

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 11, 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 12:01 p.m. on Monday, August 11, 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, Ted Lyons, Linda Rosenfeld, Norma Cusick, Sean Ziller, and Peter Dent were present for Roll Call and remained for the duration of the meeting. Kevin Baker entered the meeting at 12:05 p.m. and remained for the remainder 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 Lisa Miller.

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 are no changes to the published agenda, and no Executive Session is planned.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

July 28, 2025 Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Linda Rosenfeld, seconded by Sean Ziller, the Board approved the minutes from the July 28, 2025 meeting as presented (7-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

LCA Communications Assessment and Strategic Plan

Liesel Gross provided a presentation regarding a Communications Assessment performed by Raffetis to provide the Authority with a plan to improve and expand its communications. She explained the need to enhance the Authority's public communications and community outreach due to expanding programs like the lead service line replacement program, sewer rehabilitation program, along with increasing rates and changing regulations. Some of the key observations from the assessment included the need to augment capacity of current staff, opportunities to leverage existing good relationships with media and stakeholders, and increased focus on clearly communicating about projects and rate impacts. She also reviewed a summary of feedback gathered from stakeholder interviews and a customer survey, which demonstrate low levels of awareness about the Authority, its mission, and its services to the community.

Ms. Gross noted that the Authority has begun to recruit for the Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships position, and this assessment has been helpful in defining that position and creating the structure needed for the future of the program.

There was Board discussion regarding customer complaint tracking, name recognition and rebranding, and the benefits and risks of increased community engagement and education.

2026-2030 Allentown Division Capital Plan

Liesel Gross provided an introduction to the Authority's process for developing the Capital Plan (Plan), which is conducted annually. She noted the various Board approvals and public input process and explained that today's presentation is focused on the Allentown Division draft Plan for the 2026 to 2030 time period. Chuck Volk provided a timeline for future presentations and public input and noted that Plan approval will be requested in October. This year's five-year plan includes a modest increase from the prior five-year plan. Major cost drivers in the Plan include the Lead Service Line Replacement program at \$92.5 million, the Water Filtration Plant (WFP) PFAS treatment upgrade at \$20.5 million, escalated Inflow & Infiltration removal programs at \$30.8 million, Kline's Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (KIWWTP) wet-weather upgrade at \$21 million, and \$16 million for the KIWWTP plastic media trickling filter rehabilitation project. Ms. Gross noted that some potential grant funding is included in the financial analysis for this Plan, with the potential for additional grants to offset borrowing.

Chuck Volk then presented the Allentown Division water and wastewater project details included in the Plan via a detailed PowerPoint presentation. His presentation included a review of annual projects, smaller improvement projects, major capital improvements, and new projects included for the first time in this year's Capital Plan. The new projects include: Leak Detection Program, WFP Electrical Upgrades, WFP Little Lehigh Intake Upgrades, Schantz Spring Water Treatment Upgrades, KIWWTP Odor Control Unit Building #24 Replacement, KIWWTP Effluent Pump Station Upgrades, and KIWWTP Facility Electrical Upgrades.

Ed Klein reviewed the financial analysis included in the Plan, noting water projects total \$159 million, the wastewater projects total \$95 million. To fund the Plan, approximately \$139 million will come from operations and reserves, \$100,000 from the City of Allentown grants and reimbursements, \$29 million is expected in grant funding for the lead service line replacement program and the PFAS treatment upgrade. The remainder of the Plan, \$86 million, will be funded from prior bonds and new borrowing. He presented a cash flow statement that indicates these funding sources.

Liesel Gross concluded the presentation with a review of the Plan's impact on water and sewer rates in Allentown, which are projected to increase 7 to 9 percent per year over the next five years. The current average residential water and sewer bill is \$965 per year, which may increase to about \$1,404 per year over the Plan period.

There was some Board discussion regarding grants and funding of projects.

Liesel Gross noted that the Suburban Division draft Capital Plan and the Administrative Plan will be discussed at the next Board meeting at which time the comment period will begin. The final review process will take place before approval in October.

MONTHLY PROJECT UPDATES / INFORMATION ITEMS

Liesel Gross provided highlights of items for the next Board meeting in August. She noted that the Suburban Division Capital Plan and Administrative Capital Plan will be on the agenda for discussion, along with an on-site presentation from EMA regarding the Targeted Staffing Assessment project. She also noted that Budget discussions will begin in September.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

The June 2025 Financial Statements were presented for information purposes only. There was no discussion at this time. Liesel Gross stated that the July 2025 report will be reviewed at the August 25th meeting.

STAFF COMMENTS

Liesel Gross reported that the public comment period ended at the end of July for the Kline's Island Sewer System (KISS) Act 537 Plan. A letter was received from the City of Allentown Environmental Advisory Committee supporting the plan. The next step is to seek Resolutions of approval of the plan from the KISS municipalities. The Authority will also seek to have the Board pass a Resolution adopting the plan. This is not required by Act 537, but would illustrate the Authority's support to the KISS municipalities.

SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / OTHER COMMENTS

None.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 1:54 p.m.

Linda A. Rosenfeld
Secretary