

**MINUTES OF THE  
EASTON AREA JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY BOARD  
July 15, 2024 Meeting**

- ❖ The regular monthly meeting of the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority Board was held at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, July 15, 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		5:04
4	James Frank	Forks Township	12/31/2024	X		*
5	David 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	Joseph 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 (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), Yuselndy Zorrilla (City of Easton Office Manager of WWTP, and Authority Administrative Assistant).

❖ **Agenda and any Amendment Approval:**

Mr. Wilson, Mr. Morgan, and Ms. Hoffman explained to the Board the history of the recent switch gear breaker failure at the plant and the daily cost of between six to seven thousand dollars the Authority would incur if the plant ran on generator instead of purchasing a new breaker. Plant personnel also explained that operational changes have been made to remove the electrical load off the remaining breaker until the second can be replaced. Personnel expressed to the Board the urgency of this replacement purchase and how this breaker is critical.

Mr. Campos entered the Board meeting at 5:04 pm

Mr. Gaul stated that the agenda would need to be amended to add an item to declare an emergency at the plant and authorize the purchase of the new breaker. A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. James to approve the posted agenda with an amendment under New Business to add an item to declare an emergency at the plant and authorize the purchase of the new breaker. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

❖ **Minutes Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Riegel and seconded by Mr. Campos to approve the minutes of the Board's June 17, 2024, regular meeting, as presented. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. Lammi asked about the Concise Financial Statement advertisement. Ms. Hoffman confirmed it had been advertised.

❖ **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 he had nothing more than the report he had submitted in the Board Packet. Mr. Schimmel stated that the Auditor reached out to his office for more information for preparation of the calendar year 2023 audit, which he provided.

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve the June 2024 bills for payment in the total amount of \$2,222,368.62. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to approve the Bond Funds Requisition 24-C2024-07 in the amount of \$597.00, in accordance with the Authority Engineer's recommendation. **Motion Carried (9-0).**

**ENGINEERING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Hopkins stated the Engineering Committee met on July 2, 2024. The Committee had a long agenda and talked about many different things. Mr. Hopkins gave the floor to Mr. Morgan for further discussion.

Mr. Morgan stated he had two items to present to the Board. An item for approval and information about PFAS.

**Hot Pipe Replacement Project**

Mr. Morgan stated the Board previously approved design work for a pipe replacement project between the Boiler Building and Digester #1. A hot water pipe was found to be leaking. It was temporarily repaired but it needs to be replaced. The design has been completed and it is ready to go out for Bid. Mr. Morgan asked for approval to advertise and place on Penn Bid the Bid Specifications. This project is expected to cost around \$65,000.00 and will be paid for by the Capital Projects line, not the Bond Issue.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Van Arman, to approve the advertisement and placement of the Bid Specifications on Penn Bid. **Engineer Memorandum #07-01. Motion Carried (9-0).**

**PFAS Presentation**

Mr. Morgan gave a PowerPoint presentation about current regulatory developments regarding PFAS and their potential future impact on the Authority.

Mr. Morgan provided background information on PFAS, the history of PFAS, impacts, future regulations, effects to the Authority's Pretreatment Program, and the NPDES Permit Limits. Mr. Morgan addressed questions from the Board Members about PFAS and how it will impact the Authority and about PFAS testing. More information will be provided in the future, as limits are developed by DEP and EPA, and as regulations that affect the plant's NPDES Permit and Pretreatment Program are rolled out.

Mr. Hopkins commented that Easton Suburban Water Authority had tested its water system for PFAS and did not find a detectable level of PFAS in the system.

Ms. Hoffman commented that several industries in the Authority's IPP program are likely to be impacted by future regulatory limits and subject to testing.

At this time Mr. Morgan stated we are not looking at any immediate treatment requirement, only to monitor and data collection, but potentially in the next five years, the Authority could be subject to treatment requirements.

#### Gearbox Replacement Project

Mr. Hopkins stated the Gearbox check was received and forwarded to the Authority, so a reimbursement was processed. Mr. Schimmel confirms it was for #271,000.00 and it was deposited into the Bond account.

### **PRETREATMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Mauro had nothing to report.

Ms. Hoffman stated interviews for the Assistant Industrial Pre-Treatment Program Manager position are ongoing. A potential candidate is expected for a site visit and general conversation before conducting an official interview. In addition, there is a Zoom call prior to an in-person meeting. As of now we have these two potential candidates. The position is still posted for potential candidates.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Morgan provided an update; all the water data use reports were received for 2023, which will be used to develop the 2025 budget. Mr. Morgan stated he communicated with West Easton, and they are still working in theirs. They should have it ready in the next week or so. In addition, Mr. Morgan received the report from Palmer Township that was much higher than the previous report. He explained to Palmer they should investigate this. This high value can cause them not to get a rebate and have to pay in. Potentially 2025 bills for Operations will be very high, Capital won't be affected because this is based on capacity. Mr. Morgan stated that as soon as he receives West Easton's, he will complete a summary table and send it to Mr. Schimmel. In addition, it will be discussed at the Finance Committee in August to get the budget moving.

Mr. James apologized for West Easton Borough's delay in submitting water use reports and provided some details of the in-house issues that led to the delay.

#### Bond Refunding Update

Mr. Lammi provided an update as well on the Bond Refunding Project. He received correspondence from Mr. Hottenstein about the status of the Refunding. As of now, the current value of savings is at \$203,503.00 or 2.83% which is getting close to the saving target for the Refunding. Mr. Hottenstein will have a discussion with his

underwriting staff to determine and decide how to proceed. Mr. Hottenstein also contacted Mr. Reid to let him know the status of this.

### **INSURANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Lammi stated he had just signed the insurance check before the office received an email labeling it past due, but it was an error; it was still on time.

### **OPERATIONS REPORT**

Mr. Wilson reported only the emergency switch gear breaker situation, which was discussed earlier in the meeting. The plant is running well.

### **ADDITIONAL REPORT**

❖ **Old Business:** None.

❖ **New Business:**

#### Declaration of an Emergency at the Plant and Authorization to the Purchase New Switch Breaker

Plant personnel, Board Members, and other Authority personnel continued discussion related to the emergency replacement of the failed switch gear breaker, as requested by Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson explained two years or so ago, during an infrared scan, it was noticed some breakers needed work. They are taken out one by one and delivered to a breaker shop to be refurbished. A spare was purchased to complete these repairs; this is the breaker that failed.

Ms. Hoffman stated the failure occurred while the electrician was at the plant. The electrician was able to pull out the breaker before the damage spread and caused other major issues at the plant.

Mr. Morgan explained that, back in May 2024, a service inspection was performed on all switch breaker and switch gear. One was found in bad condition, which was removed and taken to be refurbished and replaced with this spare. This spare was purchased while the other one was getting fixed.

Mr. Wilson stated that he asked about the testing of the breaker; the breaker was in service for six weeks before it failed. The Authority purchased the breaker from BSI; they did have a certificate of analysis from the factory. It was determined that breaker could have been damaged during transport, as it came from Florida.

Mr. Morgan stated unfortunately the warranty had expired. Mr. Morgan stated another issue is that the square D switchgear breakers have become obsolete, making it difficult to get parts.

Mr. Lammi asked for the price. Mr. Wilson answered between \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00.

Mr. Wilson stated that, while working on the breaker replacements, one of them is at the shop getting refurbished and it needs work done. Mr. Wilson asked if he could get a new one faster; he was still waiting for a quote to get a breaker back in as soon as possible.

Adding to Ms. Hoffman's statement regarding temporary operational changes at the plant, Mr. Wilson stated they took one of the main energy users, the Centrifuge, and placed it on a running schedule of midnight to 6 a.m. The electrical meter trends indicate this modification is helping to keep the ampere readings under 1,000.

Mr. Lammi asked how long it would take to get the new breaker. Mr. Wilson said he did not know.

Mr. Wilson stated that he contacted BSI, as Mr. Hopkins suggested, to come over with a forensic scan to hit the breaker and make sure it was in good condition.

Mr. Morgan stated the price is between \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00.

Mr. Lammi asked Mr. Gual to go over the suggested motion.

Mr. Gaul stated it would be declaring an emergency at the plant because of a T1 Transformer Switchgear Breaker failure to authorize a budget up to \$15,000.00 for the purchase of a new breaker.

Mr. Lammi asked if that was enough. Mr. Wilson suggested increasing the amount to not exceed \$20,000.00, in case any unforeseen circumstances arise.

Mr. Lammi agreed to go with the budget of \$20,000.00.

Mr. Lammi stated no wait is necessary. Mr. Morgan stated it can be ordered and an invoice will be sent, with payment to be approved at the next meeting.

Mr. Gaul asked if it was known what kind of breaker would be purchased. Mr. Morgan stated one specifically for that unit. Mr. Morgan stated it is a 2,000 amp. Square D breaker.

Mr. Hopkins made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, declaring an emergency at the plant because of a T1 Transformer Switchgear Breaker failure and authorizing the purchase of a new breaker at an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00.

**Motion Carried (9-0).**

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. Hopkins and seconded by Mr. James, and unanimously carried, at 5:52 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Yuslendy Zorrilla  
EAJSA Board Recording Secretary