

LEHMUA
Regular Meeting

November 14, 2023

The regular meeting of the Little Egg Harbor Municipal Utilities Authority was held on November 14, 2023, at 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 (via tele-conference), 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; 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. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve the minutes of the October 10, 2023 regular meeting. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – 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. Koptic to approve the operational account bills resolution as submitted. 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 there has been no new movement with regard to the Phase II Mystic Islands Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project. He expressed his frustration and stated that the Engineer will provide an update in his report.

2 – Mr. Sutton stated that Resolution #2023-36 is on the agenda to grant CTX Infrastructure, LLC an extension to their contract. The work has been completed on this project., however the extension was required as a formality and the request of CTX due to material delays. It is recommended for approval.

Mr. Sutton asked Chairwoman DePergola if she would like to address all the resolutions at the end or as we go. She agreed that the end would be better.

3 – Mr. Sutton stated that Resolution #2023-37 is on the agenda appointing Mateo Mena to a permanent position as a Laborer. There was a personnel committee meeting that was held over the telephone, and it is recommended for approval.

4 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that Resolution #2023-38 is on the agenda creating the position of Lead Maintenance Chief. This position is necessary to further monitor our entire system through SCADA, along with the Superintendent. This position required a person to be available 24/7. It is recommended for approval.

5 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that Resolution #2023-39 is on the agenda promoting Michael Keller to the position of Lead Maintenance Chief. It is recommended for approval.

6 – Mr. Sutton stated that Resolution #2023-40 is on the agenda for consolidation of two (2) positions into one (1). Right to Know Coordinator and Mark Out Coordinator will now be Right to know/Markout Coordinator. It is recommended for approval.

7 – Mr. Sutton stated that Resolution #2023-41 is on the agenda promoting Nicholas Schano to the position of Right to Know/Markout Coordinator. It is recommended for approval.

8 – Mr. Sutton stated that Resolution #2023-42 is on the agenda to accept the new Job Description Manual for the Authority. Approval is recommended.

9 – Mr. Sutton advised the Board that the Authority is still working on the possible closeout of FEMA projects from Superstorm Sandy. Once again, he thanked Mrs. Princiotti for her continued efforts.

Mr. Sutton advised the Board that there is one customer committee matter for the meeting but no need for an executive session.

Mr. Sutton stated that there is one other matter that he would like to mention that was not on his initial report.

Mr. Sutton stated that he wants to commend the office staff's performance. It is tax sale time and we were back and forth on whether or not we were going to make a robo-call reminding people that if they hadn't paid to please do so in order to avoid tax sale. We set it up to have the call go out on Friday at 3 o'clock. It was a Holiday for us, but there were over 2400 calls made that were still showing the possibility of owing money for the water and sewer bill.

Mr. Sutton stated that yesterday, which was the due date was an unbelievable day with our highest collection in a single day. He appreciates Mrs. Princiotti's efforts. She went out front and worked with the staff all day and worked much later after closing along with Mrs. Trettin to prepare everything to go to the Tax Office. He expressed that he cannot speak highly enough about the staff with their dedication with the stress and pressure they dealt with yesterday. It is exceptional.

Mr. Sutton stated that we are down to like 900 people on the list that are getting turned over to Tax Sale. This is less than we have had in the past and the phone call really helped. In the past people complained about the call, but this time around, the staff said that people were thankful for the reminder and appreciative.

Mr. Cicco added that people on Facebook were angry.

Mr. Sutton stated that is why he won't look at it and will never respond to comments such as that. We are statutorily required to participate in the Tax Sale because it is our only method to collect that revenue.

Mr. Filiciello asked if we would be sending another one.

Mr. Sutton replied that we would not because Tax Sale is already prepared and at this point, we don't even take payments in the office, so it won't be until next year. However, we have used it for other purposes as well. It is a great tool to keep people informed.

Mr. Sutton stated that when he came here to the Authority, we had almost no contact information for our customers. Since that time, he and the staff have worked very hard to gather that information and keep it up to date. It shows that it pays off to have this information in our system.

Mr. Filiciello asked if it mattered with the Holiday?

Mr. Sutton stated that it did not. Most people that get the call don't even answer and it goes to voicemail, so they will call back and mention they got a call from this number and ask why.

The system we have also generates a report with the numbers that were called.

Mr. Cicco stated that he has also seen comments on Facebook where people complain that they sent a check in and then we returned it.

Mr. Sutton explained that it is out of our hands at that time. If they do not pay by the due date, it must be returned and payment has to be made at the Township.

Mr. Sutton stated that he would like to remind everyone that even when they see their friends or family complaining about this to call the office. He urged them not to get into a discussion about it. We are statutorily required to do this in order for the Authority to be made whole, it is out of the Commissioners' hands.

Previously mentioned resolutions were addressed at this time.

A motion made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to approve Resolution #2023-36 granting a 25-day extension to CTX Infrastructure, LLC to complete the water and sewer main tapping, service line extensions and hydrant installation. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

A motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to approve Resolution #2023-37 hiring Mateo Mena to the position of Laborer. 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. Koptic to approve Resolution #2023-38 establishing the position of Lead Maintenance Chief of the Little Egg Harbor MUA. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

A motion was made by M. Cicco, seconded by Mrs. Skelly to approve Resolution #2023-39 promoting Michael Keller to the position of Lead Maintenance Chief. 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 #2023-40 consolidating the positions of Right to Know Coordinator and Markout Coordinator. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco to approve Resolution #2023-41 promoting Nicholas Schano to the position of Right to Know Coordinator/Markout Coordinator. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

A motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to approve Resolution #2023-42 adopting an updated employee job description manual. Roll call vote, Peter Cicco – yes, Kenneth Miller – yes, Marie Skelly – yes, Joseph Koptic – yes, Margaret DePergola – yes.

With nothing further concerning the Executive Director's Report, 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 REPORT

Mr. Sutton reviewed the report with the Board and stated that all matters were covered by resolution under his Director's Report, but he would be happy to answer any questions. He thanked the Personnel Committee.

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

CUSTOMER COMMITTEE

Mr. Sutton reviewed the Customer Committee Report with the Board and stated that he would be happy to answer any questions.

There being no questions, a motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Koptic to approve the Customer Committee Report as submitted. All in favor.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

1 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that CTX Infrastructure has completed installation of water and sewer laterals where applicable to all properties throughout the township. This meets the criteria for the expansion of our infrastructure.

2 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that our personnel completed the removal and installation of the fire hydrant located on Ketch Court in the Harbourtown Estates Development. The replaced hydrant was over thirty years old and in need of repair. Due to the age of the hydrant, it was best to replace it rather than repair it.

3 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that in keeping with good public relations and perception, the Authority recently upgraded the original chain link fence for pump station #4 at the corner of Twin Lakes Boulevard and West Calabreeze Way. The new galvanized fencing greatly complements all the Township improvements at the recreation center.

4 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that in preparing for the full rehabilitation of the water tower located off Frog Pond Road (Sea Oaks Towner) the Authority has begun active talks with both T-Mobile and the Little Egg Harbor Township Police Department regarding the relocation of both parties' equipment during the rehab phase. It is the Authority's intent to begin the project in the fall of 2024. We will continue open dialogue with T-Mobile and the Police Department to ensure we have a seamless transition during the rehabilitation.

5 – Mr. DiFrancia advised the Board that at the request of the Township Public Works Department, the Authority's personnel and Jet Vac Truck assisted in the cleaning of three existing drainage lines and catch basin located along Center Street and Lake Crystalbrook Drive.

Mr. DiFrancia stated and explained why he felt it may ultimately be a tidal flow issue.

6 – Mr. DiFrancia stated that his work order management report is attached and reviewed the items with the Board.

Mr. DiFrancia stated that was all he had 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 Superintendent's Report as submitted. All in favor.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that his report has been submitted and he would like to go over a few items.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that with regard to the Mystic Islands Phase II Water and Sewer project, as frustrating as this is, we are still waiting for NJIB Final authorization to be granted. Once we have that, we will move forward in getting this project out to bid.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that with regard to Phase III, we have received some comments back from the State as mentioned at the Authority's October meeting. We have revised our plans and re-submitted them to the NJDEP.

Mr. Dittenhofer stated that was all 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 advised the Board that her report has been submitted and she would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

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


A motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to accept, and file general correspondence. All in favor.

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

Mrs. DePergola asked if there were any other matters to come before the Board. There being none, a motion was made by Mr. Cicco, seconded by Mr. Miller to close this portion of the meeting to the public. All in favor.

A motion was made by Mr. Miller, seconded by Mr. Cicco to adjourn. All in favor.



Kenneth Miller, Secretary