

# **EVESHAM MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY**

## **Meeting Minutes from April 3, 2024**

### **Authority Board, Professionals and Staff in Attendance**

Present: Vice-Chairman Tencza, Commissioners, Hunter and Druss  
(Not in attendance – Chairman Waters, Commissioner Sweeney)

### **Authority Board via Video Teleconferencing:**

Commissioners Schmidt and Kipness

Also Present: Executive Director Booth, Deputy Executive Director Puszcz, Assistant Executive Director Locantore, Operations Manager Higgins, Asset Manager Vandenberg, General Counsel Grant, Engineer Simpson and Board Secretary Krimmel

### **Members of the Public:**

Jennifer Mendel – 28 Caldwell Avenue

Vice-Chairman Tencza called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

### **Opening Statement:**

Assistant Secretary Hunter read the opening statement as follows:

Both adequate and electronic notice of this meeting, pursuant to both the Open Public Meetings Act and Emergency Remote Meeting Protocol advised in Local Finance Notice 2020-21, has been given by the Director of Finance, Deputy Executive Director of the Evesham Municipal Utilities Authority on February 8, 2024 in the following manner:

1. E-mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times and Courier Post
2. Posting written notice on the official Evesham MUA website
3. Filing written notice with the Clerks of Evesham and Medford

This statement shall be entered into the minutes of this meeting

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**March 6, 2024** – On motion by Druss, seconded by Hunter, it was moved to approve the minutes of March 6, 2024.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0-0

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Agenda Items only)

Jennifer Mendel attended the meeting to express her displeasure and lack of communication from P & A Construction Company which is the contractor for the Heritage Village (Phase 3) Water Main Replacement. Ms. Mendel voiced her concerns to the Board. Executive Director Booth apologized and informed her that he is aware of the issues and he will discuss this with the contractor.

**FINANCIAL**

**Presentation of FY 2025 Water/Sewer Budget**

Deputy Executive Director Puszcz presented the budgetary plan for fiscal year 2025. Deputy Executive Director Puszcz advised the Board that the proposed Operating budget increase is 4.7%. The proposed Capital Budget continues to be a progressive plan to address the Authority's infrastructure and technological needs. Major water projects will need to be financed, however; smaller water projects and sewer Capital projects can be funded through the Authority's Capital Reserves. We recently adopted an adjustment to our rates, which will be adequate for the proposed FY25 budget and also FY26 but a rate adjustment will be necessary for FY27. The proposed water budget increase is 4.26% while the proposed sewer budget increase is 5.07% with an overall increase for both water and sewer of 4.7%. The budget process over the past two years have been a challenge due to rising costs which are beyond the Authority's control - mainly in chemicals, bulk water purchases, and health insurance. However, with the proposed budget for FY25 these issues seem to be leveling except for bulk water purchases, which she will continue to monitor closely. The water rates show a positive net position for the next 2 years; however, that excess becomes narrow in the second year. The water rates will need to be adjusted in FY 27. The Sewer rates continue to perform well and support sewer operations and capital improvements. Sewer rates will continue to require modest, regular adjustments. Deputy Executive Director Puszcz advised the Board that the Authority has a strong net position to support capital projects. She will continue to monitor all budgets and their impact on our rate structure.

**Resolution 2024-44: Approval of FY 2025 Water/Sewer Budget** – On motion by Hunter, seconded by Druss, it was moved to adopt **Resolution #2024-44** approving the FY 2025 Water/Sewer Budget.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

**Resolution 2024-45: Payment of Bills** – On motion by Hunter, seconded by Druss, it was moved to adopt **Resolution #2024-45** approving the payment of the March 2024 bills.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

**Resolution 2024-46: Refunds, Credits & Cancellations** – On motion by Hunter, seconded by Druss, it was moved to adopt **Resolution #2024-46** approving the March 2024 refunds, credits & cancellations.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

**Resolution 2024-47: Authorizing Award of a (2) two year Contract through OMNIA Partners National Cooperative Purchasing Program** – On motion by Hunter, seconded by Druss, it was moved to adopt **Resolution #2024-47** authorizing award of a two year contract through OMNIA Partners National Cooperative Purchasing Program to Kronos SaaShr, Inc. in the amount that does not exceed \$40,000.00 to purchase payroll, human resources and scheduling services. Assistant Executive Director Locantore explained that this is for a two year contract renewal with our current vendor.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

**Resolution 2024-48: Award of Contract in excess of \$6,600** – On motion by Hunter, seconded by Druss, it was moved to adopt **Resolution #2024-48** awarding a contract to Colortech Printing & Mailing in the amount of \$10,195.92 (not to exceed \$11,000.00) for a one year contract for the printing, folding/inserting and mailing of monthly water/sewer invoices and discontinuance notices. Office Manager Krimmel advised that she requested quotes from five different vendors with only two responding: one of them being our current vendor for the past 4 years. She believes that they are very

dependable. Office Manager Krimmel requested Board approval for a one year contract at a 2% increase in price.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Executive Director Booth informed the Board that there have been no violations or water main breaks since our last meeting. However, there were seven discolored water complaints that were attributed to the Heritage Village Phase 3 Water Main Replacement. In all cases we were able to flush their lines and the water cleared. There were two odor complaints. One was a strong onion smell but could not be replicated when our technician arrived at the property. The other was a high chlorine smell, but we believe that smell was caused by the disinfection of the new water mains that were installed.

Executive Director Booth advised the Board that the annual Spring fire hydrant flushing will begin midnight on Sunday, April 14, 2024 and continue through Friday, April 26, 2024.

### **PERSONNEL, SAFETY & SECURITY**

Assistant Executive Director Locantore informed the Board that the Authority's loss time frequency report from JIF for 2022 and 2023 were zero. The Authority continues to make all of the requirements for the JIF Safety Incentive Award. Assistant Executive Director Locantore advised that our Safety Coordinator, Brenden Hirsh, has performed over 130 sight inspections in the past year and continues to keep up with our Safety Manual policies. He also continues in supporting and administering the various training programs and maintaining our PPE inventory.

Assistant Executive Director Locantore informed the Board that starting this year JIF is spinning off their Cyber Security coverage for all members to a separate JIF policy. As a member in this JIF, you need to reach certain tiers of coverage and if you do, you receive refunds on your deductible if you should have a claim. The Authority met Tier One for last year, which is being carried over and grandfathered in until June. We are completing their base level compliance and currently waiting for some of our vendors to verify their compliance.

Assistant Executive Director Locantore advised the Board that in 2022 the State of New Jersey changed their entry level driver training requirements for drivers to receive their CDL. It was originally required to have classroom time through a private vendor which cost anywhere between \$2,000 and \$10,000, depending on what type of CDL they were

getting. This was cost prohibitive for governmental entities. Government entities pushed back and had their JIF's get involved and they were able to put together a train the trainer class to which the Authority sent numerous employees. The Authority registered with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration to become a registered trainer. The Authority now has the ability to train our own employees to prepare for their CDL's. We have numerous entities reaching out for shared service to train their employees.

Assistant Executive Director Locantore informed the Board that since 2023, the Authority has hired 9 new employees. These employees primarily replaced retired employees. In addition, we have promoted 3 new supervisors. In the near future we will be advertising for licensed operators and a licensed electrician.

## **ENGINEER'S REPORT**

### **Review of Engineer's Status Report**

**Update: South Side Water Storage Tank** – Nothing new to report.

**Update: Route 70 Water Main** – The contractor has given us a preliminary schedule. They will begin in late April.

**Update: Route 70 Sewer Main** – Nothing new to report.

**Update: Elmwood Storage Building** – We have received the executed contracts back from the contractor. A preconstruction meeting will be scheduled this month.

**Update: Well No. 6 Building** – This contract is substantially complete.

**Update: Well No. 6 Redrill** – A.C. Schultes continues to complete punch list items.

**Update: Elmwood UV Disinfection** – We have received the TWA permit for this project. Final review is being conducted prior to bid.

**Update: Heritage Village (Phase 3) Water Main Replacement** – Engineer Simpson is very disappointed that due to the conditions of the roads, a resident needed to attend the meeting and voice her concerns. He plans to meet with the construction engineer and the field representative in the morning.

**Update: Cardinal Court, Sweetgum Court and Cottonwood Drive Water Main Replacement** -

**Resolution 2024-49: Authorizing advertisement-** On motion by Hunter, seconded by Kipness, it was moved to adopt **Resolution #2024-49** authorizing advertisement for bids for Cardinal Court, Sweetgum Court and Cottonwood Drive Water Main Replacement

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza

NAY: None  
ABSTAIN: Druss

MOTION CARRIED: 4-0-1

**Update: Cinelli Farm Lift Station** – We are looking to go out for bid in the next few months.

**Motion to approve S-3/W-3 for Marlton UE LLC** – On motion by Hunter, seconded by Druss, it was moved to approve S-3/W-3 for Marlton UE LLC – 301 Route 70 West (Previously Friendly’s Restaurant)

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                     NAY: None  
                                     ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

**GENERAL COUNSEL’S REPORT**

General Counsel Grant advised there is nothing new to report.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**BOARD COMMENTS**

Commissioner Kipness expressed appreciation to Deputy Executive Director Puszcz on her budget presentation. He appreciates everyone that was involved. He expressed concern to Engineer Simpson about the contractor working on the Heritage Village water main replacement.

Commissioner Druss expressed appreciation to Deputy Executive Director Puszcz, Executive Director Booth and all of the staff involved for their hard work on the budget. He attended the AEA and NJ AWWA conferences this past month and learned a lot about PFAS. He is also studying water pretreatments at water treatment plants and math for wastewater treatment operators to get a better insight. He congratulated Asset Manager Vandenberg on the birth of his daughter.

Commissioner Hunter expressed appreciation to Deputy Executive Director Puszcz and her team for a job well done with the budget. She also expressed appreciation to all of the professionals, staff and fellow commissioners for everything that they do.

Commissioner Schmidt agrees with everyone's comments. He also expressed appreciation to Assistant Executive Director Locantore for his report. He told everyone to keep up their hard work.

Commissioner Tencza expressed appreciation to Deputy Executive Director Puszcz for her presentation of the budget. He expressed appreciation to Executive Director Booth, Commissioners Schmidt and Kipness for their assistance in the budget. He also expressed appreciation to the entire Authority staff and professionals for the great job that they do.

There was a motion to adjourn by Hunter, seconded by Druss. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

RECORDED VOTE:            AYE: Kipness, Druss, Hunter, Schmidt, Tencza  
                                      NAY: None  
                                      ABSTAIN: None

MOTION CARRIED: 5-0-0

The next meeting of the Evesham Municipal Utilities Authority is scheduled for Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

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Christine Krimmel  
Office Manager

APPROVED BY THE BOARD: \_\_\_\_\_