

**EPHRATA AREA JOINT AUTHORITY
MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 2023**

The Ephrata Area Joint Authority met on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 7:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall, 124 S. State Street, Ephrata, PA.

In attendance were Thomas Reinhold, Chairman; Steve Sawyer, Treasurer; Greg Schmuck, Assistant Treasurer; as well as Member Clark Stauffer. Absent were Gary Landis, Vice Chairman, and Member Timothy Barr.

Also in attendance were Scott Hughes, Gannett Fleming; Attorney Aaron Zeamer, Russell, Krafft & Gruber, LLP; Nancy Harris, Interim Secretary; Karen Gerhart, Director of Finance; Steve Morrison, Director of Utilities; Scott Mohn, Water Operations Manager; and Stephanie Fasnacht, Recorder.

The following visitor was present:

- Jeff Bologna, Becker Engineering

Call to Order

Chairman Reinhold called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Harris provided confirmation of the following:

1. The meeting agenda was posted on the Borough's website and at Borough Hall no later than 24 hours in advance of the time of the meeting.
2. The meeting agenda included a listing of each matter of Authority business that will be or may be the subject of deliberation or official action at the meeting.
3. There were no changes made to the meeting agenda after it was posted.
4. The meeting agenda was made available to individuals in attendance at the meeting.

Chairman Reinhold asked if there were any requests to add a matter of Authority business to the meeting agenda. Seeing none, Chairman Reinhold asked for a motion to accept the meeting agenda as posted. Mr. Sawyer moved and Mr. Schmuck seconded to approve the meeting agenda as posted. The motion carried unanimously.

Reorganization

The Board unanimously approved to appoint Thomas Reinhold as Chairman; Gary Landis as Vice Chairman; Steve Sawyer as Treasurer; Greg Schmuck as Assistant Treasurer; Nancy Harris as Secretary; and, Karen Gerhart as Assistant Secretary.

Additionally, the Board unanimously approved to appoint Attorney Aaron Zeamer, Russell, Krafft & Gruber, LLP, as Solicitor; Scott Hughes, Gannett Fleming, as Engineer; and, Stephanie Fasnacht as Right-to-Know Officer.

Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2022

Mr. Stauffer moved and Mr. Schmuck seconded to approve the November 10, 2022, Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

With no visitors in attendance wishing to address the Board, Chairman Reinhold moved onto the discussion of the Financial Reports and Payment of Bills.

Financial Reports

Mr. Stauffer moved and Mr. Schmuck seconded to approve the financial reports. Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

Payment of Bills

Mr. Stauffer moved and Mr. Schmuck seconded to ratify the payment of the bills. Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

Action Items

a. Resolution 2023-1: Ephrata National Bank Account – Updating Contact Information, Signers and Online Access Authorizations

Mr. Schmuck moved and Mr. Sawyer seconded to adopt Resolution 2023-1: Ephrata National Bank Authorized Signers. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Harvey Turner: Refund of Meter Request

Ms. Harris advised that Mr. Turner is the owner of the property located at 55 Lancaster Avenue, Ephrata, which is made up of eight apartments with each having their own meter as well as the property having one house meter. Ms. Harris further advised that Mr. Turner is requesting a refund for the house meter as it is not being used in the capacity he thought it would be resulting in him having it removed.

After a brief discussion by the Board and Staff, along with input from the Solicitor, a decision was made to table this matter until the next Board meeting allowing Staff an opportunity to prepare a cost breakdown for further evaluation by the Board.

Mr. Sawyer moved and Mr. Stauffer seconded to table Mr. Turner's request for further discussion and consideration at the Board's next meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Home Town Square Phase 4A: Request to Reduce Financial Security (FINAL)

Mr. Sawyer moved and Mr. Schmuck seconded to approve the final release of \$31,254.00 in financial security currently held by the Authority to secure the completion of water facilities associated with the Improvement Agreement by and between EAJA and the Lincoln Land Group, Inc., dated March 19, 2019, for water system improvements at Home Towne Square Phase 4A residential land development located at and along Hackman Road in Clay Township. Motion carried unanimously.

d. Wyndale: Request to Reduce Financial Security

Mr. Stauffer moved and Mr. Schmuck seconded to approve the release of \$585,547.00 in financial security currently held by the Authority to secure the completion of water facilities associated with the Agreement by and between EAJA and the Lincoln Land Group, Inc., dated March 3, 2022, for water system construction at the Wyndale land development located between Philip Lane and Hackman Road and adjacent to and northeast of Home Town Boulevard in Clay Township. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items

a. Becker Engineering: Highpoint Church

Jeff Bologna, Becker Engineering, reviewed various proposals to address the ongoing issue of the daily flushing of a massive amount of water within the area of Highpoint Church. After a brief

question and answer period, Board members were in agreement to authorize Staff to begin moving forward with the process for resolution of the issue.

Old Business Items

a. Repairs to Service Connections

As a follow-up to the November 10, 2022, Board Meeting, Solicitor Zeamer provided an overview of his findings regarding what action can be taken if property owners do not repair service connections in a timely manner including: (1) to turn off the water; (2) to repair the connection on the property owner's behalf and bill them for those costs; or (2) to file a lien against the property.

After a brief discussion, Board members were in agreement for Solicitor Zeamer and Staff to prepare correspondence to be sent to the property owner which include deadlines: (1) a quick turnaround to produce a contract, and (2) a reasonable time to have the work completed.

b. New Joy Auto Flusher

Ms. Harris advised that the project is moving along and contracts have been received which will be reviewed in the near future.

Operations Report

- System Demand: 1.833mgd average for the month of December
- System Demand: 1.88mgd average for the year
- Accounted For Water: 77.4% for the month of December
- Accounted For Water: 80.2% for the year

The addresses listed below are service line leaks that are the responsibility of the property owners to repair. Staff is working on getting the owners "motivated" to have these repairs fixed as soon as possible.

- 973 Rettew Mill Road: This location is a private trailer park with a 4" service. A leak after the meter pit was detected on 01/24/22 and has yet to be repaired. It has been checked numerous times; the last being 01/11/23.
- 981 Rettew Mill Road: This location is a private trailer park with a 4" service and appears twice on the report. A leak after the meter pit was detected on 01/31/22 and found to be repaired on 09/27/22. Another leak was detected on 03/01/22 and has yet to be repaired. It was last checked on 01/11/23.
- 881 E. Main Street: This location is a private trailer park with a 6" service. A leak after the valve (curb stop) was detected on 03/01/22 and has yet to be repaired. It was last checked on 01/11/23.
- 14 Lauren Lane: This location is a ¾" service leak after the curb stop. The leak was detected on 08/03/22 and has yet to be repaired. It was last checked on 01/11/23.
- 517 Landon Circle: This location is a ¾" service leak after the curb stop and meter pit. The leak was detected on 12/21/22 and has yet to be repaired. It was last checked on 01/11/23.

All customers listed above have been given notice that they have a leak to repair.

Mr. Mohn commended the Water Operators on their recent efforts in "performing an autopsy" on a lithium battery of a source meter which has "gone bad." Mr. Mohn noted that the manufacturer of these

particular meters advised the batteries cannot be replaced; however, his Operators took on the task of attempting to “replace” them and he is happy to report they were successful in doing so. Mr. Mohn advised the employees’ efforts will alleviate the need for a future Capital Project to replace the ten source meters which in his opinion, “... is a home run!”

Mr. Sawyer inquired if Mr. Mohn or Staff has had any issues with the contractor upstream of the Filter Plant; in which, Mr. Mohn advised he was not aware they were at the site resulting in Mr. Sawyer advising he will provide Mr. Mohn with contact information for the contractor.

Mr. Stauffer, referencing the accounted for water figures, inquired as to what the ramifications would be if those amounts were under 80%; in which, Mr. Morrison advised if an entire year’s results were under 80%, the Authority would be required to submit a formal plan to have leak tests completed and documented. Mr. Morrison further advised if the amounts are under 80% in back-to-back years, DEP has the authority to mandate the construction of a new water source.

Mr. Stauffer sought clarification regarding information printed by a local newspaper regarding water rates; in which, Ms. Harris advised the reporter was incorrect as there is a possibility of EAJA needing to raise the rates to generate revenue within 2023 and that more information will be coming in the future.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is Thursday, February 9, 2023, at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment

Mr. Stauffer motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Executive Session

The Board entered into an Executive Session at 8:40 PM to discuss a personnel matter. The Executive Session ended at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Harris, P.E.
Interim Secretary

SJF