

COPLAY WHITEHALL SEWER AUTHORITY

THE REGULAR MEETING of the Coplay-Whitehall Sewer Authority was called to order by Chairman James Hahn at 7:00 p.m. on the 16th day of May 2024.

BOARD MEMBERS present were:

**Paul F. Geissinger
James Hahn
Dennis Wehr, Jr**

**Paul D. Boyle
Joseph J. Marx**

**Joseph Bonshak
James Roth**

MANAGER: Matthew Harleman

**BUSINESS MANAGER: Anita Smith &
Laura Altomare (Business Manager in
Training)**

AUTHORITY SOLICITOR: Andrew Schantz, Davison & McCarthy P C

ENGINEER: NONE

LIAISONS: NONE

PRESS: NONE

**CITIZENS present: Mike Melosky, Operations Manager
Susan Geissinger, Whitehall Resident (wife of Paul)
Jerry Wernicki, 4297 Truman Cir, Whitehall PA**

CHAIRMAN: James Hahn called the meeting to order.

Mr. Hahn called for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Mr. Hahn called for the reading of the minutes of the Regular Meeting of April 18, 2024.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. MARX, SECOND BY MR. WEHR, APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING APRIL 18, 2024 WITH ANY AND ALL ADDITIONS /DELETIONS AS NOTED, DISPENSING WITH READING OF SAME. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Hahn asked if anyone would like to address the board. No one stepped forward.

1. Written –

MOTION MADE BY MR. BOYLE, SECOND BY MR. ROTH, TO ACCEPT THE APRIL 2024 MANAGER'S FIELD REPORT AS PRESENTED AND TO MAKE THE WRITTEN REPORT PART OF THE OFFICIAL MINUTES. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Verbal-

Mr. Matthew Harleman said that he had several items. If anyone is interested in attending the PMAA Conference in Hershey which is scheduled for September 15 through 18, 2024, please let Ms. Smith know. The 2024 joint manhole grouting and lining project with Upper Macungie, Lower Macungie, Hanover Township and CWSA was put out to bid on May 8, 2024. Bids will be due May 30, 2024 so I expect to have a bid for the Board to vote on at

the June meeting. Regarding the LCA invoice on the invoice register in the amount of \$402,798.02, I recommend the Board remove this invoice from the register as what we received was a draft invoice for review and it has not yet been finalized. We are having a meeting with LCA about this tomorrow and hope to resolve. The good news is I do not expect the values to change drastically, meaning we will only be \$9,000-\$10,000 over budget on treatment charges and for a \$1.2 million dollar line item that is pretty great.

Mr. Harleman continued, in response to the Board's request to investigate an adjustment to CWSA tapping fees I have contacted David Busch of Keystone Alliance Consulting. Mr. Busch is considered an expert in tapping fee calculation having performed this service for 30+ years including an annual evaluation for Lehigh County Authority. I had a meeting with Mr. Busch this morning where we discussed the items necessary for his firm to complete a full tapping fee study for CWSA. I believe the required items are either readily available or archived in CWSA records.

After providing Mr. Busch with certain information today, he advised me CWSA has a lot of updates to be made and regulations to comply with to legally update CWSA tapping fees. Mr. Busch provided an estimated cost of \$6,000 for this service and a timeframe of 3 months to complete the necessary work.

At the conclusion of his study, Mr. Busch will make a presentation to the Board advising the Board of the maximum allowable tapping fee CWSA can charge developers to connect to the CWSA system. Mr. Busch would also work with CWSA's Solicitor to create the resolution to instate the new tapping fee.

Regarding the projected cost of \$6,000 for the tapping fee study; from his initial observations and the duration of time since the last tapping fee increase Mr. Busch stated that CWSA's tapping fee increase could as much as double the current rate. If this statement proves accurate the study would pay for itself after only the first 4 new 1 EDU connections. I would also like to note, the CWSA can't increase tapping fees arbitrarily, there must be a factual report that can be defended if challenged by prospective developers, in which case we would have Mr. Busch as our expert back-up to defend the fee.

The last time CWSA's tapping fees were adjusted was the year 1990 and after today's discussion I have reason to believe CWSA has been undercharging for quite some time. It is my recommendation to the Board that CWSA contract the services of David Busch and Keystone Alliance Consulting to perform this study immediately.

Furthermore, after discussing the tapping fee study, Mr. Busch and I had a brief discussion on CWSA's standard sewer rate structure after I mentioned the CWSA is contemplating an increase in the near future. Mr. Busch stated his firm can complete a comprehensive sewer rate study with a 5 year "look ahead" to insure the CWSA will be financially prepared for future debt services, capital costs and inflation. Mr. Busch stated the additional sewer rate study could be completed for an estimated \$20,000. It is my recommendation to the CWSA Board that we have another meeting to discuss the sewer rate study with Mr. Busch prior to proceeding with that work.

Does the Board have any questions?

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROTH, SECOND BY MR. WEHR, TO ADD THE VOTE FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE TAPPING FEE STUDY TO THE AGENDA. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION MADE BY MR. BOYLE, SECOND BY MR. ROTH, TO AUTHORIZE THE APPROVAL OF THE TAPPING FEE STUDY TO BE DONE AT A COST OF \$6,000.00. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Harleman said he placed at each board member desk, a Comparison of Quarterly Sewer bills for Residential Customers report that Mr. Busch had given me during the meeting with him. CWSA would have the 2nd least expensive sewer rate on the sheet, if we were included. This is just a statement to how well we are treating our customers.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS - Monthly Financial Report presented for Board review after general review:

MOTION MADE BY MR. WEHR, SECOND BY MR. BONSHAK, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT AS PRESENTED BY THE TREASURER. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

See attached listings for the invoices listed to be paid.

MOTION MADE BY MR. GEISSINGER, SECOND BY MR. BONSHAK, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 2024 INVOICES WITH THE EXCLUSION OF THE LEHGH COUNTY AUTHORITY INVOICE FOR \$402,798.02 FROM THE 1ST NORTHERN BANK ACCOUNT AS PRESENTED BY THE TREASURER. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

C. CORRESPONDENCE AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS DATA

1. *Resolution 324-F Authorizing the collection of legal fees, lien costs, filing and satisfaction fees and interest*
2. *Memo dated May 10, 2024 from Administration Committee to Board regarding the new hires-- Laura Altomare for Business Manager & Evan Kovalcik for summer help position*

MOTION MADE BY MR. ROTH, SECOND BY MR. WEHR, TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF LAURA ALTOMARE AS A BUSINESS MANAGER IN TRAINING. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

MOTION MADE BY MR. BOYLE, SECOND BY MR. ROTH, TO APPROVE THE HIRING OF EVAN KOVALCIK AS A SUMMER HELPER. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

3. *Kline's Island Signatory Meeting objectives & notes 5/2/24*
4. *Riverside Drive Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project--T & M Project Number: CWSA 00003 dated March 4, 2024 revised April 18, 2024*
5. *2024 Sanitary Sewer System Manhole Maintenance and Rehabilitation Project total construction cost Contract "D"*

Operations Committee – *Mr. Roth reported normal operations.*

Administrative Committee – *Mr. Marx reported normal operations.*

Financial Committee-- *Mr. Wehr reported normal operations.*

Clear Water Committee—*Mr. Geissinger reported normal operations.*

Safety Committee—Mr. Bonshak reported normal operations.

OLD BUSINESS –

NEW BUSINESS–

ADJOURNMENT –

MOTION MADE BY MR. MARX, SECOND BY MR. BONSHAK, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. 7 AYES, 0 NAYES, 0 ABSENT. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:21 PM.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Geissinger', written in a cursive style.

**Respectfully submitted,
Paul Geissinger, Secretary**