

April 20, 2021

POTTSTOWN BOROUGH AUTHORITY

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Chomnuk called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mike Benner, Jeff Chomnuk, Tom Carroll, Aram Ecker and David Renn. Also in attendance were Solicitor Vincent Pompo, Authority Manager Justin Keller, Engineer Chelsea Pearce, Public Works Director Doug Yerger, Utilities Director Brent Wagner, Bookkeeper Gerry Keszczyk and Borough Secretary Virginia Takach.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Benner moved to approve the March 16, 2021 minutes as presented. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning & Capital

Mr. Renn had nothing to add to the Engineer's Report.

Townships Meeting Report

Mr. Carroll reported that Lower Pottsgrove has hired a new Engineer, Fred Ebert. He added that there was a discussion regarding cleaning of the Wastewater Treatment Plant tanks and the grit in the tanks. He noted that Mr. Wagner advised that the grit is coming in through the manholes and possibly the Authority could address. Mr. Carroll also reported that Manager Wagner, Lower Pottsgrove, complained about the North End meter. He added that Engineer Cory Salmon found no issues in the meter.

Mr. Keller noted that he will review with Mr. Salmon and advised that the issue could have resulted from the recent power outages.

Inflow and Infiltration Committee

Mr. Carroll reported that he met with Cory Salmon, Mr. Keller and Doug Yerger and discussed several options in how to deal with I & I issues on properties and with residents. Things to identify include inspections, laterals, sump pumps and down spouts. Mr. Carroll added that the initial suggestion in dealing with the I & I is to identify when property titles change and possibly a letter to the homeowner and creating an ordinance outlining the issues. There was also a discussion to include replacing the mains and include in upcoming contracts. Mr. Carroll advised that Mr. Yerger noted that there are not

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enough inlets and the water ends up destroying the streets. He also advised that the Committee tasked Engineer Cory Salmon to review I & I procedures with at least three different municipalities.

Engineer Chelsea Pearce reported that the quote to replace 66 laterals from the main to clean out (not curb to clean-up) is \$160,000.

Mr. Yerger reviewed the previous contract to replace laterals in the North End of town, with two options, one to replace the lateral from the main to the curb and the other from the curb to the house, depending on the type of existing pipe. He confirmed that the main to the building is the property owner's responsibility.

Mr. Keller suggested adding the \$160,000 into the contract bid. The bids will eventually come before the Board for approval.

AUTHORITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Manager Keller provided a report of the recent water main break at King and Manatawny Streets and the PECO underground explosions, He noted that no significant bacteria was found in the water and the boil water notice expired March 20th, wherein 10,000-15,000 people were effected. Bottled water was provided by Nestle's and was distributed to residents.

Mr. Keller also reviewed the existing reverse 911 system. He advised that Staff is seeking an upgraded system, wherein emails and texts can be used. He continued to encourage resident to sign onto the Notify Me section of the Borough's website and additional information will be included in the upcoming utility bills. In addition, he is consulting with the Solicitor is having the cell phone companies provide numbers, if not a legal issue.

Mr. Keller advised that following last month's presentation regarding the Montgomery County Community College financing, the College has chosen to use the Higher Education Authority rather than the Pottstown Borough Authority for conduit financing. They are still moving forward with \$7 million improvements within the next three years.

Mr. Keller also referred to the letter sent to Lower Pottsgrove Township regarding its concerns with the Grypon Dryer. He also noted that interviews are in process with 15 remaining candidates for the Finance Director position. Mr. Keller also announced that Randy Neiman was recognized for his 24 years of service upon his retirement and acknowledged the passing of Distribution Supervisor Jason Kulp. He also noted that if the Pottstown Hospital should close, the EIT would be a loss to the Borough of \$300,000 and approximately \$1 million to the School District.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor Pompo referred to his report noting that SB 478 would amend the process for contract bids, when no bids are received. Construction contract bids, that are bid twice with no bidders, can be negotiated with a bidder of choice. He also advised that the Kummerer Road project with Upper Pottsgrove has gone to settlement and the Authority received the payment of \$248,820 prior to the March 31st deadline.

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ENGINEER'S REPORT

Ms. Pearce referred to the Engineer's Report distributed. She noted that the Air Scour project continues and working on the electrical design. She added that HRG expects that the blower assemblies will be constructed and shipped soon allowing the Borough Staff to continue work on the project.

Ms. Pearce updated the LT2 Enhanced Surface Water Rule: UV Installation Project. It was a recommendation for the need to install a screen (strainer assembly) in front of the proposed UV units (due to a recent issue at the Norristown WTP where a piece of material dislodged and broke a UV bulb, releasing glass fragments and trace amounts of mercury in the system). HRG is continuing to work on the UV project and has submitted a copy of the Draft Final Design drawing set to the Borough Water Treatment Plant Staff for review and discussion, along with reviewing the turbidity requirements.

Ms. Pearce added that the 2021 Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project is scheduled to go to bid this month. HRG has been informed that the relocation of the sanitary sewer on Sanatoga Road is now scheduled for the Spring of 2022. Given this updated schedule, HRG will keep the work as an alternate bid item as part of the 2021 Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project. Ms. Pearce also advised that a final walk-through of the Spring Valley Farms, Phase 3, was conducted on April 6th and has no objection to the release of the escrow funds.

The Chapter 94 report was completed and submitted to PADEP prior to the March 31st deadline. Ms. Pearce added that HRG continues to work with Staff on the NPDES permit application. HRG will be meeting with Staff on priorities under the American Rescue Plan, which includes allocating \$7.3 Billion in financing to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, \$162 Million to Montgomery County and approximately \$2.2 Million to Pottstown Borough. Eligible uses of the funding include COVID relief as well as necessary improvements to water, wastewater and broadband infrastructure. The funds must be spent by December 2024. Ms. Pearce also reviewed upcoming federal funding projects under PENNVEST.

Mr. Keller noted that he has a meeting scheduled with Representative Ciresi's office regarding the allocation of the funds.

Mr. Yerger explained the removal of the lead pipes when found, mostly located in the core area, adding that the Borough is obligated to replace the lead pipes when found.

UTILITIES DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Wagner explained the situation that occurred in Norristown. He noted that even with the screens a bulb can break and mercury can get out in the system, which is minute. Mr. Wagner is working on a solution to satisfy the DEP. He also reported that Staff will be removing alum sludge this week. Recently, one million gallons of sludge was hauled from the Water Treatment Plant to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He expects over 400 trucks within the next three weeks. He also advised that the dryer continues to run well. He noted that Staff installed its own belt, which was 70% more productive than Gryphon's belt, and was being manned 24 hours a day. Mr. Wagner also noted that he is seeking operators for second and third shift positions.

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PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Yerger reported that work continues on King Street removing lead service lines and being disconnected when found. Most are abandoned then disconnected from the main. He added that there will be more found when working on Manatawny Street. Mr. Yerger also advised that the contractor is responsible for paving from the Post Office to Manatawny Street, along with repainting.

Solicitor Pompo verified that no motion is required at this time on the Spring Valley Farms escrow return until a Facilities and Maintenance agreement is provided.

FINANCE

Mr. Keszczyk referred to the reports distributed. He advised that the water fund revenues are at 25% and expensed to 22%. The sewer fund revenues are at 24% and expensed 22% to date. Mr. Keszczyk added that the bulk sewer revenue is over budget by \$26,000 and sludge hauling increased by \$84,000 and is under budget by \$124,000, which is a good sign.

Mr. Keszczyk noted that certain accounts fell back during COVID and the holidays but these accounts have since been up to date.

Mr. Keller suggested that the Finance Department provide COVID relief information to these clients.

NEW BUSINESS

2021 Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project

Mr. Benner moved to authorize HRG to advertise the 2021 Water and Sewer Main Replacement Project, including an Alternate to the bid to seek the unit price for replacement of a lateral, from the main to the curb.

There was a brief discussion on adding the total estimate of \$160,000 vs. the unit cost to replace a lateral. It was the consensus of the Board to include the Alternate as stated.

Motion carried: 5 ayes.

SOLICIT BIDS FOR VALVE TURNING PROJECT

Mr. Keller advised that bids were solicited for the Valve Turning project with only one company responding. In addition, Staff was seeking the project through co-stars.

Mr. Keszczyk added that since his presentation in October 2020, Dave Lewis has had difficulty obtaining the co-stars certification for this project through his company, which may be a different division of the company. He requested putting the project out bid in order to proceed with the project.

Solicitor Pompo recommended advertising the bids twice and proceed according to the Statute's outline. He also explained the professional service requirements and regulations.

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Mr. Benner moved to authorize Staff to proceed with advertising bids for the Valve Turning project. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

AWIA RISK AND RESILIENCE ASSESSMENT AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN PREPARATION

Ms. Pearce referred to the proposal for the AWIA Response Plan preparation, with the deadline for submission being June 30, 2021. She noted that this is a required plan to be submitted to EPA every five years, for the Pottstown Borough Authority's Public Water System (PWS). She provided the breakdown as \$7,200 for the Risk and Resilience Assessment and \$4,300 for the Emergency Response Plan for a total of \$11,500.

Mr. Wagner confirmed that this was submitted previously by him and previous Engineer Tom Weld.

Mr. Ecker moved to accept the proposal of HRG for the AWIA Response Plan (America's Water Infrastructure Act) preparation and Emergency Response Plan preparation as submitted, in an amount not to exceed \$11,500. Mr. Benner seconded the motion.

There was a brief discussion regarding cyber security throughout the system.

The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Chomnuk recessed the meeting to executive session at 8:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. on motion by Mr. Renn.

Submitted by,

Virginia L. Takach, Borough Secretary
for Thomas Carroll, Secretary