

LEHMUA
Regular Meeting

September 13, 2022

The regular meeting of the Little Egg Harbor Municipal Utilities Authority was held on September 13, 2022, 12:00 PM at the Authority headquarters, 823 Radio Road, Little Egg Harbor, New Jersey.

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

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Earl F. Sutton, Jr., Executive Director – via tele-conference; 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

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 Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mrs. Skelly to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2022 regular meeting. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret De Pergola – yes.

TREASURER'S REPORT

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco 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 Mr. Cicco 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 stated that is hard to believe the summer is almost over. Both himself and Mr. DiFrancia can attest to the fact that it has been extremely busy. There has been an unbelievable amount of repairs not only in our distribution and sanitary sewer systems, but at our wells and collection stations. With our current staff situation, it has been non-stop and on a magnitude of different issues.

Mr. Sutton stated that he appreciates the efforts of Mr. DiFrancia, along with Michael Keller, and the rest of our staff, including John Mulvihill and even Vinny Johnson has had to get out in the field. Although we could use a break from this action, it has been to the benefit of our ratepayers that we perform this work in-house. Guaranteed this has saved the Authority in excess of \$100,000 just this summer alone.

Mr. Sutton stated that the hard work of our Superintendent and the plant staff does not go unnoticed, and it is greatly appreciated. As the Director he feels important the Board is aware of this and thanked them for their support as well.

2- Mr. Sutton stated that an application for preliminary water approval has been submitted to the Authority for consideration. The applicant is DR Horton and it is for a townhouse development at the intersection of Mathistown Road and State Highway Route 9. There is a resolution on the agenda for consideration and a letter from our engineer recommending preliminary approval.

Mr. Sutton stated that DR Horton is one of the largest home builders in North America and were attracted to this site that has been vacant for many years. It is anticipated that if things go well, they will be looking at other vacant properties to develop. There is a property originally named Blue Comet off of Center Street that could have the potential of up to 400 single family homes. They are very serious about this and it will improve our system overall.

Mr. Cicco asked for clarification with regard to the side of the street this development will be on.

Mr. Sutton clarified the location of the development.

A motion was made by Mrs. Skelly, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve Resolution #2022-54 approving preliminary water application for DRH Harbor Isles, Block 325 Lots 4.01, 4.02 and 4.03. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

3 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that there is also a preliminary sewer application submitted to the Authority by DR Horton for the same development. This has also been reviewed by the engineer and is recommended for approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to approve Resolution #2022-55 approving preliminary sewer application for DRH Harbor Isles, Block 325 Lots 4.01, 4.02 and 4.03. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

4 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that Resolution #2022-56 is on the agenda for consideration. This resolution will authorize the execution of a professional service agreement with ACE Telecom Consulting (“ACE”). This company provides services as needed concerning the monopole owned by the Authority. Their expertise is in cell tower leases, bidding, contracts, revenue and maintenance. The timing of this is extremely critical as one of the carriers is asking for additional equipment to be added to our monopole as well as existing lease agreements in effect and paid to Landmark Dividend.

Mr. Sutton stated that Mrs. Rumpf has been very helpful with regard to the leases and this professional service. This gentleman was referred to us through the company in which we purchased the monopole. His expertise is going to be to our advantage and at the end of the day when you appoint a professional such as this and a carrier comes to us with a request, he will

review it and it will be of little to no expense to the Authority. Escrow will be posted by the carrier making the request, and his fees will be paid through that escrow account. It is important that we get this ironed out, and in particular as it relates to the use of Mr. Shinn. We want to ensure that down the road, the Authority doesn't have to worry about this type of equipment going back on our water towers. Ultimately, this is very good for the Authority and it is recommended that the resolution be formally adopted.

A motion was made by Mr. Koptic, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve Resolution #2022-56 authorizing a professional appointment to ACE Telcom Consulting. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

Mr. Sutton stated that as a side note, he will forward the terms and the conditions of the agreement to Mrs. Rumpf for her review and approval.

5 – Mr. Sutton stated that once again he needs to add a reminder that anyone who is in arrears with their water and sewer charges between the period of March 9, 2020 and March 15, 2022, a person may contact the office to make an installment arrangement. In addition, there may be other programs available for low-income assistance.

6 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that there was a Customer Committee matter with regard to the homeowner of 13 South Burgee Drive who had a leak that was discovered to be underground. They rectified the issue, and were asking for forgiveness. It is customary that the Authority issue a one-time credit for 50% of the excess water charges. The Committee discussed this and agreed to provide a one-time credit for 13 South Burgee Drive.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve the recommendation of the Customer Committee. All in favor.

Mr. Sutton stated that there was no need for executive session, and that was all for his report unless there were any questions.

Mr. Cicco asked how many townhouses for the DRH Property?

Mrs. Rumpf stated that there will be a total of 125 townhomes and 24 of these are affordable housing units.

Mr. Cicco asked if they were condos or townhouses?

Mr. Sutton stated that they were individual townhouses, and that he believes they are not rentals, but rather for sale.

Mr. Sutton stated that the good thing now is that we require all on-site improvements be built by the design standards of the Authority and once completed we take those improvements over. This is done at no cost to the Authority and each unit will have their own separate meter, generating additional revenue.

Mr. DiFrancia added that whenever a development goes in and passes existing properties, infrastructure is extended to those homeowners as well. In particular vacant properties. Additionally, they are required to make a loop system. In this case they would connect on Mathistown Road and then also loop that connection into Cranberry Creek.

Mr. Sutton reiterated that this is at no cost to the Authority. The State requires the loop system so there is no dead end and poor quality water in that dead end. The developer is aware of this and we went the extra mile and met with them ahead of time so they knew what would be required.

Mr. Miller asked about the entrance to this community?

Mr. Sutton stated that it should be from Mathistown Road and it will be interesting to see the traffic generation reports because it's going to impact traffic at that intersection, especially with that bend as your coming to the light at Route 9. They may have it set up where access is one way in and another way out.

Mr. DiFrancia added that when they put Kara Homes in off of Mathistown Road, the DOT required them to shave down the roadway for visibility as you exit the development.

There was some further discussion with regard to the location of this property and the length of time it's been for sale.

Chairwoman DePergola asked if there were any other questions for the Executive Director's Report?

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

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. DiFrancia stated that before he began he would like to touch on some things previously mentioned by the Director.

Mr. DiFrancia thanked Mr. Sutton for his kind words and agreed that it has been a busy summer. We have been out there struggling at times with the all of the emergency work, and also trying to be proactive in order to avoid future emergencies.

1 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that Well No. 5 has been on his report for several months now but we are nearing the end. We are awaiting review and approval from the NJDEP. The contractor has submitted the required decommissioning report, and it is still pending approval as well. Once this has been approved we will submit our close out to the State.

2 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that the site demolition at Well No. 5 was completed on August 4, 2022. All the required disposal tickets were forwarded to the Township Construction Office and a site inspection for final grading was performed by the Township Subcode Official and final approval was granted on August 10, 2022.

3 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that Phase II of the Mystic Island Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project is in the final stages of approval. The project had previously received SED approval and has now formally received EDD approval. Currently we are still waiting on NJIB approval of the projected engineering fees. The Authority's engineer will have further information on this at the time of his report.

4 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that Pump Station No. 2 located on Osborn Island on the corner of Radio Road and Ocean Boulevard has been retro fitted with a JWC Environmental

Sewerage Grinder Pump, which is also known as a "Muffin Monster". This is one of three (3) that we now have in our collections system. This goes in the path of where the wastewater enters the wet well and chews up the rags, grease and other items, reducing the size of the material. This helps in alleviating the pumps from clogging and failing, reducing replacement costs and cost associated with emergency repairs.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that some companies are making new pumps called Chopper Pumps that are installed at the bottom and chop up the waste as it comes in. These are very expensive, and require a lot of maintenance and they still have to deal with the issues in replacing them.

Mr. DiFrancia reiterated that this is the third muffin monster we have in our system and it has worked very well for us, reducing the night calls, emergency work, and replacement costs associated with pumps.

5 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that in addition to the sewerage grinder pump installed at Pump Station No. 2, we are in the process of collecting all the necessary piping and equipment in order to completely rehab the wet well and coinciding by-pass chamber. This complete rehabilitation will all be performed in-house. This has run past its life expectancy and is about 30 years old. It is also in an area where we feed ferrous chloride which knocks down the hydrogen sulfide gasses that chew apart the pipes and also enter the Ocean County Sewerage Authority station on Calabreeze. Every Tuesday or Wednesday we pull these little pills in our manholes that collect data that record the hydrogen sulfide levels. Hydrogen Sulfide smells like rotten eggs, and when high levels are absorbed in the skin or lungs it can be very dangerous and toxic, so we are always monitoring this. Additionally, Ferrous Chloride has increased in price over the last several years and is very corrosive for pipes which is another reason we are replacing all the piping at this station.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that this week we are meeting with a representative that sells Bioxide. It is another chemical, but it is a lot cheaper and safer. The County uses this as well. The rep will be coming in with his Hydraulic Study and we are going to evaluate the savings and safety. In the long run it will be safer for our employees, downstream at the County and our facilities.

Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that in addition to Pump Station No. 2, we are doing in-house work along with some help from our electrical contractors, installing new VFDs and pumps at Pump Station No. 8, located on Middle Holly Lane. Pump Station No. 1 is another station on our radar to rehab in-house. Normally pump stations have a wet well and a dry pit. With Pump Station No. 1, the whole system is inside the building which is very dangerous. Eventually the plan is to do a dry pit chamber in there with all the check valves and re-do the entire station in-house.

Mr. DiFrancia reiterated that even though we have been doing a lot of emergency work, we are also being proactive in getting ahead of some of these stations with potential problems down the road.

6 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that as everyone is aware school is back in session and unfortunately for the school district, Frog Pond Elementary experienced a sewerage backup. Typically the school calls the Authority with any water or sewer issues first, and if we can't assist them, we will point them in the right direction. The issue was with their onsite sanitary sewer system. We were able to locate the issue with the school's owned and operated sewer piping and correct the situation with no impact on the students' school day.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that as a side note, on the second day of school, Pinelands Regional High School had a backup as well. Unfortunately, we were not able to help them, but did check all the manholes and pointed them in the right direction. The district was very happy with our assistance.

7 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that the State mandated water samples have been completed and the samples sewer submitted for testing. He is happy to report that once again, the Authority's potable water supply meets and exceeds all state and federal regulations.

8 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that his work order management report was included with the package and reviewed the items.

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

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Dittenhofer wished everyone well and stated the Engineer's Report has been submitted for review. He will review a few items that have been updated.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that as mentioned by the Superintendent, for Phase II Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project, we have received all necessary permits as it applies to NJDEP. We also have our SED and EDD approval forthcoming. The issue being that the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank has taken a much more stringent approach to how permits are obtained with regard to the financing. There were a couple instances where projects significantly larger than those the Authority has, the projects were being constructed without full approval of the IBANK. So it looks bad when the State funds projects that the State didn't necessarily permit. We actually had a tango with the CAFRA Jurisdictional Determination where it states that someone who hasn't worked on water and sewer main replacement, CAFRA Permits are required. We had to go back through all the phases, even though this is only Phase II, we had to demonstrate that this is the fourth (4th) time a project like this has been completed, and a CAFRA Permit was not required. The regulations state that with water and sewer replacement, CAFRA Permits are not required.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that hopefully at the next meeting we will have a bid date, and that he knows this has been a lengthy process and appreciates everyone's patience.

Mr. Dittenhofer expressed that his concern was the fee for the CARFA Permit because they make you go by block and lot, and that can cost upwards of \$200,000 to \$300,000, which is not feasible for an Authority of this size.

Mr. Sutton expressed his frustration with the time this has taken, not with the engineer, but with the State. We are three (3) years behind where we should be with this.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that we are looking to make up for lost time and moving along with Phase III, as soon as we get authorization to award and have bid process for Phase II, we can decide where our scope limits fit in best to Phase III. The design is substantially complete, but before we apply for the permits, we want to make sure it falls within budget.

Mr. DiFrancia commented that the inflation on piping is outrageous right now, compared to several years ago. He is interested to see where these prices come in.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that they have seen a substantial downward trend as it relates to prices of a lot of items especially as contractors are looking to work for Authorities and public entities. He is fairly hopefully that we will have good pricing. Although not as good as in 2017, but still better than even a year ago.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that he will touch on the development applications briefly. The Director covered the detail previously in his report, this is a 101 townhouse development with 24 affordable housing units. Remington and Vernick reviewed the applications and in separate letters dated September 7, 2022, recommends both preliminary water and preliminary sewer approval.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that was all for his report unless there were any questions. There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller 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 for approval. She would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

There being no questions, a motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to approve the Attorney's Report as submitted. All in favor.

Chairwoman DePergola asked if there were any matters to come before the Board? There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to accept and file all general correspondence. All in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Skelly to open this portion of the meeting to the public. All in favor.

There being no public in attendance, a motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mrs. Skelly to close this portion of the meeting to the public. All in favor.

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

Mr. DiFrancia invited all members of the Board to tour Well No. 12 after the close of the October meeting.

Nothing further to come before the Board, a motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco to adjourn. All in favor.


Kenneth Miller, Secretary