

TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED  
MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES  
August 16, 2022

Began: 6:34pm  
End: 8:14pm

**1. FLAG SALUTE:**

- a. Led by Chairperson Nancy Lawrence

**2. ROLL CALL:**

| PRESENT     | ABSENT      |                            |
|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|
| _____       | _____X_____ | Steven Grosso              |
| _____       | _____X_____ | Beth Kimmick               |
| _____X_____ | _____       | Brian Kubiel               |
| _____X_____ | _____       | Michael Ruppel             |
| _____X_____ | _____       | Chairperson Nancy Lawrence |

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT**

|             |             |                                    |
|-------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| _____X_____ | _____       | Tim Shea, VP Operations            |
| _____X_____ | _____       | Dave Leutwyler, Executive Director |
| _____X_____ | _____       | Justin Stroeleckis, Engineer T&M   |
| _____X_____ | _____       | Tom Monahan, Attorney              |
| _____       | _____X_____ | Cynthia MacReynolds, Secretary     |

**3. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT STATEMENT:**

- a. The Open Public Meeting Act was read by Mr. Monahan.

**4. TREASURER REPORT:**

- a. Mr. Leutwyler presented the Treasure's Report to the board.

Mr. Ruppel said that the authority has not seen the bills for Veolia and that they are not on the bill list for payment. The finance committee and Veolia agreed to a 90-day payable so that the authority does not misinterpret that the \$10,000 balance of that sub cash given for emergencies given the current cash flow.

There were no other comments from the board.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by Mr. Grosso. Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Ruppel.

Roll Call:

Approved:

Kubiel  
Ruppel  
Lawrence

**5. BILL LIST:**

- a. Mr. Ruppel said that the Finance committee met with staff and went over the bill list and recommend that they be approved for payment.

Chairperson Lawrence asked if they are going to see significant increase on the JCP&L bill now that the plant is discharging or if this is going to be the rate. Mr. Shea stated that the bill is expected to stay at \$2,500 per month. He was also asked if it anticipated in the budget. Mr. Shea said that it is below the projected budget and it will not go up significantly in the next 6 months

Mr. Ruppel made a motion to approve the Bill List. Mr. Kubiel 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

Roll Call:

Approved:

Kubiel  
Ruppel  
Lawrence

**6. TOWNSHIP REQUISITION FOR PAYMENTS:**

- a. There were no requisitions for the month.

**7. MINUTES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR APPROVAL:**

- a. There were no minutes to approve.

**8. T&M ASSOCIATES PROJECT UPDATES:**

- a. There was no report from T&M. Justin Stroeleckis was present to address the board.

Mr. Stroeleckis presented the project report. The date of the report is August 10, 2022 and reflects the status of the waste water system for the month of July 2022.

Mr. Stroeleckis said that the contract had two portions, the sewer collection system (sewer in the street) which was installed by P&A construction and did the holding tank. He said that the blower is operational and that the aeration requirements are managed by the operator, Veolia. Mr. Stroeleckis stated that the

holding tank has been used for storage of raw wastewater in case of high level in the EQ tanks for additional storage during the weekend and until the plant is compliant with the permit and ready to run continuously. The average flow is 50,000 gallons per day as of the beginning of August. As stated, 100% is done and PNA is under 2-year bond.

Mr. Stroeleckis stated that the waste water treatment plant portion is performed by Tomar. He reported that Veolia runs the facility with full time staff on weekdays only, until they started discharging.

He said that Tomar returns to the site to work on items when notified of issues by the operator and that they've been responsive. In the event of equipment issues, Tomar has responded and addressed the issues timely. Equipment replacements have been ordered and Tomar is waiting for delivery. Tomar is waiting 3 Equalization Pumps and a Primary Recirculation Flow meter.

Mr. Stroeleckis said that the micro seed dosing pump communications board needed to be replaced. He said that these issues came up during start up and testing establishing compliance and that the issues have not interrupted operations, and that they are at permit limits with the equipment in place. Mr. Stroeleckis said that Tomar has addressed the issues.

Tomar completed the following work:

July 12- Tomar was sent Veolia operators a punch list of Item No. 1-8 from an email sent by Kevin. They are to be addressed immediately to maintain operations.

July 21- Tomar sent O&M for probe transmitter as it was being cleaned and are troubleshooting on site.

July 22- Tomar sent a spare parts list as requested with updates on Item No. 1-8.

July 25- Tomar was onsite with the contractors to address Items No. 2,3,4,7 of the punch list.

July 26- Tomar responded to the site with subcontractors to address issues with a power interruption. The breaker tripped for 120-volt panel. An electrician investigated the issue. They could not attribute it to the power interruption, but they found that it had coincided.

July 29- Tomar addressed micro seed dosing pump. Tomar worked on it and said it was fixed, but he discovered that it was the communication board. He said that also on this day that a plumbing subcontractor installed the Replacement Injector Pump. There are 2 Injector Pumps in a pit inside of the building.

Aug 5- Tomar had sent updated Site Plan updates to NSU. Since T&M Associates is the sites civil engineer, he forwarded the updates to Steve Schiber for review. Mr. Stroeleckis had additional comments inquired that Tomar provide additional info on the as builds. He asked Tomar to add more elevations and notes from constructions and that they need to incorporate into CAD.

Mr. Stroeleckis briefed the board on the Construction Schedule. He said that the beginning section has not changed. Tomar's contract deadline was on Feb 10, 2021. They are past that deadline by over 1 yr.

Tomar addressing punch list items and providing as build redline drawings to NSU for the record drawing revisions.

Feb 11- Sewer valve opened to the treatment plant.

Feb 14- Biological seeding occurred with activated sludge from a nearby facility. Train 2 was put into service and operations of the plant commenced.

July 22- The plant has been treating waste water during the 5-day work week only and it was not yet in compliance of the discharge permit in the month of July.

Aug 8- A meeting was held by Veolia and the NJDEP Permitting and Enforcement Groups. Veolia stated that the plant discharge is now in compliance with phosphorus and nitrate based on lab results, and NJDEP gave verbal authorization to begin discharging into the Crosswicks Creek. The next morning, the plant discharged to the creek. This was the beginning of the 30-day testing period.

The plant must perform a 30-day uninterrupted operation of treatment in compliance with the permit. They can't have upset in the treatment process that would throw the effluent parameters out of compliance with the permit or upset the plant operations that we can no longer treat and discharge waste water.

Mr. Stroeleckis said that it is very important that they address issues that they are facing. Some pending issues such as the EQ pumps and the Flow Meter are being addressed onsite.

Mr. Stroeleckis said that after the 30-day performance testing period is complete, and all of the punch list items are completed by Tomar, that the final completion will be determined by acceptance of DEP by the owner and the engineer. The contract specifications states that upon documented and witness successful completion of the scope, the PMUA is to issue in writing to design builder a letter of final acceptance.

Mr. Stroeleckis said that NSU has proposed a preliminary and final walkthrough for stake holders and board members to meet onsite to tour the facility and provide comments for the contractor. It is scheduled for tomorrow afternoon (August 17). If that does not fit into the board member's schedules, they can pick a day on the following week. Mr. Stroeleckis said that after 30 days is complete, they would like to do a final walk through after punch list is complete.

Chairperson Lawrence commented on the fencing. Mr. Stroeleckis said that landscaping dependent on the stake holders preference, and that completion of the landscaping is also dependent of the approval of the board and stake holders. The same applies with aesthetics (sidewalk, building, etc).

Mr. Stroeleckis asked if Mr. Ruppel will attend the walk through. Mr. Ruppel stated that he is not sure if the board should meet with contractors and will seek

guidance prior to any meeting. He said that contractual issues are ultimately the responsibility of the board to find resolution, but is usually conducted between the hired professionals and the contractors. He does not want to interfere with T&M, NSU or Tomar. Would like to discuss amongst board.

It was agreed to reschedule for next week and only 2 at a time. This is an opportunity for the board to see the operations of the plant.

Mr. Ruppel asked is there a final engineer's punch list and if it a written document. Mr. Stroeleckis said that there is a punch list and that he wanted to wait for the preliminary walk through to add the minor items. Mr. Ruppel asked what was the delay for getting a written punch list. Mr. Stroeleckis said that it is not a contract requirement for the engineer to put it in writing as a final punch list.

Mr. Ruppel had a question about the Equalization Pumps and the Primary Recert Flow Meter. He asked if these are ongoing, long lead items or did this just happen and what is being done to fix it immediately. Mr. Stroeleckis said that the pumps went bad and they had their vendor replace them. He said that he ordered the pumps and that they were the wrong ones that arrived. They applied pressure to the vendor to send the correct pipes immediately. The next set of EQ pumps will be there as soon as possible. Mr. Ruppel asked how many pumps there are and Mr. Stroeleckis said that there are 4 total and 3 went bad.

Mr. Shea stated that they have a work around. He said that the Flow Meter came in and it was not the proper Flow Meter. Kevin, the operator said that there is probably a problem with the VFD still on the Equalization pumps. Mr. Shea said that the Permeate Pumps are dripping out on a regular basis and that this is a Suez member prodder issue and that Suez is investigating. This impacts the operation, because when it gets out, you have to stop the processes.

There is a concern that there are only 30 days and a question as to what the board would do because of the issues. Mr. Stroeleckis said that he will have the issue to the operator.

Chairperson Lawrence said that the authority is paying for a treatment plant that operates 100% and that is not happening.

Mr. Stroeleckis stated that on Feb 11, everything worked and now there are issues.

Mr. Ruppel asked about the as-builts. He asked if they have all of the as-builts or just a portion of the as builds. Mr. Stroeleckis said that they have a portion and that Tomar needed to add information to the CADS files. Mr. Ruppel asked about O&M manuals. He said that they have everything on site. Mr. Shea stated that they are waiting for Tomar to give them a Table of Contents.

Mr. Stroeleckis then spoke about a T&M and NSU amendment. There was a letter from Steve Schreiber from July, 2022. The letter is a proposal from NSU for additional administration services to wrap up the project. Mr. Ruppel stated that he has not received a copy. He asked that the board receive a copy of the letter so that they may review it to answer the letter as soon as possible. Mr. Ruppel and

Mr. Kubiak will receive the letter for review. They will get together in the following week.

## **9. VEOLIA REPORT:**

- a. Mr. Shea addressed the board with his report. He stated that they run internal processes monitoring on the key parameters, Phosphorus and Nitrate as well as running outside certified laboratory samples since startup. Both of those parameters over the last 3 weeks have proven that they are meeting permit. In the past week, they ran two full battery of samples and not received the results. He will report the results to the board upon receipt.

Veolia is required to report 3 sample efforts this month as per the DEP. Mr. Shea said that is a typical requirement (3x per month). The permitted value for Phosphorus is - .1 with .15 as the daily max. The permitted value for Nitrate is 7.5 with the max is. 5.

Mr. Shea said that there are several results under 5 for the Nitrate level, and non-detectable on the Phosphorus for 3 weeks and that it's not a real concern. He said that they test for other metals on a regular basis. It was not a concern so they stopped running the tests. Any other parameters such as, BOD, TSS or ammonia has never been an issue. Mr. Shea said that all other analysis has been scheduled after his conversation with Mr. Ruppel. After his discussions with some of the board members, Mr. Shea stated that they came to the conclusion that they will run other testing that is required this month, quarterly testing and semi-annual testing. Third quarter testing will be conducted this month. The time period for quarterly testing is between July-December, however, they will conduct the quarterly and semiannual test this month.

Mr. Shea reported that pump and haul is at 1.318 million gallons, which is 54,000 gallons per day for the last month. This indicative that there are fewer, if not less sewer connections as it was last month.

Mr. Shea said that they started discharging on August 9<sup>th</sup>, and there is no more haul in the discharge tank. He said that there is some hauling out of the holding tank to empty it, so that they can waste and run the plant as intended to operate. Mr. Shea stated that his biggest concern is the permeated pump tripping out.

Mr. Stroeckis stated that Veolia needs to communicate with him regarding the test results so that he may address Tomar so that the problems may be fixed. Mr. Shea addressed him and said that he will have a discussion with him.

No other questions or comments from the board.

## **10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:**

- a. Mr. Leutwyler addressed the board with his report. The Executive Director Report was read to the board.

He updated the number of permit applications to 4 on his report.

No comments from the board.

**11. CORRESPONDENCE:**

- a. No correspondences.

**12. COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a. No other committee reports given. Finance committee discussion was earlier in the meeting.

**13. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. Mr. Ruppel stated that it is critical to have an executive session or a special meeting now that the 30-day time period started. Ms. Lawrence said that one of the subjects of the meeting will be about contracts and damages. She also said that another item of discussion will be regarding construction delays, overruns, our engineering firm contract, potential of looking at rules and regulations revision.

No other comments from the board.

**14. NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. No new business.

**15. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

- a. Melanie Balmer of 10 Lakewood Rd., New Egypt, NJ spoke before the board. Ms. Balmer came to the board to ask for a waiver of the connection fee due to financial hardship.

She stated that she did not have her paperwork submitted for her sewer connection on time. She has now hired a plumber, and was just advised that she needs to pay the \$1,500 connection fee. She asked the board if the fee is a penalty for not connecting to the sewer on time.

Chairperson Lawrence said that it is a fee that everyone has to pay, but if it was submitted before a certain date, the fee was waived. The fee is not a punishment. The waiver was a way to entice more people to connect in order to get the flow to the treatment plant.

Ms. Balmer stated that a lot of people got out of paying the connection fee due to the waiver and said that it is still an expense.

Ms. Balmer said that although she has hired a contractor, she does not believe that she will be connected by the November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

She asked about the penalty for people who have not connected. She was advised that they will be fined, and that the people who are not connecting are adding a financial burden on those who did. It could cause the sewer rates to go up.

- b. Storm and Tom Pender of 5 Earley Dr. New Egypt, NJ spoke before the board. Mr. and Mrs. Pender came before the board during the March 2022 meeting. At the time, they were potential homebuyers of 5 Earley Dr. and they had placed an offer on the home. Their purchase was delayed due to an issue between them and the current homeowner involving an oil tank.

The Penders were not permitted to apply for the permits or the loan, and they were not able to have the connection fee waived due to pending ownership of the home. They sent a correspondence to the board and made an appeal for consideration. They were advised to reappear before the board after they had bought the house and paid the fees.

They are asking to have the financial program extended and to have the connection fee waived.

The board was unable to make a decision at this time. They advised the Penders that they may apply for the loan, but will probably still have to pay the \$1,500 connection fee.

The board would like time to review the minutes from the March meeting and hope to have an answer by the next meeting. A committee was formed with Chairperson Lawrence, Mr. Ruppel and Mr. Kubiel to research and make a decision.

The board asked counsel to advise them on what they can do and consider when making a decision. Mr. Monahan stated that the board is limited and does not have the authority to make a decision that is not permitted in a township ordinance unless there are stipulations in said ordinance. Counsel was advising the board that they could be accused of being discriminatory.

The board advised the Penders to send them another correspondence addressed to the board for consideration and submit it to Mr. Leutwyler. Mr. Leutwyler gave the Penders his email address.

- c. Ken Kaiser of 78 N. Main St., New Egypt, NJ spoke before the board. Mr. Kaiser is asking the board to waive the \$1,500 connection fee.

Mr. Kaiser said that he missed the deadline to have the connection fee waived. He stated that his mother is ill and he was out of the state during the time of the connection fee deadline. He said that he does not recall receiving a notice by mail because his mail was held by the Post Office in his absence. He also stated he missed the cut off by one day when he applied.

Mr. Kaiser said that he went to the bank to apply for a loan and was denied.

He asked for advice from the board on how to pay for the connection fee, plumbing and the fines if there are any.

Mr. Ruppel stated that the notices have been sent about the pending deadline and that the board is going to stick to the date that was set by his processors.



Mr. Kaiser was advised by some of the board members to speak with his neighbors to get an idea of the cost of installation and plumbing. He was advised that a list of contractors was on the PMUA website.

**16. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

- a. No executive session.

**17. ADJOURN:**

- a. Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ruppel, and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. Kubiell. Unanimous Yeas to adjourn.

Minutes were prepared by the Plumsted Municipal Utilities Authority Secretary,

Cynthia MacReynolds