

**MINUTES OF THE  
EASTON AREA JOINT SEWER AUTHORITY BOARD  
March 16, 2026, Meeting**

- ❖ The regular monthly meeting of the Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority Board was held at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2026, at the EAJSA Administration Building, 50-A 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. Dave Hopkins. Mr. Hopkins 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	12/31/2030	X		*
2	Jeffrey Bracken	Wilson Borough	12/31/2029	X		*
3	Luis Campos	City of Easton	12/31/2030	X		*
4	Patrick Caubel	City of Easton	12/31/2028	X		*
4	James Frank	Forks Township	12/31/2029	X		*
5	David Hopkins Chairman	City of Easton	12/31/2028	X		*
6	Paul James Vice-Chairman	West Easton Borough	12/31/2029	X		*
7	Robert Lammi	Palmer Township	12/31/2029	X		*
8	Joseph Mauro Jr	City of Easton	12/31/2030	X		*
9	Stephen Riegel Secretary	Tatamy Borough	12/31/2029	X		*
11	Robert Werner	City of Easton	12/31/2030	X		*
12	VACANT	City of Easton	12/31/2029			

\*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).

Mr. Blanchfield asked about adding Executive Committee discussion to the agenda. Mr. Hopkins stated after a discussion with Solicitor Mr. Gaul this should be tabled until Mr. Gaul conducts further research on all aspects of it, including compensation for prospective members.

❖ **Agenda and any Amendment Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. James and seconded by Mr. Werner, to approve the posted agenda without any amendments. **Motion Carried (11-0).**

❖ **Minutes Approval:**

A motion was made by Mr. Bracken and seconded by Mr. Mauro to approve the minutes of the Board's

February 17, 2026, regular meeting, as presented. **Motion Carried (10-0; Riegel abstained).**

**Mr. Riegel abstained because he was not present at the last Board meeting.**

❖ **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 but did inform the Board that former Board member Mr. John Van Arman sent an email confirming that he declined the City of Easton's recent appointment with the Board. As a result, the seat is vacant. The city should be informed that Mr. Van Arman has declined the appointment.

**ACCOUNTANTS REPORT**

Mr. John Schimmel, EAJSA Accountant, stated he had nothing to report.

Mr. Hopkins asked whether there would be discussion about the Fulton Corporate Resolution. Mr. Blanchfield stated neither him nor Mr. Schimmel heard from Fulton Bank about it.

Solicitor Mr. Gaul reported that the Authority had received a DAC alert regarding a filing disclosing a rating change for the Authority. Mr. Gaul stated S & P put the Authority on a "negative watch" because the Authority has not sent S & P its 2024 financial information. DAC then sent a disclosure notice to the EMMA system about the rating change.

Mr. Gaul stated he contacted Mr. Hottenstein, Authority Financial Advisor, and Mr. Gaul's partner Mr. Reid, Authority Bond Counsel to see if they have any insight/advice on the S & P/DAC notices. Mr. Gaul stated at this present time he had not heard back from Mr. Hottenstein.

Mr. Morgan commented that the Authority's last rating was done by Moody's, a different rating agency.

Mr. Blanchfield and Mr. Schimmel confirmed the Authority submittal for the 2024 fiscal year was done October 9<sup>th</sup> 2025.

Mr. Hopkins stated he was concerned when he saw a potential for a negative rating. Mr. Hopkins added as a takeaway from this would be to let the Auditors know they should respond when needed by the Authority.

Mr. Schimmel stated he would provide the Auditors with a copy of this rating.

Mr. Blanchfield confirmed with Mr. Schimmel April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2026, is the Audit date.

Mr. James made a motion, seconded by Mr. Riegel, to approve the February 17, 2026, bills for payment in the total amount of \$ 143,291.54. **Motion Carried (11-0).**

Mr. Blanchfield made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mauro, to approve the Bond Funds Requisition 26-C2026-03 in the amount of \$ 81,802.72 in accordance with the Authority Engineer's recommendation. **Motion Carried (11-0).**

**ENGINEERING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Hopkins gave the floor to Mr. Lammi to provide his report.

Mr. Lammi stated the Engineering Committee met on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026. Mr. Morgan provided updates on six agenda items.

Mr. Lammi gave the floor to Mr. Morgan to discuss these.

Mr. Hopkins informed the Board Mr. Lammi is now the Chair of the Engineering Committee.

Mr. Morgan stated he had updates on couple of items. No funding requests or proposal approvals at this time.

**First Update- Force Main Replacement Project:**

Mr. Morgan stated the contractor and subcontractor are back doing some restoration work in the parking lot and some work in the park, which should be completed hopefully mid-April.

**Second Update-Digester Cleaning Project:**

Mr. Morgan stated it is ongoing and various pieces of equipment are being installed. Mr. Morgan stated scaffoldings are being set up in the Digester and next Wednesday morning a Structural Engineer will conduct an inspection to make sure everything looks good.

Mr. Morgan stated after that it is the wait to get the delivery of the new draft 2 Mixers to be installed and painted and hopefully be able to put the Sludge back at the end of April at the beginning of May.

Mr. Morgan stated there is also some work in the Chlorine Contact Tank, three new heat exchangers for the Digesters, and some new pumps and valves have been installed.

**PRETREATMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Mauro had no report.

Ms. Hoffman stated she had two items to report before getting to the actual agenda item.

**First Item:**

Ms. Hoffman stated the EPA 2025 Annual Report has been completed, submission completed March 4, 2026. Ms. Hoffman added the deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2026, but it was done much earlier.

**Second Item:**

EPA has been notified about the Slug Discharge via email and will be receiving a Certified letter in the mail which will also be included in the DMR which go to DEP as required by our permit.

Mr. Morgan stated this is the second year doing the spreadsheet report on the portal. Mr. Morgan stated there was a delay last year because all the data entered was supposed to be transferred to the new portal for 2025 and did not happen so had to wait until that was corrected.

Mr. Hopkins confirmed this was first year for Ms. Skibicki submitting the report. Ms. Hoffman stated Ms. Skibicki did a great job.

Mr. Morgan presented an item discussed with Solicitor Mr. Gaul about the Appels Committee and the IPP Committee and the overlap on that.

Mr. Morgan stated there are a few options. Mr. Morgan stated Mr. Gaul suggested appointing an Appeals Committee so there is no overlap with the IPP Committee for the future if needed.

Mr. Gaul added the IPP Committee role is to interact with Ms. Hoffman and Mr. Morgan on these matters. The Appeals Committee may hear appeals on such matters and should thus consist of different individuals.

Mr. Hopkins added this set of people should be Board members, to which Mr. Gaul agreed.

Mr. Hopkins asked if the Board has to make the appointments now. Mr. Gaul stated he will look into the rules and regulations to do so. Mr. Hopkins asked if anyone who is not part of the IPP Committee would like to be part of the Appeals Board, to let him know. He stated it is not a big commitment because appeals do not often occur.

Mr. Morgan presented the agenda item.

**Appointment of Special Counsel-**

Mr. Morgan stated that Solicitor Mr. Gaul's Law Firm had a conflict of interest in serving as counsel in a possible IPP program enforcement matter, and as a result, the Authority would need to engage Special Counsel.

Mr. Morgan stated Special Counsel has been utilized in the past and described certain instances when this happened. Mr. Morgan added he reached out to someone he worked with in the past, and this person and his associate are interested in serving as Special Counsel. Mr. Morgan added this person is a former EPA Attorney. Mr. Morgan stated he is a good candidate based on his experience with EPA federal regulations.

Mr. Morgan stated this candidate had sent an email with his background information and rate, which he had forwarded to the IPP Committee members. Mr. Morgan added this email can be forwarded to all Board members but would like to obtain an approval at this time to utilize this candidate, if possible.

Mr. Hopkins asked if this approval should be made by resolution. Mr. Gaul stated that a motion could be used, identifying the firm and their rates.

Mr. Morgan stated an email was sent by the candidate with his rate, \$450.00 per hour, his associate \$ 350.00 per hour, Paralegal \$ 200.00 per hour.

Mr. Hopkins asked the Board if anyone had a question about onboarding a Special Counsel. There were no questions.

Motion was made by Mr. Campos and seconded by Mr. Mauro, to authorize the engagement of the Hanglely Aronchick Pudlin & Schiller Law Firm, and specifically Steve Miano, as special counsel for a possible IPP enforcement matter their rates specified in the Mr. Miano's email to Mr. Morgan, subject to an engagement letter satisfactory to the Chairman, in consultation with the Solicitor . **Motion Carried (11-0).**

Mr. Morgan stated he would reach out to the prospective attorney to provide the documents required by the Board. Mr. Morgan will also forward to the Board Mr. Miano's email regarding rates sent to the IPP Committee.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr. Blanchfield stated neither him nor Mr. Schimmel had heard back from Fulton Bank about the addition of more check signatories.

Mr. Schimmel stated he would touch based with his contacts at Fulton Bank to obtain an update on the request.

Mr. Blanchfield stated there is no urgency in this matter and asked for this agenda item to be table.

Mr. Schimmel provided an update on the Petty Cash account for which final statement was received, and it states that there is a \$0.00 balance available.

Mr. Schimmel stated transfer was made to Embassy Bank.

Mr. Blanchfield asked Mr. Schimmel to provide an answer to Mr. Morgan about out the one million dollars from the Grant was. Mr. Blanchfield also mentioned M & T Bank and when would be the time to use that.

Mr. Schimmel stated the million dollars was put in the Clearing Funds account when it came in. Mr. Schimmel stated he had moved it to the 2021 Bond Issue because that is from where all checks were paid out for projects, Mr. Schimmel stated that should have raised the Bond amount by a million dollars.

Mr. Morgan stated as of February 2026 there is \$956,000.00 dollars and change, if the million has been moved and spent and that is all available, maybe there should be a discussion about drawing down additional funds from the M& T Bank loan facility to paying bills for the Force Main Project and the Digester Cleaning Project. Mr. Morgan stated another option would be to utilize funds out of the Bond Redemption Improvement Fund, but it is best to use the borrowed money first.

Mr. Schimmel mentioned the need for new requisition documentation to implement the draw down of M & T Bank loan proceeds.

Mr. Gaul stated Attorney Reid sent an email explaining the documentation that needed to be used.

Mr. Morgan stated the current 2025 Construction Fund only has \$ 1,200.00. Mr. Morgan stated funds should be transferred from M & T and every month do a requisition to pay the bills.

Mr. Morgan stated he would confirm with Mr. Reid about how the withdrawal of funds should be done.

Mr. Schimmel asked from what account the newly hired attorney fees come out of.

Mr. Gaul stated it should be out of the Solicitor Budget Line.

Mr. Hopkins asked for this item to be on the agenda for next month's Board meeting under Finance Committee.



**OPERATIONS REPORT**

Mr. Wilson reported some violations due to the slug being discharged in February. Mr. Wilson stated that, as Ms. Hoffinan mentioned, spoke to DEP in length about it and even though these are violations, they will not be considered as treatment violations because the sludge was located and correction actions were taken.

Mr. Wilson reported weekly and monthly TSS and cBOD exceedances, CSO-146,100 gallons.

Mr. Wilson also reported Digester #3 hole in floating cover, Centrifuge vibration alarms-sensors replaced.

Mr. Wilson also reported plant operations related to slug discharge.

Mr. Wilson invited members to refer to the chart where fluctuated results for this time of year can be appreciated.

Mr. Hopkins stated this was a significant incident compared to what the plant had dealt with in the past. Mr. Hopkins added the Board has invested heavily in the last 15 years in the plant, including the Disc Filters.

Ms. Hoffman stated the amount of slug created some sort of extra coating blinding the screens, preventing the filters from operating properly.

Mr. Wilson added the slug caused an overflow at the plant.

Ms. Hoffman stated some carryover residual effects would be present in March as well.

#### ADDITIONAL REPORT

❖ **Old Business:** N/A

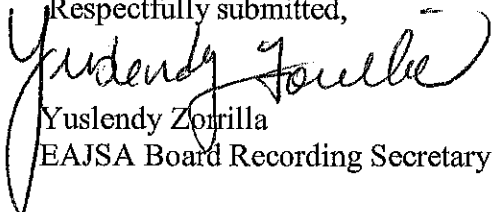
❖ **New Business:** N/A

Mr. Riegel thanked everyone on behalf of his family for the flower arrangement sent in honor of his late mother's passing.

❖ **Unfinished Business:** N/A

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mr. Werner and seconded by Mr. Caubel and unanimously carried, at 5:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Yuselndy Zorrilla  
EAJSA Board Recording Secretary