

**LOWER SAUCON AUTHORITY
MINUTES OF MEETING
MAY 20, 2025**

1. Call to Order

Mr. Green called the meeting to order at 6:32 P.M.

2. Roll Call

Present were Mr. Green, Vice Chairman; Mr. Keich, Secretary; Mr. Corcoran, Treasurer; Mr. Youst, Engineer; Mr. Ross, Assistant Administrator; Ms. Fetzer, Assistant Administrator; Mrs. Kerchner, Secretary; (Mr. Thakkar was present via zoom, Mr. Backenstoe arrived at 6:40 P.M., Mr. Gress, Mr. Davis, Mr. Yanchuk, Ms. Ophhof-Cordaro and Mr. Reccek were not present).

3. Citizen Agenda Items

None.

4. Minutes

Motion by Mr. Corcoran, Second by Mr. Keich to approve the minutes dated April 15, 2025 as presented.

Roll Call 4-0 Motion Approved. (Mr. Gress, Mr. Davis and Mr. Yanchuk were not present).

5. Financial Report

Mr. Corcoran reviewed the year-to-date treasurer's report. Mr. Corcoran noted that there was little spent on the Creekside pump station project last month. Mr. Corcoran asked when the payments will begin for the construction. Mr. Youst said the first payment to Doli Construction will be sometime in July.

It was noted that the spending on the Merryweather Drive pipe replacement project is not complete. The spending so far on the project was on the pipe and we will still have the cost for the fire hydrant and the cost for the restoration at the end of the project. Mr. Corcoran noted that we have a healthy amount in the bank account. It was also noted that

Fund 3 and Fund 4 will be moved to Fund 1 as discussed and decided upon earlier and the fund transfer will hopefully take place by the next meeting.

6. Agenda

A. Salary Survey

Mr. Ross said he did let the Board Members know that we received the updated proposal from PRJ & Co. The extra cost for the administrator review was removed from the proposal but there was an additional cost in the proposal for the longevity plan review. Mr. Ross said when he was at the PMAA meeting last month one of the speakers was from the Meyner Center at Lafayette College, which is a center designated for local government. Mr. Ross said the Meyner Center conducts research and does work for local government and authorities and offers salary and benefits surveys. Mr. Ross said since they are not a private firm, and they are an educational organization, their rates are significantly less expensive. Mr. Ross would like to explore the route of having the salary survey conducted by the Meyner Center as this will be less costly than having PRJ & Co doing the salary survey. Mr. Ross said he did talk to someone from the Meyner Center and told them he is interested in them putting a salary and longevity proposal together for the Authority. Mr. Ross said he will meet with them next week to discuss with them what they have to offer and see if they can put together a proposal for the Authority. Mr. Ross said he is hoping to have a proposal from them for the next board meeting.

Attorney Backenstoe said he is very familiar with the Meyner Center at Lafayette College and said they do very nice work.

B. Longevity Benefits Survey

Mr. Ross said after the last board meeting, he sent out an email to his fellow municipal authority administrators to see what if any longevity plans, they have in place. Mr. Ross said he copied Mr. Corcoran in on the email so that he would receive the responses. Mr. Ross said he received 19 responses. Mr. Ross then went over the handout that was given to the board members of the responses he received. Mr. Ross said he also included in the packet the 4 longevity scenarios that he proposes for the Authority staff. Mr. Ross said the Board Members do not have to make a decision regarding the proposals tonight. Mr. Ross said that he would like to put the plan into place for the budget next year. Mr. Ross said we can revisit this again when we get to the budget time. There was a brief general discussion regarding the results Mr. Ross received from emails from other authorities about what plans they have in place and the proposed longevity plans he has proposed for the Authority employees.

C. Consumer Confidence Report

Mr. Ross said the consumer confidence report is sent out every June to all Authority water customers. Mr. Ross said the board packet includes a copy of the report. Mr. Ross said he will send the report to the printer after the Memorial Day holiday. Mr. Ross noted that he posts a copy on our website and Facebook page as well.

Mr. Green noted that there are no water hardness results included in the report. Mr. Ross confirmed that the report does not include a water hardness section but said the water the Authority supplies is on the edge of hard, but it is not considered hard water. There are different items that must be reported for each Authority or water supplier based on the size and differences of each supplier.

D. Merryweather Drive Pipe Replacement Project

Mr. Ross said the construction of the project has not begun yet, but the prep work is completed, and the crew will begin the work after the Memorial Day holiday. Mr. Ross said that after the holiday the crew will begin their four 10-hour days which will be good for working on the project. Mr. Ross said 1,200 ft of pipe will be replaced. After this update the meeting went back to the Creekside update.

E. Creekside Update

The Creekside update took place out of order and occurred as the first agenda item. Mr. Youst said the construction for the project will begin soon. Mr. Youst said he issued 2 requests for pricing to Doli Construction in April and Mr. Youst said he received a response from them May 8th. Mr. Youst said the one request is to add a sanitary sewer manhole and gravity line in the center of Springtown Hill Road where the gravity line diagonals the current interim Creekside station across the street to the east side. The purpose of the manhole in Springtown Hill Road is for a connection for the St. Luke's facility that will be constructed to the south. This manhole was not incorporated in the design plans because we did not know that there would be this future extension for the St. Luke's facility. Mr. Youst said he asked Doli Construction for what the cost would be for this manhole. Mr. Youst said the price from Doli Construction for this manhole and the restoration work is \$8,500.00. Mr. Youst said he spoke to the engineer for St. Luke's, and they have expressed their intent to move forward and build their facility, and they would like the manhole. There is no confirmation in writing about their commitment to the funding for their facility yet. Mr. Youst said he would like to ask the Board Members to approve the addition of the extra manhole in Springtown Hill Road from the Authority's RFP #2 in the amount of \$8,500.00 subject to receipt of written confirmation of St. Luke's intent and confirmation

to the solicitor's satisfaction of their commitment to the payment to cover the \$8,500.00 cost. Mr. Youst made it clear that St. Luke's will be funding the manhole cost. Mr. Youst said he is looking to increase the contract value to include this manhole but said that St. Luke's will cover the cost.

Mr. Keich asked what the timing is for this agreement to be completed. Mr. Youst said he sent a message to Doli Construction, and they did not get back to him with a date that they need this completed by. Mr. Youst said the engineer from St. Luke's told him that he is very hopeful the necessary paperwork will be completed by the end of this week or the beginning of next week.

Mr. Corcoran asked if there are any other approvals or permits needed for this additional manhole. Mr. Youst said there are no additional approvals or permits needed for the manhole.

The Board Members then made a motion to approve the addition to the project.

Motion by Mr. Corcoran, Second by Mr. Keich to amend the existing contract with Doli Construction to increase it by \$8,500.00 to install a manhole near the Springtown Hill Road interconnection to only be executed when we get a reimbursement letter from SLUHN.

Roll Call 4-0 Motion Approved. (Mr. Gress, Mr. Davis and Mr. Yanchuk were not present).

The completion of the Creekside update occurred after the Merryweather Drive pipe replacement project update.

Mr. Youst said that he had his surveying crew initiate our field stake out for the project to mark the property boundary lines for the easements the Authority has before the construction begins. In addition, all manholes are marked as well. Mr. Youst was informed by his field surveyor that PPL installed a new pole on the east side of Springtown Hill Road by the lower of the 2 bus stop shelters. Mr. Youst said the pole is almost directly on top of where the Authority plans to install a gravity sewer line. Mr. Youst did note that the PPL pole is in the public right of way on Springtown Hill Road. Mr. Youst said that we would have to shift the 2 manholes which will then bring the sewer line just slightly encroaching the front corner of the neighboring private property line. The Authority will now need an easement with that property owner. Mr. Youst said the easement is about the size of 15 x 20 x 10ft. Mr. Youst said he has already talked to Attorney Backenstoe about needing this easement and has discussed the easement with him. Mr. Youst said he and Mr. Ross will have to plan to contact the property owner.

Mr. Thakkar asked if the Authority needs to place any structures on the easement area and Mr. Youst said there are no structures needed on the easement area. The area of land where the easement is needed is clear land and the Authority will not be putting any structures on top of the land. Also, Mr. Youst noted that the land the Authority would need for the easement is pretty much unusable for putting any structure on it by the property owner. Mr. Youst said that we would want an easement even though part of what the Authority needs is in the right of way, however, for the initial installation and if the Authority would have to dig for repairs in the future an easement is needed. The property owner would not be able to plant any trees or put a fence at this location. Mr. Youst said they did look at other options instead of obtaining an easement from the property owner and he noted that there are no other suitable ways.

Mr. Thakkar asked if any additional pipe is needed for this slight location adjustment. Mr. Youst said no additional pipe will be needed since they are reducing the length of pipe on the one side of the run and adding it to the other side of the run. He also asked when we need to obtain the easement. Mr. Youst said we would need at least a written agreement with the property owner in the next 4 weeks.

Attorney Backenstoe said that he would prefer to draft an easement as soon as Mr. Youst has the exact specific metes and bounds and details and then contact the property owner. Attorney Backenstoe said that we would not want to have to take the easement by eminent domain as that could be a lengthy process to execute.

Mr. Corcoran asked why the Authority would not just ask PPL to move their pole and asked if PPL would have followed all the proper protocols and procedures. Mr. Youst said that it would take a much longer time to contact PPL and have them move their pole. Mr. Youst said the pole is installed in a public right of way and that he would believe that PPL followed all necessary protocols for the pole installation. Mr. Youst is not sure of the exact time the pole was installed but said that the disturbed earth around the pole looks to be like the ground was freshly dug up.

Mr. Thakkar just noted the importance of contacting the property owner as soon as possible to get this moving along.

Attorney Backenstoe did note that if the property owner agrees to the easement proposal presented by the Authority, he can execute the easement agreement quickly.

Mr. Youst noted that he did briefly talk to the property owner about 3 years ago when the initial design and surveying was being conducted for the township permit submittals. The homeowner 3 years ago spoke to Mr. Youst and was understanding of the project when Mr.

Youst explained to him the scope of the project and the concept of the right of way on a homeowner's property. Mr. Youst said the homeowner should hopefully still be familiar with the scope of the project and their property line and the right of way information he had briefly discussed with him about 3 years ago.

Mr. Green said we need to take this one step at a time and the first step is we must talk to the property owner.

The Board Members then made a motion for the easement.

Motion by Mr. Keich Second by Mr. Corcoran to allow Authority staff to approach the landowner and get the easement for the 20ft X 15ft triangular area as described in the meeting up to and including \$2,500.00.

Roll Call 4-0 Motion Approved. (Mr. Gress, Mr. Davis and Mr. Yanchuk were not present).

Mr. Youst said he also asked Doli Construction for a credit proposal for a small drop pipe assembly for the pump wet well as this will be easier for the maintenance. It would be more difficult to perform maintenance with a top access hatch to the wet well. Doli Construction offered \$350.00 as a deduct from the contract.

Also, Mr. Youst said that M&W precast said the building will be delivered either Sept. 3rd or Sept. 4th as Sept. 1st is the Labor Day holiday. Doli Construction said that they will have the concrete slab ready by Sept. 1st so the generator and building can be delivered.

Mr. Youst noted that Hydra-Numatic, who is the pump supplier, said the pumps will be shipped out mid-September. This September shipment date is about a month earlier than their original mid-October ship date.

Mr. Youst said he received an email from the county public works director about erosion at the stream crossing site where Barrasso Excavation completed work for the Authority. Mr. Youst went out to the site and said that the new grass did not take. Mr. Youst contacted Barrasso Excavation, the contractor who completed the work and they came right out and raked and hydro-seeded the area. Mr. Youst is not sure that the erosion is from the Authority project or erosion from the pumps from the bridge construction. Mr. Youst said Barrasso Excavation took care of fixing the eroding area.

Mr. Ross said there was not much spent on the project last month there was just the 1st quarter transmission cost to Hellertown, which will be a reimbursable expense.

7. Citizen Non-Agenda Items

None.

8. Reports

A. Attorney

Attorney Backenstoe said he was working with Mr. Youst on the easement that is needed.

B. Engineer

Mr. Youst said there were a couple of small development projects that came in to the Authority from Lower Saucon Township with requests for review. It was determined that the Authority will need to collect an escrow account for each so Mr. Youst can do the engineering review. It was then talked about with Ms. Fetzer about closing out old escrow accounts that the projects are completed and collecting additional funds for projects where needed. Mr. Youst said that this will then update the escrow accounts the Authority has.

C. Administrator

Mr. Ross went over the lost water for the first quarter of the year. Mr. Ross said we have a very low lost water percentage and are doing very well. Mr. Ross said PMAA is starting to do podcasts and would like to possibly have a podcast about the Authority keeping our lost water percentage so low.

D. Chairman

Mr. Gress was not present.

E. Members

No members had anything to report.

9. Adjournment

Upon motion by Mr. Green and agreement by the Board Members the May 20, 2025 Board Meeting adjourned at 7:59 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Kerchner
Recording Secretary