

**WESTERN BUTLER COUNTY AUTHORITY
607 MARKET STREET
ZELIENOPLE, PA 16063
PHONE: (724) 452-5501**

Regular Meeting Minutes – Nov. 12, 2020

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum was reached, and after reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Thomas Tomayko called the Nov. 12, 2020 meeting of the Western Butler County Authority Board of Directors to order at 7:05 p.m.

PRESENT ON ROLL CALL:

The following board members were in attendance:

Ed Eckenrode
Mark Butler (via teleconference)
Daniel Karns (via teleconference)
Paul J. Kremer Jr.
Ron Lutz
Greg Such (via teleconference)
Thomas Tomayko
Dave Weber

OTHERS PRESENT:

Manager Autumn Crawford
Solicitor Matt Racunas (via teleconference)
Consulting Engineer Chad Hanley
Samantha Schmucker of HRG
Evan George, WBCA Office Administrator
Jennifer Fassinger, WBCA Customer Billing Coordinator

MEMBERS ABSENT:

No members were absent.

VISITORS:

Don Houk and David Stumpf of Houk Consulting discussed the progress made in updating the Authority's computer systems since March 2020. The firm addressed hardware battery backups, remote access solutions, and network security.

They also presented a seven-year budget that maps expenses. Plans include replacing the Authority's server to increase system security and reliability. After initial high expenses in getting the systems up-to-date and secure, costs should decrease.

Greg Such asked about cloud-based storage. Mr. Houk explained that the Authority is using a hybrid model, utilizing both cloud and on-site storage, taking performance, security and accessibility, and cost into consideration. Ed Eckenrode asked what services will be cloud or on-site based after the new server is installed.

Board members had expressed concerns regarding the cost. Manager Autumn Crawford explained that contracting with a professional IT consultant is vital in securing the Authority's data from external threats and preserving continuity in the event of power loss. Tom Tomayko asked why the costs are so high. Mr. Houk explained that application licensing is among the significant costs.

Mr. Eckenrode asked whether all of the Authority's issues would be corrected. Mr. Houk explained that most of their work was preventative maintenance, and should mitigate future issues.

MINUTES:

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board unanimously approved the Oct. 8, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes, as amended.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

A list of bills in the amount of \$103,621.30 was presented to the Board in the form of Expense by Vendor summaries with checks dated Nov. 12, 2020. Manager Autumn Crawford answered questions that board members had regarding the bills.

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Dave Weber, the Board unanimously approved all of the bills for payment as presented by the Manager in Expense by Vendor summaries with checks dated Nov. 12, 2020.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY:

The Secretary had nothing to report.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES:

Personnel Committee

The Manager reported that the wastewater treatment plant is short-staffed because an employee tested positive for COVID 19. Individuals who came in close contact with the employee were instructed to quarantine until cleared with a negative COVID 19 test before returning to work. As

a result, the Manager is behind on personnel reviews but will prepare them and salary adjustments for the December meeting.

Finance Committee

The Committee prepared the recommended 2021 Budget for review and approval at the December Board meeting.

Facilities Maintenance Committee

The Committee had nothing to report.

Administrative Review Committee

The Committee had nothing to report.

REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR:

The Solicitor highlighted the following report items:

- Worked with the Manager and the Engineer on an issue involving the location of a recently installed gas utility line, and prepared and sent a letter notifying the utility company of the Authority's concerns with the location of the line.
- Reviewed the Set Aside Agreement for Seneca Trails.
- Performed research regarding the letter that the Authority received from Zelianople Borough regarding meter reading costs and prepared and sent a letter to Zelianople Borough setting forth the Authority's legal position on the increase in meter reading costs.
- Continued work on documents needed to revive the Authority.
- Drafted a COVID 19 Resolution.

REPORT OF THE ENGINEER:

The Engineer highlighted the following report items:

- The Engineer provided a breakdown of billable hours for the Board to review, as requested by The Manager and Dave Weber.
- **Herman Pump Station Replacement:** Requested a motion for an issuance of award.

In a motion made by Dave Weber and seconded by Ron Lutz, the Board voted

unanimously to authorize HRG to award contracts to J.S. Bova Excavating and Wagner Electric and Construction for the Herman Pump Station Replacement project.

- **Act 537 Plan:** Sent out a completed draft of the Act 537 Plan and requested a motion to advertise for public comment.

In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Dave Weber, the Board voted unanimously to grant HRG permission to advertise for public comment on WBCA's Act 537 Plan.

- **Harmony Pump Station:** The basis of design proposal and engineering behind the project has been completed.
- **Water Pollution Control Plant Upgrade:** Making progress on the basis of design for the WPCP headworks. A field survey and existing conditions base mapping has commenced.
- Foxwood Trails pump station is operational.

Greg Such asked whether the Engineer planned to present the Act 537 Plan to the member municipalities, and whether they know how much the pump station and water control plant costs. The Engineer said they would be sent the entire plan as part of the comment period, including a plan summary with an overview of the costs and the impact to rates. The Engineer said he is willing to attend meetings with municipalities to explain the plan.

REPORT OF THE MANAGER:

ADMINISTRATIVE

- In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Tom Tomayko, the Board voted unanimously to open an escrow account for Jackson Ridge Phase II.
- The Manager and Board member Greg Such attended an emergency meeting with the Butler County Commissioners regarding the rising number of COVID 19 cases in the county. During the meeting, businesses were asked to voluntarily close some functions to reduce the spread of the virus. Mr. Such added that the county is getting close to overrunning capacity of its hospitals because of super spreader events, and are trying to reduce the number of cases before Thanksgiving and another subsequent increase in cases.

The Manager requested a motion for Resolution 11-20, which states that WBCA will immediately close Authority offices to the general public until further notice because of a recent spike of COVID 19 cases in Butler County in compliance with the county health officials' recommendations. The Manager said that Authority offices will be open by appointment only.

In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Paul Kremer, the Board voted to approve Resolution 11-20, to immediately close WBCA's offices to the general public as a result of the recent spike in COVID 19 cases in Butler County. Roll call vote: Ed Eckenrode – YES, Mark Butler – YES, Daniel Karns – YES, Paul J. Kremer Jr. – YES, Ron Lutz – NO, Greg Such – YES, Thomas Tomayko – YES, Dave Weber – YES.

- **Medical Plan Renewal:** In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Ron Lutz, the Board voted unanimously to approve renewal of the existing medical plan, UPMC MyCare Advantage Platinum EPO \$350-\$20/40 Premium Network, at the annual premium of \$153,037.

- **Act 57 Consultant Fee Update:**

In a motion made by Dave Weber and seconded by Paul Kremer, the Board voted unanimously to approve HRG's consultant fee of \$8,500 to update the Act 57 Plan.

- **Harmony Pump Station:** In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Tom Tomayko, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Harmony Pump Station Infrastructure Improvements Project Design and Permitting Proposal for Phase II and Phase III at a cost of \$765,400.
- **Herman Pump Station:** In a motion made by Dave Weber and seconded by Dan Karns, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Herman Pump Station Construction Phase Services Proposal Part 1 Lump Sum in the amount of \$42,300 and Part 2 in the amount of \$38,000, based on time and materials.
- **Mercer Road:** Signed a release with Travelers Insurance for reimbursement of Mercer Road work in the amount of \$4,250.
- **Route 68/PennDOT Project:** In a motion made by Paul Kremer and seconded by Ron Lutz, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Route 68 PennDOT Project Agreement No. 101020091 for reimbursement of 75% of the costs associated with work on the realignment of Route 68.
- **Northwest Bank:** In a motion made by Tom Tomayko and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Northwest Express Deposit application for in-house express deposits, eliminating the need to go to the bank for deposits
- **WBCA Christmas party:** The Dec. 10, 2020, Board meeting will be rescheduled to 4:30 p.m., followed by the party at 6:30 p.m. at North Park Lounge, Cranberry Township. The Manager proposed a contingency in case the party had to be cancelled: Board members, retirees, and employees will receive a \$65 gift card.
- Hams will be ordered for distribution to employees and retirees on Dec. 10, 2020.

SEWER SYSTEM REPORT

- **Scenic Ridge Phase 3 Maintenance Bond:** In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Paul Kremer, the Board voted unanimously to approve the release of \$27,078.00 from the Scenic Ridge Performance/Labor and Materials Line of Credit.
- **Foxwood Pump Station & Force Main:** Construction is complete and as-built drawings are pending final approval. Start-up took place Oct. 28, 2020, and required the replacement by Generac of a solenoid valve.

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board voted unanimously to release \$45,000 held in a sequestered account for Foxwood Pump Station.

- **Buncher Phase 3A:** In a motion made by Tom Tomayko and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Grant of Right of Way Resolution reviewed by HRG and Racunas Law Group.
- **Seneca Trails:** In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Dave Weber, the Board voted to approve Release #1 from cash escrow posted in lieu of bonding in the amount of \$90,808.14. Ron Lutz abstained. The motion carried.

In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Tom Tomayko, the Board voted to approve Release #1 from cash escrow in the amount of \$115,738.63 for the Seneca Trails Onsite portion of the sanitary sewer. Ron Lutz abstained. The motion carried.

- **Jeremiah Village:** In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Paul Kremer, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Jeremiah Village requiring the deposit of 10 taps prior to WBCA beginning any work on the Route 68 7-inch line.
- **Jackson Ridge Phase 2:** Construction has begun. Cash in escrow was posted in lieu of bonding in the amount of \$107,876.

PAST DUE ACTIVITY

On 10/1/2020, a total of 37 customers failed to respond to the 30-day past due notification and were posted for water shut-off. Payment was due on or before 10/13/2020. Only customers on a public water service are included for shut off. Customers with a balance in excess of \$20 who are 60 days past due are included.

Ed Eckenrode asked how collections were going. The Manager said two shutoffs were performed in October. One returned full payment, and the other was for a vacant home.

	Zelienople	Jackson	Lancaster	Harmony	Total
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September 2020	\$12,103.90	\$3,601.98	\$480.10	\$7,571.98	\$23,758.00
October 2020	\$11,567.96	\$3,466.97	\$135.02	\$7,774.97	\$22,944.92

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business was discussed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:54 p.m. to discuss personnel and litigation issues and exited at 9:06 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

As there was no further business to discuss, Ron Lutz motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ed Eckenrode, and the Nov. 12, 2020 Regular Meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Peffer, Recording Secretary
Western Butler County Authority