

**LEHMUA
Regular Meeting**

April 7, 2020

The regular meeting of the Little Egg Harbor Municipal Utilities Authority was held on April 7, 2020 at 12:00 PM at the Authority headquarters, 823 Radio Road, Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey and via tele-conference with Commissioners.

MEMBERS PRESENT VIA TELE-CONFERENCE: Joseph Koptic, Chairman; Margaret DePergola – Vice Chair; Earl Miller, Secretary; Marie Skelly, Treasurer; Kenneth Miller; Kenneth Laney Peter Cicco

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Earl F. Sutton, Jr., Executive Director; Michael S. DiFrancia, Superintendent; Nicole M. Princiotti, Executive Secretary/QPA; Joanna Bermingham, Authority Engineer via tele-conference; Debra Rumpf, Esq., Authority Attorney via tele-conference.

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: None

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that due to the circumstance, he and Chairman Koptic agreed that Mr. Sutton would run this month's meeting.

Mr. Sutton stated that after the Pledge of Allegiance, he would like members to take a moment of silence for those lives that have been lost and those suffering during this crisis.

Nicole M. Princiotti read the following statement:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, this meeting has been duly advertised in the Atlantic City Press and the Asbury Park Press, posted on the Authority bulletin board and posted and filed in the Office of the Little Egg Harbor Township Clerk. Resolutions are posted on the Authority's bulletin board.

PRIOR MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. E. Miller to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2020 regular meeting. Roll call vote, Earl Miller – yes, Peter Cicco – yes, Ken Laney – yes, Ken Miller – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

A motion was made by Mr. E. Miller, seconded by Mr. Koptic to approve the Treasurer's Report as submitted. Roll call vote, Earl Miller – yes, Ken Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes.

BILLS RESOLUTION

A motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mrs. Skelly to approve the operational account bills resolution. Roll call vote, Earl Miller – yes, Ken Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Sutton welcomed everyone on our first meeting held via tele-conference. He hopes everyone is healthy and staying safe during this time.

1 - Mr. Sutton stated that despite the COVID-19 crisis we have been operating as usual. There is very limited public contact here at the office. We have purchased a drop box which has been placed next to the drive-thru window in order for customers to make payments right from their car.

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that we have alternated our staff here and he would like to express how proud he is of everyone working at the Authority and the job they do. They have been more than cooperative and expressed that we are truly a family.

Mr. Sutton stated that he would also like to recognize Mr. DiFrancia, Mr. Mulvihill, Mr. Keller and Mr. Johnson over the last two weeks while we were together in the first of the alternating shifts of the staff.

Mr. Sutton stated that he is truly blessed to have the best team of people to work along with.

2 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that he will be texting and emailing the customers and asking that they make all payments online or through the mail. If they need to come to the office, they will need to use the drop boxes or the drive-thru window only. There will be no one permitted in the building.

Mr. Sutton stated that he doesn't know what to expect with payments as so many people are unemployed at this time. This bill may not be one of their priorities, but we will see what happens. We are not extending any due dates for payments and the bills will be going out on time this week.

3 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that a bid opening took place on April 3, 2020 for the Mystic Island Phase I project. There will be a resolution presented to award the bid to M.S.P. Construction who is the lowest responsible bidder.

Mr. Sutton thanked Ms. Bermingahm, Mrs. Rumpf, Mrs. Princiotti, Superintendent DiFrancia and Mr. Mulvihill for seeing this takes place and on schedule.

In this particular case, Mrs. Rumpf has recused herself as there is a conflict of interest with one of the bidders. She made us aware of that immediately.

Mr. Sutton stated that we can take action on the resolution regarding the award to M.S.P. at this time.

Mr. Sutton asked if there were any questions? There being none a motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. Koptic to approve Resolution #2020-11 awarding a contract to M.S.P. Construction for Mystic Islands Phase I Water and Sewer Main Replacement. Roll call vote, Earl Miller – yes, Ken Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes.

4 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that Little Egg Harbor Police Department caught a local paving company in the process of stealing water from the Authority. They we connected to one of our fire hydrants and weren't given permission. We were contacted by the police and

Superintendent DiFrancia went to the scene. We are waiting for the police report to be filed to decide what further action will be taken.

Mr. Sutton stated that using our hydrant puts a tremendous burden on our system with a drop in pressure that can create a serious problem if a fire were to occur. This is a very serious issue with potentially serious consequences. And as mentioned before we are waiting for the police report and will determine at that time what legal measures we are going to take.

Mr. Sutton stated he would like to thank Chief Buzby and the Officer for stopping the paving company.

5 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that a new request will be submitted for reimbursement to the NJIB regarding Well #12. This is request number six and is in the amount of \$360,000. We have been very fortunate in the turn around time with reimbursement. We are receiving the reimbursement funds within a couple of weeks after the request is submitted.

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that the newsletter went out to all the residents on our system and he is very proud of the content. We advised the rate payers that there will be no increase to the rates this year, but in 2021, they should expect an increase.

6 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that there are no customer committee recommendations this month.

7 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that when his report was originally written, there was no need for Executive Session, but since then, there is a need for discussion under Executive Session. No action is anticipated, just discussion with regard to potential litigation.

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that we will open the meeting to the public for anyone that may have called in and stated that a notice was posted advising anyone who wanted to participate in the meeting could do so via the tele-conference. Once the public portion is closed, Mrs. Rumpf who advised us earlier of a potential conflict, will recuse herself and disconnect from the tele-conference.

Mr. Sutton advised Mrs. Rumpf that she can re-join the tele-conference if she would like.

Mrs. Rumpf stated that unless we needed something, she didn't feel it would be necessary.

Mr. Sutton stated that was all he had for his report unless there were any questions.

There being none, a motion was made by Mr. E. Miller, seconded by Mr. Koptic to approve the Executive Director's Report as submitted. All in favor.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. DiFrancia thanked everyone and wished them safety and good health during this pandemic.

1 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that the Water Treatment Plant Project is moving along despite everything that is going on. The contractor had several items stolen from the site and fortunately the Authority had invested in some trail cameras which were mounted around the worksite. The individual was caught on video and photo. The contractor posted it on Facebook and asked for help in identifying the person and the police were notified. Within 24 hours the suspect was identified and the equipment was returned. The contractor determined that he wasn't going to press charges.

2 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that the tank renovation next door is underway. The tank has been offline for two weeks and once again we are on-call with all the fire departments and police dispatch for any event over the next 60 days.

3 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that Iowa Court slip lining is in progress. Resolution #2020-10 is on the agenda for approval with regard to emergency repairs as noted in the letter from Remington and Vernick, dated March 24, 2020. We had an emergency when part of the main collapsed requiring Mathis Construction to perform the necessary emergency work.

Mr. Sutton stated that they would address Resolution #2020-10 at this time and asked if there were any questions?

There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mrs. DePergola to approve Resolution #2020-10 Declaring an Emergency Regarding the Needed Repair of the Sanitary Sewer Line on Iowa Court. Roll call vote, Earl Miller – yes, Ken Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes.

4 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that he would like to take a moment to thank the staff over the last several weeks. We have had a split shift and only half the crew, and everyone has jumped in and put out 100% of their time and effort. We were not prepared for this situation and with everything going on, he is amazed at how well everything has been going at the Authority.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that he would also like to thank Mr. Mulvihill who has put in some long hours and done everything needed of him and has gone above and beyond for the Authority.

5- Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that there will be no workorder management report for this month based on the amount of other work required to be done during the COVID-19 Crisis. A report will be provided next month.

Mr. DiFrancia advised that was all for his report unless there were any questions.

There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mr. E. Miller to approve the Superintendent's Report as submitted. All in favor.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Ms. Bermingham stated that she hopes everyone is healthy and doing well during this pandemic.

Ms. Bermingham advised that her report has been submitted for approval and that she would be happy to answer any questions.

Mr. Sutton asked if there were any questions on the Engineer's Report?

There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mrs. Skelly to approve the Engineer's Report as submitted. All in favor.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mrs. Rumpf thanked the Board and wished everyone good health during this time. She advised that her report has been submitted for approval.

Mrs. Rumpf stated that she wanted to express her apologies for the inconvenience with regard to the conflict of interest as it relates to the bid for Phase I of the Mystic Project.

Mr. Sutton thanked Mrs. Rumpf for notifying the Authority in a timely manner and wished her and her family good health.

Mr. Sutton asked if there were any questions for the Attorney's Report? There being none, a motion was made by Mr. E. Miller, seconded by Mr. Koptic to approve the Attorney's Report as submitted. All in favor.

Mr. Sutton asked the Board for a motion to open this portion of the meeting to the public. A motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mrs. DePergola to open this portion of the meeting to the public. All in favor.

Mr. Sutton asked if there were any members of the public on the tele-conference and confirmed that there were no callers on the conference.

Mr. Sutton asked for a motion to close this portion of the meeting to the public. A motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. Koptic to close this portion of the meeting to the public. All in favor.


Mr. Sutton thanked Mrs. Rumpf for her support.

Mrs. Rumpf thanked the Board and wished everyone well and disconnected from the tele-conference.

Mr. Sutton asked for a motion to approve Resolution #2020-12 authorizing Executive Session. A motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mrs. DePergola to approve Executive Session Resolution #2020-12. Roll call vote, Earl Miller – yes, Ken Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes.

After return from Executive Session, where no action was taken, the meeting reconvened. A motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mrs. DePergola to adjourn. All in favor.

Mr. Koptic wished everyone good health and to stay safe.


Earl Miller