

TOWNSHIP OF PLUMSTED
MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY
MEETING MINUTES
July 25, 2023

Start Time: 6:41 PM
End Time: 8:46 PM

1. FLAG SALUTE:

- a. Led by Vice Chairman, Mr. Grosso.

2. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT	ABSENT	
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Vice Chairman Steven Grosso
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Beth Kimmick
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Michael Ruppel
<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	Chairman Brian Kubiak

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Chris Earle, Veolia Regional VP of Operations
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Alexandria Noriega, Veolia Project Manager
<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	Mel Davis, Contractor NSU
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Ben Wyler, ERI
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Kelsey McGuckin-Anthony, Attorney
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Cynthia MacReynolds, Secretary
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Deputy Mayor Herb Marinari
<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Committeeman Dominick Cuozzo

3. OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT STATEMENT:

- a. The Open Public Meeting Act was read by Counsel.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT:

- a. Mr. Earle read the Treasurer's Report.

There is an opening balance of \$496,363.15, with checks and debits in the amount of \$2,677.47. The total balance for deposits is \$46,328.45 and as of June 30 2023, the balance is \$540,332.30.

The payments on the Bill List are in the amount of \$155,604.16, leaving a balance of \$384,728.14 in the general checking account.

No other comments regarding the Treasurer's Report.

Mr. Ruppel made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report and was 2nd by Ms. Kimmick.

Roll Call:

Approved:

Grosso
Kimmick
Ruppel

5. BILL LIST:

- a. Mr. Ruppel said that the Finance Committee met with the staff to discuss the list and they believe that the attached bills are appropriate for regular payments.

A motion to accept the Bill List was made by Mr. Ruppel and 2nd by Ms. Kimmick.

Roll Call:

Approved:

Grosso
Kimmick
Ruppel

6. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL: June 20, 2023

- a. A motion to approve the June 20, 2023 minutes was made by Mr. Ruppel and 2nd by Mr. Grosso.

Roll Call:

Approved:

Grosso
Kimmick
Ruppel

7. REQUISITIONS FOR APPROVAL FOR TOWNSHIP TO PAY T&M VOUCHER:

- a. Mr. Ruppel said that the Finance Committee reviewed the bill and made a recommendation to send the concurrence to the township for payment.

A motion to approve the voucher for payment in the amount of \$867.67 was made by Mr. Ruppel and 2nd by Ms. Kimmick.

Roll Call:

Approved:

Grosso
Kimmick
Ruppel

8. T&M ASSOCIATES PROJECT UPDATE:

- a. A representative for T&M was not present to give their Project Update.

The board voiced their disappointment that T&M or NSU did not attend the PMUA meeting for the second time in a row. Mr. Ruppel said that their report was important in moving forward to closing out the construction contracts.

Mr. Ruppel recapped that the Board had authorized a release a final payment to Tomar for approximately \$46,000. He said that T&M was tasked with closing the books on the contract and establishing a date of completion. Their appearance would have enabled the board to bring forward any disagreements that they may have on what the final contract/close out costs would be.

Mr. Ruppel apologized for their absence and that it was not due to any inaction of the Board. Mr. Grosso said that this has been addressed to T&M in the past and that it is disheartening that they are not present at tonight's meeting.

Mr. Earle was asked if he had anything to report from T&M. Mr. Earle said that NSU sent the as builts today.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that he had a paper from T&M's report that states the work that was completed in June. He asked Mr. Earle if he had any information with regard to any work completed in July. Mr. Earle said that he did not.

Vice Chairman Grosso suggested that a representative be present and to included current work done to current, because whatever they accomplished was not in the report.

No other comments from the Board.

9. ERI UPDATE:

- a. Mr. Weller addressed the board.

Mr. Weller reported that he and Mr. Earle met to review the Asset Management Report. He said that there were changes that Mr. Earle requested and that ERI will make the changes.

Mr. Earle said that the list of assets was updated. He said that they changed the characteristics of the criticality and the life cycle of the list. He said that they were going to add some language into the statements about the efficiency of the facility, and lastly, the pro forma will be updated to current costing.

Vice Chairman Grosso told Mr. Weller that ERI needs to clarify their billing prior to submission. Mr. Weller said that he will relay that to the billing department.

Mr. Weller anticipates that the report will be complete for submission by August.

No other questions from the Board.

10. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- a. Mr. Earle presented the Executive Director's report.

Mr. Earle reported that 528 permits were issued in downtown and that 510 sewer connections. He also said that 258 connections have been completed in Lennar.

Mr. Earle said that the PMUA is continuing to work on Phase 3 of the contract.

He reported that the PMUA scheduled 2 meetings in July with Waste Management to address the missed trash pickups. Waste Management is currently working with the Field Staff to review and revise protocols. He then said that the PMUA will continue to keep track of the missed trash pick-ups.

Mr. Earle said that Waste Management's corporate has been working diligently and that they were unaware of the magnitude of the problem. He reported that Committeeman Cuzzo made a request to Google Maps to change 1 road in hopes that it will help Waste Management to locate the street.

Mr. Earle said that Waste Management and Veolia are working cooperatively to streamline the process of reporting missed trash pickups by using an automated service, which will be instantaneous. He anticipates that this will be implemented by August. He said that with this new service that if the resident calls the number, it will notify Waste Management and the PMUA simultaneously, creating a ticket with the hope that the trucks will be rerouted.

Mr. Ruppel said that he was in attendance at the meeting with Waste Management and that he spoke on behalf of the community. He said that there was a deliberate response from Waste Management.

Mr. Ruppel said that the drivers will be responsible, as they collect the garbage to annotate in real time that the garbage was picked up. He said that there will be a supervisory level in remote locations that will hold the drivers accountable if they drive past customers. This gives them the opportunity to reroute the truck during the day and pick up any missed garbage or recycling.

They addressed how they would provide services to homes that do not have curbside pickups and backing down extended driveways. Mr. Ruppel told them to tell them if they can or cannot provide the service to those residents.

Chairman Grosso asked Mr. Earle if residents still need to call the PMUA office when there is a missed trash pickup and if they check their voicemails. Mr. Earle said that the process remains the same, which is why they want to move to the Waste Management automated system.

Vice Chairman Grosso recommended that in the interim, they check the voicemails before the end of the day to see if there are any complaints to forward to Waste Management.

Mr. Earle reported that the New Jersey One **Call** application was submitted. He said that they will supply a digital copy of the as build to New Jersey One.

He reported that they are continuing to work with HFA and CPA and they will follow up with them tomorrow for an update.

Mr. Earle said that they continued the budget meeting with the Finance Committee during the week.

Mr. Earle reported that the PMUA will take part of an energy aggregation with another municipality and that they current rates and tariffs are being evaluated.

Mr. Ruppel said that the aggregation is an aggregation of all electric energy users in Plumsted that together with Manchester, a bid was going to be advertised to provide energy production services to both communities. He said that if the bid is lower than the base service agreement of JCP&L, that bidder will be awarded the contract. Mr. Ruppel said that the reduced rates will pass on to the individual consumers of energy.

Mr. Ruppel said that they did not go out for bid last year because the marketplace dictated that their pricing was going to be higher than JCP&L. He said that they have been in contract with them for approximately 3 years.

He said that there is a low participation rate at the homeowner level. Mr. Ruppel said that they made a commitment that if they go out to bid, that the bids go out to the street, and that there is some time for the bidders to react. If the bids are successful, where they lower the JCP&L service rate that they will coordinate a campaign amongst the residents of Plumsted so that they have a better understanding of what is being offered to them.

If the resident agrees to sign the application form, their bill will be recalculated and sent to them from JCP&L. This will produce a lower cost for the production of the energy. If they sign a 2-year contract, they will automatically default to JCP&L at the end of the term.

No other comments from the Board.

End of the Executive Director's Report.

11. VEOLIA REPORT:

- a. Mr. Earle presented the report.

Mr. Earle said that the plant continues to run within parameters and that the process control of the facility treatment operations continued.

He reported that they are implementing EHS safety items in the facility with adding posters about cleaning up and slip/trip/fall hazards.

Mr. Earle said that the flow has decreased. The daily average flow was 83,464 gallons with a minimum daily flow of 72,000 and a maximum of 89,000.

He reported that all samples and tests showed that they are within the permit requirements for June. Mr. Earle said that 85,700 gallons of sludge was removed out of 2.5 million gallons of influent, which equates to 3.4%. He said that the monthly average has been approximately between 3.4% -3.5%.

Mr. Earle said that June's DMR is available at the wastewater treatment facility. He said that the staff at the treatment plant has been focusing on safety and that there have been zero issues at the facility.

No other questions from the Board.

End of Veolia Report.

12. CORRESPONDENCES:

- a. There were no correspondences for the Board.

13. OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Mr. Ruppel addressed a question that was asked at June's meeting from a resident of Lennar. The resident asked about the ownership of the sewer lines and wastewater assets in the Lennar Community.

Mr. Ruppel said that He will be speaking in terms of the operation of the system within the Lennar sewer lines is strictly sanitary and has nothing to do with stormwater. Veolia is providing the service of operating that pump station and that they make routine visits. This is included in the cost of operation that they bill the Authority for Terms of Service.

Mr. Ruppel said that they have seen little documentation in terms of ownership, which will need further investigation.

No other New/Old Business from the Board.

14. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Vice Chairman Grosso advised the public that the Board is in a financial meeting and that they are researching the finance of the organization and how the plant is running. He said that they are continuing to get the numbers and that it has not been 1 year. He reiterated that they will not discuss any rate changes tonight.

- a. John Lombardo of 6 Gulfstream Rd. addressed the Board.

Mr. Lombardo asked if they had a record of what the daily flow is out of the Lennar community that goes into the sewer system. He was told that it is not broken down that way.

He then asked rhetorically if the monthly flow was for the past month, 83,464 and then corrected himself to say daily flow. Mr. Earle said that the average daily flow was 83,464 gallons per day.

Mr. Lombardo then asked if that number was both the Lennar residents and the people in the downtown area. Mr. Earle said that it was the influent number into the facility.

Mr. Lombardo asked if it is correct that there will be about 1,100 total customers once it is done. He was advised that it is a fair estimate.

Mr. Lombardo said that if you make an evaluation the amount of flow on a daily basis upon the present number of customers that are hooked on the township sewer system, taking the daily flow of 83,464 and multiply that by 30 days and divide it by the number of customers presently online, you would get an average of 3,2000 gallons per month per customer, noting that in previous months, it was lower.

Mr. Lombardo said that water rates from the water system is \$7.77 per 1,000 and then said that if they are to multiply $\$7.77 \times 3$ that the total would be between \$14 or \$21, plus a fixed charge.

Mr. Lombardo said that he accumulated bills from the customers inside of the development and asked if he could read 10 of them on the record, because he does not have all of them and that he is still waiting for more about how much usage they have in Lennar.

He said rhetorically that the water bill would show what their daily usage is of water and what the monthly usage and annual usage. Mr. Lombardo the said that in all 10 cases, added every customer in Lennar and divided them is averaging between 1,000 to 2,000 gallons per month in usage and that it proves that the Lennar residents are not putting a lot of water into the sanitary sewer system that goes into the sewage treatment plant.

Mr. Lombardo began to read some examples of customers. He said that 48 Churchill average annual usage is 4,000 gallons, 57 Churchill is 19,000 gallons, 44 Belmont is 8,000 gallons, 1 Gulfstream is 23,000 gallons, 2 Belmont is 20,000, 17 Belmont is 8,000 gallons, 22 Chestnut is 6,000 gallons, 6 Gulfstream is 7,000, 20 Belmont is 10,000 gallons and 4 Gulfstream is 5,000 gallons.

Mr. Lombardo said that in every situation, they would all be far below where the numbers are stating of the daily flow that's going into the system. He said that he conducted an analysis to show that in each case, what the percentage is that they are overpaying in their sewer rates based on their water rates.

He said that 48 Churchill, with 72% more paying for their sewage and their water, 57 Churchill is 57%, 44 Belmont is 51%, 1 Gulfstream is 21%, 2 Belmont is 57%, 17 Belmont is 45%, 22 Chepsaw is 21%, 6 Gulfstream is 57%, 20 Belmont is 51% and 4 Gulfstream is 57%. He said that shows that they are all paying that much more for their sewer based upon what their actual water usage is going into the system.

Mr. Lombardo wanted to ask another question, but Mr. Ruppel pointed out that it refers to the computation of the rates. He said that the Vice Chairman opened the public session saying that they are not going to entertain dialogue. Mr. Ruppel said that he can speak to it all that Mr. Lombardo likes, but he would stand opposed to a cross examination of any one of the members of the board

because they said that they are not going to speak about how the rate is structured.

Mr. Ruppel told Mr. Lombardo that they have been down this road multiple times. Mr. Lombardo began to interrupt, and then Mr. Ruppel said that he (Mr. Ruppel) has the floor.

Mr. Ruppel continued by saying that they have been down this road before, the Board expressed their position and made it adamant at June's meeting and that they have other business to conduct tonight and that the Board is not going to address the rates.

Mr. Ruppel said that he did not think that the Board should not allow for dialogues regarding the rate structure, and that is what was said going in.

Mr. Lombardo said that they are citizens of the community and that the Board has an obligation to listen to their complaints and try to correct the situation. He said that they understand what they are going through with other dealings with the sewer plant, but his point is that they need to get evidence, which is what he is trying to put on the record and that they are not putting hardly any water into the sanitary sewer system and that they are overly charged.

Mr. Lombardo said that the Board mentioned that the residents are to expect an increase beginning in January and that he is there to defend that. He then said that it is absurd to say that the rate is being increased when they are not putting much water into the system and that its "fact", and that the Board is going to charge them more.

Mr. Lombardo said that at the last meeting, they said that the Board stated that they could not find \$600,000. Mr. Ruppel said that was an absurd statement that he has just heard coming from Mr. Lombardo and said that he absolutely did not say that. Mr. Lombardo said that he would not say it if he did not hear it.

Mr. Lombardo said that he noticed that 2 months of minutes are missing from the website and that when he reads them, some of them are not exactly what was stated on the record when they speak and that they are "changing" them. He said that he did not know why it is happening.

Mr. Grosso said that he is not sure why that the meeting is recorded and that it should be the same dialogue as they speak. He said that they can be sure that the minutes are updated and that they should be updated regularly.

Mr. Lombardo wanted to bring up the total design for the system. He said that he read that for Phase 1, that it was designed to do 220,000 gallons per day and that the current design is at 330,000 gallons per day and that the maximum design was 600,000 gallons per day. He said that the numbers were highly inflated, based on the true facts of what the usage is, by all customers on the system and that they are much lower than what the system was built for.

Mr. Lombardo said that they are being charged for their hiring anticipation of flow that is going through and that with the records and evidence that they have that there is no way that they are coming anywhere near what was originally projected and that they are being overcharged for it.

No other comments from Mr. Lombardo.

Mr. Ruppel addressed Vice Chairman Grosso that he would like to state and to restate what was discussed last month. He said that never during the course of that meeting that he represented what Mr. Lombardo alleged, because he was the one who gave the presentation, that never during the course of that meeting that he represents that \$600,000, \$800,000 or \$1 was lost, misplaced or missing. He said that he represented that there is a deficit to that order of magnitude, but not that money's turned up missing because that it was absolutely absurd.

Mr. Ruppel said that had that occurred, even if it was \$5, they would hear him preaching it from the highest podium in there that there was a misappropriation of public funds. He reiterated that it did not happen and that he wanted to make that clear and on the record that there was it never stated in that aspect and that it simply is not true.

Vice Chairman Grosso addressed Mr. Lombardo and said that he wished that the engineers were at the meeting to back up some of his (Mr. Lombardo's) facts. He said that he believes that the design for Phase 1, the max amount of flow has a calculation that they use. He said that it should never hit that design flow and that it's for wet weather and big storm events. (Mr. Grosso, please see comment)

Vice Chairman Grosso continued to address Mr. Lombardo and said that Mr. Lombardo said that it was built to handle that, and that he (Vice Chairman Grosso) thinks the DEP requires it to handle "X" amount of flow over the average flow and that is why the design for that phase is high. He reiterated that he does not know the exact number or the calculation that they use for that and then said that it was a question for the engineers.

Vice Chairman Grosso addressed Mr. Lombardo and reminded him that he stated that they maximum for Phase 1 is about 220,000 gallons. Mr. Lombardo said that was maximum capacity and that it was in prior meetings that said that it was going to be 600,000 gallons. He then said that the first phase was 250,000, but the average was going to 330,000 and that they are only coming in 75%.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that there is a calculation that the engineers, and that they designed it based upon the requirements.

No further comments.

b. Rogers Ramirez from the New Egypt Press addressed the Board.

Mr. Ramirez said that this is his first PMUA meeting and that he wanted clarity for his viewers and readers about something that he just heard. He asked Vice Chairman Grosso what his reason was for saying that there will be no discussion of rates at tonight's meeting.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that they have gone over this many months in advance. He said that in order to calculate the rates, they should have a full year's worth or set amount of data used to calculate everything, and they are not at that point yet.

Mr. Ramirez said that he heard of the consumption model for billing and rates before and then asked what is the model being used right now for the rate schedule. Vice Chairman Grosso said that there was a rate meeting before the current members of the board were appointed when the design of the plant was set, they set the rates for it.

Mr. Ramirez asked who was “they”. Vice Chairman Grosso said it was the previous board and administration and that they worked with the engineers and operators of the plant.

Mr. Ramirez asked if he could get the names of those board members after the meeting.

Mr. Ruppel added that one of the complexities in striking the rate, which they had a significant amount of discussion in the last half a year or more, is that you have to do it by statute, and the statutes have provisions within them that require entities, such as theirs to have, in his own words, but it has a fair and equitable distribution of the rate structure. He said that when you look at a community that has certain portions of the sewered area, that has a public water supply that they have meters. He then said that when you have a community such as Plumsted, there is a significant portion of the utility that does not have meters, so the Authority have to apply their costs equally amongst all of those users.

Mr. Ramirez addressed Mr. Ruppel and said that respectfully, that he is hearing the Board defend the current rate and the model used for it, but not allowing any challenge to that and that it sounds a little bit incorrect to him. He said that he would recommend the Board not defend the current model if there is further discovery to be done.

Mr. Ramirez asked why the Board has not responded to the resident of Oakford Ave. (Christian Serbes). He advised the board that it is actually coming from a live feed question to the board. He said that Mr. Serbes could not be there right now and asked the Board if they are familiar with the situation.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that the Chairman of the Board is working on it. He said that the Chairman was handling it personally this month and that he has been doing a lot of work on it and that he thinks that he has come up with some solutions, but he cannot speak for the Chairman because he is not present. Mr. Ramirez gave Ms. Barbara Serbes the floor.

c. Barbara Serbes from 4 Oakford Avenue addressed the Board.

Ms. Serbes reminded the Board that her sewer pipe is broken and that she is supposed to hook up into. She said that she got a letter from the Chairman that said that the Authority is not able to do anything about it or fix it. Mr. Ruppel asked if it was a recent letter, and Ms. Serbes said that she got it yesterday.

Ms. Serbes said that regardless how it broke and that there is nothing that they could do about it, she requested that they be exempt from hooking up to the sewer so that they can cap it off, close the hole and put the lawn back together. She said that after 8 months of no answer, that is the only thing that she can come up with.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that they cannot make exceptions for one particular person, because if they make one for her then there will be others. Ms. Serbes said that they have given exemptions for people who can't hook into it and they cannot hook into the broken pipe and the Authority will not fix it and there is no solution in the letter.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that he has not seen the letter and that the Chairman was handing it. Ms. Serbes said that his handling of it is that he is washing his hands of it.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that he was at the site last month with the engineer, the contractor and from their end, their record said that it was installed properly. Ms. Serbes said that it is broken now and Vice Chairman Grosso said that her plumber said that it was broken and that her plumber was the last one to mess with it. Ms. Serbes said that the plumber said that he did not break it.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that he understands what he is telling her, but from their side, they have two people that said it was installed and tested properly and that everything on their end was good, so he has to take the side of their representatives where were there to inspect it verses her personal plumber.

Ms. Serbes asked what the Board suggests that she does now because nobody is fixing it and there is a big hole in the road. She said that her lawn is also torn up and that any suggestions would be really terrific right now.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that he has to follow up with the Chairman and that he is sorry that he is not present, and that he knows that he is working on it.

Mr. Ruppel asked Ms. Serbes if she has paid her contractor. She said that he was given a deposit. and he then asked her if he provided her with insurance. Ms. Serbes said that she thinks so. Mr. Ruppel asked why she did not go after the insurance.

Mr. Ruppel said that if it were his house, that would have been the first thing that he would have done and does not see why she is excluded from doing it and that she should make a demand out of him. He also suggested that she pursue a discussion with her carrier and see if they can give her guidance. Mr. Ruppel made it clear that he did not make those suggestions to dismiss the problem, but to give legitimate suggestions.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that he has been to the site and looked at her property, especially how close it is to her garage. He said that is one of his concerns, especially the location of her property compared to the lake into Tootie's and to leave an open trench is a hazard.

Vice Chairman Grosso reiterated that he has to go on what the Authorities experts are saying, and that everything was correct on their end before her contractor started. He said that he will follow up with the Chairman to see what he told her and what he has found and then either he or the Chairman will contact her.

Ms. Serbes said that if her plumber is not willing to fix it because he said that he did not break it, they cannot leave the street open. Mr. Ruppel asked if she has

insurance from him. She then asked if it is on her to get it fixed at this point and they are allowed to fill in the street. She was advised that that it might be a plumbing code issue.

Mr. Ruppel said that nobody from the Board knows what occurred when her contractor was excavating and that her contractor had to go back multiple times because he didn't have adequate pumps or digging equipment, and along the way, it was discovered that the pipe is separated. He then said that he wouldn't even say that it was his fault at this point.

Mr. Ruppel then said that hypothetically, he would bill the plumbing contractor and have him finish the product that my contractor did not provide and I'm going to go after my contractor's insurance to fix that hole.

Mr. Ruppel said that what needs to be discovered after excavation is what is not correct. Ms. Serbes said that it is filled with water.

Vice Chairman Grosso said that another issue that the Board has is the excess flow, and for all they know, the rainwater that is coming into the line because they do not know if he plugged it or capped it. Ms. Serbes said that it is completely open.

Mr. Ruppel said that in any event, that the excavation occurred on her side of the curb and that it was discovered that it was broken 4' on the road and it might put the Authority in the position to say, "Someone damaged my line".

Counsel then intervened and said that this is something that they need the township to weigh in on.

Mr. Ruppel continued and said that if there is something that the Authority is capable of doing, that they are more than willing to do it.

Ms. Serbes said that she will contact her plumber and Mr. Ruppel asked that she keep them informed.

Ms. Serbes asked if it was still her responsibility, even though the pipe belongs to the township. Chairman Grosso said that it was damaged from her end, which Ms. Serbes said, "So we have to fix it" and Vice Chairman Grosso said, "Unfortunately, yeah". Ms. Serbes then said, "Thank you".

- d. Mr. Ruppel addressed Mr. Ramirez and said that in response to one of the comments that he raised, that no one is trying to restrict anybody from putting anything on the record of our meetings. Mr. Ramirez asked what comment that this was in response to and Mr. Ruppel said that it when they talked about not allowing comment or at least the way that he perceived was not allowing comments about the rates. He said that it was not the case at all and that is not what they are trying to do.

Mr. Ramirez said that he referred to the call made by (Vice Chairman) Grosso made in the beginning of the meeting when he said that there will be no discussion of the rates.

Mr. Ruppel said that he was right that they were not going to discuss it, but that does not mean that you can't bring to them a position that you might have on the rates. Mr. Ruppel reiterated what Mr. Ramirez said that this was his first meeting and that the Authority has spent a considerable amount of time every meeting for as many as he can recall, having dialogue back and forth about the rates, not necessarily the rate, but how the rate is structured.

Mr. Ruppel said that he thinks, without putting words in Vice Chairman Grosso's mouth that what they are saying is that the question has been asked and that the Board has answered them and if he wants to raise the issue and put in on the agenda/record, that is fine, but as a Board, they are not going to entertain dialogue back and forth on it, because they answered those questions.

Mr. Ruppel further said that when the Authority talks about rates and changing rates or changing the structure of rates, it is required to be done by what is called a Rate Hearing, of which there is a special public meeting set aside specifically on that subject matter, where a lot of dialogue takes place, and that was the point that he wanted to make clear.

Mr. Ramirez said that Mr. Ruppel's clarity has helped him because he has another question to follow up with. Mr. Ramirez asked if you have 2 homes, one of them has flushed 1,000 times in a day and the other home has flushed once or twice a day, and both homes are paying the same rate, could he have an explanation on the rationale for this model.

Mr. Ruppel said that he does not want to call it a model, but a methodology used by many utilities around the state, and it is when you do not have every user on a meter, there is a calculation that is made. He said that it brings everybody to an equal footing based upon what's called an "EDU" aka Equivalent Dwelling Unit.

Mr. Ruppel said that he agrees with Mr. Ramirez on some cases, for example, there is a senior in a room and a 2-bedroom home or a 1-bedroom home and the guy next door with six kids in a 4- bedroom home, so there are going to be differences.

Mr. Ruppel said that it could be akin to "why do I pay a water rate that has a minimum bill, when I don't use the minimum" because they're doing the similar type calculations, but that would be the reason why.

Mr. Ramirez said that Mr. Ruppel brought up a good point and said that "You'll have one home right next to the other" Mr. Ramirez brought up 2 homes, 2 Maple Dr. that has 6 residents inside of it and 4 Maple Dr. that has one disabled resident that's on limited income, pays the same rate as the home next door, that has a usage, far beyond. He asked Mr. Ruppel to explain the model (the sense that the model has) as it puts an undue burden on the disabled resident of this town, but for the grace of God, go "You or I". He then asked why are we putting this stress on our residents.

Mr. Ruppel said that he does not know if he can answer that specifically and that he just said that that is the method of how they calculate it. Mr. Ruppel said that there were people who could not afford to tie into the system, and the Authority had to tell them that they had to tie in, because it is required.

Mr. Ruppel said that he just had a conversation with the mayor about it and that it was one of the most troubling things that he has had to do in his time as a public servant. Mr. Ruppel said that there is never going to be 100% balance and that if he thinks that we live in a world where you are going to make 100% balance to have a go at it.

Mr. Ramirez said that he has 100's. Mr. Ruppel said that it is still not 100% or even closes to 100% or about as close to equality, but they are faced with the statutes having to provide that equal bill across the entire user base, and that it's a method used all over the state and that it's not exclusive to Plumsted. Mr. Ruppel said that Mr. Ramirez could go to any community with the same scenario and those people in that position are going to be pretty much the same position that the Authority is in.

Mr. Ramirez asked respectfully if Mr. Ruppel is telling him that this is the way that it's always been done. Mr. Ruppel said that it is not what he is telling him at all and that he is telling him that it is the way that it has to be done.

Mr. Ramirez said that it is the way that it has been done and we have to continue in the manner, to which Mr. Ruppel replied that it has to be done that way. Vice Chairman Grosso added that a lot of it is based on water usage and to give more clarification, he (Vice Chairman) has well water, to which Mr. Ramirez interrupted to give the floor to other members of the public.

e. Mr. Lombardo then interjected and said that the statement that was made that it's been all over and it's been throughout the state is an incorrect statement. He said to check the Ocean Co. MUA, has a tariff where everybody pays different rates, some by fixtures and others by usage. He said that they are not the only ones that they all do it that way. He said that it is the way that the people in clumps chose to do it. He said that it can be done and changed and that he wanted this on the record.

f. Morgan Peterson of 44 Meadowbrook Ln. addressed the board.

Mr. Peterson said that his problem is the people doing the work or designing the work, in his opinion. He said that he was a New York City (*inaudible*) for Tower No. 3 for 20 years, he is a pipe fitter and he has been in plumbing and heating since he was 15 years old.

Mr. Peterson that he heard it through the grapevine from a local contractor how there's many problems inside the sewage treatment plant itself. He said that he knows of work that was done, which is part of the sewer treatment plant that was done with no permit and done against code. He said that he is looking into that and getting documentation and that it will be addressed.

Mr. Peterson continued to say that certain contractors don't know what they are doing and that they should not be involved. He said that it is like the "good old boy" system in the town. He said that he knows how it works because he has worked in many housings and authorities such as Asbury Park, North Camden and that it's the "good old boy" system.

He said that for instance, that at the end of Meadowbrook that there were 6 of them that had to install sewer injectors and that there were no specifications from the engineers to the resident. He said that everyone has the wrong pumping but him and that their pumps cost them \$600 while his cost him \$4,500. Mr. Peterson said that it is a forced main in the street.

Mr. Peterson asked why the town would approve them. He said that there are no specs and that it is not the inspector's fault. He also said that they need to find the right people that know what they are doing and not just some local that thinks that they know everything.

Mr. Peterson said that they need to hire people like him that off the books to do work because he is a pipe fitter and that he does side work for plumbers and that he has worked at sewer treatment plants.

Mr. Peterson said that the Authority have problems with personnel. He said that he does not know about the personnel running it that are getting paid for it, but definitely contractors. Mr. Peterson said that the contractor was working on 49 Meadowbrook and that he pushed the dirt to the end of the road and dammed the water and that the water was 18" deep.

He said that the garbage cans that belong to the resident at 50 Meadowbrook were floating in it and he (Mr. Peterson) contacted Dave Leutwyler and told him and that Mr. Leutwyler said "What do you want me to do?"

Vice Chairman Grosso asked if it was a private contractor and Mr. Peterson said that it was. He said that he had to get a machine and clear the dirt and that he should not have to do that.

Mr. Peterson said that the town should address this at the committee meetings and hold the contractors responsible when they are doing terrible work, like the sewer project on Main St.

Mr. Peterson said that he is digging streets in Jersey City and installing 20" gas lines. He said that at the end of the day that the street looks like it was before they started digging.

He said that P&A did a terrible job on Main Street. Mr. Peterson said that when you drive down Main St., the bus would pick up the kids and they would breathe that stuff in. He said that the project is a "dog and pony" show. He said that hopefully the right people will remedy things.

Mr. Peterson said that he is not going to complain about the rates and that he put in the more expensive pump because he likes to do stuff right.

Mr. Peterson asked if Lennar know what the residents were going to be paying monthly for the sewer bill because it is in their contracts. Vice Chairman Grosso said that he does not have reference to it. Mr. Peterson then said that to hear the

same thing over and over again that it's "not fair". He then said, "Who's it fair to? It's not fair to anyone, so we're all good."

15. ADJOURNMENT:

- a. Mr. Grosso made a motion to adjourn the meeting and was 2nd by Ms. Kimmick.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Minutes were prepared by the Plumsted Municipal Utilities Authority Secretary,
Cynthia MacReynolds