

**LEHMUA
Regular Meeting**

April 12, 2022

The regular meeting of the Little Egg Harbor Municipal Utilities Authority was held on April 12, 2022, 12:00 PM at the Authority headquarters, 823 Radio Road, Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey and via tele-conference with the Commissioners.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Margaret DePergola, Chairwoman; Joseph Koptic, Vice-Chair; Marie Skelly, Treasurer; Kenneth Miller, Secretary; Peter Cicco, Christopher Filiciello

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

THOSE ABSENT: Kenneth Maxwell, Commissioner

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: None

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. Miller to approve the minutes of the March 1, 2022 regular meeting. Roll call vote, Christopher Filiciello – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret De Pergola – yes.

Mr. Cicco joined the meeting at this time and apologized for being late.

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

BILLS RESOLUTION

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that he had a discussion with the Personnel Committee with regard to offering Kyle Mattina a permanent position with the Authority as a Laborer. Mr. Mattina has completed his 90-day probationary period and has done very well with the Authority. It has been recommended by the Committee to approve his permanent position and there is a resolution on the agenda for adoption.

A motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve Resolution #2022-12 authorizing the hiring of Kyle Mattina to the position of Laborer. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

Mr. Sutton reiterated that Mr. Mattina has done an excellent job working for the Authority, and he is confident he will continue to be successful.

2 – Mr. Sutton stated that he had a very lengthy discussion with Chairwoman DePergola, and Commissioner Skelly of the Personnel Committee with regard to a one-time cost of living increase to all full-time employees of the Authority. The discussion occurred based on the current economic conditions in the State and nationwide. They released some numbers today that are even more startling with regard to inflation.

Mr. Sutton stated that with the discussion the Committee recommends taking action on the Resolution as presented. The increase will be \$1.50 per hour increase effective April 14, 2022.

Mr. Sutton stated that he and the Committee believe this is the appropriate thing to do to recognize our employees and the current economic conditions.

A motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mrs. DePergola to approve Resolution #2022-13 authorizing a one-time cost of living increase for all full-time employees of the Authority. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

Mr. Sutton thanked the Board and stated that he knows the employees will greatly appreciate this.

3 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that Labor negotiations are underway regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement. The existing agreement is set to expire June 30, 2022. It is possible that contract language will be further discussed with the possibility of some recommendations at the May 2022 meeting.

Mr. Sutton stated that he would be following up with the Personnel Committee in the coming weeks.

4 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that this item was not included in his original report sent in the Friday packages, but was a last minute addition. We had to make some minor revisions with regard to the Authority's Water and Sewer Rules and Regulations. The purpose for the modification is to allow certain qualified individuals besides those that hold a particular certification to perform the taps to our system. It will be under great scrutiny and will not be offered to those who aren't qualified or to those who don't have the proper equipment or insurance. However, it was important that we do make those modifications to the rules and regulations.

Mr. Sutton stated Monday were two additional resolutions were emailed pertaining to this matter, and they are recommended for approval.

A motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve Resolution #2022-14 authorizing the adoption of the revised Water Rules and Regulations. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

A motion was made by Mrs. Skelly, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve Resolution #2022-15 authorizing the adoption of the revised Sewer Rules and Regulations. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

5 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that the Authority needs to retain a conflict Attorney regarding the monopole owned by The Authority. This is as a result of a courtesy hearing before the Zoning Board of Adjustment at the Township. Mrs. Rumpf cannot represent the Authority on this matter and it was suggested that Attorney Robert Shinn of Manahawkin who specializes in zoning matters be appointed as Conflict Attorney for this matter.

Mr. Sutton stated that he would need a motion to move forward with this appointment, and does not anticipate a large amount of money to be spent for his service.

Mrs. Princiotti stated that after the motion, she would perform roll call due to the fact that we are appointing a professional service.

A motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. Cicco to appoint Conflict Attorney Robert Shinn Esq., for matters as it relates to Zoning Board. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

7 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that there was another item to add to his report as a result of another Executive Order by our Governor.

Mr. Sutton expressed that he cannot wait for this particular order to expire as it serves no benefit to the Authority financially. As everyone is aware, there have been previous allowances for people who are delinquent on their water charges. This allowed customers to avoid paying any interest or penalties on their delinquent charges, and forced the Authority to make installment arrangements with those that are delinquent. The new order adds sewer charges to this and stipulates that anyone in arrears for water and sewer charges between March 9, 2020 and March 15, 2022 are permitted to make payment arrangements for the arrearages and are to call the office in order to make these arrangements. In addition there may be other programs available for low-income assistance.

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that the Authority is required to continue to make this available and to reiterate this at each meeting.

Mr. Sutton stated that there are no customer committee matters, nor is there a need for Executive Session at this time.

Mr. Sutton stated that was all for his Executive Director's Report unless there were any questions.

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

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that the minutes of the Personnel Committee are attached and items pertaining to these matters were previously addressed. At this time, he requested a motion and second for approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mr. Miller to approve the Personnel Committee report as submitted. All in favor.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. DiFrancia wished everyone well.

1 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that per the DEP, the Authority is required to complete the decommissioning of Well No. 5 located off of Twin Lakes Boulevard. We have put the package together and advertised the bidding in the Atlantic City Press and Asbury Park Press on April 11, 2022. The bid opening will be held on April 22, 2022. Once awarded it will be a thirty (30) day contract. The DEP is requesting a well abandonment report by June 30, 2022.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that once the decommissioning has been completed, we will take the building down, and hopefully sell the piece of property.

Mr. DiFrancia added that this well is no longer needed. As it is right now and the diversion from that water is being reallocated over to the other aquifers. The DEP can change their mind, but they have not changed our allocation. The DEP allows us to only pump a certain amount of water monthly, quarterly, yearly, and only a certain amount of gallons per minute. If they took that water away, it would hinder us, in particular during those peak times.

2 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that as of Monday April 12, 2022 the Authority personnel began the annual hydrant flushing program. Hydrant flushing takes about a month or two and is performed at night. We perform this at night to limit any disturbances to our customers. Because we are a two (2) split system, high pressure and low pressure, performing the flushing at night prevents a dip in the pressure and the customers don't experience this fluctuation.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that flushing also aids in cleaning the mains out by scouring the inside of the lines, keeping everything clean and fresh. Our personnel also inspect all the hydrants, keeping record and a full report of any maintenance that needs to be performed. This is logged and repairs are scheduled to be done during the regular workday.

3 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that we are still waiting for the SED approval for Phase II of the Mystic Water and Sewer Replacement Project. Previous projected dates were given again and had to be revised again. It is anticipated that advertisement will be April 29, 2022, contract award will be June 14, 2022, beginning date July 25, 2022 with 180 contract days putting the completion date of sometime in January 2023.

4 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that his work order management report has been submitted and he reviewed the items on the report.

Mr. DiFrancia mentioned that there were a significant amount of backups for this month and that is typically due to people flushing items they shouldn't, such as rags and wipes. He noted that the Director has made efforts to educate the public on this by sending out notices with bills as well as posting what you should and shouldn't flush into our annual news letter.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that was all for his Superintendent's Report unless there were any questions.

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

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Dittenhofer wished everyone well and thanked the Director and stated that he only had a couple updates to review today.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that with regard to Phase II of the Mystic Island Project, we are still waiting for SED approval from the DEP. We have sent several follow-up letters trying to move this along.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that with regard to Phase III of the Mystic Island Project, design is still underway. We have prepared application documents in accordance with recent NJDEP standard to ensure the permitting process is seamless.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that for the decommissioning of Well #5, as the Superintendent mentioned the project has been advertised and we will have the bid opening on April 22, 2022.

Mr. Dittenhofer thanked the Director and his staff for all of their work and attention to details in preparing the specifications for Well #5. It has been very helpful and very much appreciated.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that was all for his report unless there were any questions. There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve the Engineer's Report as submitted. All in favor.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Mrs. Rumpf wished everyone well and stated that her report has been submitted and she would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Mrs. Rumpf stated that if Mr. Sutton would like, she will perform the Oath of Office for our new commissioner, Kenneth Maxwell when she sees him at a meeting tomorrow night, and that she would send over the notarized oath once it has been completed.

Mr. Sutton stated that would be good and he appreciates Mrs. Rumpf doing this for the Authority.

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

Mr. Sutton asked if there were any other matters to come before the Board? There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mr. Miller to file general correspondence. All in favor.


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 was any member of the public on the tele-conference? There being no public in attendance, a motion was made by Mrs. DePergola, seconded by Mr. Miller to close this portion of the meeting to the public. All in favor.

Mr. Cicco stated that before we adjourn he would like to mention the tour he got from the Superintendent last week. He spent time at the new treatment plant and advised the Board that it's amazing to see this facility and was amazed at the size and how the system works. He thanked the Superintendent and recommended that everyone should take this tour if possible.

Mr. DiFrancia reiterated that if anyone wanted to see the facility, he would be more than happy to spend some time showing them around and thanked Mr. Cicco for his time.

With nothing else further coming before the Board, a motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to adjourn. All in favor.



Kenneth Miller, Secretary