

**LOWER SAUCON AUTHORITY  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
MAY 16, 2023**

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Gress called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

**2. Roll Call**

Present were Mr. Gress, Chairman; Mr. Smith, Vice Chairman; Mr. Werner, Secretary; Mr. Corcoran, Treasurer; Mr. Davis, Member; Mr. Keich, Member; Mr. Ross, Administrator; Ms. Fetzer, Assistant, Administrator; Mrs. Kerchner, Secretary; Mr. Backenstoe, Attorney; (Mr. Thakkar, Mr. Carocci and Mr. Reccek were not present and Mr. Youst was present via zoom).

**3. Citizen Agenda Items**

None.

**4. Minutes**

Motion by Mr. Werner, Second by Mr. Gress to approve the minutes dated April 18, 2023 as presented.

Roll Call 6-0 Motion Approved. (Mr. Thakkar was not present).

**5. Financial Report**

Mr. Corcoran stated that the past month was light for revenue. There were some project costs related to the Creekside project. He noted that year to date we are cash neutral. Mr. Ross then reviewed with the Board Members the past quarter water usage based on what the Authority purchased versus what was sold to the Authority customers.

**6. Agenda**

**A. Safety Glass**

Mr. Ross said the safety glass was installed this past Saturday. He said he is pleased with the work done by M & J Outdoor Services and will keep them in mind for other work that may be needed in the future.

## **B. Muni-Link Billing System Transition**

Mr. Ross said we have been working on the transition to the Muni-Link billing software for a while. Mr. Ross said we had a meeting with Muni Link and they showed us how everything would look with the Authority information. We were not happy with how it looked. He noted that Stacey was very unhappy. Mr. Ross said we tried to work it out and told them what we needed, but they could not provide that for the Authority. Mr. Ross told them that we must discuss as the Authority if we can move forward with using their program. Mr. Ross said he then received a call from the COO of Muni Link and he said he did not want any unhappy customers, and he said that if we are not happy with the way the program works, we can terminate our contract. Mr. Ross said we talked it over and decided it was best to end our contract with Muni-Link. Mr. Ross said we invested a little bit of time and money with the transition. Mr. Ross said that we are working with Harris our current software program to have it installed on two other computers so that he and Emily can look up information. Mr. Gress asked if there are other options besides Muni-Link and Harris and Mr. Ross said there are but not many. Mr. Corcoran asked if he is correct to say that he remembers that in the end it was the way the bill to our customers was going to look as one of the reasons to end the transition with Muni-Link.

Ms. Fetzer then explained what was incorrect with the sample bill Muni-Link sent over. She said that they could not separate the base charge and the usage charge, and they could not include the sprinkler charge on the bill as well. Those were just a few problems with the format of the bill. Stacey said Muni-Link was telling the Authority how we should bill our customers and how we should run our business.

Mr. Ross said we received a letter from Muni-Link stating that the contract was terminated.

## **C. Summer Hours**

Mr. Ross said we will begin the summer hours on Memorial Day.

## **D. Creekside Update**

Mr. Youst updated the Board Members regarding the Creekside pump station project. He said we are within a week and a half of submitting the applications for the environmental permits, which are the storm water NPDES permit along with the stream crossing permit. Mr. Youst said he has been working with Mr. Ross and Mr. Reccek to finalize the bidding documents with all the materials that will be needed. This will lead to procuring the pipe ahead of time, so it is ready when the construction contractor needs it - to avoid any delays. Mr. Youst had a few handouts for the Board Members, one of which is the critical elements timeline. Mr. Youst noted that he was finally able to speak with the county engineer to get some questions answered and the engineer provided some confirmation on which aspects of the bridge work will begin first. The county engineer basically confirmed that

they will be awarding the bridge work contract in January of 2024. Mr. Youst then went into an overview of the layout of the bridge work. It is most critical to make sure the water line is completed before work begins on the bridge. We will also need to have the sewer main in as well before work begins on the bridge. Mr. Youst said this is all the reason to consider advanced procurement of the pipe for the project.

Next, Mr. Youst said he received the proposal from the precast company that would provide the building for the generator. This is a two-part procurement contract. Mr. Youst said he received the proposal today and forwarded it to Mr. Ross and Attorney Backenstoe for their review. The first phase would be for them to complete the shop drawings. Then it would hold until the Authority tells them to move ahead with the second phase which is fabrication of the building and acquiring the generator. There is no decision needed by the Board Members tonight. Mr. Youst said that we would approve phase one of the shop drawings at the June board meeting after attorney Backenstoe reviews the proposal. We can then tell them to move on to phase two when we are ready.

Mr. Youst noted that the bidding process for the construction phase of the project will begin in November. We would have notice to proceed for the contractor at the earliest likely date of January of 2024. The pipe procurement bid will be awarded at the June 2023 meeting. The best case for the project completion would be around July of 2025. This two-part procurement bid would save the Authority about 3 months of time.

Mr. Corcoran asked when we can decide on procurement of phase one and phase two. Phase two of the contract, which is constructing the building and ordering the generator will not start until we at least have the DEP permits in hand. This will utilize a CoStars vendor, who would then fabricate the building. We would not have to bid out this part of the project. Mr. Corcoran asked about how long the Authority has until we tell the vendor that we want to proceed with phase two before they change the price of it. He said he would have Attorney Backenstoe look at the proposal and make sure it mentions in the proposal a period that they would hold the price for phase two.

Mr. Smith said he recalls it being about twenty thousand dollars for phase one which is the shop drawings. He said that we will be saving three months of pumping costs by doing the procurement phases which is about fifteen thousand dollars. He said if there is a change order to the shop drawings would Mr. Youst know what they would possibly be or about how much they would cost. Mr. Youst said there should not be any change requests in the shop drawings because shop drawings are not usually approved the first time they are submitted.

Mr. Werner asked what the earliest time we could purchase the generator. Mr. Youst said the generator would be part of the building contract. The building vendor will obtain the generator from a manufacturer, and they will install it in the building. Mr. Youst said as far as the earliest we could order the package for the building and generator would be after

the receipt of the DEP permit but before we have the construction bids. He does not recommend giving the go for phase two until we know we have the DEP permit in hand.

Mr. Werner said it was mentioned at earlier meetings that we could purchase the generator ourselves and if it were not the correct generator, we could sell it and recover our money. He said the board members mentioned that they were going to consider this option. He asked when the generator would be specified so that it can be purchased. Mr. Youst said we are predicting the earliest date for fabrication drawings ready for use is about August 26<sup>th</sup>, and that is assuming we award phase one in June. This is then the point we can order a generator, if we want to. Mr. Youst said we would have to change the proposal to have the generator purchased separately. Mr. Youst said we could pursue that, but he does not know that there will be that great of a benefit of time saved for that level of complication. This is not something that would typically be done.

Mr. Corcoran said that we should not step into too many obligations until we know more about the cost of the project and if we are awarded the grant. He said that if we do not receive the grant, we would have to look at different funding sources.

Mr. Gress said that we are trying to look at every possible way to save time.

Mr. Ross said by July we will know if we received the grant.

Mr. Smith said what he gathers from Mr. Youst's explanation is that in August we could potentially ask to change the contract and have the generator purchased separately. We would be saving about four months with the generator. Mr. Smith said to Mr. Youst that he feels it is worth asking the question about changing the proposal to have the generator part separate so that can be ordered as early as possible. Mr. Youst said he can pursue this if the board members would like him to.

Mr. Corcoran said we would also approve the pipe bid at the June meeting. This pipe will cover the water line along with the sewer pipe for the stream crossing. Mr. Youst confirmed that some of the pipe is not reimbursable from the county. The water line is already in use as an active utility so that will be reimbursed. The water line provides water to the shopping center and the homes along Springtown Hill Road. The sewer main is not active now so that may not be reimbursed by the county. Mr. Youst wants everyone to be aware that not all the pipe procurement will be reimbursed by the county.

Mr. Ross reminded the board members that when we do begin the work around the creek crossing, we will have to use the emergency interconnection with Hellertown Borough Authority while the work is completed and the water line is relocated.

## **7. Citizen Non-Agenda Items**

None.

## **8. Reports**

### **A. Attorney**

Attorney Backenstoe had nothing to report and said he continues to work with Mr. Ross as needed.

### **B. Engineer**

Mr. Youst had nothing much further to report regarding the Creekside pump station project. He said his field personnel will be working on and monitoring the Saucon Overlook development when more of the construction begins. He said he will be ready to talk more at the next meeting about the financial aspects of the Creekside project and when we get information regarding if we received the grant, which will be around July. The information will include tapping fees that must be updated as well as other aspects that will be discussed.

### **C. Administrator**

Mr. Ross said the water main replacement project on North Drive is moving along well.

Also, Mr. Ross said the board packet includes the final version of the CCR report that will be mailed out to our customers in early June.

### **D. Chairman**

Mr. Gress had nothing to report.

### **E. Members**

No members had anything to report.

## **9. Adjournment**

Upon Motion by Mr. Corcoran and agreement by the Board Members the May 16, 2023 Board Meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Kerchner  
Recording Secretary