the process of having the security updated.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:26 p.m.

Jeffrey J. Morgan
Secretary