

## **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

### **April 14, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 12:01 p.m. on Monday, April 14, 2025, Chairman Amir Famili 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. Amir Famili, Jeff Morgan, Norma Cusick, Kevin Baker, Sean Ziller, Marc Grammes and Peter Dent were present for Roll Call and remained for the duration of the meeting. Ted Lyons entered the meeting at 12:03 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, Chris Moughan, Andrew Moore, AJ Capuzzi, Charles Volk, Phil DePoe and Susan Sampson.

Chairman Famili 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 there were no changes or additions to the agenda. An Executive Session will be held following the close of the regular meeting to discuss potential property acquisition.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

##### **March 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

On a motion by Jeff Morgan, seconded by Norma Cusick, the Board approved the minutes from the March 24, 2025 meeting as presented (8-0).

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

##### **Resolution 4-2025-1: Authorizing the Authority's Application for Grant Funding, North Whitehall Division Water Interconnection Project**

Liesel Gross reviewed Resolution 4-2025-1, which would authorize the Authority to apply for grant funding via the Pennsylvania Small Water and Sewer Grant Program. She reviewed the project specified for the grant application, which includes construction of a water system interconnection between the Authority's North Whitehall Division (NWD) and the Northampton Borough Municipal Authority (NBMA) water system. The NWD currently serves a small area in North Whitehall Township and the Authority purchases all water for this system from the NBMA water system through a single water system interconnection. The project will provide enhancements to system reliability and emergency response by adding a second interconnection. She explained the system is eligible for a grant due to the small size of the service area, and the application will request the maximum grant amount allowable by the program of \$500,000.

Solicitor Kevin Reid reviewed the Resolution, which is required to be adopted by the Authority Board prior to completing the grant application process.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Peter Dent, the Board approved Resolution 4-2025-1, authorizing the Authority's application for grant funding for the North Whitehall Division water system interconnection project (8-0).

### **Water Main Replacement Program Cycles 7 & 8**

Jason Peters provided a presentation outlining the positive results of the water main replacement project recently completed in the City of Allentown. He highlighted various key benefits of the project, including replacement of 2.2 miles of water main and replacement of 124 lead service lines. The project was funded by a grant from the City, utilizing their American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Cost savings were also achieved by partnering with the City on a cost-sharing approach for final paving in the project area. Mr. Peters explained that the success of the program would be extended into future projects and pipes prioritized for replacement can be focused on achieving similar economies of scale. The Cycle 7 & 8 project was successful in completing the Authority's obligation to replace 4 miles of water main in the period from 2021 to 2024, per the requirements of the Allentown Water & Sewer Lease. The City has provided authorization for the Authority to complete 4 miles of water main replacement in the next compliance period of 2025 to 2028.

Jeff Morgan asked about the Authority's pipe prioritization process, and Jason Peters explained that the next project area has already been selected for the 2025 project. However, moving forward, the prioritization method would be adjusted to include metrics related to lead service lines in addition to pipe material, age and break history.

There was additional Board discussion about the success of the project and lessons learned that can be applied to future projects. Chuck Volk explained that there were some contractor delays with this project that resulted from delays in delivery of new fire hydrants. The Authority will consider purchasing equipment with long lead times in advance, to avoid future project delays.

Marc Grammes inquired about the use of the City's ARPA funding for this project and whether that funding is guaranteed. Liesel Gross commented that the City has authorized the funding via City ordinance, which included allocation of approximately \$15 million of ARPA funds to multiple water main replacement projects, the water filter upgrade project, and a sewer rehabilitation project. Jennifer McKenna, City of Allentown Office of Compliance, explained that the City is fully committed to funding the projects as outlined in the City's authorizing ordinance. Sean Ziller also commented that the municipalities that received ARPA funding had to officially allocate the funds to specific uses by the end of 2024.

Amir Famili thanked the Authority staff for the presentation and commented that it is helpful to see positive progress on key projects and to use the projects as an opportunity to document lessons learned.

### **Western Lehigh Interceptor Municipalities Test & Seal Lateral Grouting Project, Year 2 (2025)**

Chuck Volk introduced the project, which will include testing and sealing of main line joints and sewer service lateral connections in various areas of Upper Macungie and Upper Milford Townships.

Jason Peters reviewed the project in more detail, noting that this is the second project of this nature that the Authority will be administering. The work will be completed under a single contract with the Authority, with costs incurred for work in Upper Macungie Township reimbursed directly by the Township up to the maximum authorization amount of \$1 million. Other work will be completed in the LCA-owned sewer collection system in Upper Milford Township. He reviewed the details of the project and the bidding process. The Authority recommends award of the construction contract to

Vortex Services, LLC, as they were the low bidder and have performed similar work for the Authority with satisfactory results.

Chuck Volk reviewed details of the inspection services proposed to be performed by Arcadis. He explained that the test and seal method requires full-time inspection services as each system joint and lateral connection is tested individually and then grouted if repair is needed. The project is billed to the Authority based on the quantity of grout used, and the inspector is responsible for tracking each repair. The inspector also serves as the liaison between the contractor and homeowners who are impacted by the project.

There was some Board discussion regarding the test and seal methodology. Mr. Volk explained that while the project is very detail oriented and labor intensive, the test and seal method is more cost-effective than full main-line lining projects, and less disruptive to the community as the work can be completed while the pipe remains in service. There was additional discussion about how to measure the amount of leakage removed through these projects.

On a motion by Sean Ziller, seconded by Norma Cusick, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization for the Western Lehigh Interceptor Municipalities Test & Seal Lateral Grouting Project, Year 2, Construction Phase, in the amount of \$1,574,992.00, which includes award of the Construction Contract to Vortex Services, LLC in the amount of \$1,282,992.00 and a Professional Services Authorization to Arcadis in the amount of \$232,000.00 (8-0).

#### **MONTHLY PROJECT UPDATES / INFORMATION ITEMS**

Liesel Gross reviewed items that will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

#### **STAFF COMMENTS**

Liesel Gross announced that the Kline's Island Sewer System (KISS) Act 537 Plan is due to be released for public review and approval within the next week. This regional sewer plan has been developed over the course of the past five years through significant collaboration among the 15 municipalities that use the KISS. The final plan document will be posted online and submitted to the KISS municipalities' planning commissions for review and comment. Thereafter, a public comment period will commence, and all KISS municipalities and Authorities will be asked to approve the plan by Resolution sometime later this summer. Ms. Gross noted the sustained effort by Authority staff and specifically Senior Planning Engineer, Phil DePoe, to bring this planning effort to a positive conclusion.

#### **SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS**

None.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS / OTHER COMMENTS**

Jennifer McKenna, City of Allentown Office of Compliance, commented that the Allentown Water & Sewer Lease Agreement includes a requirement that the Authority shall complete 165 miles of leak detection annually during the period of 2021 through 2024, and this requirement will be extended through 2028. Leak detection requirements are intended to supplement the water main replacement requirements in the Lease in order to provide reliable water service to City customers.

#### **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

An Executive Session will be held following the close of the regular meeting to discuss potential property acquisition.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 12:42 p.m.

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Norma Cusick  
Assistant Secretary