

Towanda Municipal Authority

January 20, 2025

The January meeting of the Towanda Municipal Authority was called to order by Mr. Walsh at 12:02 p.m.

PRESENT: Michael Walsh, Joseph Snell, Fred Johnson, Carmen Venezia, Roger Hatch, Katrina Murray

ABSENT: Mark Christini, Eric West, Robert Williams-WTMA Chairman

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

Visitors:

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Re organization:

Mr. Johnson made a motion to maintain the same officers and compensation for the secretary/treasurer for 2025, Mr. Hatch seconded, approved.

Minutes:

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

Bills:

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

Permits:

Mr. Aikey stated he has the specifications for water and sewer and he will be changing the rules and regulations to inform customers and contractors we need a permit filed so that we inspect water and sewer lines throughout the system. He has a fee set up for the inspections; Mr. Johnson stated why are we adding more fees to our customers; Mr. Hatch stated we should be offsetting our costs; Mr. Johnson stated he would go out and inspect service lines as part of his duties.

Ms. Vanderpool:

Mr. Aikey stated he has some of the fees associated with the cost of connecting Ms. Vanderpool to the water system; he needs access inside her residence, which he has been unable to obtain access from Ms. Vanderpool.

Headworks Project:

Mr. Casanave stated that the Penn Vest meeting is January 22nd, we should know what we are receiving in grant/loan for our project.

Process Upgrade / Collection Conveyance System:

Mr. Shura stated that since we completed and are in process with the Headworks project, we need to start looking at the process upgrade. We need to meet with DEP to start the conversation of the upgrade. Mr. Shura stated he can provide an engineering agreement to start the process planning. We had two options for the new process one being the site we went to in Illinois, once we identify our process we can design and cost the project.

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Mr. Walsh requested for Mr. Shura to schedule this out for the Board for instance we need to do a 537 now and meet with DEP, basically the steps we need to follow for this project.

Mr. Shura stated we need to meet with DEP now to start the process and see how they want us to proceed.

Mr. Shura stated he wants to avoid a full Act 537 for the plant, Mr. Johnson stated he thought an Act 537 needed done only if we were planning on expanding our system, which we are not; Mr. Shura stated that they may request one only to have the system evaluated as a whole, so that we are not piecing together something that will not work cohesively. Mr. Shura knows that we will need a full Act 537 but that would delay this project, he is hoping in discussion with DEP, we can convince them of a special study for the process is all that is needed. When he spoke with a DEP representative, they requested we do a preplanning meeting with them and discuss our project and see what their stand is on the project. Mr. Johnson asked what the timeline is for a meeting; Mr. Shura stated he would like to see it as soon as possible; Mr. Johnson questioned why we are in a rush are we looking at a grant; Mr. Shura stated we would have our debt and we will know more when Penn Vest announces our funding on Wednesday; but regardless of that we need to address the process at the plant. Mr. Shura stated that it takes almost two years to get the project initiated. Mr. Walsh stated our Act 537 plan is almost 20 years old.

Mr. Walsh stated we need to meet with DEP to see if they will let us do a special study or if they need a full Act 537. Mr. Johnson questioned what are we looking at expending; Mr. Shura stated around \$20,000.00. Mr. Shura stated that the time is getting approval from all of our municipalities would be the most time-consuming part of it, but we can get the design started in the meantime.

Mr. Shura stated the difference in price is different as a full-blown Act 537 costs between \$150,000.00 to \$200,000.00.

Mr. Johnson stated we can do some of this work in house; Mr. Shura stated that yes, they can outline what needs to be accomplished and we can save monies by doing it in house, they could oversee and gather the information we need.

Mr. Walsh stated that we need to meet with DEP to see what we are looking at; Mr. Shura agreed and will set up a meeting.

Mr. Walsh requested he would like to see a timeline in hopes they approve a special study, so that we are aware how this project will proceed. Mr. Shura is hoping they allow a special study; we need to address the process of the plant.

2025 Fee Schedule:

Mr. Johnson stated that we need change the price on meter testing it has \$25.00 for 5/8" and 3/4" meters at \$25.00, the 1" meter is \$50.00, Mr. Johnson stated they should all be \$50.00, he tested meters and there should be no difference in price. Mr. Venezia made a motion to approve resolution 01-2025 the 2025 Fee Schedule that had the change for 5/8" and 3/4 "meter base charge from \$16.40 to \$20.00 and the 1" meter base charge from \$24.48 to \$29.79 and the meter test fee change Mr. Johnson stated, Mr. Johnson seconded, approved.

HallockShannon PC:

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve HallockShannon P.C. perform our 2024 audit in an amount not to exceed \$4,800.00, Mr. Snell seconded, approved.

Letters of Financial Interest:

Mr. Walsh stated that the letters of financial interest needs returned to Ms. Maynard.

WTMA:

Ms. Schoonover stated at the last Wysox meeting it was addressed that they do not wish to expend any funds if TMA is not interested in the merger. Mr. Walsh stated that we are interested, they have to address the wells and the grinder pumps; Mr. Johnson stated they have not come back to

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the Board in reference to that. Mr. Johnson stated that they need to have a public meeting to address to their customers what they want to do as they would be taking the rules and regulations of TMA. Mr. Casanave stated his take from the meeting is that Wysox was under the assumption that TMA in writing or otherwise would inform them of what needed to be done in order to start the merging process; Ms. Schoonover stated that wanted TMA to go to their next meeting. Mr. Walsh stated he will check with Mr. Christini to see where he is at in his research. The Board discussed the easements of the grinder pumps and the wording that was put in the easement; Mr. Johnson requested a copy of the easement be sent to him so he can have clarification on the matter. Mr. Walsh will have Mr. Christini furnish something to Wysox.

Mr. Schrimp:

Ms. Maynard stated Mr. Schrimp came in due to being billed sewer for the water he used to power wash his house. Mr. Johnson stated there was discussion to get meters with hose connections so that we can provide sewer credits; it has only been discussed and not followed through. Mr. Walsh thinks that is not something we want to pursue. Mr. Johnson stated we have a way to remedy the problem or not.

Burlington Project:

Mr. Walsh stated he received the grant paperwork and signed it; Mr. Aikey stated we should have received a copy as well; Mr. Walsh questioned Mr. Snell if he received a copy to sign; Mr. Snell stated he does not recall receiving it but will look; Mr. Walsh stated he will find the paperwork and forward it to Ms. Schoonover.

Entity Name:

Mr. Johnson questioned the name on the reports he stated it should state TMA not Towanda Borough we are two separate entities.

Adjournment:

As there was nothing further to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
April Maynard
Recording Secretary