

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

**Regular Meeting Minutes – October 14, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

A quorum was reached, and after reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Thomas Tomayko called the October 14, 2021 meeting of the Western Butler County Authority Board of Directors to order at 7 p.m.

**PRESENT ON ROLL CALL:**

Ed Eckenrode  
Daniel Karns  
Paul J. Kremer Jr.  
Ron Lutz  
Thomas Tomayko  
Dave Weber

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Manager Autumn Crawford  
Solicitor Matt Racunas  
Consulting Engineer Chad Hanley  
Samantha Schmucker of HRG  
Recording Secretary Nicole Peffer (remotely)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Mark Butler  
Greg Such

**VISITORS:**

No visitors were in attendance.

**MINUTES:**

In a motion made by Ed Eckenrode and seconded by Dave Weber, the Board unanimously approved the September 9, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes.

Ron Lutz requested information about the proposed Water Pollution Control Plant section of the Engineer's Report. The Manager discussed options and merits of various methods relating to the clarification tanks.

### **BILLS AND COMMUNICATIONS:**

Lists of bills in the amounts of \$71,713.16 (Operating) and \$24,579.50 (Capital) were presented to the Board in the form of Expense by Vendor summaries with checks dated October 14, 2021. Manager Autumn Crawford answered questions that board members had regarding the bills.

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board unanimously approved all of the bills for payment as presented by the Manager in Expense by Vendor summaries with checks dated October 14, 2021.

The Manager discussed consulting fees. The Environmental Protection Agency offers a program to assess computer system vulnerabilities, because of recent hacks targeting municipal water systems. Two issues were identified and resolved.

The Manager reported that the Authority's three Certificates of Deposit could be used toward the cost of construct a new administration building.

Ron Lutz asked for details regarding fluctuations in service billings. The Manager said billings depend on when billing cycle falls during the week, and can range between 27 and 32 days.

### **REPORT OF THE SECRETARY:**

The Assistant Secretary had nothing to report.

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEES:**

#### *Personnel Committee*

- The Manager reported that one job vacancy has been posted and proposed posting a second vacancy during the winter months.
- Two employees were off on bereavement leave.
- An upcoming Committee meeting will address medical insurance plans renewal.
- The Manager recommended the Board give the Authority's newest hire Joe Rossi a raise for exemplary performance. After working with Insight Pipe to televise sewer lines, he spent personal time and resources to map every break, tap, lateral and crack and presented it in a report to the Manager. He said that he saw an opportunity to stand out and took it. The Manager said his attitude and work ethic merit a raise.

In a motion made by Tom Tomayko and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board voted

unanimously to raise Joe Rossi's wage by \$1 per hour beginning next pay period.

- The Manager reported that a fraudulent unemployment claim was reported for a recent retiree. The former employee filed a report with local police and the Authority is working with Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association (PMAA) to investigate.

#### ***Finance Committee***

- Ron Lutz announced that a 2022 Budget meeting was scheduled for Oct. 26, 2021.

#### ***Facilities Maintenance Committee***

- Dave Weber reported that the Committee interviewed two firms for the proposed administration building's design. After reviewing six firms, Requests for Proposal were submitted to three; one bowed out. Two firms were interviewed, Hayes Design Group and RSSC Architecture. Mr. Weber said the Committee viewed Hayes as the best qualified. It has engaged in several authority projects, offers an innovative design team, and familiarity with water treatment processes. The Manager said the firm seems in tune with WBCA's goals.

Mr. Weber recommended on behalf of the Committee that HRG begin working with Hayes Design Group on the project scope.

#### ***Administrative Review Committee***

The Committee had nothing to report.

#### **REPORT OF THE SOLICITOR:**

- Reviewed changes proposed by sellers to the Zelig Self Storage property sales agreement. Concerns will be discussed further with the Manager and Engineer.
- Reviewed a right-of-way issue for the Jackson's Point development and a line location for the Jackson Ridge Phase II development.
- Continued ongoing discussions regarding the approval of the Authority's proposed Act 537 plan.
- The Authority was named as one of 217 parties in a lawsuit involving an asbestos claim. The Solicitor says he has worked with a similar case and the client was released. This has been turned in to the insurance carrier just in case there is coverage.

#### **REPORT OF THE ENGINEER:**

- **Herman Pump Station:** The Facilities Committee toured the station. Generator, pump

and flow meter start-up show the pumps are producing 10% more than the design point. It is online and must prove itself for 10 consecutive days without issues before the demolition of the old station can begin.

- **Act 537 Plan:** Planning agencies have not responded yet. The Plan was sent to municipalities for adoption. No stakeholders meetings were held for the Plan.
- **Harmony Pump Station:** Met with Peoples Gas on Oct. 13, 2021 to discuss relocating a gas line along East Spring Street.
- **Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI)** has granted clearance so HRG can submit a permit application for the proposed Water Pollution Control Plant.
- Received a second Highway Occupancy Permit approval; still need one of three easements, but are experiencing difficulty contacting one individual to sign off on the easement.

## **REPORT OF THE MANAGER:**

### ADMINISTRATIVE

- Western Pennsylvania Water Pollution Control Association awarded W.B.C.A. with an Excellence in Operations Award. The Manager credited the Board and Authority employees for making it possible.
- The Manager intends to discuss with the Personnel Committed the possibility of planning how to protect employees in the event that the Authority is dissolved, such as putting some sort of severance package in place.
- The Dec. 9, 2021, Board meeting will move up to 4 p.m. to allow everyone to attend the 2021 Christmas party.
- Lancaster Township named Dennis Blakely and Chris Zoelle to the Western Butler County Authority Steering Committee. Zelienople Borough has yet to appoint anyone to represent the Borough on the Committee.
- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Cincinnati Insurance has sent the Authority notice that its current general liability coverage and umbrella liability will include communicable disease exclusion and its commercial property coverage will include cyber incident exclusion, effective immediately.

### FACILITIES

- **Herman Pump Station:** In a motion made by Paul Kremer and seconded by Ron Lutz, the Board unanimously approved Payment Application #7 to Wagner Electric in the

amount of \$6,887.50

In a motion made by Paul Kremer and seconded by Dan Karns, the Board unanimously approved Payment Application #6 to Bova Construction in the amount of \$37,503.40.

- Paving at Foxwood pump station is complete.
- The sulfur dioxide unit is operational.

SEWER SYSTEM REPORT

- **Arden Woods:** Construction of Phase 2 and 3 are complete.

In a motion made by Dan Karns and seconded by Ed Eckenrode, the Board unanimously approved Arden Woods Phase 2 Release Request in the amount of \$178,886.40, leaving a remaining balance of \$19,646.00.

In a motion made by Ron Lutz and seconded by Dan Karns, the Board unanimously approved Arden Woods Phase 3 Release Request 1 and 2 with a total amount of \$338,571.70, with the original amount of \$357,063.58, leaving a remaining balance of \$18,491.88.

PAST DUE ACTIVITY

On Sept. 22, 2021, a total of 33 customers failed to respond to the 30-day past due notification and were posted for water shut-off. Payment was due on or before Oct. 5, 2021. 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
August 2021	\$11,106.03	\$6,839.47	\$1,258.50	\$7,747.74	\$26,951.74
September 2021	\$6,575.07	\$4,106.13	\$660.41	\$7,563.27	\$18,904.90

**OLD BUSINESS:**

No old business was discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The Manager briefly mentioned proposed developments.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. to discuss litigation and personnel and exited at 8:24 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

As there was no further business to discuss, Ron Lutz motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ed Eckenrode, and the Oct. 14, 2021 Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Pepper, Recording Secretary  
Western Butler County Authority