

**MINUTES OF THE
EASTON AREA JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY BOARD
June 17, 2024 Meeting**

- ❖ The regular monthly meeting of the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority Board was held at 5:03 p.m. on Monday, June 17, 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 5:03 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	Luis Campos	City of Easton	12/31/2025		X	*
3	James Frank	Forks Township	12/31/2024	X		*
4	David Hopkins Vice-Chairman	City of Easton	12/31/2028	X		*
5	Paul James	West Easton Borough	12/31/2024		X	*
6	Robert Lammi Chairman	Palmer Township	12/31/2024	X		*
7	Joseph Mauro Jr	City of Easton	12/31/2025	X		*
8	Stephen Riegel Secretary	Tatamy Borough	12/31/2024	X		*
9	John Van Arman	City of Easton	12/31/2024	X		*
10	Robert Werner	City of Easton	12/31/2025	X		*
11	Jeffrey Bracken	Wilson Borough	12/31/2024	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 (Authority 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. Riegel, to approve the posted agenda without any amendments. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

❖ **Minutes Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Mauro and seconded by Mr. Werner to approve the minutes of the Board's May 20, 2024, regular meeting, as presented. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

A motion was made by Mr. Riegel and seconded by Mr. Blanchfield to approve the minutes of the Board's May 28, 2024 special meeting. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

❖ **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, reported the Audit for the calendar year 2023 was started. Mr. Schimmel also reported that the Authority's auditor has a new representative working on the Authority's audit, which should help expedite the process.

Mr. Blanchfield asked if the Audit contract was signed. Mr. Lammi corrected this by saying it is an engagement letter.

Mr. Schimmel stated that the auditor expects that the audit will be completed in time for it to be sent out in September.

Mr. Lammi asked if the Concise Financial Statement for the 2022 Audit had been advertised. Mr. Schimmel stated that he had just received the draft advertisement, and as a result, it has not been advertised yet. Ms. Hoffman offered to send the advertisement to the Express Times as soon as Mr. Schimmel sent it to her. Mr. Gaul asked that the draft advertisement be sent to him for review prior to it being placed with the paper. In response to a question by Ms. Hoffman, Mr. Gaul confirmed that the advertisement only needed to run one day.

Mr. Blanchfield made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to approve the May 2024 bills for payment in the total amount of \$80,552.46. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to approve the Bond Funds Requisition 24-C2024-06 in the amount of \$17,871.05, in accordance with the Authority Engineer's recommendation. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

ENGINEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Hopkins stated the Engineering Committee met on June 4, 2024. Mr. Hopkins stated the items discussed at the meeting will be presented by the consultant engineer this evening. In addition, the cleaning and painting of the Gearbox will also be discussed, including the insurance check exchange between the City and the Authority.

Mr. Hopkins also stated there is a meeting set up with the owner of the building on Larry Holmes Drive. He will share the meeting outcomes with Mr. Morgan.

Mr. Morgan stated he noticed the park has been cleaned up and the work that was being done in the canal is now complete.

Mr. Morgan added the space in the canal park would need to be utilized for the lining work for the pipe in the river. Mr. Hopkins asked if the parking lot would be the designated space. Mr. Morgan stated it will be mainly grass area. Mr. Hopkins expressed his concern with heavy trucks in the area.

Mr. Morgan estimated the work would be done between January to May. The park is not heavily used during those months.

Mr. Morgan presented three items for approval. The first item was the cleaning and inspection project for Digester #1. Mr. Morgan provided Board members directions to the location of the Digester in the plant area, so they could see where it was, and also directions to the auxiliary heat exchanger building as well. Mr. Morgan added the tank was cleaned out last time between 2007-2008, about 17 years. Mr. Morgan stated he had been working with ARRO on a proposal for the cleaning project, and to implement recommendations from the Methane Gas System study that was done.

In addition, Mr. Morgan, Mr. Wilson, and Ms. Hoffman did a walk-through with ARRO, the proposed design engineer, to look at some building items that should also be addressed at the same time as the Digester project. In addition, some allowances are provided for concrete repair and cover repair on the contract once the tank is drained and inspected. The cost for this design work is \$89,100.00. It will take about 20 drawings because a lot of electrical work needs to be incorporated into the project,

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve a professional services agreement with ARRO for a Design Engineering Proposal for Digester No.1 Cleaning and Miscellaneous Improvement project in the amount of \$89,100.00.

Engineer Memorandum #06-01. Motion Carried (9-0).

Mr. Morgan presented the second item for approval, which was a proposed Authority COSTARS purchasing policy. It was reviewed at the Engineering Committee and then with the Solicitor Mr. Gaul. The final version is in the Board packet. Adoption of the new policy will allow Authority and City staff to inform potential COSTAR vendors of requirements for sale proposals/quotes. That will allow the Authority to issue purchase orders in accordance with COSTAR contracts.

Mr. Gaul agreed that the adoption of a policy made sense and should streamline future COSTAR purchases.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve the proposed Authority PA COSTARs Program Purchasing Policy as presented. **Engineer Memorandum #06-02. Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. Morgan presented the third item for approval. Mr. Morgan included a copy of an insurance policy proposal from Selective Insurance in the board packet for Commercial Vehicle Insurance and Inland Marine. Mr. Morgan mentioned the previous insurance provider, Nationwide, had elected not to renew its prior policy, and as a result, the Authority had to obtain new coverage. Mr. Morgan provided a follow-up e-mail, not included in the packet but it was sent to all members with the previous and new policy cost, including all equipment at the plant, removed old ones, and made sure all new ones were added.

Mr. Morgan mentioned it was challenging to get this quote because, as he just learned, most insurances don't want to provide monoline insurance; they would prefer to offer bundled insurance for different areas such as property, liability, and auto. Mr. Morgan stated Miers was able to obtain a quote from Selective Insurance. Michelle from KWM was very helpful with this, as she agreed to review the Selective proposal and provide comments. Mr. Morgan asked for the Board to approve the Selective proposal so coverage can be continued starting July 1, 2024. Mr. Morgan told Miers he could not bind the coverage until it was approved by the Board.

Mr. Morgan is expected to send a purchase confirmation email first thing in the morning. Mr. Morgan also asked Mr. Schimmel to be ready to cut a check for the policy purchase. He will provide him with further details as soon as possible.

Mr. Morgan apologized to both signatories for having to make a special trip to the accountant's office to sign the check.

Mr. Werner stated he had no issue approving this item but wanted on the record that he did not consider KWM's evaluation of the Selective proposal a helpful factor in his decision because KWM had not served the Authority well in prior matters. He wanted to be clear that he did not harbor any personal animosity towards KWM but believed from a professional standpoint that KWM had not been sufficiently responsive to the Authority in important prior matters.

Mr. Hopkins spoke highly of his daily business interactions with Michelle of KWM and believed her work ethic to be on point.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, for the approval of Selective's Quote for Commercial Vehicle and Inland Marine Insurance Policies in the amount of \$13,038. **Engineer Memorandum #06-03. Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. Gaul asked if the theft insurance required for the grant had been received. Mr. Morgan stated we are just waiting for the bill.

Mr. Blanchfield asked Mr. Morgan about the monthly Pump Station Flow data he places in the packet. Mr. Blanchfield inquired about a comparison option to be able to see, if any, changes from month to month. Mr. Morgan stated he includes the Interceptor Level Monitor Data and the Pump Station Flow Data in the monthly packet. Mr. Blanchfield asked if Mr. Morgan would notify the Board if something were out of order. Mr. Morgan stated if there was ever a big event, he would notify the Engineering Committee or report it at the Board Meeting. In addition, Mr. Morgan added we pay ADS to keep all the data stored on the Cloud. He prints out the most recent month and adds it to the Board packet for informational purposes. Mr. Morgan stated very often we have received requests from Palmer and Forks Townships to supply them with some data or planning for DEP.

Mr. Gaul asked how the plant's current volume compares to the volume from four years ago. Mr. Morgan stated an annual Chapter 94 report is conducted, which is a report from the past five years. In addition, it has data projected for the next five years. It is all summarized. Mr. Morgan stated that from 1998 to the present, the plant has maintained the same MGD of 5.5. It does depend on the weather but mainly remains the same. Mr. Morgan added that besides some surrounding structural changes, the main source of changes in flow is the rain. Unless we get a large industrial company such as a pharmaceutical, or bottling company, the plant's flow will most likely remain the same. Mr. Hopkins added that even big apartment buildings do not significantly change the expected volume.

Mr. Wilson commented that the plant might get to 5.7 MGD on occasion, but normally it is at 5.5 MGD.

PRETREATMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Mauro had nothing to report.

Ms. Hoffman stated all five remaining inspections will be completed in the next couple of weeks, which will wrap up all 2024 inspections. Ms. Hoffman added that that will provide a great transition to teach a new hire to take over Mr. Messa's position.

Ms. Hoffman added this will allow her to focus on training the new hire in the office rather than in the field and facilitate a clean start in 2025 with inspections.

Mr. Hopkins stated the job description was approved. Ms. Hoffman stated she would contact Human Resources about posting it on the website.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Blanchfield stated Ms. Hoffman will take care of the advertisement of the Concise Financial Statement.

Mr. Morgan asked Mr. Schimmel if he has everything needed for the Audit. Mr. Schimmel stated the Auditor went to his offices and took all the records. Mr. Schimmel believes this Audit should run smoothly.

Mr. Morgan stated he is aware the one item missing is the fourth quarter IPP charges; these should be added at the end of the month.

Ms. Hoffman stated everyone has been paying regularly and on time.

Mr. Lammi provided an update about the Bond refunding. Mr. Lammi sent a text message to Mr. Hottenstein to find out the status. Mr. Hottenstein stated some good movements happened; rates came down based on last week's CPI, but we still need a drop of 0.15 to meet our threshold goal. Mr. Hottenstein and the underwriting team are monitoring any changes. When appropriate, they will print out the POS.

INSURANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Lammi stated this section was already covered earlier during this meeting. Mr. Lammi added we are only waiting for the Prime policy and binder.

Mr. Lammi was thankful to Mr. Morgan for following up on obtaining this policy.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Mr. Wilson reported the plant is running well. Mr. Wilson added referring to the ADS meters, the CSO of the sewer overflow to 2.6 million which is a little bit elevated and not accurate. Mr. Wilson stated there was some material caught in the monitor; he had the collections crew clean it. A level sensor in the manhole detects 15 inches as overflow. Some material stuck to the bottom of the line, which was giving an inaccurate reading.

Mr. Hopkins asked if this event was included in the report. Ms. Hoffman stated she normally does not include that type of data; she uses an estimate for those days based on historical data. Ms. Hoffman stated this data is asterisked in the DEP report with a comment.

Mr. Wilson added the WETT testing was complete, which is Whole Toxicity Testing of our effluent. This test is complete by adding daphnia (water fleas) to different ratios of effluent and water. There is a kill ratio used to determine water quality; it provides a good estimate of how healthy the effluent is. We received a perfect test.

Mr. Hopkins asked if there was ever a perfect test. Mr. Morgan answered yes, but it was done manually.

ADDITIONAL REPORT

❖ **Old Business:** None.

❖ **New Business:** None.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Mauro and seconded by Mr. Werner, and unanimously carried, at 5:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Yuslenny Zorrilla
EAJSA Board Recording Secretary