

NEWPORT BOROUGH WATER AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

January 12, 2017

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT** – Penny Frownfelter, Jerry Robinson, John McNaughton, Harry Fahnestock and Trevor Kaufman

**OTHERS PRESENT** – Adam Britcher (Solicitor), Robert Hassemeier (Engineer), Dean Miller (Operations Manager), Zach Willard (PFCM) and Jennifer Caron (Eckert Seamans)

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** – by Chairwoman Penny Frownfelter at 7:00 P.M.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Steve Simmons brought a bottle of discolored water and stained laundry. Simmons asked if the water was safe to drink and Miller replied that iron in drinking water is not considered a health hazard. Jerrie Klingman also expressed his displeasure at the continuing problems with discolored water. Hassemeier is writing a contract for the excavation and replacement of pipes in the Fickes Lane area and will be ready to submit the contract for bids sometime in February. Work would begin at the earliest after school is out for the summer. Customers affected by the ongoing water discoloration issue in the Fickes Lane area are continuing to receive a 50% discount.

**REFINANCING UPDATE** – Willard and Caron explained the refinancing options detailed in a packet distributed to the Board. The Board will need to decide which refinancing option would best suit the Water Authority's needs and long term goals. Willard further explained that PennVest will want any loans to be subordinate to their loans and that most banks will not be interested in loaning the Water Authority money under those terms. The best option may be to refinance the PennVest loans as well. Option 2, in green, on page 5 would include \$400,000 in new money; \$150,000 for capital projects, \$150,000 to catch up on account payables and \$100,000 to fund the FNB reserve fund. Willard and Caron will return for the February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting to update the Board on their progress.

**Moved by Robinson, seconded by Kaufman to approve option #2 on page 5 of the handout (attached). All in favor.**

**ENGINEER'S REPORT** – Robert Hassemeier

1. Howe Reservoir – The memo in the Board packet reflects some appraisal of the costs involved in various options. It has a significant leak and repairing it would be too costly, so looking at removal instead. Hassemeier spoke with DEP about using it as a storm water basin and this is an acceptable alternative. The pond would be drained and a trash rack installed so that the dam acts as a drain and not as a dam.

**Moved by Kaufman, seconded by McNaughton to accept the proposal for draining the reservoir. All in favor.**

2. Well 10 NPDES permit – Inquiries with DEP have revealed that it will be several months before they will review the situation. Also, DEP will not need to be involved when the equipment at Well 10 is replaced.
3. Tapping fees – The funding and grant details of the River Plant Filtration system still needs to be detailed to complete the study.
4. Grant application – The Water Authority's grant application was not discussed at the December meeting and will likely not be reviewed until the March meeting.
5. Fickes Lane – If the grant monies are not received to allow replacement of the deteriorating pipes in the Fickes Lane area, an alternative option would be to tap into Kelly Lane and go out to route 849. That would require replacement of only 400 feet of pipe and might relieve some of the pressure and improve water function. If the Board is interested at a later date, Hassemeier will supply specifics regarding cost and the work to be done.

**OPERATIONAL REPORT** – Dean Miller

1. Update 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> – Discussed in public comment section and engineer’s report.
2. New Meters – Waiting for response from grant application.
3. Paving/Excavation contractors – Still a work in progress.
4. Fire on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street – The water is not shut off properly as it will require excavation. A letter will be sent to the property owners informing them of their responsibility to do this and service will be removed from that address.
5. River Filtration Plant (RFP) operation – Miller had a conference call with DEP regarding the start-up date of January 16. The call was positive, and so we are moving forward. There are still outstanding issues with SCADA and Keystone has provided a second opinion in the event that Control 21 is unable to provide the needed technology.
6. Control System 21 – Miller is still trying to get them onsite to clean up the ongoing issues, so that we remain in compliance with the necessary documentation for DEP. The Water Authority has already paid them over \$144,000 and only has an outstanding balance of \$1600. Miller will contact the owner of Control System 21.
7. Maintenance has been done on the access road to the Howe township plant to ensure passage of the trucks for Commonwealth Disposal.
8. The Water Authority’s equipment for locating water lines is very outdated and slow, thus taking more of the operator’s time. Miller will request trade in value, which will reduce the cost of new equipment and present it to the Board at the next meeting.
9. Update to GIS mapping system – The mapping is progressing very well and is getting closer to completion.

**SOLICITOR’S REPORT** – Adam Britcher

1. Oliver Twp Shutoff Letter – Nothing to report.
2. Lien/Sheriff Sales – The Failor sale was delayed and will be held this month.
3. Rules and Regs – Britcher has provided a draft to replace the outdated version the Water Authority currently uses, it will be circulated for comments, corrections and revisions.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

1. Delinquent Accounts – The balance of past due accounts is coming down.
2. Update on financing/refinancing options – Discussed at the beginning of the meeting

**Moved by Robinson, seconded by McNaughton to approve Treasurer’s report. All in favor.**

**Moved by Robinson, seconded by Fahnestock to approve December’s bills. All in favor.**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Moved by Robinson, seconded by Fahnestock to approve December 5, 2016 regular meeting minutes. All in favor.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. Muni-Link – The new billing software is set to go live sometime between January 20<sup>th</sup> and January 30<sup>th</sup>. The February water and sewer billing will be generated through Muni-Link.
2. Maintenance issues – The odor has been resolved. Additional remotes are needed so the gates can be kept closed after hours. Robinson will contact Tyson to purchase additional, better quality remotes.
3. Retainer for audit – SEK is requesting a retainer of \$11,075 in advance of any work on the 2015-16 audit. Frownfelter will discuss a smaller retainer with them.

**Moved by McNaughton, seconded by Robinson to approve payment of a retainer for SEK. All in favor.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. 2017 Reorganization – Motion to leave officers and president in current positions; Frownfelter as Chair, Fahnestock as Vice-Chair, Robinson as Treasurer, McNaughton as Secretary and Kaufman as Member.

**Moved by Robinson, seconded by McNaughton. All in favor.**

2. Re-appoint Barton & Loguidice, P.C. as the Water Authority's engineering firm and Britcher as the Water Authority's solicitor.

**Moved by Robinson, seconded by Fahnestock. All in favor.**

3. VOIP hosting for phones – The proposal included in the Board packet outlines a switch from our current VOIP provider JD Webb, who provides no service or support for the Water Authority's phones to our current IT providers SelecTech. They will also purchase and install a firewall which will offer an additional level of security and stability to the phone system.

**Moved by McNaughton, seconded by Kaufman to approve the switch to SelecTech and the purchase of a firewall. All in favor.**

4. PA Rural Water Conference – Approval is needed for Rich Radle and Justin McNaughton to attend.

**Moved by Robinson, seconded by McNaughton. All in favor.**

5. Ethics forms – The forms have been received at the office, and all Board members will need to complete them.
6. Robinson would like to be considered for oversight of the Fifth Street project, which will involve Water, Sewer and the Borough.
7. Robinson brought up the subject of Justin McNaughton's hourly rate and suggested giving him a raise retroactive to January 1, 2017. Justin will be receiving his license and January 1 marks his second year anniversary. Discussion is tabled until an Executive Session can be held.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Moved by Fahnestock, seconded by McNaughton to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 P.M. Motion carried unanimously.

Debra Kunish

Recording Secretary