

## **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

### **October 27, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority Board of Directors was called to order at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, October 27, 2025, Vice Chairman Jeff Morgan 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, Sean Ziller, and Peter Dent were present for Roll Call and remained for the duration of the meeting. Kevin Baker entered the meeting at 12:10 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, Taylor Stakes and Lisa Miller.

Vice Chairman Morgan 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**

##### **October 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

On a motion by Linda Rosenfeld, seconded by Peter Dent, the Board approved the minutes from the October 13, 2025 meeting as presented (6-0).

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

##### **Resolution 10-2025-1: Authorizing the Authority's Application for Grant Funding, Equipment Purchase**

Liesel Gross provided clarification on the project description, noting that the grant would be used for equipment and installation of water system valves in the City of Allentown. The Local Share Assessment grant is offered annually and requires a Board resolution in order to apply. The maximum of the grant is \$1 million. Chris Moughan provided additional details on the project that would address small water system valves in Allentown that are found to be inoperable, which causes challenges for emergency response procedures during a water main break.

On a motion by Peter Dent, seconded by Linda Rosenfeld, the Board approved Resolution 10-2025-1 (6-0).

##### **2026-2030 Capital Plan**

Liesel Gross provided a presentation summarizing the 2026-2030 Capital Plan noting that the plan is conceptual, and next year's costs are incorporated into the 2026 Budget. Chuck Volk reviewed the changes made to the project details since the prior presentations of the draft plan. He noted that a

project was added to the Suburban Water plan for Small Systems Water Supply Improvements for \$100,000. Also in the Suburban Water plan, the Buss Acres Water Treatment Upgrade project has been reduced from \$600,000 to \$250,000 due to timing considerations related to a potential Pennvest grant application. In the Suburban Wastewater plan, the 2026 budget for the Pretreatment Plant Critical Upgrades project has been reduced from \$2.5 million to \$2.0 million to reflect the timing of work to be completed in the current year. The Pretreatment Plant Upgrades and Replacement project budget for 2026 has been increased from \$200,000 to \$400,000 to reflect the electrical upgrades design phase. In the Allentown Division plan, the Manhole Rehabilitation Project description was changed to reflect current plans and details as reviewed with the City of Allentown. Phil DePoe provided details of the project.

Ms. Gross provided a total Plan summary, noting \$335 million in project costs is slightly lower than the prior Capital Plan mainly due to completion of some projects and the phasing of the Pretreatment Plant upgrades. She reviewed the main drivers for plan costs including wet-weather projects, major wastewater facility upgrades, and regulatory-driven projects such as the lead service line replacement program. There was some discussion regarding the regulatory projects.

Ed Klein provided an overview of the funding sources for the 2026-2030 Capital Plan projects.

Chuck Volk reviewed the comments that were received from the City of Allentown and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

There was additional Board discussion regarding funding for the lead service line replacement program. Sean Ziller thanked the staff for putting together a thoughtful capital plan.

On a motion by Sean Ziller, seconded by Linda Rosenfeld, the Board approved the 2026-2030 Capital Plan (7-0).

### **2026 Budget**

Liesel Gross noted that today's presentation is a summary of 2026 Budget information previously provided to the Board, and the Board will be asked to approve the Budget. Ms. Gross provided an executive summary and reviewed the highlights of the 2026 Budget, summarizing the impact of the strategic initiatives and staff changes. There are no changes to the proposed budget from prior presentations.

Ed Klein reviewed the 2026 Budget summary, noting the Authority's metrics related to debt service coverage ratio and cash reserves, and he reviewed planned borrowing for 2026 capital expenses.

Ms. Gross reviewed the proposed customer rate increases for 2026 and a rate comparison among other communities in the Lehigh Valley.

On a motion by Ted Lyons, seconded by Peter Dent, the Board approved the 2026 Budget (7-0).

### **Emergency Declaration – Water Main Replacement – 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Allentown**

Chris Moughan provided an overview of the water main break that occurred on October 15<sup>th</sup> on 13<sup>th</sup> Street, between Liberty and Gordon Streets, in Allentown. After assessing the situation, Joao Bradley was contacted to mobilize their emergency repair team. Approximately 15 feet of damaged 12-inch cast iron pipe was removed and replaced with 12-inch ductile iron pipe using two repair clamps received from Eastern Suburban via Core and Main. Water service was restored around 6:30 p.m. and the roadway was reopened shortly thereafter. Based on the findings of the damaged pipe, it was recommended that full replacement of the 12-inch water main in that block be replaced. The

pipe was originally installed in 1912. Further discussion determined that the adjacent 30-inch main of similar age and condition should also be replaced, but this pipe could be downsized to 12-inch ductile iron pipe. Joao Bradley provided a cost estimate of \$397,875.00 for the work. Due to the time sensitive nature of the repair, the emergency was declared administratively on October 15, 2025.

Staff is asking for Board approval of the declaration retroactive to October 15, 2025 to cover expenses already incurred in response to this emergency and waive standard purchasing guidelines as a result of acting as expeditiously as possible to address the emergency.

Sean Ziller asked if any buildings were impacted by the water flowing from the water main break and, if so, does the Authority share the cost of remediation. Chris Moughan said that most of the water went into the storm drain, and he is unaware of any property damage. There was some discussion about the insurance claims process in these cases and protections provided to municipal entities for exposure to property damage claims.

There was additional discussion regarding the prioritization of pipe replacements based on age and condition.

On a motion by Sean Ziller, seconded by Linda Rosenfeld, the Board approved the Emergency Declaration retroactive to October 15, 2025, for the water main replacement and repair work on 13<sup>th</sup> Street in Allentown for a cost estimate of \$397,875.00 (7-0).

#### **Suburban Division – Upper Western Lehigh Pump Station & Force Main Change Order**

Chuck Volk provided a background of the project. Amy Kunkel explained that during construction of the pump station wet well, and after an extended period of wet weather, a sinkhole developed on the construction site near the two parallel interceptors that convey sewage to and from the Pretreatment Plant. Earth Engineering Inc. (EEI) was retained by Blooming Glen Contractors to evaluate and quantify the sinkhole and recommended that grouting be installed to minimize further sinkhole development and damage to the interceptor lines. The cost to install the grouting is a conservative estimate based on the recommendation from the geotechnical engineer. The exact amount of drilling and grouting material required to reach bedrock is not known at this time, and actual costs will be updated upon completion of the work.

On a motion by Linda Rosenfeld, seconded by Peter Dent, the Board approved Amendment No. 1 for the Construction Change Order for Contract 1 – General / Process Mechanical to Blooming Glen Contractors Inc. in the amount of \$149,981.52 (7-0).

#### **MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW**

Ed Klein provided a presentation of the September 2025 Financial statements. He stated that cash flow for the full year is forecasted to be better than the budget for all three funds; however, net income is favorable to budget for Suburban Water and Wastewater, but the City Division is unfavorable due to deferment of the \$15 million lead service line replacement project in 2025.

#### **MONTHLY SYSTEM OPERATIONS OVERVIEW**

Andrew Moore reviewed the September 2025 report, reviewing the two recordable injury accidents that occurred last month. Both accidents required medical attention. Amir Famili commented that the lack of JSAs (Job Safety Analysis) appears to be a common theme in the safety incidents reported this year. He asked that the Board be updated on current procedures and process of updating JSAs. Mr. Moore said that this can be provided at a future meeting.

Mr. Moore reviewed water production and wastewater treatment statistics for the prior month. He explained a Notice of Violation (NOV) was received for the PFAS exceedance in the Emmaus Consecutive Division. An NOV will be issued quarterly until the Borough of Emmaus project to resolve the PFAS issue is completed. He then reviewed the system performance for sanitary sewer overflows and permit exceedances.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

Liesel Gross introduced Taylor Stakes, the new Director of Communications and Strategic Partnerships. Mr. Stakes provided a brief background of his work experience.

**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 1:25 p.m.

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Linda A. Rosenfeld  
Secretary