

# Towanda Municipal Authority

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June 17, 2024

The June meeting of the Towanda Municipal Authority was called to order by Mr. Walsh at 12:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Michael Walsh, Carmen Venezia, Joseph Snell, Fred Johnson , Katrina Murray, William Shaw

**ABSENT:** Roger Hatch, Mark Christini, Robert Williams-WTMA Chairman

**OTHERS:** Matthew Aikey, Superintendent; Morgan Madden, Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC; Eric Casanave, Stiffler McGraw

**Visitors:** None

## **Visitors:**

None

## **Hezekiah's Hands:**

Mr. Walsh stated we received a thank you card from Hezekiah's Hands for the donation for the ramp for Mr. VanDeWeert.

## **Minutes:**

The May 20, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as written with a motion made by Mr. Snell, seconded by Mr. Johnson, approved.

## **Bills:**

The May bills were approved on a motion made by Mr. Shaw, and seconded by Mr. Venezia, approved.

## **Water:**

Mr. Aikey stated that the maintenance on the Thomas Street Tank will be done June 24-28<sup>th</sup>, we need to perform maintenance on the building; that will be done in-house. The tanks are scheduled to be inspected the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of July.

Mr. Aikey stated WTMA had their inspection of their water system by PADEP, one of the requirements is to have a tank inspection performed within the last 5 years, our tanks have not been inspected since 2014. We should have current inspections done before the TMA inspection in the fall. Mr. Venezia asked if WTMA was cited for not having a current inspection, Mr. Aikey stated it was notated. Mr. Aikey stated he was able to find the inspection on the tank for Wysox, but he is still unable to locate the Towanda inspections. Mr. Johnson stated they should be filed; Ms. Maynard stated she spoke with Mr. Lane and he stated the folder with the disk that had photos of the inspections were in his office, we are unable to locate that. Mr. Aikey stated Wysox was notated for maintenance and not having a current emergency plan and SOP.

Mr. Aikey stated that he, Mr. Maynard, and Mr. Nagle updated the emergency plan, worked on operation and maintenance, as well as the standard operating procedures for both TMA and WTMA.

## **Thomas Street PRV:**

Mr. Casanave stated he sent the usage report Ms. McGuire provided on the customers serviced by the vault, with the information we were able to reduce the valves from 8" and 4" to a 6" and 2" which should provide savings overall. Once we get the new specifications, we can go out to bid for this project with savings; Mr. Johnson stated that we most likely lost the savings due to the time it has taken to get this project done. Mr. Johnson asked about the permit, Mr. Casanave stated that can not be done until we have the layout available, it is a Minor Public Water Supply Permit amendment.

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## **Sewer:**

Mr. Aikey stated that he has been giving updates to Mr. Walsh, Mr. Johnson and Mr. Eberlin on the Council. Mr. Aikey stated that everything is up and running; he wanted to thank the Board for the emergency vote to get the process started.

Mr. Aikey stated we had a power surge the day before Memorial Day; we do not know if it is the surge or the low voltage after the power issue that effected our equipment. Mr. Christini is working on the surge protection for the plant. Mr. Aikey stated the power issue burned up 15 VFD's and a PLC. We had an electrical representative from Schaedler Yesco on site, as well as Mr. Walsh, Mr. Johnson, software representatives, and Penelec on Sunday and Monday. The electrical representative went through to see what other items were effected, we recieved pricing and availability for everything we needed to get the plant back operational; everything we needed was available with the exception of one cabinet which is 3 to 6 weeks out; we did retrofit a cabinet for the centrifuge until the replacement comes in. Mr. Aikey stated at this point the only thing not running is the filter.

Ms. Murray questioned what happened; Mr. Aikey stated that Penelec stated there was a lightning strike, the weather was clear that day. JELD-WEN and the Progress Building sustained damage from what essentially was a brown out, that is what caused the damage from what can be surmised. Mr. Johnson stated his daughter seen the black smoke coming from the substation. Mr. Aikey stated we have contacted insurance and everything is covered besides our deductible. Mr. Aikey stated the plant was down for two weeks and two days, we have three weeks storage capability at the plant. We will be running the centrifuge until we process the waste that we were not able to process.

Mr. Aikey stated we need to address the surge protection for the plant. Mr. Johnson questioned if we are putting a rush on that, as we are in storm season; Mr. Aikey stated that Schadler Yesco does have that in stock; Mr. Aikey wants Mr. Christini to review the product to ensure it will be what we need in order to avoid this damage again. Mr. Christini is concerned about the low voltage and if it adequate to deal with that. Mr. Walsh asked if our pump stations have surge protection, Mr. Aikey stated that on the newer ones we do, but we do need to address that on our older ones. Mr. Aikey stated we do need to address our pump stations as a whole. Mr. Venezia made a motion to purchase surge protection for the WWTP, once we have Mr. Christini's input, Mr. Snell seconded, approved. Mr. Aikey questioned had we had a back up generator would we have not encountered the issues we had at the treatment plant; Mr. Casanave stated he does not know; low voltage might not have transferred the service as it was not an outage just low voltage.

Mr. Casanave stated our project went to DEP a month and half ago for the permits, with the assumption the ATAD was getting an upgrade with pumps and nozzles; before this incident on Memorial Day weekend, Mr. Walker had planned on draining the ATAD in the spring so that we could see what else might need to be addressed or what needs to be removed from the project. Mr. Casanave stated we need to get a visual on the ATAD just to firm items on the project. Mr. Walsh questioned if only the Headworks is addressed in the project, Mr. Casanave stated yes, Mr. Walsh stated no controls, Mr. Casanave stated nothing to do with the process. Mr. Walsh questioned the maintenance on the building, Mr. Casanave stated that is included in the project. Mr. Johnson requested a list of what is included in the project, Mr. Casanave stated he would provide the Board the DEP applications that outlines the project.

## **College Run Sewer Lateral:**

Mr. Aikey stated he received a call last week on the sewer main that goes from Third Street through Tidd Alley to Second Street; the line is a terracotta line 3-foot sections, every joint is offset and a portion of it has collapsed, it is leaking. Mr. Aikey obtained video from Mr. Miller, he forwarded that to Mr. Casanave. Mr. Aikey stated that we have to open dig and replace, we need to find easements on the properties. We have to clear trees and make a road to address this; Mr. Aikey forwarded a blanket easement to Ms. Madden to review. This project will not be able to be done in house; Mr. Aikey stated he has Sikora Brothers coming up to provide an estimate, they will be here in an hour. Mr. Aikey stated from the camera footage we are missing parts of the pipe in portions, he suggests we upsize the

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pipe to 8" and use plastic. We need to move the location up from its current placement. Mr. Aikey wanted the Board's opinion if this is considered an emergency. Mr. Aikey stated he will send the quote to the Board once he receives it. Mr. Aikey questioned Ms. Madden if this would be considered an emergency; Ms. Madden stated she does not think it would be considered emergent as it is a known issue. Mr. Casanave stated since it is leaking it may be. This is approximately 200 feet of sewer line.

## **Rules and Regulations:**

Ms. Madden presented the final drafts of the water and sewer regulations; she noted after a conversation with Ms. Maynard in the water rules and regulations on page 9 under section M for meter change outs it should state an initial letter is sent then a second request is sent 30 days after the initial letter then 30 days after that attempts are made to contact the customer by phone, after that time we will then access the fee for failure to comply. Ms. Madden stated we can approve the rules and regulations and she will make the changes and have the copies available next month for signature. Mr. Johnson made a motion to adopt the Water and Sewer Rules and Regulations with the edits stated above, Mr. Snell seconded, approved. Ms. Maynard requested we set the fee so that we can add that amount to our fee resolution to be adopted next month. The Board discussed the fee as initially presented then decided that a flat fee of \$150.00 will be assessed, that is a monthly fee until we receive access to change out our meter.

## **Vacancies:**

Mr. Walsh asked about the hiring process, Mr. Aikey stated he had 5 interviews scheduled, only one person came in and the others never called. Mr. Johnson asked about the sewer plant vacancy, Mr. Aikey stated we did hire an individual who has a bachelor degree in biology. We had an individual hired the day after Memorial Day and quit the next Monday. We have hired an individual to be our water treatment operator.

## **New Albany:**

Mr. Aikey stated that New Albany is contacting us as they have no water operator, Mr. Johnson stated we were the operator, Mr. Aikey stated we do not have a water operator. Mr. Aikey stated we have been doing their testing to keep them out of trouble. Mr. Aikey questioned Mr. Casanave if he found the agreement with New Albany, Mr. Casanave stated no. Mr. Casanave stated we are looking for the agreement that outlines TMA's responsibility to New Albany. Mr. Johnson stated the only thing we own in the booster station, the distribution and tank is New Albany's. Mr. Aikey found the agreement with New Albany but it is not signed. Mr. Aikey stated that he does not know if anyone wants to be the operator of that system; it is in need of a lot of work. Mr. Aikey stated that they need to find a circuit rider as we have had to do. Mr. Aikey stated that since we have helped them for years, they assume it is our responsibility. Mr. Aikey stated we need the signed agreement. Ms. Maynard will look through the files.

## **Adjournment**

As there was nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*April Maynard*  
Recording Secretary