

**MINUTES OF THE
EASTON AREA JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY BOARD
October 21, 2024**

- ❖ The regular monthly meeting of the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority Board was held at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 21, 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 5:01 p.m. Board Members were 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

Members attending via Zoom Meeting could hear each other meeting attendees and be heard by each other 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), Mr. 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. Van Arman and seconded by Mr. Mauro, to approve the posted agenda without any amendments. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

❖ **Minutes Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Blanchfield and seconded by Mr. Mauro to approve the minutes of the September 16, 2024, regular meeting, as presented. **Motion Carried (8-0,** with Mr. Van Arman abstaining). Mr. Van Arman abstained from the vote because he was not present at the last Board

meeting.

❖ **Courtesy of the floor:**

A member of the public, Mr. Patrick M. Caubel, MD, PhD, MBA was present at the meeting. Board member Mr. Werner introduced Mr. Caubel. Mr. Caubel, moved to the United States in 1998 and has been an Easton resident since 2005. Mr. Caubel is a prospective new Authority Board member for the City of Easton. Mr. Caubel presented to the Board his medical and medicine research background. In addition, Mr. Caubel expressed his interest and involvement in community health issues. Mr. Caubel also added his oldest son is currently an Advisor at the White House.

Mr. Lammi hopes Mr. Caubel's application for employment with the City of Easton is considered because a vacant employment opportunity has been open for about three years.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Attorney Gaul had no report. However, there were two topics for discussion during the Executive Session. The two policies required compliance with PA H2O Grant for the FM Replacement Project.

ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT

Mr. John Schimmel, EAJSA Accountant, had no report. Only an item listed on the agenda under Finance Committee.

Mr. Lammi stated 2025 Budget should be on agenda for approval at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Mauro made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to approve payment of the September 2024 bills for a total amount of \$1,742,589.59. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to approve the Bond Funds Requisition 24-C2024-10 in the amount of \$59,817.05 in accordance with the Authority Engineer's recommendation. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

ENGINEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Hopkins stated the Engineering Committee met on October 1, 2024. Mr. Hopkins stated the agenda was exceptionally long with about ten items and discussed different topics. In addition, Mr. Hopkins stated the City had a three-year-based contract, with three one-year options, with Chrin for Sludge Hauling but Chrin decided not to renew it. Mr. Wilson stated the current price is \$60.00 a ton for Landfill and \$35.00 a ton for Hauling. Mr. Hopkins stated Waste Management beat Chrin with \$91.00 and Chrin doubled the existing price to \$120.00 for Landfill. Also, Mr. Hopkins stated an Invitation to Bid for Hauling was issued, and the City should have a Hauler selected by the first or second week in November. Mr. Hopkins stated Chrin went up by 33%.

Mr. Hopkins stated the new Landfill and Hauling will increase the Budget expense to approximately \$600,000.00. Mr. Hopkins stated that, after he gets the final increase amount, the 2025 budget will have to be revised. Mr. Hopkins stated the due date for Bids is November 7th, 2024; bid numbers will be provided at the next Board meeting. Mr. Blanchfield stated the budget line could be revised and approved at the same time at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Morgan stated the City of Bethlehem sends their sludge to a land reclamation site, Synagro, which is more reasonable in price, something the Authority might consider in the future.

Mr. Hopkins stated that this suggestion could be brought up to the next City Council meeting which is on the second Wednesday of the month and ask Chrin for a short contract extension until the Authority decides on a Hauler.

Mr. Morgan stated he will get more information by the next Engineering Committee meeting.

Mr. Morgan presented the first one of the five items listed on the agenda under the Engineering Committee.

Mr. Morgan stated the Authority needed to adopt two policies required for compliance with the PA H2O Grant for the FM Replacement Project, which Mr. Gaul and Mr. Campbell turned into resolutions.

Proposed Resolution No. 2024-10-21A, Resolution Adopting A Nondiscrimination/Sexual Harassment Policy

Mr. Gaul handed out copies of the proposed Resolution including Policy and provided an overview of the documents. The Policy required compliance with the Commonwealth Nondiscrimination Sexual Harassment clause, which was included in the Board meeting packet. The policy contains other provisions typically found in Nondiscrimination and Sexual Harassment policies, including procedures regarding reporting, investigation and enforcement. Mr. Gaul added the Authority must reprimand offenders in some manner. Mr. Gaul stated this policy must be followed by the Authority and distributed yearly.

Mr. Werner asked the origin of this grant and Mr. Morgan stated it was Federally funded.

Mr. Morgan stated Federally funded grants have different requirements than State funded grants.

Mr. Werner asked how having this policy affects the Authority's insurance. Mr. Gaul stated that he expects that it would be beneficial to the insurance.

Mr. Gaul stated he expects the Authority's use of the H2O grant funds will subject to an audit because the Authority will receive more than \$750,000 in H2O grant funds, which originally came from the federal government.

A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins, and seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to adopt proposed **Resolution 2024-10-21A. Motion Carried (9-0).**

Proposed Resolution No. 2024-10-21B, Resolution Adopting A Business Integrity in Government Agreements/Contracts Policy

Mr. Gaul handed out copies of the proposed Resolution including Policy and provided an overview of the documents.

Mr. Morgan had prepared the original draft of the policy based on the language provided in the grant agreement. His draft was in the meeting packet. Mr. Morgan shared this document with Mr. Gaul for revision and consideration.

Mr. Gaul made some minor changes, including adding some language prohibiting conflicts of interest required by the federal procurement regulations. Mr. Gaul said the H2O grant contract required the Authority to include these integrity provisions in its contracts with contractors working on the Force Main Replacement project and paid with H2O grant funds.

A motion was made by Mr. Mauro, and seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, to adopt proposed **Resolution 2024-10-21B. Motion carried (9-0).**

Mr. Gaul stated there was another item to be discussed during the Executive Session and it is related to the Force Main Replacement Project.

Item # 10-02:

Mr. Morgan explained the need for a new Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) for Pump No. 1 at the South Delaware Pump Station after using a temporary one. Mr. Morgan stated attempts to obtain a replacement through the vendor have failed. Mr. Morgan stated the Engineering Committee agreed to obtain a quote from BSI and install it. Mr. Morgan stated going back to the original vendor in the future if the need for their services arises but after many issues with this vendor it is likely not to happen.

Mr. Morgan there was no need for multiple quotes because it was under the Threshold of \$12,600.00.

A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Riegel for the purchase of a new Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) for Pump No.1 at the South Delaware Pump Station (SDPS) in the amount of \$12,400.00. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Item # 10-03:

Mr. Morgan requested approval for a Closed-Circuit TV (CCTV) Inspection of the Lehigh Drive Sewer Line. Mr. Morgan stated a sizable portion of this sewer line is located so close to the Lehigh River, it is believed to be a potential source of flow and infiltration.

Mr. Morgan stated the Engineering Committee reviewed the attached proposal from Utility Services Group, Inc (USG) which is in the Board packet. Mr. Morgan stated this vendor has a COSTARS contract which was awarded on 4/3/2023 and expires on 4/3/2025. Mr. Morgan stated the Authority has only had positive experiences collaborating with this vendor on similar projects, that only one quote was obtained from them.

Mr. Morgan stated there was a misunderstanding between rates provided by the vendor and rates on the COSTARS' website due to technical difficulties. One of the rates was accurate, the TV rate for \$250.00 an hour. Mr. Morgan sent an email to Mr. Gaul regarding this, but Mr. Gaul was not able to go over it at that time. Mr. Morgan asked for this approval and meanwhile he will address these minor issues. Mr. Morgan stated the request is for a not to exceed amount of \$18,600.00.

A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Werner to approve USG's proposal for Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) Inspection of the Lehigh Drive Sewer Line through COSTARS contract # 016-E23-314 in an amount not to exceed \$18,600.00. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Item # 10-04:

Mr. Morgan presented a past item approved by the Authority back at August's Board meeting about the WWTP Main Switchgear Repairs. Mr. Morgan stated the approved item was under the emergency procurement procedures not to exceed \$100,000.00 and included the purchase of an additional spare 2,000 AMP breaker for the switchgear in the amount of \$14,175.00. Mr. Gaul had a different recollection about this approved item and that it only included purchase of the breaker, and did not include the BSI work being proposed now. His recollection was that the topic of future emergency procurement authority was a separate discussion and vote.

Mr. Wilson stated to his recollection this item was approved for repairs and there was a written memo about future emergency repairs adopted by the Board.

Mr. Gaul read some lines from the Board minutes to make his point about his recollection of the events.

Mr. Hopkins said it did not make sense that the Board would have approved the purchase of the breaker on an emergency basis, but not its installation.

Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Gaul had a discussion over this matter. Mr. Gaul stated that the Board had his prior draft policy on emergency procurement procedures and a Memorandum containing his research on that topic and the principals involved. He did not need to go over that further.

Mr. Morgan asked for an approval of \$58,795.00 for the refurbishment of the breaker compartment and temporary electrical work and other temporary power that needs to be done to work on the tie breaker for repairs.

Mr. Hopkins stated that when a Consulting Engineer presents a need for repairs or parts purchase to avoid a negative effect on the plant's operation, it should be considered an emergency. Mr. Hopkins stated the Authority is in business to discharge the best effluent into the river.

A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. Werner to approve the installation of the new Electrical Switchgear on an emergency basis. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. Morgan specified that the work involved the tie-breaker repair in the Switchgear.

Mr. Wilson stated that based on communications with BSI the components of the breaker are being plated at a facility. Mr. Hopkins asked if the work has been done in a rapid manner and Mr. Wilson stated the facility workers have been checking in to make sure they have everything they need to do the work.

Item #10-05:

Mr. Morgan stated the Engineering Committee reviewed Attorney Gaul's draft emergency procurement policy and tabled it to make some edits to it. Mr. Morgan stated the Committee also decided to request an increase in the amount of money the Engineering Committee can approve for services and materials expenditure without prior Board approval. Mr. Morgan did not provide an exact amount but would like an amount to be approved for emergencies. Mr. Morgan provided some 1998 history to explain the reason for the Engineering Committee's current level of authorization to expend funds without Board prior approval.

Mr. Lammi suggested the Engineering Committee should produce a proposal for the Authority Board and provide a suggested increase dollar amount and remain on the current guidelines.

Mr. Blanchfield stated it is necessary to include this Engineering Committee increase in the policy. Mr. Blanchfield added the Committee should produce a dollar amount. Mr. Morgan stated he understands it should not go over the current threshold for competitive bidding.

PRETREATMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Mauro reported Ms. Hoffman's Pre-Treatment Report was in the packet, and he had nothing else to report.

Mr. Lammi asked for UAE industry payment update. Mr. Morgan stated Q1 2024 payment was received the day of this Board meeting, however, payment for Q2 2024 has not been received yet.

Mr. Wilson was willing to provide more IPP Report answers if needed.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Blanchfield reported the completion of the 2023 Audit. Mr. Blanchfield stated the Auditor provided him with three bound copies, one for himself (Authority's Treasurer), Mr. Schimmel, (the Authority's Account), and one for the Authority's files.

Mr. Blanchfield led a presentation, public discussion, and action on 2023 Audit. Furthermore, Mr. Blanchfield read the Auditing Standard Procedure utilized to conduct the Audit. No discrepancies were found between the Auditor and the Authority.

Mr. Blanchfield recommended accepting the Audit as presented.

Mr. Schimmel stated he submitted the report and received notification it was received. Mr. Schimmel provided a spreadsheet in the Board packet with rebate calculations going back to Municipalities in the total amount of \$1,321,876.71.

A motion was made by Mr. Blanchfield and seconded by Mr. Mauro to approve the 2023 Audit.

Motion carried (9-0).

Mr. Schimmel stated these rebates should go out to Municipalities in two weeks.

Mr. Schimmel stated the Financial Statement has been advertised and filed with DCED.

Mr. Morgan suggested that some of the rebates could be put aside and utilized for Capital Projects.

INSURANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Lammi stated Officer and Board Liability Insurance renewal requested information from the Board. Mr. Lammi stated we still awaiting a quote.

OPERATIONS REPORT

Mr. Wilson reported A1 Aerator going back to Nord factory in Wisconsin but was not provided with a pickup date. Mr. Wilson stated the high-speed temperature on Aerator A2 scheduled to go out for repair on October 30th. Mr. Wilson added B2 Aerator that had the leap seal leak must go back to Phili Mixer and is scheduled for October 29th. Mr. Wilson stated B2 and A2 are out of commission, so B2 electrical motor will be installed in A2 and run on high speed, take a blower used at pump stations for grease and rags will be install in B2 and add compress air.

ADDITIONAL REPORT

- ❖ **Old Business:** Policy & Procedures on Authority Emergency Procurement was tabled for the next Board meeting.
- ❖ **New Business:** None

The meeting was moved to Executive Session to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor by a motion from Mr. Mauro, and seconded by Mr. Riegel, and unanimously carried, at 6:21 pm.

The Meeting returned to Public Session at 6:44 pm

Executive Session was held to discuss legal matters. No decisions were made, and no action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Werner and seconded by Mr. Riegel, and unanimously carried, at 6:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Yuslendy Zorrilla

EAJSA Board Recording Secretary