

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

Regular Meeting Minutes – April 9, 2020

CALL TO ORDER:

A quorum was reached via teleconference, and after reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Thomas Tomayko called the April 9, 2020 meeting of the Western Butler County Authority Board of Directors to order at 7 p.m.

PRESENT ON ROLL CALL:

The following board members were in attendance:

Mark Butler
Ed Eckenrode
Paul J. Kremer Jr.
Ron Lutz
Greg Such
Thomas Tomayko
Dave Weber

OTHERS PRESENT:

Manager Autumn Crawford
Samantha Cobb of HRG
Solicitor Matt Racunas
Consulting Engineer Chad Hanley

MINUTES:

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the March 12, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes, as amended.

BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

A list of bills in the amount of \$79,989.97 was presented to the Board of Directors in the form of Expenses by Vendor summary with checks dated April 9, 2020. Manager Autumn Crawford answered questions that board members had regarding the bills.

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Paul Kremer, the Western County Authority

Board of Directors unanimously approved all of the bills for payment as presented by the Manager in Expenses by Vendor summary with checks dated April 9, 2020.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY:

The Secretary had nothing to report.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES:

Personnel Committee

The Manager said a workers compensation claim was filed after an employee splashed aluminum sulfate into his eye, requiring a visit to an urgent care facility. He is expected to return to work after a follow up visit with an ophthalmologist.

Finance Committee

Ron Lutz said the Committee recommended that the Board move \$250,000 out of the cash operating account to pay down the debt. Mark Butler asked how much cash on hand is available. Mr. Lutz said approximately \$1.4 million. The Manager clarified that this was prior to the \$250,000 being moved.

Mr. Lutz raised a discussion he had with Greg Such regarding the current financial situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Even if 15% or 20% of customers are unable to pay their sewer bill, the Authority still would be able to move the funds without having a significant financial impact. The Manager clarified that the Authority collected \$256,000 in March billings. Even with a 15% loss, \$217,000 was collected. Her assessment was that, during the short term, the Authority should be sound financially.

Mr. Butler asked whether the Authority charges late fees; the Manager explained that between approximately \$2,000 and \$4,000 in penalties and fees associated with late payments occur monthly, but that the Committee recommended bypassing late fees in the interim. She said it was not substantial enough to put a dent in the Authority's revenue. Mr. Butler concurred. Mr. Lutz explained that the Committee plans to review freezing penalties on a month-by-month basis.

- In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board unanimously approved moving \$250,000 out of Cash Operating to pay down the Authority's debt.
- In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Paul Kremer, the Board unanimously approved to freeze penalty charges, to be reviewed on a monthly basis for the duration of the pandemic.

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 Authority management on various issues related to the Covid-19 pandemic to provide a safe work environment for employees and Board meeting procedures.
- Zelienople Borough Council approved the Authority's land development plan for the Herman Pump Station replacement project. Zelienople Planning Commission recommended approval of the land development plan in February. Work on the land development plan and easement acquisition continues.
- Worked with the Manager and Engineer on unfinished items at the Scenic Ridge development. The Solicitor awaits contact from the developer's attorney regarding homeowner releases.
- Discussed customer violations (flushing wipes and other items) with the Manager, and contacted other sanitary authorities regarding how they handle customer violations.
- Began revisions to current Sewer Service and Construction Agreement.

REPORT OF THE ENGINEER:

The Engineer highlighted the following report items:

- Submitted the Chapter 94 Wasteload Management Report to the Department of Environmental Protection.
- Continued drafting revisions to the Authority's rules and regulations
- Received verbal agreements for easements for two properties needed for the Herman Pump Station replacement project. The Water Quality Management permit is under review by the DEP; no comments have been received to date. The GP-11 (waterways encroachment) Permit has been submitted, and comments from the DEP have been addressed.
- The 537 Plan schedule has been drafted and is expected to be met.
- The insurance requirements for the Administration Building re-roofing project are finalized. The Engineer expects quotes for the Board to act upon during the May meeting.

- The Engineer presented a proposal to rebuild the Harmony Pump Station. He said he would like to begin a preliminary engineering study, so a plan will be in place upon approval of the Act 537 Plan. Approval is anticipated to be nine-to-12 months away, with the cost of construction estimated to be approximately \$5-\$8 million. The station experienced a Sanitary Sewer Overflow that had to be reported to the DEP, moving up the timetable for this critical project. The Manager explained that if these events continue, there is a risk that the DEP will impose a tapping ban.

Mr. Kremer asked if flow information would need to be taken before the Act 537 Plan is finalized. The Engineer explained that the planning section of the Plan will discuss and set the pump station's flow rate, and capacity will be defined within the Act 537 Plan. The preliminary engineering study will examine how to achieve necessary capacity from the upgraded pump station.

Greg Such asked how the pandemic will delay approval of the Act 537 Plan and the Herman Pump Station plan. The Engineer said the Act 537 Plan is one HRG has been able to push forward. HRG is fully staffed, all the field work is complete, and the rest is administration-related. He said he does not anticipate a delay in completion. Delays could take place if municipal meetings or the public comment period are not permitted to move forward. The Harmony Pump Station preliminary work can be completed, but some aspects, such as structural evaluation, may not be able to be completed until Shelter-In-Place orders have been lifted.

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Dave Weber, the Board unanimously authorized HRG start the preliminary engineering and planning to rebuild Harmony Pump Station.

REPORT OF THE MANAGER:

ADMINISTRATIVE

- The Manager is in the process of drafting suggested amendments to WBCA by-laws for its anticipated re-incorporation.
- The Manager recommended purchasing tablets for Board members for use in the event of emergencies such as the current Shelter-In-Place order, to eliminate the need to provide paper files for review.
- The Manager reported that productivity has increased in the office due to lobby closure to the public, and suggested reducing the number of hours per week that customers have access to the office.
- On March 20, 2020, WBCA received a report that a sanitary sewer manhole at Indian Brave Campground in Harmony was overflowing. Crews were dispatched to the site to check manholes both up and downstream from the overflowing manhole. It was

determined that the Scholars Run Interceptor was inundated with infiltration and inflow during a heavy rain event. The overflow appeared to be laden with mud.

Mr. Kremer asked where the mud originated. The Manager said they tried to trace it, and it is coming from somewhere between Fanker Road and the campground manhole, and that it is possible there is a leak beneath Scholars Run Road. State Pipe Services is on standby for the next heavy rain event to help pinpoint the leak's location. Mr. Kremer asked if new developments upstream were ruled out from adding load to the system; the Manager said they were. He asked if there was a leak under the creek, if there was noticeable increase in flow from Harmony; the Manger said yes, and that it seemed to be picking up at some point between Fanker Road and the campground manhole. The Manager explained that when the State replaced the bridge, a portion of the sewer line was moved and truss pipe was replaced with SDR-35. The Manager said the flow at that point is substantial but not enough to cause the overflow happening at Indian Brave. At some point between, it is picking up mud, so it seems to be close to the creek or Scholars Run Road.

Mr. Kremer said a tap was made near Fanker Road to extend the line, but encountered uncontrollable water likely from old mines, and it had to be abandoned and capped. It is still tapped to the main sanitary sewer. If it blew out, the line could be draining a substantial amount of water. The Manager said that could account for some of the flow and will keep that in mind when televising the line.

Mr. Weber asked what response the DEP provided regarding the overflow. The Manager said she did not expect an immediate response because it was not a severe issue and that there is a backlog on responding to these reports.

- The Manager reported that the current lawn tractor is 20 years old and has reached the end of its life. She requested a motion on a bid from Bill Harper Power Equipment for a Bob-Cat zero-turn mower (manufacturer's suggested retail price: \$13,000) for \$10,950.

In a motion made by Paul Kremer and seconded by Ron Lutz, the Board unanimously approved the purchase of a Bob-Cat zero-turn mower from Bill Harper Power Equipment in the amount of \$10,950.

- The Manager requested a motion to award a contract to Insight Pipe to provide end-to-end lining at a cost of \$250,000 to be covered by the capital budget.

In a motion made by Dave Weber and seconded by Ron Lutz, the Board unanimously approved to award a contract to Insight Pipe to provide end-to-end lining at a cost of \$250,000.

- Log Cabin Inn plans to install two additional grease interceptors; the Manager advised them that proper maintenance is required for them to work. This will minimize the fat, oil, and grease released into the system. In addition, the sewer line might be routed to a

gravity flow into the main. They are not certain yet whether they will keep the existing pressurized system. Mr. Tomayko advised a configuration. The Manager said the Authority does not dictate how grease traps are installed, but offers guidelines on allowable discharge rates, and hesitates making direct recommendations.

SEWER SYSTEM REPORT

- The Manager found Foxwood Trails release request #2 in the amount of \$50,972.01 for work completed through April 3, 2020, to be substantiated.

In a motion made by Tom Tomayko and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board voted unanimously to approve Foxwood Trails release request #2 in the amount of \$50,972.01 for work completed through April 3, 2020.

- The Arden Woods maintenance bond discussion was moved to the May meeting.
- Route 19 is slated to be resurfaced in 2020.

PAST DUE ACTIVITY

On March 30, 2020, a total of 42 customers failed to respond to the 30-day past due notification and were posted for water shut-off. Payment was due on or before April 15, 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.

	Zelienople	Jackson	Lancaster	Harmony	Total
February 2020	\$9,797.31	\$2,866.33	\$548.03	\$6,105.28	\$19,316.95
March 2020	\$9,748.43	\$2,415.51	\$828.99	\$6,334.43	\$19,327.36

OLD BUSINESS:

No old business was discussed.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT:

As there was no further business to discuss, Ron Lutz motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mark Butler, and the April 9, 2020 Regular Meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Peffer, Recording Secretary

Western Butler County Authority