

Towanda Municipal Authority

October 21, 2024

The September meeting of the Towanda Municipal Authority was called to order by Mr. Walsh at 12:07 p.m.

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

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

OTHERS: Matthew Aikey, Superintendent; Morgan Madden (via phone), Babst, Calland, Clements and Zomnir, P.C.; Eric Casanave, Stiffler McGraw; Stacy Schoonover, Borough Manager; Angela Oliver, Administrative Assistant

Visitors: None

Visitors:

None

Minutes:

The September 16, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as written with a motion made by Mr. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Snell, approved.

Bills:

Mr. Johnson stated the 08 fund has very high expenses; Mr. Aikey stated that is still from the power surge at the plant but we have received the insurance reimbursements for our expenses, he has forwarded the last of the paperwork to Ms. McGuire. The September bills were approved on a motion made by Mr. Christini, and seconded by Mr. Johnson, approved.

Thomas Street PRV:

Mr. Casanave stated he was informed by LB Water that they can hold the vault until we are ready for installation; we can purchase it to have it put in production to have that part of the project complete. Mr. Casanave stated we need to work with Mr. Aikey on the valves, we need to identify and ensure the valves are operational in order to not have customers without water for a long period of time.

Mr. Casanave stated we can purchase this equipment through Co Stars; does he need to get a purchase order from Ms. McGuire? Ms. Schoonover stated she would take care of that.

Mr. Walsh questioned if we will make our deadline on the grant; Mr. Casanave stated we have until June 30th. We need to hire a contractor to dig the hole then pull out the old vault out, this should be accomplished in the spring.

SRBC Grant:

Mr. Aikey stated that Mr. Benjamin is still continuing the meter change outs. Mr. Aikey questioned the amount of meter left to be replaced; Ms. Maynard stated she ran a report as we only have \$117,519.75 left on the grant and we still have at minimum 415 meters yet to replace; Ms. Maynard stated when the project started LB water took a list of our meters and was to inform us of the Iperl meters in the system that are over 10 years old, but she has not heard from them.

Ms. Maynard stated she hoped we would continue replacing the meters, even if the grant expired. Ms. Schoonover stated she will have a cost of what the Authority would have to expend to get the rest of the system done. Mr. Johnson stated we do budget for meter replacement every year; Mr. Johnson stated we should be in good shape to replace all the meters. Ms. Maynard stated we are also installing radios to each meter so that is probably why the funds have been expended so quickly; Mr. Johnson stated with radio capabilities on meters we can look at an antenna system for reads.

Towanda Municipal Authority

October 21, 2024

Water:

Mr. Aikey stated that DEP will be here on October 15, 2024 to do the water inspection. Mr. Johnson stated who is doing the inspection; Mr. Aikey stated Mr. Bob Blaney from DEP, he will be in attendance as well as Mr. Nagle, and Mr. Pat Maynard and Mr. Paul Maynard. Mr. Aikey stated we learned from the Wysox inspection what Mr. Blaney wants to look at, so we should be prepared.

Mr. Walsh questioned if the calibrations were completed; Mr. Aikey stated they were completed, with the exception of the Bulk Water Station as they needed to have different equipment; we did not get New Albany's completed either due to maintenance needed on New Albany's part. New Albany has not responded to our requests, part of the calibration in the past was to do New Albany's meters as well; their influent and affluent meters are not functioning, and they have meter issues. Mr. Johnson questioned if we billed New Albany for these services in the past; Ms. Schoonover stated yes, and they have paid in the past.

Mr. Aikey stated the North Towanda Dollar General has been an issue we were never given any plans on the project; they did change engineers. Mr. Aikey stated they started excavation without our knowledge of any plans; Mr. Casanave stated they have worked out of sequence. Mr. Aikey stated the contractor was upset that we put a hold on the project; Mr. Aikey explained the Authority had no plans. Mr. Casanave stated we did install a meter pit; Mr. Casanave is completing an email to them informing them of what needs to be done to complete the project. Mr. Aikey stated they were going to bore under route 6 for their sewer but there is a manhole by M & T Bank they can use. Mr. Casanave stated our force main is underneath their driveway; Mr. Walsh asked how far down is our main; Mr. Casanave stated 3 feet. Mr. Johnson stated that North Towanda should be informed that if they get a permit for building, they contact the Authority; Mr. Casanave stated this is Bradford County Planning.

Mr. Aikey stated he is working with Ms. Maynard to get a permitting procedure in place. Mr. Johnson stated we should also be sending letters annually to our townships and boroughs that we need to be informed when any construction that involves water or sewer is requested.

Exposed Water Line:

Mr. Casanave stated that after last month's meeting we were concerned about wetlands in the area of the exposed water line. Mr. Casanave stated the wetlands are not as bad as he first suspected. Mr. Casanave still thinks we need to move the line from the stream bank. We need to get pressure readings from the surrounding manholes, and we need to get ground elevation shots at the Albers property. If we have enough pressure in that area his recommendation is to tap at both ends and run new line. Mr. Johnson questioned if we can get to the pipe; Mr. Casanave stated we can get an access road built to where we need to work; Mr. Aikey thinks this can be done inhouse. Mr. Johnson questioned if we have identified other areas of concern in that area; Mr. Casanave stated they did walk up and down stream, and did not see anything of concern.

Mr. Johnson stated we might want to abandon this line.

Mr. Walsh questioned if there are any funds for this project. Mr. Casanave stated we might want to contact PEMA, we did have monies left in the project but it was for other areas that were identified after the 2018 flood event and most of the areas identified are inaccessible.

Mr. Johnson requested what cost are we looking at for this project; Mr. Casanave stated approximately \$200,000.00, if the project is done inhouse it would be less.

Mr. Walsh questioned if we have a contact for PEMA; Mr. Casanave stated we can ask as long as the project is not closed; Ms. Schoonover stated she will look into it.

The Board discussed abandoning the line; Mr. Casanave stated that if we remove the line from the water system, we can never get it back, and we cannot currently service areas with the other water sources in the

Towanda Municipal Authority

October 21, 2024

system due to the size of the service lines that transmit water to our customers. Mr. Casanave stated we can not stop servicing customers as well.

The Board discussed all of our past projects that had to do with the service lines from the new water source as well as other projects that have been discussed but never undertaken; Mr. Christini questioned who is responsible to ensure these projects do not disappear from the radar of the Authority. Mr. Casanave stated he will provide a map of projects he was tasked to research, and provide that to the Authority next month.

Headworks Project:

Mr. Casanave stated we added the Scada and generators and the additional excavation needed due to the soil samplings that were done the cost of the project should not exceed \$7,736,520.00.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to Submit the Financial Assistance Application to the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority in an amount not to exceed \$7,736,520.00 Resolution 06-2024, Mr. Christini seconded; Roll call vote: Mr. Walsh – yes, Mr. Venezia – yes, Mr. Snell – yes, Mr. Johnson – yes, Mr. Christini – yes.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to Reimburse General Funds or Short-Term Borrowed Funds used to Construct Improvements to the Wastewater Conveyance System with funds received from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority Resolution 07-2024, Mr. Christini seconded; Roll call vote: Mr. Walsh – yes, Mr. Venezia – yes, Mr. Snell – yes, Mr. Johnson – yes, Mr. Christini – yes.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to have Mr. Walsh and Mr. Snell have signatory responsibility with the Penn Vest Funding application, Mr. Christini seconded, approved

Sewer:

Mr. Aikey stated that Penelec is supposed to be at the sewer plant today to install the third transformer and new lines; Penelec was supposed to be there mid-morning but haven't arrived yet; Mr. Aikey has a message to Mr. Krise to see where they are at. Mr. Johnson questioned if the ATAD is down; Mr. Aikey stated that no, they are running with the two transformers. Mr. Aikey informed the Board he heard from Mr. Krise, and they have crews down in Florida, and have to reschedule; we have an electrician on site that has been waiting, and we will have to reschedule his services as well.

Mr. Aikey stated we should be also looking at surge protection for the headworks building. Mr. Aikey stated that he did have Schaedler Yesco look at the Water Treatment Plant and that does have surge protection. Mr. Walsh requested to get a price on surge protection for the headworks building for the next meeting. Mr. Johnson thinks that building does have surge protection; Mr. Aikey and Mr. Casanave will take a look.

College Run Sewer Lateral:

Mr. Aikey stated this project is complete and was done inhouse.

Local Shares Grant:

Mr. Walsh stated that the list of projects given to the Board can be submitted as Ms. Madden had stated prioritizing our projects; Mr. Casanave stated he will reach out to Ms. Madden to see how she did that with her clients. Mr. Casanave mentioned that Ms. Hotaling submitted the Local Shares Grant for the Authority last year, he was not involved in that process. The Board discussed other projects we have looked at in the past.

Towanda Municipal Authority

October 21, 2024

WTMA:

Mr. Walsh stated he was approached by Wysox; Mr. Aikey stated a meeting date was set by WTMA to meet on November 7th at 5 p.m. at the Wysox Township building. This meeting will be to discuss both authorities merging and any concerns from both parties in regards to that. Mr. Aikey stated a reminder email will be sent for this meeting.

TMA Debt:

Ms. Schoonover stated that we are all getting new computers but Ms. Maynard due to the fact that she has the old billing system on her computer. Mr. Johnson questioned if we could keep that computer that has that information on still active; Ms. Maynard stated the IT person basically said no. Ms. Schoonover stated the system contains outstanding balances of old tenant billing. Mr. Christini stated Ms. Maynard needs to get ahold of Ms. Madden to see if there is a statute of limitations; if we are within it transfer and go after the outstanding balance.

Payment Plan:

Ms. Maynard stated she has been approached by a resident who is requiring more than a year payment plan; previous policy Ms. Maynard is only authorized to give a 6-month payment plan; administration can authorize a year to a year in a half; any further agreements need to be brought to the Board. This customer is only able to pay \$300.00 plus current billing which will be almost a five-year payment plan; the balance was due to a service line leak.

The Board discussed enforcing our rules and regulations when it comes to service line leaks; we should not let this get that out of hand. We are to send a 5-day letter if it is not repaired, we need to terminate service until they provide proof it has been repaired. Mr. Aikey questioned if we have them notarize a payment plan; Ms. Maynard stated no.

Ms. Maynard is to contact Ms. Madden so that we address this situation in the future correctly; Mr. Aikey stated it is in our rules and regulations.

Adjournment

As there was nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
April Maynard
Recording Secretary