

Mount Pocono Municipal Authority  
Regular Meeting  
November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023

The monthly Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Mount Pocono Municipal Authority (the "Authority") was called to order by Vice Chairman Jeff Woehrle at 7:05 PM. The following people were in attendance: Chairman Matthew Hensel (until 7:37 PM), Vice Chairman Jeff Woehrle, Treasurer Karl Davis, Board Member Christine Farrugia, Executive Director Jon Klotz, David Kee from Arro, Solicitor Scott Lipson, Accountant Dean Cable, Office Accountant Stephanie Rodgers, and Administrative Assistant Alexandria Patrick. Borough council member AnnMarie Harris, customer Manuel Farrugia, and customer Edgar Romney was also in attendance. Vice Chairman Woehrle led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MINUTES:**

**Regular Meeting Minutes:**

Minutes of the October 12th, 2023 regular monthly Authority Meeting were presented.

A Motion was made by Treasurer Karl Davis, seconded by Christine Farrugia, to approve the Minutes of the October 12th, 2023 meeting as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**CUSTOMER APPEAL:**

**Appeal of Rejected Payment Agreement Accounts 009109-0, 009122-0, 009146-0, 009148-0, & 009149-0:**

The owner of accounts 009109-0, 009122-0, 009146-0, 009148-0, 009149-0 presented to the Board his abatement request of late fees for all the accounts mentioned. Mr. Romney explained that he had tried to pay the third quarter 2023 bill on October 31<sup>st</sup> for all six of his accounts through the online payment system, but at that time the third-party system was down and not accepting his payment. He had called the office October 31<sup>st</sup>, and was told about the issue with the third-party system was reported. The customer was told that he could mail his payment and his payment would be considered on time if the postmark is October 31<sup>st</sup>. On October 31<sup>st</sup>, he had made a payment through ACH on one of his six accounts, but he explained the surcharge was \$8.00. Mr. Romney sent payments for his other five accounts through the postal system, after confirming the postage was correct, but was returned to his residence. On November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Mr. Romney dropped off his payment for all five accounts, and had brought the envelope he sent October 31<sup>st</sup>. The envelope did not have a postmark date or a return label including the date it had been returned. Administrative assistant Alexandria Patrick explained to the customer that the office cannot waive these fees because the payment was not received on time and there had not been a postmark or return label with a date prior to the due date. Mr. Romney went to the post office to inquire why his envelope had been sent back to his residence, and it was explained that the envelopes are processed in batches and the American Flag sticker that was in the bottom left corner of the envelope may have interfered with the process.

Executive Director Jonathan Klotz explained that the online service was down from October 30<sup>th</sup> around 3:00 PM to October 31<sup>st</sup> around 1:00 PM. Mr. Klotz explained that the code on the bottom came from a bulk mailer, which would explain the absence of the postmark and the return label.

Mr. Romney had also asked for the online payment system to allow over \$1,000.00 per transaction. Mr. Klotz explained that the allowance for the transactions cannot be higher because raising the total amount to be paid will increase the payment charges for all of the customers of the MPMA.

A motion to approve the abatement request for accounts 009109-0, 009122-0, 009146-0, 009148-0, & 009149-0 in the total amount of \$154.75 was made by Mr. Davis. The motion was seconded by Chairman Matthew Hensel and the motion carried unanimously 4-0.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer Karl Davis.

**Bills to be paid:**

A motion was made by Mr. Davis to pay the bills in the total amount of \$71,520.07 as listed in the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrugia and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

**Transfer from Operating to Payroll:**

A motion was made by Mr. Davis to transfer from Operating to Payroll in the amount of \$40,940.15 as listed in the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrugia and the motion carried unanimously 3-0.

**COLLECTIONS:**

Executive Director Jonathan Klotz presented a memo explaining the current payment arrangements, liens, and properties on shut off. There are currently 20 payment arrangements and updated arrangements have been sent to customers. There are currently 72 active liens, and 14 liens have been sent to the prothonotary. A total of 9 accounts remains shut off.

**SOLICITOR:**

Mr. Lipson discussed the Chapter 11 bankruptcy regarding Rite-Aid, explaining that the Mount Pocono Rite-Aid is not on the list to close. Due to this, the Authority will receive payment towards Rite-Aid's balance.

**Pocono Mountain Industrial Park:**

Executive Director Jonathan Klotz brought into discussion the process of a Writ against the Pocono Mountain Industrial Water Park. Mr. Lipson explained that as time passes, the Authority is waiving the statute of limitation amounts, and that their office will need a transaction report for the Pocono Mountain Industrial Park to progress. Mr. Lipson also explained that a motion will need to be made to authorize a writ against the Industrial Park.

A motion to authorize the filing of a Writ against the Pocono Mountain Industrial Park was made by Mr. Davis. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrugia and the motion passed unanimously 3-0.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Mr. Klotz presented the solids report for October 2023. Nothing to discuss.

SARS Co-V2 report was presented. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority will see a change of the report, as the Authority will no longer use Bio-Bot for the report. The Authority will now be using Borough of Laboratories. Mr. Davis asked of the significance of the spike of SARS Co-V2 in September. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority does not have a responsibility to act upon the data, but the Authority may post information regarding the data as long as it is in real time.

**Land Logics Group Quote:**

Mr. Klotz presented a quote from the Land Logistics Group for a geo-tool and the corresponding equipment. The quote will include the tool, backpack, mounting plate, technical support, and free ground shipping. Mr. Klotz explained that this technology will be useful to the MPMA operators and will have many potential uses to the Authority.

A motion to approve the purchase from the Land Logics Group in the amount of \$2,910.00 was made by Mr. Davis. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrugia and the motion passed unanimously 3-0.

**ENGINEER REPORT:**

Mr. Kee presented the Engineer's report.

**Pine Hill Pump Station:**

Mr. Kee discussed that all paperwork was received for the pump station and all applications are completed. The project had been completed in July 2023, and will have the maintenance period of one year, ending in July 2024.

**Knob Road Lot 68:**

Mr. Kee explained that ARRO has received plans after the Engineer's report was provided to the Authority. The plans are currently being reviewed.

**New Business:**

**Request for Abatement of Late Fees Account 008215-0:**

Executive Director Jonathan Klotz presented a memo for the abatement of late fees for account 008215-0. The customer had set up auto-pay, but the payment was cancelled by the third-party system. The customer called the office November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023 to inform the office about the issue.

Mr. Klotz began a discussion about late fees, and whether or not they should be charged. Abatement of late fees comes out of the Authority, therefore Mr. Klotz proposed that the Authority may rid itself of processing late fees by increasing the quarterly bill by an amount that will budget in accounts that are not paid by the due date. Mr. Davis proposed a grace period a few days after the due date, but Mr. Klotz explained it is not an option because it is too similar to the discount the Authority previously had, which did not work for the Authority. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority may reform the bill so that the due

date is larger and bolded, and the quarterly due dates will be posted on the Mount Pocono Municipal Authority website (mpma-pa.org).

Borough Council member AnnMarie Harris proposed an idea for monthly billing to assist those that may not be able to pay the quarterly bills by the due date. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority is not opposed to monthly billing, but the Authority does not have the office space for an additional employee to assist with the volume of payments each month. He had also stated that the collections will come quicker if the Authority bills monthly rather than quarterly. Ms. Patrick discussed the option of including on either the bill or newsletter a note to encourage customers to pay monthly. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority can inform customers that they may pay monthly, but there will be an increase in payments each month and those who pay online will pay more fees paying monthly compared to quarterly. Mr. Klotz did insist that the Authority are able to work with customers who are proactive and call either himself or the office prior to the due date of any bill.

Customer Manuel Farrugia asked how the bills would work with the water readings during a monthly billing period. Mr. Klotz explained that the Authority relies on Pennsylvania American Water for water readings, which may be provided at the beginning or the end of each month. This will cause issue if the Authority chooses to bill monthly rather than quarterly.

A motion to waive the late fee of \$28.63 for account 008215-0 was made by Ms. Farrugia. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davis. The motion failed, with a vote of 0-3.

**Employee Holiday Bonuses:**

A motion to approve the holiday bonus schedule was made by Mr. Davis. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrugia and the motion passed unanimously 3-0.

**Old Business:**

Nothing to discuss.

**ADJOURN:**

There being no further business to be discussed, the Meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexandria Patrick  
Mount Pocono Municipal Authority