

Mount Pocono Municipal Authority
Regular Meeting
March 14th, 2024

The monthly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Mount Pocono Municipal Authority (the "Authority") was called to order by Chairman Jeff Woehrle at 7:08 PM. The following people were in attendance: Chairman Jeff Woehrle, Vice Charman Matthew Hensel, Board Member Karl Davis (7:25 PM), Executive Director Jon Klotz, Engineer David Kee from Arro, Solicitor Scott Lipson, Administrative Assistant Alexandria Patrick, customer Jennifer Williams, and customer Stephen Planchock. Treasurer Christine Farrugia and Accountant Dean Cable attended via Zoom. Chairman Woehrle led the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

Regular Meeting Minutes:

Minutes of the February 8th, 2024 regular monthly Authority Meeting were presented.

A Motion was made by Treasurer Christine Farrugia, seconded by Vice Chairman Matthew Hensel, to approve the Minutes of the February 8th, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion passed unanimously 3-0.

CUSTOMER APPEARANCE:

Request for Abatement of Overage Account No. 000565-0:

Customer Jennifer Williams presented the Board her formal request, a picture of the front yard, and her highest and lowest water bill. Ms. Williams requested for the abatement of overage for the fourth quarter 2023 bill, and/or an adjustment for the upcoming first quarter 2024 bill. Ms. Williams explained that in October she had high water bills, so she had spoken with Pennsylvania American Water and had American Rooter come to the property to check for a leak. She further explained that the original individual from American Rooter stated that there was not a leak, which prolonged the process by three weeks until a second opinion was made by another individual from American Rooter. Ms. Williams stated that she had insurance that she thought covered the expenses from the leak, but unfortunately not all expenses were covered. Ms. Williams stayed in frequent contact with Administrative Assistant Alexandria Patrick about the situation and her efforts to get more information from the insurance company and American Rooter. Ms. Patrick explained that the Authority had matched the Pennsylvania American Water credit for the fourth quarter 2023, and that Ms. Williams has paid the entirety of the fourth quarter bill including late fees, in which the overage and late fee amount was calculated to be \$317.19. The usage for the first quarter 2024 bill has been calculated as a total of 77,300 gallons. Ms. Patrick confirmed that 59,300 gallons is the number of gallons exceeding the 18,000-gallon allotment for 1 EDU.

A motion to approve the reimbursement of \$317.19 for the fourth quarter 2023 bill, and to give permission for the office to adjust 59,300 gallons of usage from the first quarter 2024 bill was made by Mr.

Hensel. The motion was seconded by Treasurer Christine Farrugia, and the motion passed unanimously 3-0.

Mr. Hensel explained that the Board has voted in favor of the customer due to frequent contact with the office, all the information and documentation that she could have provided had been provided to the Authority, and it is safely assumed that the water had not reached the Authority's system.

CHAIR REPORT:

Executive Director Jon Klotz presented the signatory sheets for the COVID-19 Small Water and Sewer and COVID-19 H2O grants, as well as the full grant packages for each. ARRO Engineer Dave Kee and Mr. Klotz explained that the grants will give around \$0.66 cents back for every dollar spent for both projects. Mr. Kee also explained that the grants as they are written will allow ARRO to work on the project without a bid. Mr. Klotz recommended the Board to remain with ARRO for both projects. The agreements for both grants need to be acknowledged before any expenditure can be made.

COVID-19 Small Water and Sewer Grant:

Mr. Klotz explained that the COVID-19 Small Water and Sewer grant will be used for a pump replacement project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The grant period is from December 2023 to September of 2026. Mr. Klotz and ARRO Engineer Dave Kee explained that the Authority will aim to complete this project by the beginning of 2025. Jon Klotz stated that the project timeline is projected to be short for the Authority to stay within audit requirements while both the Small Water and Sewer and H2O Grants are active. Costars may be a potential vendor and has been approved by Solicitor Scott Lipson.

COVID-19 H2O Grant:

Mr. Klotz explained that the COVID-19 H2O grant will be used for a sludge project. This project will entail a sludge processing unit, in which the Authority will aim to have near twenty percent (20%) solids, compared to the two to three percent (2-3%) solids the WWTP currently has. The higher solids percentage will reduce hauling costs for the Authority. Mr. Kee and Mr. Klotz stated that the Authority may want an independent study with a smaller system that is similar to the processing unit mentioned above to have data when proceeding with the project. Mr. Klotz explained that the building will have a lifespan of 50 years, and the equipment will be about 20 years. The motor will be between one quarter (1/4) to a half (1/2) horsepower with reduction and will be easy to fix or repair. Mr. Lipson inquired about possible supply chain issues for the parts of the unit. Mr. Kee stated that the parts are easily obtainable, as another client of ARRO has the same unit.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Executive Director Jon Klotz.

Bills to be paid:

A motion was made by Vice Chairman Mr. Hensel to pay the bills in the total amount of \$74,611.90 as listed in the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by treasurer Ms. Farrugia, and the motion passed unanimously 3-0.

Transfer from Operating to Payroll:

A motion was made by Mr. Hensel to transfer \$41,731.79 from Operating to Payroll. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrugia, and the motion passed unanimously 3-0.

COLLECTIONS:

Executive Director Jon Klotz presented to the Board a customer payment plan list, lien list, and sheriff's sale claim for 146 Foxfire Drive Unit 103.

Mr. Klotz stated that one customer successfully completed a customer payment plan, and one has been added. The newly added customer payment plan is for account 000330-0, which has been part of the collections list for a long time for the Authority. The owner that could not be served prior to the customer payment plan had come into the office and signed both an acceptance of service letter, which has been provided to the Authority's legal team, and a customer payment plan. Mr. Klotz explained that if at any time the payment plan is not honored, the Authority may continue with collection efforts.

Jon Klotz stated that there are 57 active liens.

Mr. Klotz stated that the previous Sheriff's sale for 75 Fairview Avenue has been successful, and 146 Foxfire Drive Unit 103 will be up for Sheriff's sale on March 28th.

SOLICITOR:

Mr. Lipson provided the Board with a color coordinated packet of the collections list that shows where each account is in the process of collections. He stated that the accounts are in one of 3 stages: they have been, or are ready to be, sent to Judge Riley, they are in litigation, or they are in post judgement. Mr. Lipson explained that the list has been getting shorter and hopes to continue efforts to reduce the list.

Mr. Lipson stated that it is difficult to get service on those who live in a different state, as the Authority had experienced with account 000330-0. Customer Mr. Stephen Planchock inquired if there was the possibility of tracing individuals through tax records. Mr. Klotz explained that it is possible, but in the case where an individual has multiple addresses, the Authority and legal team would need to inspect to see which address is the proper one to serve.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Jon Klotz presented the solids report for February 2024. The data has no significant changes from previous reports.

Mr. Klotz presented the SARS Co-V2 report and stated that it is normal.

Johnson Controls Quote:

A quote from Johnson Controls for glycol replacement, and spare parts for pumps and fans in the amount of \$17,001.82 was presented by Mr. Klotz. He explained that the operators at the treatment plant would be able to repair small parts of the pump to avoid the costs of a technician for simple repairs. Operators have the knowledge base to efficiently and effectively replace or fix small issues. Mr. Klotz explained that in-house repairs would not interfere with Johnson Controls in future situations where a technician would be needed. Parts need to be bought from Johnson Controls, as these parts from another

company would not fit the system. Mr. Davis inquired about the lifespan of the fans and how often they are used. Mr. Klotz explained that the fans are not used all the time, as they are turned on and off frequently. While the fans are not in use, operators exhibit routine care of the fans to ensure proper functionality when used.

A motion to accept the proposal from Johnson Controls in the amount of \$17,001.18 for spare parts was made by Mr. Hensel. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davis, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Macroinvertebrate Study Contract:

Mr. Klotz presented a contract to conduct the Macroinvertebrate Study by Michael Bilger, Aquatic Biologist. The total cost for the study will be \$1,650.00 for three samples, including travel costs. Mr. Hensel inquired about having testing done more often than twice a year. Mr. Klotz explained that there is nothing to prevent the Authority from doing so. The only caveat would be that more data would have more cost to the Authority. Customer Mr. Planchock asked the Board what the testing is and what it is for. Mr. Hensel explained that the Macroinvertebrate study has biologists come to the Forest Hills Run stream, where rocks are flipped, and samples are taken from the stream from three stations twice each year. The samples are taken to the lab and spread onto a grid, and at random, coordinates on the grid are chosen and evaluated to evaluate the percent of tolerant and intolerant species of bugs in the water. This study is done to see how the water that is discharged from the plant into Forest Hills Run impacts the water quality of the stream. Mr. Klotz explained that the goal is 83% of the same quality from the station before the Wastewater Plant and the two stations after the plant. In April of last year, the WWTP reached 81%.

North End Electric:

Mr. Klotz presented the Board with two quotes from North End Electric for the repair of a pump and the price of a new pump. Mr. Klotz stated that these pumps are a crucial piece of equipment for the functioning of the WWTP. The WWTP has been having numerous issues with the pumps and one has already been remanufactured. Mr. Klotz recommended the purchase of two new pumps to replace pumps that are dated from 1997. The third pump at the plant is currently in good condition. Mr. Klotz also explained that he could not get different quotes due to part specificity. At the time pumps are not used, the operators at the WWTP take preventative care measures. Mr. Klotz stated that it is possible to get a quote from Costars, but even if available, the costs would likely be more than North End Electric. Mr. Hensel inquired about an upgraded pump, and Mr. Klotz stated that there are no upgrades for this pump at this time, as they are specific. Mr. Planchock asked the Board if the Authority records the aging of equipment and the useful life. Mr. Klotz stated that the Authority does keep these records. Mr. Hensel asked Mr. Klotz if the purchasing of the pumps would raise the rates. Mr. Klotz stated that the purchase of the pumps would not raise the rates, as they are needed in everyday function and not an expansion to the WWTP.

A motion to buy two (2) new pumps from North End Electric for \$42,573.33 each was made by Mr. Davis. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hensel, and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

ENGINEER REPORT:

Mr. Kee presented the Engineer's report.

Lot 103 Brunswicke is currently in review, and Mr. Kee stated the review is projected to be completed the week of March 18th.

Mr. Kee explained that ARRO is currently waiting for revisions for Knob Road Lot 68 and Summit Pointe Lot 57.

The PA American Filter and Backwash Facility Review is currently underway and is waiting for payment and completed relevant documentation.

Mr. Kee stated that the Annual DRBC Docket report was completed and submitted January 29th.

A draft of the Chapter 94 Report has been submitted to Mr. Klotz by Mr. Kee, and currently waiting for Mr. Klotz signature. Mr. Kee stated that the report will be submitted before the March 31st deadline.

New Business:

Request for Abatement of Late Fees Account 005228-0:

Ms. Patrick presented to the Board the request of account 005228-0. The property owner stated that they had not received their bill for the third quarter 2023 and fourth quarter 2023. The customer stated that he had paid the late fees for the third quarter. On February 7th, the customer enrolled in e-billing to prevent this issue in the future. The customer requests for the abatement of late fees in the amount of \$28.64. Ms. Patrick explained that in both instances the bill to address was confirmed by the customer and the next billing date was told to the customer.

A motion to approve the abatement of late fees in the amount of \$28.64 was made by Mr. Hensel and seconded by Ms. Farrugia. The motion did not pass 0-4.

Request for Abatement of Late Fees Account No. 000626-0:

Ms. Patrick presented to the Board the request of account 000626-0. The property owner stated that they had not received their bill for the fourth quarter 2023. The customer stated to office staff that she is not ambulatory at this time and received the late notice when her daughter-in law visited and brought the owner's mail from the mailbox. Ms. Patrick stated that the customer had not paid late prior to this instance, and the customer paid the amount of \$308.00.

A motion to approve the abatement of late fees in the amount of 28.64 for account 000626-0 was made by Mr. Hensel and was seconded by Ms. Farrugia. The motion passed 3-1, Jeff Woehrle, Matthew Hensel, and Christine Farrugia voted in favor for the motion, and Karl Davis voted against the motion.

Request for Abatement of Late Fees Account No. 000763-0:

Ms. Patrick presented to the Board the request for account 000763-0. The office received a check from the customer that was incomplete on January 31st. Ms. Patrick explained that the account did not have

customer contact information, therefore the office could only reach out via mail. The check was mailed back to the customer on February 2nd, as the office waited for customer contact within that time. The customer requested the Board to abate late fees in the amount of \$28.35.

A motion to approve the abatement of late fees in the amount of \$28.35 for account 000763-0 was made by Mr. Hensel and seconded by Ms. Farrugia. The motion failed 2-2, Mr. Woehrle and Ms. Farrugia voted in favor of the motion, and Mr. Hensel and Mr. Davis voted against the motion.

Zero Tolerance Policy:

Mr. Klotz presented a proposed Zero Tolerance Policy to the Board. This policy aims to define the proper actions the Authority staff must take when faced with unreasonable and/or unacceptable behavior. Mr. Klotz explained that there have been incidents at other entities that involve negative and harmful behaviors towards their staff, and this proposed policy is to protect the Authority's staff. Office staff will be in coordination with Solicitor Scott Lipson to make minor adjustments to the proposed policy. No motion.

Board Member Data Protection Policy:

Mr. Klotz presented a proposed Board Member Data Protection Policy to the Board. The policy aims to protect the personal data of the Authority's Board Members, similar to that of the Authority's employees as defined in the policy. Office staff will be in coordination with Mr. Lipson to make minor adjustments to the proposed policy. No motion.

The Authorities Board Member Training:

Mr. Klotz presented board member training by The Authorities. The training will take place April 4th and April 11th, and the Authority encourages Board members to attend one of the training sessions. Mr. Davis stated that he would like to attend the April 4th session.

Old Business:

Mr. Planchock inquired about the office location, and if there was a possibility of the office being placed in a modular building on Authority property. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority had searched several options for the office location, including a modular building, but renting from the Mount Pocono Borough is currently the best option for the Authority. Mr. Klotz also explained that the Authority has proposed a lease agreement to the Mount Pocono Borough and is currently awaiting response.

An Executive Session was called at 8:55 PM to discuss legal issues. The Board retired from Executive Session at 9:23 PM.

ADJOURN:

There being no further business to be discussed, the Meeting was adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandria Patrick
Mount Pocono Municipal Authority