

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE MEMBERS OF
SWATARA TOWNSHIP AUTHORITY**

The regular monthly meeting of the Swatara Township Authority was held via Zoom, on December 16, 2020, at 6:00 P.M. The following members were present: Spare (Chairman), Castellano (Secretary), Mancuso (Treasurer), Schreffler, Murphy, Cichy, Werner, and Johnson. Also present were: Miller (Business Manager), Morrison (Arro Consulting Engineers) and Coccoresse (Salzmann Hughes, PC).

PLANT REPORT

**OPERATION & MAINTENANCE
COST PER DAY**

	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
STA	\$ 1,099.62	\$ 1,311.45
TREATMENT PLANT	\$ 3,382.65	\$ 3,533.73

% REDUCTION BOD	99	TONS OF SLUDGE PROCESSED	45.10
% REDUCTION SUS. SOLIDS	99	TOTAL E.D.U.'S	17,439

FINANCIAL REPORT

	<u>CHECKING ACCOUNT BALANCE</u>	<u>MATURED ACCUM. OF BALANCE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>PREVIOUS MONTH'S TOTAL</u>
STA	\$ 1,568,510.67	\$ 1,940,333.01	\$ 3,508,843.68	\$ 3,294,258.12

The following were approved:

The minutes of last month's meeting, the Plant Report and the Treasurer's Report.

Chairman Spare called the meeting to order at 6:07 P.M.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Spare offered his personal thanks to all the staff of the Authority for hard work and dedication during this year of the pandemic and transition for the organization. He also thanked the Board for all of its efforts, and notably Ms. Castellano and Mr. Coccorese for all their efforts on behalf of the Authority.

Next, he entertained a motion to accept and approve the minutes of October 21, 2020. Mr. Johnson made the motion to accept and approve the minutes. Ms. Mancuso made the second, and the motion passed.

Chairman Spare reminded the Board that the November meeting was cancelled due to various folks being ill. Therefore, this month's Board meeting will include items for the past two months.

There were no visitors at the meeting.

Mr. Miller, Business Manager, read the plant summary compiled by Mr. Dave Neidig, Chief Operator.

Ms. Castellano interjected to say that the plant summary will be shared on-screen during Zoom meetings and not read verbatim by Mr. Miller. Moving forward, a copy of the report will be emailed to the Board and attached to the month's minutes for the files. Therefore, the detailed plant summary items will no longer be included within the actual minutes.

Mr. Miller stated that the plant dryer is down again, and Ms. Castellano could provide a status. She stated that a new gear box was installed this afternoon, and Maintenance staff stayed later at the plant to ensure it would be running properly with the upcoming storm. Mr. Morrison said he is waiting for some information from *Huber*, and we should be able to present information to the stakeholders in mid-February. If the Authority will need a permit for installation from DEP, then we should add three months pre-installation. It will probably take one year to fully install the dryer from start to finish.

A motion to approve the Plant Report was made by Mr. Schreffler. Mr. Johnson made the second, and the motion passed.

Mr. Miller presented his report.

The Board packets were delivered individually to all members by Mr. Miller. Minutes and the plant summary were sent via email.

The sewer bills will go out next week for the first quarter of 2021. Those mailings will include the letter announcing the upcoming sewer rate increase.

In January, there will be the retirement of Ms. Zeiders, the Stormwater project transfer to the Township, and the completion of the bank transfer to *Orrstown*. On the topic of the Stormwater transfer, initial testing has begun with the Township; however, there will likely be a period of transition for the customers. Regarding the bank transfer, testing of various items with *Orrstown* has begun as well.

There were 205 delinquent letters mailed out. Of those, 100 paid in full and 105 were sent to Collections. No eligible accounts took advantage of the COVID-19 hardship program. To date, there are 458 accounts with Collections for a total of \$869,000.

Per the Board's previous decision, *Benecon* will be updating the Authority plan to allow access for retirees and their spouses to purchase health insurance. This insurance is purchased solely at the cost of the retiree/spouse.

Chairman Spare sought a motion to approve the Authority's rate increase effective with the March 2021 billings, which reflects an increase of \$4.00/quarter in the base rate (from \$96.00 to \$100.00) and a 50-cent increase in the multiplier (from \$6.00 to \$6.50 per thousand gallons) for gallons in excess of 16,000. Ms. Mancuso made a motion, as previously stated, regarding the Authority rate increase. The motion was seconded by Mr. Schreffler, and was approved.

A motion was made by Mr. Schreffler, and seconded by Mr. Cichy, to accept Mr. Miller's report. The motion passed.

Mr. Coccorese, Authority Solicitor, presented his report.

While a longer-term MOU agreement has been discussed with Mr. Christopher Heagy and Mr. Juan Carter of AFSCME, due to Mr. Carter's death that discussion is on hold. In the meantime, Mr. Heagy has agreed to an extension of the current MOU for the Acting Foreman position.

Chairman Spare requested a motion to approve Mr. Heagy's MOU extension. Mr. Johnson moved to approve Mr. Heagy's MOU extension, and this was seconded by Mr. Murphy. The motion passed.

At this time, Ms. Castellano shared with the Board that AFSCME thanked the Authority for the flowers in memory of Mr. Carter. She and Mr. Coccorese attended the memorial for Mr. Carter via Zoom, and were asked to share some words on behalf of the Authority. Additionally, many of the Authority employees have reached out to Ms. Castellano, asking her to thank the Board for the gift cards (in lieu of employee appreciation and holiday luncheons) and one-time additional holiday (appreciation for the extra work during the pandemic).

Mr. Coccorese next discussed the changes necessary in the Lab, in order for Mr. Moppin to leave the lab to train with Mr. Neidig prior to his retirement. No current employees are interested in assuming the Lab position, and the staff and Ms. Castellano agree that an outside lab contract should be obtained.

Chairman Spare asked for motion to approve staff and Ms. Castellano pursuing an outside lab contract for temporary assistance in the Authority's Lab. A motion was made by Mr. Schreffler, then seconded by Mr. Cichy, to pursue the contract. The motion was approved.

Mr. Lee Stinnett of *Salzmann Hughes* has been working on the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for workforce issues. Mr. Coccorese relayed that Mr. Stinnett informed him and Ms. Castellano that more entities would like to join the IGA, however he does not have signatures to date on the IGA. The Board stated it would like to see the IGA executed before there is any need amongst the entities to share staff. This will be shared with Mr. Stinnett.

There is no real update regarding the possible t.v. rig purchase. Ms. Castellano will share the estimates with Mr. Cichy for him to review.

Mr. Coccorese next discussed the need to address the COVID-19 leave policies for the Authority. He mentioned that he and Ms. Castellano updated the mask policy, to be reflective of Pennsylvania changes. This was disseminated to all staff. No motion is needed. The current federal COVID-19 leaves expire on December 31st. To continue the leave despite no action from Congress, the Authority must approve such. The Personnel Committee recommends continuing the leaves as they are through January 31, 2021, with the Board revisiting the topic at the January meeting.

Chairman Spare requested a motion to continue the COVID-19 leave policies as they are written through January 31, 2021. Mr. Johnson made the motion as previously stated, which was seconded by Mr. Schreffler. The motion passed.

Mr. Coccorese and Ms. Castellano then discussed the fact that no snow/inclement weather emergency policy exists for the Authority. Therefore, they worked to draft one in consultation with staff. This will later serve as a draft policy to present to AFSCME for inclusion in the proposed Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

A motion was sought by Chairman Spare to approve the draft snow policy as discussed and have Mr. Coccorese and Ms. Castellano draft a snow/inclement weather emergency policy to present to AFSCME. Mr. Werner made the motion as previously stated. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cichy, and approved by the Board.

The IT assessment was completed at the plant by *Marco*, the IT company for the business office. Mr. Miller will continue to work on this issue of combining the IT needs for the Authority, in consultation with Ms. Castellano and Mr. Coccorese.

Finally, Mr. Coccorese reported that a Stormwater Authority has been formally approved by the Township Board of Commissioners.

Additional items will be reviewed in Executive Session.

Ms. Mancuso moved to approve Mr. Coccorese's report. This was seconded by Mr. Werner. The motion passed.

Mr. Morrison, Authority Engineer, presented his report.

The following issues were reported by Mr. Morrison:

- The I-83 drawings were received. From those, Arro and the Authority will develop base maps, and plan the scope of upcoming work with staff. This will all eventually need approved by PennDOT.

Chairman Spare requested a motion for the Authority staff to execute the documents with PennDOT when necessary. Mr. Cichy made the motion, seconded by Mr. Schreffler, and the motion passed.

- Due to the dryer issue, an arrangement was made for outside solids handling during the time it was down.
- A Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) is needed for the proposed project to replace manholes on one of the Township's state roads (Highland Street).

A motion to approve Mr. Morrison's report was made by Mr. Werner and seconded by Mr. Johnson. The motion passed.

The Board adjourned to Executive Session at 7:10 P.M. Chairman Spare told Mr. Morrison and Mr. Miller that they could leave the meeting.

The Board resumed the Regular Meeting at 8:10 P.M.

Under New Business, Ms. Castellano stated that various motions were needed for several topics discussed in Executive Session. They were as follows:

- Proceeding with interviews to hire for an Administrative Assistant in the business office.

Mr. Cichy made the motion to proceed with interviews, with oversight by Ms. Castellano and the Personnel Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Werner. The motion was approved.

- Conducting the Authority Board meetings via Zoom in 2021 for January, February, March, April, May, and June. All meetings will begin at 6:00 P.M.

Ms. Mancuso moved to approve the Authority Board meeting changes as previously outlined. Mr. Johnson seconded her motion, and the motion passed.

- Approving the recommendations of the Personnel Committee for retirement bonuses, one-time Stormwater stipends, and a 1.5% cost-of-living allowance for management employees (this will be offered to AFSCME for the union employees for 2021) effective January 1, 2021, and authorizing union negotiations to include discussions of various compensations.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnson to approve the Personnel Committee recommendations as discussed. Ms. Mancuso seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Under Board Members' Comments, Ms. Castellano stated that the Authority would wait to hear from AFSCME regarding resuming union negotiations. Due to Mr. Carter's death, a new union representative will need assigned to this CBA negotiation. At this time, the Authority will only participate in CBA negotiations via Zoom.

With no further business to be conducted, Chairman Spare adjourned the meeting by acclamation at 8:17 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,



Melissa DiSanto Castellano
Secretary