

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 28, 2016

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority was called to order at 12:13 p.m. on Monday, November 28, 2016, Vice Chairman Scott Bieber presiding. Other Members present at the commencement of the meeting were: Linda Rosenfeld, Kevin Baker, Richard Bohner, Norma Cusick, Ted Lyons and Deana Zosky. Authority Staff present were Liesel Gross, Frank Leist, Ed Klein, Pat Mandes, Brad Landon, John Parsons, Chuck Volk, and Lisa Miller.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Liesel Gross recommended the order of the agenda be adjusted to begin with the Drought Status Report. Ms. Gross stated there are three items for Executive Session regarding property acquisition, personnel, and litigation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

October 24, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Linda Rosenfeld, seconded by Norma Cusick, the Board approved the Minutes of the October 24, 2016 meeting (6-0). Richard Bohner abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Drought Status Report

Liesel Gross gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Drought Status with an overview of the data. Lehigh County is currently under a Drought Watch issued by Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) and a Drought Warning issued by Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Some residents were present with questions and concerns.

Deana Zosky commented that the Little Lehigh Creek by her house dries up then seems to recharge overnight.

Scott Bieber asked if the Authority is pulling water from all of its wells. Liesel Gross stated not all wells need to run all the time and that some wells are only used depending on the amount of capacity needed. Ted Lyons questioned if the Authority has data regarding the Lehigh River and the drought. Ms. Gross stated the Authority does have data on all wells as well as the Little Lehigh Creek and the Lehigh River. Ms. Gross announced the quarterly meeting with the Industrial users on December 7, 2016 will discuss what they can do in order to assist with conservation without actually stopping production. It was also noted that the industrial customers are primarily using water drawn from the interconnection with the City of Allentown, which we know because of testing done on fluoride levels.

The Board discussed an additional study that would be required to better understand how groundwater and surface water sources are being impacted by the drought and water usage rates, and also discussed how to get the community partners and municipalities involved. Liesel Gross stated that the Authority is dedicating a page on the website that would capture and share information with the community and educate customers on conservation.

Scott Alderfer, Geologist and Lower Macungie Township resident, stated that we don't have enough data currently to solve the mystery of why we had lower groundwater levels in 2002 without seeing the surface water impacts we are seeing today. We need additional data points and stream gages to capture knowledge. The Little Lehigh Creek should have an additional 2 gages installed to obtain key data.

Art Persing questioned how the Authority would penalize customers if water usage restrictions are put in place.

Claudia Steckel asked that in the event of a water emergency, will businesses be restricted as well? Liesel Gross responded that specific kinds of usages are typically excluded from water use restrictions during a Drought Emergency. Restrictions are typically based on eliminating non-essential uses like watering lawns, filling pools, and washing cars at home. If water supplies decline to the point that service to the community would be impacted, the Authority could implement its own Drought Emergency declaration and could declare other water use restrictions up to and including a water rationing plan that would impose penalties for water waste, or implementation of water rationing rates to promote conservation. However, water supplies have not reached this level and the Authority is not recommending this action at this time. Ms. Steckel also asked if the Authority could make a statement to stop development. Ms. Gross said that the Authority does not control or approve development plans, as the municipalities have the authority to control development.

Mike Siegel commented that this problem is not just a precipitation problem. The problem lies in the cone of depression for well withdrawals. Drought indicators will be out of line and wells may need to be shut down to prevent creeks from drying out. Mr. Siegel provided some Board members with copies of pages excerpted from the WRIR 90-4076 US Geological Survey and advised the Board to read the report. Mr. Siegel also stated the Authority needs a USGS gaging system at the Spring Creek pumping station to gather proper data, which could also be used as an early warning system for flooding during peak rain events for traffic safety.

There was some discussion regarding taking some of the Authority's wells offline with the idea that the wells could recharge the base flow. Liesel Gross explained that the Authority needs to balance the operation of the system among all its supplies including the wells and the interconnection with Allentown. Further study and additional data points may be needed to understand current impacts to the Little Lehigh regarding water withdrawals, limestone geology, dam removals, etc. She explained that staff has scheduled a meeting with a hydrogeologist for later in the week to discuss potential data collection efforts to gather more meaningful monitoring data which could be used to inform operational decisions.

Jan Keim encouraged the Authority to forget about another study and take action.

Residents also voiced their concern about the safety of Spring Creek Road during flooding and suggested that Lower Macungie Township may be willing to partner with the Authority to install proper stream gages to determine if the road needs to be closed and assist with the cost of implementing these devices.

Deana Zosky left the meeting at 1:30 p.m.

Vice Chairman Bieber called a break at 1:30 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:34 p.m.

2017 Water & Sewer Rates

Liesel Gross offered to the Board the 2017 Water & Sewer rates as presented in the agenda packet.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Kevin Baker, the Board approved the 2017 Water & Sewer rates (6-0).

Suburban Division – Asset Management Facility Upgrades

Chuck Volk gave an overview of the project which is part of the Suburban Division Facility Condition Assessment Report. Based on the report, nine water and two wastewater facilities were selected for upgrade based on a high risk assessment rating. Those facilities are: Beverly Hills, NL 15-16 (Heidelberg Hts.), NL-19 (Heidelberg Hts.), Clearview Farms, WL-6, WL-10, WL-11, WL-13, WL-16, Lynn Township WWTP, and WLI siphon chambers.

Mr. Volk is requesting approval of the Capital Project Authorization – Design & Build Phase in the amount of \$110,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to D’Huy Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$79,500.00.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Linda Rosenfeld, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization – Design & Build Phase in the amount of \$110,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to D’Huy Engineering, Inc. in the amount of \$79,500.00 (6-0).

Suburban Division – Water Main Replacement Program Amendment to Design Phase Cycles 1 - 3

Frank Leist gave an overview of the project. The amendment to the project is requested due to the 1.7 miles of additional water main added to the project scope. The additional miles consists of replacing the water mains between intersections, rather than ending a replacement mid-block, thus allowing future replacements to be easily extended with lessened interruptions in service to customers in the area. Mr. Leist is requesting approval of the Capital Project Authorization – Amendment No. 2 of the Design Phase in the amount of \$60,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Gannett Fleming, Inc.

On a motion by Richard Bohner, seconded by Norma Cusick, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization – Amendment No. 2 of the Design Phase in the amount of \$60,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Gannett Fleming, Inc. (6-0).

Allentown Division – Schantz Spring Main Replacement Design Phase

Frank Leist gave an overview of the project which consists of replacing approximately 2,000 linear feet of 1903 vintage 30” water main from Schantz Spring to the Water Filtration Plant. It also includes addressing approximately 15 leaks, located at various areas from Schantz Spring to Schreibers Bridge, as identified during the SmartBall leak detection work by the City of Allentown prior to the lease. This project is a Schedule-7 project and will be funded by the LCA Allentown Division. Mr. Leist is requesting approval of the Capital Project Authorization – Design Phase in the amount of \$187,635.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Gannett Fleming, Inc. in the amount of \$127,635.00.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Ted Lyons, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization – Design Phase in the amount of \$187,635.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Gannett Fleming, Inc. in the amount of \$127,635.00 (6-0).

Allentown Division – PA Rapid Bridge Replacement Project of the Hamilton Street Bridge crossing Cedar Creek

Frank Leist gave an overview of the project which consists of relocating approximately 500 linear feet of 6” diameter water main due to the replacement of the Cedar Creek Bridge on Hamilton Street. The project is currently listed to be funded by the LCA Allentown Division, however, based on current bridge design, 100% of the costs are anticipated to be reimbursed by PennDOT because the facilities are located in a private easement. Mr. Leist is requesting approval of the Capital Project Authorization – Design Phase in the amount of \$124,500.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization in the amount of \$97,000.00 to Gannett Fleming, Inc.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Richard Bohner, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization – Design Phase in the amount of \$124,500.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization in the amount of \$97,000.00 to Gannett Fleming, Inc. (6-0).

2017 Arcadis SCARP Program Management Services

Pat Mandes gave an overview of the project for Arcadis for work related to the Sewer Capacity Assurance and Rehabilitation Program (SCARP). The work includes Program Management for 2017.

Ms. Mandes is requesting approval for the Capital Project Authorization – Amendment No. 25 in the amount of \$125,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Arcadis.

On a motion by Norma Cusick, seconded by Linda Rosenfeld, the Board approved the Capital Project Authorization – Amendment No. 25 in the amount of \$125,000.00 which includes the Professional Services Authorization to Arcadis (6-0).

PROJECT UPDATES/INFORMATION ITEMS

Liesel Gross brought to the attention of the Board items listed in the report. There were no questions or comments.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL REVIEW

Ed Klein reviewed the 2016 Q4 Forecast report as attached and presented to the Board.

SYSTEM OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

John Parsons reviewed the October 2016 Operations report that was attached to the Board agenda.

STAFF COMMENTS

None.

SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / OTHER COMMENTS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice Chairman Bieber called an Executive Session at 2:02 p.m. to discuss property acquisition, personnel, and litigation.

The Executive Session ended at 2:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Vice Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Richard H. Bohner
Secretary