

Towanda Municipal Authority

January 15, 2024

The January meeting of the Towanda Municipal Authority was called to order by Mr. Walsh at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Michael Walsh, Joseph Snell, Carmen Venezia, Mark Christini (via zoom), Katrina Murray, Fred Johnson

ABSENT: William Shaw, Roger Hatch, Robert Williams-WTMA Chairman

OTHERS: Lauren Hotaling, Borough Manager; Chad Strickland, Superintendent; Eric Casanave, Stiffler McGraw; Morgan Madden, (via zoom) Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC; Erik Berggren, The Daily Review

Visitors: None

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Minutes:

The December 15, 2023 meeting minutes were approved with correction to header stating January 20, 2023 on a motion made by Mr. Johnson, and seconded by Mr. Snell, approved.

Bills:

The December bills were approved on a motion made by Mr. Johnson, and seconded by Mr. Venezia, approved.

Re-Organization:

Mr. Johnson made a motion to retain the following officers for 2024, Mr. Venezia seconded, approved.

Mr. Walsh – Chairman

Mr. Venezia – Vice -Chairman

Mr. Snell – Secretary/Treasurer

Ms. Murray – Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Mr. Venezia made a motion to keep the 2023 reimbursement rate to the Secretary/Assistant Secretary of \$175.00 each, Mr. Johnson seconded, approved.

Ms. Madden stated there is no retainer for her services but her firm would request we vote to retain Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC as our attorney; Mr., Snell made a motion to retain Ms. Madden for our attorney services for 2024, Mr. Johnson seconded, approved.

SRBC:

Ms. Hotaling stated that we submitted reimbursement for the 70 meters that were replaced in the 4th quarter from SRBC, the amount of \$32,430.60 was submitted, and approved for reimbursement last week.

Mr. Walsh questioned if we are finding the time to get the meters changed out; Ms. Hotaling stated we are working on it, we are trying to get people to contact us to accomplish this. Mr. Strickland stated LB Water is coming next week to train more personnel on changing out meters; once they are trained, we will be able to get more appointments made to change out meters.

SRBC granted an extension to September 7, 2028 to reduce our water loss to less than 20%.

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H2O and Small Sewer Grant:

Ms. Hotaling stated we did receive the grant for North Main Street in the amount of \$495,142.00; this is for the turnback project. Mr. Johnson questioned if the engineering is complete; Mr. Casanave stated that the engineering was not, they were waiting on the funding. Mr. Walsh inquired what this project entailed; Mr. Strickland stated installation of 3 manholes on North Main to get access to the sewer main from Locust to Barstow and William Street from Spruce to Packer. Mr. Casanave stated we would also be moving the sewer main from the street to the sidewalk, and from behind houses to a location accessible to our crews. Ms. Hotaling stated the grant we requested for the water portion was not approved; the turn back project will not begin for a couple years so we will try to get that grant once it opens up again. Mr. Strickland stated we would want to wait for the turnback so we do not have to apply for a Penn Dot permit.

Sewer:

Mr. Casanave stated that after last month's meeting, we added the ATAD and UV system to the project; Mr. Casanave will go over the update to the design and provide an amendment to the Engineering agreement for this project. Mr. Casanave stated that per Bradford County we do not need to do land development for this project. Mr. Venezia stated the project is for the headworks, renovation, ATAD and UV; Mr. Casanave stated and control upgrades as well. Mr. Johnson stated that is \$5,000,000.00; Mr. Casanave stated yes, most of the monies is in the headworks portion of the project. Mr. Walsh questioned if we were also working on the rest of the project; Mr. Casanave stated that the process upgrade is being reviewed as well. Mr. Johnson questioned the rehab or replacement of the UV system; Mr. Strickland stated the Board agreed to go in the direction of rehab until we figure out what process we will be utilizing.

Mr. Casanave presented a supplement to the engineering services from last year to add design, permitting and construction adding an additional \$107,000.00. Mr. Walsh questioned if this is payable upfront; Mr. Casanave stated yes, you would be able to tie it into the funding of the project. Mr. Walsh questioned Ms. Hotaling if we have the funds available; Ms. Hotaling stated yes. Mr. Walsh questioned if we will be able to submit the project in the fall; Mr. Casanave stated yes. Mr. Venezia made a motion to approve the amendment to the Engineering Agreement dated July 17,2023 to add the additional \$107,000.00 for the ATAD, UV and Controls upgrades, Mr. Snell seconded, approved.

Ms. Murray / Mr. Hatch:

Ms. Hotaling stated that at the January Council meeting Ms. Murray was reappointed to the Board, and Mr. Roger Hatch was appointed to the Board.

Letters of Financial Interest:

Ms. Hotaling stated that the letters of financial interest need completed and returned to Ms. Maynard.

Rate Resolution:

Ms. Hotaling presented the 2024 the Rate Resolution with the list of fees that are charged to our customers as well as sewage, bulk water and collection fees. Mr. Walsh questioned if we can increase any of these fees if need be; Ms. Madden stated yes; we would just approve another Rate Resolution. Ms. Maynard inquired if we are to add attorney fees once a lien is placed; Ms. Madden stated no; fees will be calculated when lien is going to be satisfied.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve Resolution 01-2024 Towanda Municipal Authority Towanda Water & Sewer Systems Schedule of Rates and Fees, Mr. Venezia seconded approved.

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Rules and Regulations:

Ms. Madden is still working on the Rules and Regulations; she will have a draft copy to review for the February meeting.

Tour:

Ms. Hotaling stated she will coordinate a tour of the water and sewer system for our new members. Ms. Maynard stated Wysox had interest in going on a tour as well.

Budget:

Mr. Johnson questioned if deficit that was projected in the sewer operating account would hurt our chances of funding. Ms. Hotaling stated the loss was \$15,000.00; we had projected a loss last year as well but we were fine .

Adjournment

As there was nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
April Maynard
Recording Secretary