

**MINUTES OF THE
EASTON AREA JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY BOARD
December 16, 2024**

- ❖ The regular monthly meeting of the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority Board was held at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 16, 2024, at the EAJSA Administration Building, 50 South Delaware Drive, Easton, Pennsylvania 18042, with Zoom Meeting option. The meeting was open to the public.
- ❖ The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Mr. Robert Lammi. Mr. Lammi ordered the roll to be called at 5:00 p.m. Board Members were present in-person and via video conference option. Board members present at the call to order were as follows:

#	Member	Municipality	Term Expires	Present	Absent	Time Entered
1	Robert Blanchfield Treasurer	Palmer Township	12/31/2025	X		*
2	Jeffrey Bracken	Wilson Borough	12/31/2024	X		*
3	Luis Campos	City of Easton	12/31/2025		X	*
4	James Frank	Forks Township	12/31/2024	X		*
5	Dave Hopkins Vice-Chairman	City of Easton	12/31/2028	X		*
6	Paul James	West Easton Borough	12/31/2024	X		*
7	Robert Lammi Chairman	Palmer Township	12/31/2024	X		*
8	Joe Mauro Jr	City of Easton	12/31/2025	X		*
9	Stephen Riegel Secretary	Tatamy Borough	12/31/2024	X		*
10	John Van Arman	City of Easton	12/31/2024	X		*
11	Robert Werner	City of Easton	12/31/2025	X		*
12	VACANT	City of Easton	12/31/2023			

*Beginning of Meeting **Adjournment of Meeting

Board members attending via Zoom Meeting could hear each meeting attendee and be heard by each attendee.

❖ **The following personnel were in attendance:**

Mike Gaul (King Spry law firm, Authority Solicitor), Jeff Morgan (SC Engineers, Authority Engineer), John Schimmel (Accountant), Chuck Wilson (City of Easton Operations Manager of WWTP), Alexandria Hoffman (City of Easton Assistant Operations Manager of WWTP, and Authority IPP Manager), Yuslenny Zorrilla (City of Easton Office Manager of WWTP, and Authority Administrative Assistant).

❖ **Agenda and any Amendment Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to approve the posted agenda with two amendments to add under the Insurance Review Committee agenda heading renewals and payment of the Authority’s Environmental Pollution Insurance and Public Official Insurance.

Motion Carried (10-0).

❖ **Minutes Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Riegel and seconded by Mr. Van Arman to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2024, meeting, as presented. **Motion Carried (10-0).**

❖ **Courtesy of the floor:**

Ms. Hoffman confirmed that the Authority had not received any correspondence through phone, email, or mail for public comment at the meeting. No members of the public attended the meeting.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Attorney Gaul had no report.

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

Mr. John Schimmel, EAJSA Accountant, had no report.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to approve the November bills for payment in the total amount of \$ 132,576.51. Motion **Carried (10-0)**.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve the Bond Funds Requisition 24-C2024-12 in the amount of \$ 11,173.25 in accordance with the Authority Engineer's recommendation.

Motion Carried (10-0).

ENGINEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Hopkins stated the Engineering Committee met on December 3, 2024. Mr. Hopkins stated the Committee had a busy agenda. Mr. Hopkins asked Mr. Morgan to discuss his items.

Mr. Morgan first presented an update on the plan for the Lehigh River Force Main Replacement Project.

Mr. Morgan had a Power Point presentation where he introduced the work to be done under the Lehigh River where the existing Force Main will be connected directly from the pump station. Mr. Morgan stated that making this connection was problematic due to the extent of depth needed and two shafts. Mr. Morgan stated only one contractor bid on performing these 45-foot depth shafts near the river. Mr. Morgan added there is another way to get this done, which is by working closer to the parking lot closer to the border pit, which is only 7 feet deep and then tie to the force main on the side of the river and consequently to the pump station that would be ideal.

Mr. Morgan stated he also contacted DCED about changing the scope of work for the project and deleting the installation of the two new chopper pumps at the Second Street Pump station because the mixing system at this station is getting upgraded with a new chopper pump so pump replacement work can be put on hold for now. Mr. Morgan stated DCED did not have any objection to cancelling the installation of the two new chopper pumps because no funds were approved for it in their grant for this project.

Mr. Morgan added he and Mr. Hopkins had a meeting with the parking lot owner from whom the Authority would need to obtain an easement for the Force Main Replacement work. The property owner may desire that his parking lot be re-configured when the lot is restored after the Force Main is replaced. Mr. Morgan stated it will make sense to get the work done after the repairs by the river are finalized.

Mr. Morgan added some draft easements would be provided at the January Board meeting for all members to approve so they can be provided to the building owner and to the City.

Mr. Gaul asked if any permits would be required to make these parking lot changes. Mr. Hopkins stated the City

would have to provide curbing permits and the building owner would have to make sure the lot complies with these. Mr. Hopkins added the contractors would have to pull a zoning permit to follow the design.

Mr. Gaul asked if the Force Main's air release valve would have an odor. Mr. Morgan stated that this force main is utilized all the time, remains full of water, and should not release any air. Mr. Morgan stated that if some air is released, it should be contained in the manhole which houses the air release valve.

Mr. Gaul asked about how this project would affect existing utilities. Mr. Morgan stated PA One Call would take care of staking out existing utilities on the property such as Easton Suburban Water, City Storm, and City Sanitary.

Mr. Morgan also presented two items for approval.

Item# 12-01:

Approval to advertise the Digester Gas System Upgrades, Structural Painting and Improvements, and Miscellaneous Upgrades Project.

Mr. Morgan added the design of this project involves digester cleaning equipment upgrades and safety. Mr. Morgan stated the work would be completed in and around Digester 1,2, and 3, the Heat Exchanger Building, Digester No 2/3 Building, Boiler Building, the Chlorine Contact Tank, and the Primary Sludge Pump Station.

Mr. Morgan stated a memo in the packet also describes miscellaneous work that will be done.

Mr. Morgan stated this project would be placed on PennBid in mid-January 2025 and that there will also be a pre-bid for this project.

Mr. Morgan stated the estimated cost for this project is \$1,100,000. Mr. Morgan stated this project would be paid for by the Authority's 2021 Bond Issue.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, for Approval to Advertise the Digester Gas System Upgrades, Structural Painting and Improvements, and Miscellaneous Upgrades Project.

Engineer Memorandum #12-01. Motion Carried (10-0).

Item # 12-02: Approval of Proposal for Design Engineering and Bidding Services for the Lehigh Drive Interceptor and Bushkill Interceptor Inverted Siphon Boxes Repair Project

Mr. Morgan presented PowerPoint slides to show a 6ft by 3ft stormwater culvert approximately 335 feet west of Adamson Street and the EAJSA's 15-inch clay sanitary sewer pipe that crosses perpendicular under this culvert were damaged. This sewer line and culvert need to be repaired.

Mr. Morgan added this video inspection also identified repairs needed at the existing metering chamber at the interception of Adamson and Lehigh Drive.

Mr. Morgan stated that at a previous inspection of the EAJSA's Bushkill Interceptor Siphon also found that the sluice gates in these chambers are inoperable, corroded in place and partially block some of the flow in the barrels of the siphons. Mr. Morgan also added these gates must be demolished to provide better water flow.

Mr. Morgan provided photos to show all the repairs needed.

Mr. Morgan stated the proposal amount of \$84,475 is elevated because the location of these repairs is on a State highway and a PENNDOT Highway Occupancy Permit is required.

Mr. Morgan stated it would take two months to obtain a PENNDOT permit to do this work.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Van Arman, for Approval of Proposal for Design Engineering and Bidding Services for the Lehigh Drive Interceptor and Bushkill Interceptor Inverted Siphon Boxes Repair Project. **Engineering Memorandum #12-02. Motion Carried (10-0).**

PRETREATMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Mauro had no report.

Ms. Hoffman stated the new bodywash products industry in Forks Township called AP Develop has a 6,000 holding tank for their industrial waste discharge, which is then transported to another WWTP for treatment, and not discharged to the Authority's WWTP. Ms. Hoffman stated that the industry is only discharging domestic sewage to the Authority's WWTP. As a result, Ms. Hoffman stated this industry would not be on the Authority's IPP program. Ms. Hoffman stated the industry's industrial discharge is going to Lehigh County Authority's WWTP, and a manifest is available.

Ms. Hoffman stated four more industries are expected to send in their sample results to close out 2024.

Mr. Hopkins asked how an industry is monitored for compliance when not in the IPP program. Ms. Hoffman stated the industry's manifests can be checked if necessary to confirm compliance.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Blanchfield stated during the Engineering Committee Mr. Morgan presented a comparison of the sources and use of funds for the planned Capital Projects. Mr. Morgan stated this information was provided in the board packet on table #3.

Mr. Morgan stated on the left side of chart 3 are Finance projects that are being paid with Bond issue money, and the grant. Mr. Morgan also included Bond Redemption and Improvement Fund money, which is a backup if needed.

Mr. Morgan explained between the MCC Project, the Digester Project just approved to advertise, the Force Main Replacement Project and other items, there is about 5.3 million dollars' worth of work to be completed. Mr. Morgan stated 6.9 million dollars in available funds, if funds from the Bond Redemption Fund which is a safety net are not counted, there is about 5.4 million dollars available to fund the projects discussed.

Mr. Morgan stated projects that are been paid out of the Authority's Budget Line items such as the Underground Hot Water Replacement projects, which should be starting shortly, the Switchgear Repairs, the removal and repair of Oxidation Ditch B-2, we still waiting to hear what the cost would be from the repair shop. Mr. Morgan added the Lehigh Drive Interceptor Project, the Siphon Box Gate work and the design and construction to be determined. Mr. Morgan stated the total for these projects is \$ 318,000.00. Mr. Morgan added \$557,000.00 from other line items are available as needed.

Mr. Morgan stated at the next Engineering Committee one of the topics will be the updated five-year budget capital plan. Mr. Morgan stated this information is normally provided in the packet for informational purposes only.

Mr. Gaul asked if the Authority had considered creating a reserve for replacement of capital items. Mr. Morgan stated all money gets rebated with the one exception of the Bond Redemption Fund. Mr. Morgan stated cutting down Municipalities' rebates would be another source of revenue.

Mr. Morgan stated that Bond Redemption Fund is funded annually by a 10% payment of the debt service for the 2015 Bond issue.

Mr. Lammi commented that if money cannot be obtained through a reserve account, money must be borrowed, and the Authority must pay the debt service.

Mr. Hopkins stated that the Authority's annual operating budget contains funds for capital projects.

INSURANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Lammi stated two insurance policies were up for renewal, the Environmental Insurance Policy, including the addition of the Terrorism Policy for 2025, and the Public Officials Policy with Penn Prime.

Mr. Lammi was provided with a quote of \$19, 803.36 for the Environmental Insurance policy and the Terrorism coverage costing \$587.47, for a total of \$20,389.83. Mr. Lammi commented that, compared to 2024, there was a slight increase in costs.

Mr. Lammi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to pay \$20,389.83 for the Environmental Insurance policy including the Terrorism coverage.

Motion Carried (10-0).

Next, Mr. Lammi presented the renewal of the Authority's Public Officials Policy with Penn Prime. Mr. Lammi asked Mr. Schimmel if a net contribution of \$2,114.00 was determined to go in the trust fund.

Mr. Schimmel stated it would be a 2025 expenditure but paid in 2024.

Mr. Lammi stated because the Authority is part of a trust fund, a credit the Authority received for 2024 brings down Penn Prime premium from \$16,000.00 to \$2,114.00.

Mr. Lammi made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to pay the Penn Prime invoice of \$2,114.00 for the Authority's Public Official Policy.

Motion Carried (10-0).

OPERATIONS REPORT

Ms. Hoffman reported a pink residue found in the disc filters consists of a single cell ciliate, which is eating all the other microorganisms in the WWTP system.

Ms. Hoffman stated a meeting is scheduled to speak to a Microbiologist Specialist named Michael Gerardi who has experience in the Wastewater field. Ms. Hoffman hopes Mr. Gerardi can provide an answer as to how to get rid of this foreign microorganism.

Ms. Hoffman stated the plant staff has tried diverse ways to eliminate the organism, such as keeping the disc filter building doors open to allow as much sunlight in the building as possible, but nothing has worked so far.

Ms. Hoffman stated disc filters are also being cleaned out more frequently than usual, but that has not worked

either.

Ms. Hoffman commented that this issue is causing high TSS and higher blankets in the clarifiers. Ms. Hoffman asked the disc filter company to provide her contact information for a Canadian WWTP that had the same problem, so she could find out how they solved the problem. However, in that case, the organism may have simply cycled out of their system on its own, without the Canadian WWTP taking a specific remedial action.

ADDITIONAL REPORT

- ❖ **Old Business:** None
- ❖ **New Business:** Mr. Lammi presented a plaque of recognition to Mr. Van Arman who is retiring.
- ❖ **Unfinished Business:** the Emergency Procurement Policy. Mr. Morgan stated that after a discussion with Mr. Gaul, the Engineering Committee decided that the best approach was to manage emergency procurement on a case-by-case basis and not have a formal policy.

Mr. Lammi asked Mr. Gaul if there was a reason for an Executive Session. Mr. Gaul responded, there was not.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Riegel and seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, and unanimously. Carried at 6:09 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Yuslendy Zorrilla
EAJSA Board Recording Secretary