

Towanda Municipal Authority

April 15, 2024

The April meeting of the Towanda Municipal Authority was called to order by Mr. Walsh at 5:02 p.m.

PRESENT: Michael Walsh, Carmen Venezia, Fred Johnson, Roger Hatch, Joseph Snell, Mark Christini, Katrina Murray, William Shaw

ABSENT: Robert Williams-WTMA Chairman

OTHERS: Lauren Hotaling, Borough Manager; Matthew Aikey, Superintendent; Morgan Madden, (via zoom) Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC; Erik Berggren, The Daily Review

Visitors: None

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Minutes:

The March 18, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as written with a motion made by Mr. Hatch, seconded by Mr. Venezia, approved.

Bills:

The March bills were approved on a motion made by Mr. Shaw, and seconded by Mr. Johnson, approved.

Water:

Ms. Hotaling stated that the William Street water line replacement project is going to get started they have saw cut the road, this is from Mix Avenue to Chestnut, they plan to get started in 2-3 weeks.

EPA Service Line Inventory:

Ms. Hotaling stated we have 1,400 properties inventoried out of approximately 2,100 properties in our system, we have to have 90% done by October. Mr. Walsh inquired if we have found galvanized lines, Ms. Hotaling stated yes.

SRBC :

Ms. Hotaling stated we have 249-meter replacements to be reported for the first quarter, that is the quite a large amount of change outs that were completed.

Sewer:

Ms. Hotaling stated the Chapter 94 Report was filed with DEP.

Ms. Hotaling stated Mr. Casanave provided a timeline for the WWTP upgrade project:

1. Completion of preliminary design March 1, 2024
2. Final design March 1st – August 1, 2024
3. Submission of WQM Part 2 permit and Joint permit week of April 15th
4. Secure environmental permits November 1, 2024
5. Apply for Penn Vest funding November 6, 2024
6. Submit the building permit application around the time of funding application submission.
7. Secure funding January 15, 2025
8. Advertise for bidding around February 3, 2025
9. Open bids March 17, 2025
10. Award construction contracts April 2025
11. Close Penn Vest funding beginning of June 2025

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12. Issue notice to proceed and begin construction in June 2025
13. Construction completed June 2026

Rules and Regulations:

Ms. Madden stated she entered Ms. Maynard's changes to the rules and regulations. Ms. Madden stated we need to discuss the process that we penalize or what we do with customers who do not let us in for meter change outs. Ms. Madden does not care how this process is done it needs to be spelled out in the rules and regulations and done in conformity throughout the system. Mr. Walsh stated that we already have something in the rules and regulation in regards to our meters; Ms. Madden stated yes; Ms. Hotaling stated we send a notice for the change out request then another; Ms. Maynard stated we send a notice then after 30 days a second request, 30 days after we try to contact the customer by phone if no number is available we send a door knocker, after that is not successful we were issuing a 72 hour shut off notice, the issue came when we were to shut them off after the 72 hours had passed. Ms. Hotaling stated she spoke with Mr. Aikey and in Old Lycoming County they penalized the customer for not responding; Mr. Aikey stated that the penalty was 3 times the billing rate, some customers did pay that, but 99% did question the billing and were informed it was because of failure to allow an inspection, to which the fee was waived when the customer complied. Mr. Johnson stated we need to put the fee in the schedule of rates. Mr. Walsh agreed that a fee is more suitable in this situation then a shut off notice. Mr. Aikey stated the rules need to define the procedure and the fee would be made and set in the fee resolution. Ms. Madden stated we can state a fee and leave our option of shutting off a customer for non-compliance. Ms. Maynard stated her concern as most of the customers not complying are absentee landlords with the shut off notice we were receiving tenants calling for the change out to occur. Mr. Aikey stated we bill the landowner and that is who ultimately responsible to comply. Ms. Madden stated she will update the rules and regulations and disseminate a copy to Ms. Hotaling, Mr. Aikey and Ms. Maynard with the wording so see if that is what we want and hopefully present another draft copy of the rules and regulations at next month's meeting.

Tanks:

Mr. Aikey stated he contacted Pittsburgh Tank & Tower Group to obtain a quote on the tank inspections and restoration; they provided a quote of \$1,600.00 per inspection and to paint the VFW tank it would be \$75,000.00 so a total of \$82,930.00. Ms. Hotaling stated she did receive names of other companies we can contact. Ms. Hotaling stated with the cost we might have to go out to bid; but since they are a specialty service maybe we do not need to. Mr. Johnson inquired if this included the Wysox Tank, Mr. Aikey stated yes. Mr. Johnson suggested getting other quotes first before we go forward; Mr. Walsh stated that if anything the inspections need completed then we can go from there, once we obtain the best price. Mr. Walsh stated that an email with the best price will suffice to get the inspections done.

Executive Session:

Mr. Walsh called for an executive session at 5:21 p.m. the Board remained in executive until 6:05 p.m. in reference to reorganization of TMA.

Adjournment

As there was nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
April Maynard
Recording Secretary