

**MINUTES OF THE  
EASTON AREA JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY BOARD  
July 17, 2023**

- ❖ The regular monthly meeting of the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority Board was held at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, July 17, 2023, 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, Robert Lammi. Mr. Lammi ordered the roll to be called at 6:01 p.m. Board Members were in attendance 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	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	James McGowan Treasurer	Wilson Borough	12/31/2024	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		*
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\*Beginning of Meeting      \*\*Adjournment of Meeting

Members attending via Zoom Meeting could hear each other meeting attendee and be heard by each other attendee.

Carrie Lambert acted as the Recording Secretary for the meeting.

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

Michael Gaul, Alan Battisti and Richard Campbell, Jr., of King, Spry, Herman, Freund, and Faul, LLC (Authority Solicitor), Jeff Morgan (SC Engineers), John Schimmel (Accountant), City of Easton employees, Chuck Wilson (Operations Manager of WWTP), Carrie Lambert (Laboratory Manager of WWTP), Yuslendy Zorrilla (Office Manager of WWTP)

❖ **Agenda and any Amendment Approval:**

Chairman Lammi stated that there were 2 meeting agenda amendments to be approved:

- New business to discuss the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED's) request for the Authority's 2022 audit report.
- There will be an executive session to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor.

A motion was made by Mr. McGowan, and seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve the amended agenda. **Motion Carried (8-0)**. The purpose of the amendment was to allow expedient Board consideration of the matter.

❖ **Minutes Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Werner, and seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to approve the minutes of the

May 15, 2023, meeting as presented. **Motion Carried (8-0).**

❖ **Courtesy of the floor:**

Ms. Lambert 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 Michael Gaul, EAJSA Solicitor, stated that he did not have any report for the Board's public meeting, but an executive session would be needed to discuss a legal matter with the Board. His partner Alan S. Battisti was present to participate in the executive session.

**ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT**

Mr. John Schimmel, EAJSA Accountant, reported Mr. Morgan has reached a contact at the accounting firm performing the Authority Audit. He reported that the auditing firm stated that they cannot prepare any of the documentation previously prepared in preparation for the accounting audit. Mr. Schimmel stated that the audit is moving forward but will require more time to prepare/collect documentation.

A motion was made by Mr. McGowan, and seconded by Mr. Mauro, to approve the bills for July 2023 in the amount of \$33,944.98. **Motion Carried (8-0).**

A motion was made by Mr. Mauro, and seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve the Bond Funds Requisitions 22-C2023-07 \$147,909.14. **Motion Carried (8-0).**

**ENGINEERING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Hopkins stated that the Engineering Committee Report did not have many items to report on except for the three major rain events that caused some significant operational issues. The plant and staff performed well given the circumstances and only had one violation in June as a result of these severe storm events. Mr. Wilson stated that there was a fecal coliform permit violation during blending. Mr. Wilson also stated that the plant's Standard Operating Procedures will be updated to implement new tasks during high flow events. Mr. Morgan stated that the plant got struck by lightning and during the rain event it appeared that the Rotary Disk Filter "high flow - bypass mode" programming did not work as intended but that this matter was still being investigated. The filter controls will be reprogrammed as necessary in order to prevent the rotary disk filters from shutting down during high flow rain events.

Mr. Morgan said that he had one item for discussion. The proposed Palmer Township Sheridan Drive Pump Station Project would eliminate a 50-year-old force main and pump station with approval from DEP to be replaced with a gravity sewer line going to Bethlehem Township and ultimately the City of Bethlehem WWTP. Palmer Township and DEP have requested that the Authority approve the project. The impacted service area serves roughly 145 houses, with a sewer flow of 41,000 gallon. Mr. Morgan stated that from an environmental and engineering standpoint, it makes sense to remove a pumping station.

Solicitor Gaul stated that with the given information, there are several areas of legal concern. First, what impact would this removal of the flow from the EAJSA system have on Authority finances. Mr. Morgan indicated that Palmer's obligation to pay for capital expenditures, including debt service, would not change, because that is based on allocated capacity and not flow, and that the flow involved is de minimus compared to Palmer's total flow. Mr. Gaul asked Mr. Morgan whether it was his opinion that the impacted flow could not, by good engineering practice, be delivered to the Easton Treatment Plant on a practical and economical basis. Mr. Morgan that was his opinion, based on the unnecessary cost of a new pump station, when gravity lines now exist to the Bethlehem plant. Solicitor Gaul stated that the 1988 Agreement was between not just the Authority and the City of Easton, but also five other member municipalities. He said that while the Authority may not object to the re-

routing of flow, the Authority cannot provide to Palmer or DEP any assurances regarding the position of the other member municipalities. Lastly, Mr. Gaul stated a concern that the Board's approval of the project may set a precedent that flow could be re-routed whenever a member municipality proposed to eliminate a pump station.

Mr. Lammi states that the flow loss is offset by the flow gains in other parts of Palmer Township, Mr. Blanchfield and Mr. Riegel stated that the appointed members of the board have made financial decisions on behalf of the member municipalities in the past. Mr. Hopkins and Mr. Morgan stated that there are very few instances where the elimination of an existing pumping stations and force mains would be viable in other parts of the sewer system.

A motion was made by Mr. Werner, and seconded by Mr. Hopkins, to approve the Proposed Palmer Township-Sheridan Drive Pump Station Project.

**Motion Carried Memorandum # 07-01 (8-0).**

### **PRETREATMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Mauro stated that they met last week and there is nothing to report. He will read Ms. Hoffman's June report for IPP:

- Savant Beverage had a violation.
- Wilson Borough had heavy duty oil and grease issue in-line. They will have to clean that themselves. 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter plant samples are completed.
- A meeting with Keystone foods was had to confirm meter information.

Upcoming meetings include: September 8, 2023 is the PIX Conference, September 15, 2023 is the EPWPCOA conference at the Easton WWTP, and the next IPP Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 7, 2023 at 9 a.m.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Schimmel stated that there was nothing to report.

### **INSURANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Lammi stated one item on the agenda is to discuss is workers compensations. The Authority does not have any employees currently and has no plans to hire one. The Board discussed keeping working compensation coverage as a protective measure if an employee was to be hired by the Authority in the future versus cancelling the coverage and running the risk of possibly not covering a future employee.

A motion was made by Mr. Hopkins, and seconded by, Mr. Werner, to cancel workers compensation coverage.  
**Motion Carried (8-0).**

Mr. Hopkins stated that a claim was filed with Travelers Insurance to cover some of the loss of the gearbox failure. The insurance company is going to hire a special contractor to investigate the specific type of loss at no cost to the City since it is considered a large loss item in order to make a determination if this loss is covered by the policy.

Mr. Lammi stated 2 meetings had occurred to discuss the risk assessments for the plant. There is now enough information to compile a report of risks in order to make decisions regarding this in future Insurance Committee reports.

### **OPERATIONS REPORT**

Mr. Wilson stated the plant, as previously stated, ran into some issues during the rain events The main issue at

present is the continued problems and warranty repair work for the new JetVac Truck stemming from trying to coordinate with the 4 entities, Aquatech, Vortex, Mac Chassy, and Allison Motors. Programming seems to be the root of the problems.

#### **ADDITIONAL REPORT**

❖ **Old Business:** None

❖ **New Business:** Mr. Lammi stated that there is 1 item of new business to discuss. The Authority received a letter from DCED requesting the Authority file an audit report for 2022. Mr. Schimmel stated that the report cannot be completed until the audit has concluded. Mr. Schimmel will compose a letter to the DCED stating that the report will be delayed.

The meeting was moved to Executive Session to discuss legal matters with the Solicitor by motion from Mr. Werner, and seconded by Mr. Blanchfield, and unanimously carried, at 7:21 p.m.

The meeting was moved back to Public Session by motion from Mr. Hopkins, and seconded by Mr. Riegel, and unanimously carried, at 7:45 p.m.

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. Riegel, and seconded by Mr. Mauro, and unanimously carried, at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie Lambert, Acting EAJSA Recording Secretary