

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 23, 2012

The Regular Meeting of the Lehigh County Authority was called to order at 12:28 p.m. on Monday, January 23, 2012, Chairman Asa Hughes presiding. Other Members present at the commencement of the meeting were: Tom Muller, Richard Bohner, Emrich Stellar, Brian Nagle, Norma Cusick, and Scott Bieber. Authority Staff present were: Aurel Arndt, Frank Leist, Liesel Adam, Pat Mandes, Joseph McMahon, Douglas Young, Cristin Garger, and Pete Burkhardt.

Dave DiSera, Jon Varner, and Chris Jones, consultants from EMA, Inc, were also present. Ellen Kern from Senator Pat Browne's office was also in attendance.

Member of the public, Jeanine Bauer of Jordan Road in North Whitehall Township, was in attendance.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

Mr. Arndt noted that the Action Item for Wastewater regarding the Arcadia West Treatment Plant Upgrade will be removed from the agenda and discussed at the February Workshop.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Arndt stated no executive sessions were required.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

December 7, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes

On a motion by Mr. Bohner, seconded by Ms. Cusick, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the December 7, 2011 Regular Meeting as amended (7-0).

ACTION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

Information Management and Technology Master Plan (ITMP)

Mr. McMahon introduced EMA, the ITMP consultants. Mr. Jones referred to the attached presentation, noting that the current plan is an update from the 2001 ITMP and detailed recommendations will be summarized. He elaborated on the main themes of the Plan recommendations falling under four categories: Information Technology, Operational, Management/Practices, and Combined Enterprise. Mr. Jones also explained the need for IT Governance in the form of an IT Director position which could be accomplished with a mix of internal and external resources. He continued on, explaining details of some of the specific projects, such as wireless connectivity, document management, field instrumentation and control, and a work management system. Mr. Jones also provided a summary table of price ranges for each project and rankings for each project based on project cost, need, and complexity to implement the project. Mr. DiSera discussed the significance of the IT Governance and IT Disaster Recovery Planning. Discussion followed.

Ellen Kern left the meeting at 1:17 p.m.

External Laboratory Analysis (Approval)

Mr. McMahon recommended approval of a three year agreement with Suburban Water Testing Laboratories (SWTL). He stated that SWTL is providing the best overall pricing and service among the five laboratories that offered price proposals; their price is also lower than budgeted for 2012.

On a motion by Mr. Stellar, seconded by Mr. Bieber, the Board unanimously approved the PSA for Suburban Water Testing Laboratories in the amount of \$128,300 (7-0).

Pete Burkhardt, Dave DiSera, Jon Varner, and Chris Jones left the meeting at 1:35 p.m.

Brad Landon entered the meeting at 1:38 p.m.

2012 Water Rate Increase

Mr. Young explained that the Authority is working with Keystone Consulting on a rate evaluation and distributed a handout including proposed common rate increases. He noted that revenue listed does not include the future revenue from the Ocean Spray plant that is proposed in the Authority service area. Mr. Young explained that volumetric charges will increase about 3.5% for a typical customer and fixed charges will remain the same; which equates to ~\$7 per year increase for a typical residential customer. Some discussion followed.

Mr. Arndt stated that if Board members were agreeable with this rate increase, notices would be issued immediately to industrial customers and municipal officials for comment with final adoption of the rates occurring in March 2012.

There were no objections from Board members.

SYSTEM OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Mr. McMahon had no comments.

STAFF COMMENTS

Strategic Plan Update

Mr. Arndt referred to the additional memorandum regarding the updates to the Authority Strategic Plan (Plan). He noted that there are no significant changes at this time; however, two specific items have been changed. Mr. Arndt stated the SCARP program has been developed since the last Plan update in 2007; therefore, a benchmark consistent with that program is needed to adequately track progress. Secondly, a regional effort regarding water quantity needs to be undertaken. He noted that this is a broadly written statement in the Plan reflecting the urgency and dependence on other entities and that in the coming years, the Authority's Master Plan will be updated and will better address water adequacy. Mr. Arndt stated that the draft update would be sent to Authority stakeholders, such as municipal and local government officials, for comment with final adoption proposed for the February Board meeting. Discussion followed.

2012 Organizational Goals

Mr. Arndt referred to the previously distributed memorandum and noted that the 2012 goals are a product of departmental and individual goals, the current Capital Plan, and the 2012 Budget. He noted that some items, such as the employee classification and pay plan are under way and some activities spill over into 2013.

Mr. Bieber inquired as to when the new Act 537 Plan process would begin in regard to the provision of increased treatment capacity for the Western Lehigh Interceptor signatories.

Ms. Mandes noted that an RFQ is ready to be sent out; however, the Authority is awaiting a response from the City of Allentown regarding a joint Act 537 Plan since many of the options being evaluated involved the City's wastewater plant. Discussion followed.

Mr. Arndt stated that a meeting is scheduled for Mr. Hughes and himself with the Mayor of Allentown to discuss a joint plan.

SOLICITOR'S COMMENTS

Solicitor Landon had no comments.

OTHER COMMENTS

Mr. Nagle asked for updates regarding well monitoring and water quality monitoring in the Little Lehigh Creek basin.

Groundwater Monitoring

Mr. Leist explained that groundwater monitoring reports are anticipated to be ready to be sent to the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) by the end of the month. He noted that the lateness of the report is due to data transmission issues and several other communication lapses, but these issues have been rectified and the final reports are back on track to be submitted to DRBC and Lower Macungie Township. Both the 2010 and 2011 plans will be submitted, so although the 2010 plan is late, the 2011 plan is timely.

Little Lehigh Creek

Ms. Adam explained that Wildlands Conservancy had approached the Authority to assist with monitoring the Little Lehigh Creek for bacteria during the summer months of 2011. The monitoring showed varying levels of bacteria, with some high results during high-stream-flow events following wet weather, which is expected due to stormwater runoff. She stated that the Authority will continue partnering with Wildlands Conservancy and other organizations in 2012 to study stream quality. Ms. Adam also noted that with the help of PA-DEP sampling process, a Recreational Use Evaluation for the Little Lehigh Creek watershed will start in May 2012. Discussion followed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There were no Executive Sessions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:37 p.m.

Richard H. Bohner
Secretary