

EPHRATA AREA JOINT AUTHORITY MINUTES – AUGUST 10, 2023

The Ephrata Area Joint Authority met on Thursday, August 10, 2023, at 7:00 PM, in the Council Chambers of Borough Hall, 124 S. State Street, Ephrata, PA.

In attendance were Thomas Reinhold, Chairman; Gary Landis, Vice Chairman; Steve Sawyer, Treasurer; Jonathan Zimmerman, Assistant Treasurer; and Members Timothy Barr and Clark Stauffer.

Also in attendance were Attorney Aaron Zeamer, Russell, Krafft & Gruber, LLP; Nancy Harris, Secretary; Steve Morrison, Director of Utilities; and Stephanie Fasnacht, Recorder.

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. Barr moved and Mr. Zimmerman seconded to approve the meeting agenda as posted. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes – July 18, 2023

Mr. Landis moved and Mr. Barr seconded to approve the July 18, 2023, Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

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

Financial Reports

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

Payment of Bills

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

Action Items**a. Route SR 322 East Main Street Water Main Project**

1. People's Security Bank & Trust Requisition No. 2
 - a. DOLI Construction Corporation, Payment Application No. 2 - \$115,875.00

Mr. Sawyer moved and Mr. Barr seconded to approve the processing of People's Security Bank & Trust Requisition No. 2 for the Route SR 322 East Main Street Water Main Project. Motion carried unanimously via roll call vote.

b. Becker Engineering, LLC: Ephrata Area School Athletic Field Improvements Water Plan Review #2 – Lot Add-On and Development Plan

Mr. Landis moved and Mr. Sawyer seconded to conditionally approve the Lot Add-On and Land Development Plan subject to the following comments and recommendations received from Becker Engineering, LLC:

1. The Authority granted 16 EDU's (3,725 gpd) of water capacity.
2. Due to the complexity of the existing utilities, existing grading, and the fact that the School Complex is currently situated on multiple separate parcels, the Authority, at their June 2023 meeting granted the school relief and permitted the school to have more than one water lateral connection to the Authority's water main.
3. The Authority waived the requirement of the school posting financial security for the proposed project as no improvements are proposed to the public water system.
4. The developer's consultant has acknowledged that prior to the Final Plan approval, all plans will be signed and sealed by a Pennsylvania Registered Professional Engineer.
5. The school's consultant has acknowledged that all water facility easements to be dedicated to the Authority, including, but not limited to, access easements, will be properly transferred to the Authority and all legal descriptions and exhibits will be submitted to the Authority Engineer for review prior to Final Plan approval.

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items**a. Possible Clay Township Water Source/Tower**

Mr. Landis referenced ongoing discussions regarding a proposal from YWAM who has advised they do not wish to hook up to public water or sewer, but rather utilize the water source and on-lot sewer system on the property located in Clay Township. *(NOTE: Upon the writing of the Board's Meeting Minutes, Staff confirmed that YWAM has agreed to a number of buildings/properties on the tract of land be connected to public sewer only.)* Mr. Landis advised that Clay Township's Board of Supervisors granted approval for YWAM to complete the preliminary phase of their project. Mr. Landis noted before any expansion beyond the approved preliminary phase can be completed, YWAM would need to obtain permission from the Township or they would be required to hook up to public sewer and water.

Mr. Landis advised he has concerns regarding YWAM utilizing the water on the property as a source of public consumption due to the area being noted for sinkholes in an agricultural area where there are contaminations. Mr. Landis commented, "... I felt very strongly that is not the direction the Township should be going."

Mr. Landis stated that Keith Martin, Vice-Chairman, Board of Supervisors, Clay Township, contacted him to advise that as he put additional thought into the project, he thought there may be another option for YWAM which may also be a benefit to the Township. Mr. Landis advised Mr. Martin further commented that he believes the owner of YWAM may be somewhat more agreeable to providing an area for a possible water tower or a well which could be part of the Clay Township Agreement as final details are currently being worked through. Mr. Landis further advised that Mr. Martin requested his thoughts be shared with the EAJA Board for additional discussion. Mr. Landis then sought input if the suggestion is one that could possibly be pursued.

Mr. Barr inquired if there is a possibility of more developments being built in the area; in which, Mr. Landis advised it is a possibility, but it would be rather limited as zoning would need to be changed. Mr. Landis stated that Clayland Commons is "coming on board" and "... they are having difficulties meeting the requirements to do what they want to do." Mr. Landis further stated, "... there would be a definite need if that plan goes as proposed ... and after that, there isn't a whole lot of developable land that is zoned for that ... that doesn't mean something couldn't be rezoned." Mr. Barr then commented, "... the ability to have a water supply in backup ... I don't see any negatives to that ... when you have a backup supply if there would be some development ... extra capacity ... I don't see anything bad with that."

Ms. Harris advised that unfortunately there is not a quick or easy answer to Mr. Landis' inquiry; however, Staff can begin to explore options noting there are a lot of areas which need to be evaluated. Mr. Reinhold requested that Staff keep the Board informed of their findings and/or possible solution(s).

Mr. Bologna, addressing Mr. Landis, asked clarifying questions in reference to the property itself to get a better understanding if a well would be able to meet the mandated requirements. Mr. Landis provided an overview of the proposed project details including the retaining of commercial buildings for businesses, the establishment of dormitories, as well as proposed use of the farmland on the property. Mr. Bologna advised that part of the battle of creating a well is finding a site that meets the State's requirements as well as the imposed 400-foot area around the site which cannot be used for anything that involves any hazardous chemicals, any storage of chemicals, any fertilizers, etc. Mr. Bologna advised that not only does the site have to meet the State's criteria, but it also has to not have any negative ecological impacts (i.e., to wetlands, streams, etc.).

Mr. Landis commented, "... there is one other advantage to us as a Water Authority that I failed to share and that is we do have a dead-end line there that flushes automatically ... and, hopefully, if as this plan gets developed, they are required to hook up ... that certainly

ought to help us ... but, hopefully, we won't be flushing away all that fresh water in the farmer's field who gets upset about that."

Mr. Sawyer inquired as to the existing wells on the property; in which, Mr. Landis advised the existing wells being used provide water to the businesses and the bed and breakfast in that area. Mr. Landis commented, "... pretty much that whole limestone valley ... there's very few issues with quantity of water ... quality might be another issue." Mr. Landis advised, "... when you get a little further north where the transition takes place from the limestone soil to the shale area ... that's a different story for finding water."

In concluding the discussion, Ms. Harris again advised Staff will begin to conduct some high-level evaluations of the area to determine any viable option(s) and will communicate those findings to the Board.

Old Business Items

a. Highpoint Church

Mr. Morrison advised that the project is expected to be completed in 2024 and that Highpoint Church representatives have been made aware of the revised schedule.

b. New Joy Church

Ms. Harris advised that ELA Group has been working on easements and that Mr. Cover has been made aware of the status of the project.

Operations Report

- System Demand:
 - 1.929mgd Average for the Month of July
 - 1.930mgd Average for the Year
- Accounted For Water
 - 80.3% for the Month of July
 - 80.8% for the Year

The System Demand Daily Average is back to being what is expected for this time of the year.

Mr. Reinhold inquired if there was a water main leak at Main and Lake Streets; in which, Ms. Harris advised that work was being carried out to repair an old leak.

Mr. Sawyer inquired if the upcoming North State Street Project is a project of EAJA's; in which, Ms. Harris advised the project involves utility adjustments resulting in valve and manhole replacements as a result of the street being repaved.

Mr. Zimmerman referenced a recent apartment building fire in Ephrata and advised he had heard that as one of fire departments sought access to hydrants, it was discovered two hydrants were out of service near Ridge Avenue or Akron Road. Ms. Harris advised that she was not informed of that issue – Mr. Morrison also confirmed he was not made aware of the issue - and is not aware of any hydrants being out of service in that area except for one at Landis Road.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Harris, P.E.
Secretary

SJF