

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Municipal Authority of the Borough of Portage Water Department was held on Thursday, February 16th, at 6:00p.m., in the Conference Room located at 606 Cambria Street.

Those in attendance were:

Dino Scarton, Scott Yetsko, Matt McCoy, and Christopher McCall and Thomas Riskus.

Also present were:

Joe Beyer-Engineer, Chuck Gouse- Superintendent, and Jennifer Flowers, Business Manager.

Absent were:

Attorney Michael Carbonara – Solicitor.

I. CALL TO ORDER -

Mr. Scarton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call.

II. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS –

Mrs. Patricia Rylke – Request for adjustment. Mrs. Rylke has concern of her water usage from Jan 2021 to Dec of 2022. She has reached out to several businesses to help her resolve her issue with her toilet flapper. She realizes that this issue has been ongoing for some time now, but she has had health issues that have kept her from taking care of this sooner. A PWA employee had talked to her about the consumption and he checked for a possible leak on the Water Authority side. Mrs. Rylke has shutoff the toilet in the basement to help prevent any future high bills. She is asking the Water Authority for any type of help they will give her. Mr. Scarton asked Mrs. Rylke if the problem has been addressed at this time and she replied that was correct. Mr. Scarton asked Mr. Gouse if Mrs. Rylke was given the appropriate paperwork to fill out for an adjustment, Mr. Gouse stated that the readings were not astronomically high and that an adjustment is only good for one month. Mr. Scarton thanked Mrs. Rylke for coming to the meeting and voicing her concern, and stated that a discussion will be held and Mr. Gouse will be in contact with her. Mr. Gouse stated he informed Mrs. Rylke that he will be getting together with her to install a new meter.

Mr. Shane Malinish – Unifirst Presentation. Mr. Gouse invited Mr. Malinish to the meeting tonight to discuss Unifirst services compared to the previous supplier, Cintas. Mr. Malinish stated that this is a contractual agreement of 3-5 years. This basically secures an investment into Unifirst products. Mr. Scarton thanked Mr. Malinish for coming to the meeting. Mr. Riskus asked if we would start this agreement on a weekly basis, could we change to bi-weekly if we see weekly is not needed, Mr. Malinish stated that can absolutely be done.

III. CORRESPONDENCE –

Letter from Portage Borough Council appointing Mr. Thomas Riskus to the Portage Water Authority Board, term expiring December 31, 2024. Welcome Mr. Riskus!

Letter from Amanda Kline, Portage Summerfest – Mr. Scarton asked Mrs. Flowers to respond to Amanda stating the Water Authority Board cannot contribute to organizations.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES -

ON MOTION BY MR. McCALL SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, THE BOARD AGREED TO DISPENSE WITH THE READING OF THE JANUARY 2023 MINUTES BEING THAT THEY WERE DISTRIBUTED IN WRITTEN FORMAT AND UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL, AND MR. McCOY, AND MR. RISKUS.

V. AGENTS EXPENDITURES –

Nothing to report.

VI. INVOICES - FOR JANUARY 2023

PAID BILLS 1/06/2023

Allegheny Supply	\$ 26.83
Bobbie Jo Myers – Customer Deposit Refund	100.00
Cambria Mailing Services, Inc.	78.33
Cambria Systems, Inc	3,362.26
Cintas	89.38
Eric Salen – Customer Refund on Closed out Acct	57.04
German Town Electric – Martindale	145.00
Hines Equipment – Unit #1	131.71
Jozie Nemitz – Customer Deposit Refund	100.00
Ludwig Electric, LLC	311.00
Metron-Farnier, LLC	6,725.00
Pace Analytical Services, LLC	715.50
Peoples Natural Gas Company	572.74
Portage Service Center	362.18
Raptosh Lehmier & Carbonara – November 2022	1,034.50
Ray Oil & Gas Co	402.87
RDM-Johnstown, LLC – November/December 2022	444.00
Rochelle Rusnak – Customer Deposit Refund	100.00
Sherri K Burgan – Customer Deposit Refund	54.77
Stagers Store	96.24
Teno’s Truck & Auto Repair – Unit #1	59.81
Tony Anico – Customer Deposit Refund	100.00
Verizon Wireless	32.78
Visa – 1 st Summit	<u>184.37</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 15,286.31

PAID BILLS 01/19/2023

Aflac – Bilchak	\$ 33.50
American Water Works Assoc.	50.00
Anthony Thomas – 2023 Clothing Allowance	300.00

Charles Gouse – 2023 Clothing Allowance	300.00
Christopher McCall – January 2023 Mtg	45.00
CMPA – January Bills	1,000.00
Comcast	328.10
Common of Pa – Lab Registration Application	50.00
DJ Moore – 2023 Clothing Allowance	300.00
Dino Scarton – January 2023 Mtg	45.00
Get Through Communications	440.61
Isabella McCabe – 2023 Clothing Allowance	100.00
Jennifer Flowers – 2023 Clothing Allowance	200.00
John M. Bilchak – 2023 Clothing Allowance	300.00
Mainline Newspaper – 2023 Meeting Date Schedule	60.75
Mark Kennedy – 2023 Clothing Allowance	300.00
Mary L Elchin – December 2022 Cleaning	200.00
Matt McCoy – January 2023 Mtg	45.00
PA One Call System, Inc.	121.56
Pace Analytical Services. LLC – Plants	238.50
Penelec	519.92
PMAA – Life/Disability Dues	446.18
Portage Auto Parts – Unit #2	6.29
Pro Disposal, Inc.	191.40
Randall Motor Company – Unit #2	1,075.95
Rave Mobile Safety (currently SwiftReach) 1 yr license	1,250.00
Ray Oil & Gas Co.	3,116.24
Scott Yetsko – January 2023 Mtg	45.00
Stager’s Store	65.81
Todd Feathers – 2023 Clothing Allowance	300.00
Verizon	438.35
VWR International LLC	804.77
WIN-911 Software – License Tracking – Benscreek	<u>800.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 13,517.93

PAID BILLS 01/20/2023

REA Energy cooperative Inc.	\$ 1,528.72
UPMC – Health, Dental & Vision	<u>7,819.80</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 9,348.52

PAID BILLS

1 st Summit Bank – LOC	\$ 1,108.00
PA Turnpike Toll By Plate –Chuck/Joe Beyer	9.80
Staples – Office Supplies	31.10
VWR International LLC	<u>509.74</u>
TOTAL:	\$ 1,658.64

ON MOTION OF MR. YETSKO SECONDED BY MR. McCALL, THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ACCEPT AND PAY INVOICES FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2023 FOR \$59,758.76, WHICH INCLUDES PENNVEST (\$3,896.36) AND USDA

(\$16,051.00) MONTHLY, PAYMENTS. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL, AND MR. McCOY, AND MR. RISKUS.

VII. TREASURER'S REPORT NOVEMBER:

ON MOTION OF MR. McCALL SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ACCEPT TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY BEGINNING CASH, \$2,066,739.93, ENDING CASH \$2,089,905.17. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL AND MR. McCOY. AND MR. RISKUS.

VIII. SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Leaks

Mr. Gouse touched base on the three leaks: Johnson Ave & Hammer Street Intersection, Johnstown Housing Authority and Newry Road.

Vehicles

There is nothing to report on the vehicles. Mr. McCall questioned the status of the new vehicles to which Mr. Gouse stated that he has not heard any word on a delivery date. He has contacted the salesman with no response. Mr. McCall stated that it is close to 6 months since they have been ordered.

Administrative

Mr. Gouse stated that he has accepted the Superintendent's position with a few stipulations that will be discussed in Executive Session.

Portage Township approached Mr. Gouse in regards to installing a 2" dry hydrant at the township building because of using their sweeper in the summer they are filling up and cleaning out the sweeper with the hydrant at Portage School and the school does not like the dirt on the road and in the drain. Mr. Gouse received a price for a hydrant, a pressure reducing valve and a check valve with installation by the meter pit on their property. Mr. Gouse is presenting the PWA with this issue due to the fact of the Township not paying for the install. If this would happen, it would be on a separate meter. Discussion was held on this and was tabled at this time.

Mr. Gouse attached the Portage Sewer Authority letter regarding the Water Meter Replacement Cost Sharing request from PWA. Mr. Gouse spoke to Attorney Carbonara who spoke with the Sewer Authority Attorney. They are in agreement with this and Attorney Carbonara will draw up an agreement.

Mr. Gouse pointed out the need for a new server for PWA Scada System, the current one is nearly 20 years old and is hard to find replacement parts. Mr. Gouse has reached out multiple times to Cambria Systems with no response. He reached out to Josh Dickert at L/B Water for a quote of \$36,463.00 for material with installation being done in house. Mr. Scarton questioned Mr. Gouse that if the equipment fails that it is up to PWA to service and fix, Mr. Gouse replied "yes". This system communicates with our tanks and pressure reducing valves. This project was included in the meter pit grant that was submitted. There could be 6-8 months until there is an approval or not with the grant. Mr. McCoy asked Mr. Gouse to reach out to Rural Water and see if they could recommend a company to help fix this, Mr. Gouse said he is sure there are

companies out of state that could help. Mr. Scarton is concerned about the install being done in house. Mr. Scarton would like to see a few more quotes on this.

Mr. Gouse contacted Diversified Technology, PWA's Billing Software Company, regarding pricing to have PWA water bills done through them. A spreadsheet has been provided to the board prior to tonight's meeting for review. Mr. Gouse discussed the options of billing being done through them and customer payments being paid directly to them through a PO Box. He said this would eliminate two jobs from the water office. Mr. Gouse stated that there would not be a flow of customers coming in the office and no payments to be processed on a daily basis. Mrs. Flowers questioned Mr. Gouse that customers will not need to come into the office at all anymore and Mr. Gouse stated that all payments would go to Diversified. Mr. Gouse explained that currently the bills are sent out on a postcard, which says Municipal Authority of Portage Water Department and some customers don't realize that the sewer and garbage are also included on the bill. Diversified bills would be on a full size sheet of paper and would hold more information and would be cheaper. Mrs. Flowers asked Mr. Gouse what exactly the girls in the office would do Mr. Gouse replied that other than doing payroll, that would be about all they would have to do. Mr. Riskus reiterated what Mr. Gouse said, that if PWA moves forward with this Diversified proposal, two jobs would be eliminated. Mr. Gouse replied that he doesn't know if it would eliminate the jobs, that the office could easily be reduced to one full time or part time person for sure because they are not doing the process to which the bills get sent out monthly, and are not answering phone calls or taking customer payments and posting them. Mr. Scarton questioned Mr. Gouse that when the call center takes the customer call, for instance and has a high bill, what will Diversified do because they will still have to contact someone at the office. Mr. Gouse stated that was his concern also, it would be him taking the customer call and explaining their bill to them. Mr. Scarton used again the scenario of a customer calling with a high bill and wanting answers, who do they call. Mr. Gouse responded by asking Mr. Scarton if he had an issue with his bill and called the utility company, who would he speak to?, which Mr. Scarton replied, that it would be an automated system. Mr. Gouse asked if there is a difference between the two, added that Portage Water Authority customers are living in a society that they are local and are used to coming in to drop their bill off. Mr. Gouse asked if this needs to stay this way, he said not necessarily. Mr. Gouse was asked how user friendly it will be for the customer and if there are any companies that use this program that we can get feedback from. Mr. Gouse stated that he is not aware of any other companies using Diversified Technologies. After discussion, Mr. Scarton stated that there are more things to explore and presentations to be done before making any decisions.

Mr. Gouse approached the PWA Board with an idea of possible consolidation with Portage Sewer Authority. Mr. Gouse gave a breakdown of the pros and cons of doing this. Mr. Scarton asked to hold this until Executive Session.

Mr. Gouse reported that he has quotes for replacing the PWA roof. This will more than likely have to be bid out.

Mr. Gouse stated, in regards to our tanks, DEP is now issuing an annual inspection on the tanks. An annual inspection was done last year. He has pricing from Southern Corrosion of \$20,400 per year, for Munster Road Tank and a list of things this company will do – includes annual visual inspection, any emergency issues, the first year they would clean, paint inside and

outside up to AWWA regulation, disinfect and refill. After this initial visit, this would then be done every five years.

Mr. Scarton asked if this is just for the one tank. Mr. Gouse replied that was correct, it includes total restoration every five years. As far as the remaining tanks, they would do a visual inspection and every five years they would do a complete washout. This is annual inspection includes: Park Avenue, Spring Hill, Mountain Avenue, Martindale & Benscreek. The washout would only be for Mountain Avenue, Spring Hill & Park Avenue for now because we don't have a way to take the clear wells offline.

IX. PLANT MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Gouse stated that Mr. Moore changed to Univar as the chemical supplier for the plants. Mr. Gouse suggested to Mr. Moore and Mr. Thompson that at the beginning of each year they should reach out to multiple suppliers for cost comparison.

Mr. Scarton asked Mr. Gouse if he had any comment on the final item on the Plant Manager's Report. Mr. Gouse stated this is on the report monthly and that hiring an extra employee is needed for distribution also. Mr. McCoy asked Mr. Gouse if any of the employees have discussed getting their full license, Mr. Gouse said that Mr. Feathers does have his full license, Mr. Gouse stated that technically a full license is not necessary to work at the plants. As long as there is one licensed operator there.

X. ENGINEER'S REPORTS

A copy of the Engineer's Report was distributed to the board prior to the meeting.

Emergency Action Plan

Mr. Beyer stated there is no change.

Notice of Violations

Mr. Beyer stated there was a conference call with DEP, Dan Mikesic from Pennvest. The next date for issuing another Tier 2 Notice of Violation will be no later than April 3, 2023.

Long Range Plan

Mr. Beyer met with Mr. Gouse to propose a plan for the Water Authority Board long range plan. The information has been given to the board for review. Mr. Beyer told the board that there can be changes made if they feel needed.

Johnson Avenue

Mr. Beyer stated the curb boxes that MABP will move curb boxes that are required to be moved as part of the upcoming project.

Pennvest Project

Mr. Beyer spoke with Mr. Estep to get status of well drilling investigation. Mr. Casselberry is supposed to have his report completed by the end of February.

Hydrant Flow Testing

Mr. Beyer presented the board with a cost of \$90.00 per hour for Gus Yahner to show employees how to do individual hydrant testing. Mr. McCall stated he would like that all employees be educated on this.

Meter Pit Information

Mr. Beyer provided Mr. Gouse with Meter Pit Information.

Projects

Mr. Beyer presented approximate cost estimates for several projects prior to the meeting for review.

XI. SOLICITOR'S REPORT

No Report

XII. FORESTER'S REPORT

No Report

XIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Garbage Contract

This is still pending.

QuickBooks/Wessel

Need to have better communication with Wessel & Company.

Grants

This will be reported and updated under the Engineer section.

XIV. NEW BUSINESS

2021 Customer Deposit Refunds

ON MOTION OF MR. McCALL, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO APPROVE THE 2021 CUSTOMER DEPOSIT REFUNDS TOTALING \$3,000. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL, MR. McCOY AND MR. RISKUS.

Mrs. Flowers stated that the reason for only having 2021 deposit refunds is that the office staff is finally getting caught up now that there is more staff.

Motion to approve the 2022 customer write-offs was tabled until the next meeting. Mr. Scarton asked Mrs. Flowers to contact Attorney Carbonara regarding liens. Mrs. Flowers replied that she will do so.

Mr. Scarton stated that Attorney Carbonara wanted a motion on the sewer agreement for meters.

ON MOTION OF MR. YETSKO, SECONDED BY MR. McCOY THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO GIVE AUTHORIZATION FOR ATTORNEY CARBONARA TO DEVELOPE A PORTAGE SEWER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT AT ONE YEAR FOR 2023 CALENDAR YEAR AT .50 PER METER READING PER MONTH. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL, MR. McCOY AND MR. RISKUS.

Hydrant Flow Testing

ON MOTION OF MR. McCALL, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED THAT PORTAGE WATER AUTHORITY CONTRACT THE EADS GROUP WITH NO MORE THAT 4 HOURS FOR TRAINING PURPOSES FOR HYDRANT FLOW TESTING AND SYSTEM FLUSHING. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL, MR. McCOY AND MR. RISKUS.

XV. ADJUSTMENTS FOR THE MONTH

ON MOTION OF MR. McCALL, SECONDED BY MR. RISKUS, THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO APPROVE THE ADJUSTMENTS FOR JANUARY IN THE AMOUNTS OF \$49.70, \$377.22, \$93.71, \$171.37, \$282.79, \$39.00, \$42.36, \$215.02 AND \$124.40, TOTALING \$1,395.57. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCALL, MR. McCOY AND MR. RISKUS.

XVI. GOOD OF THE ORDER –

Mr. McCoy asked Mr. Gouse if the EAD’S Group has met with our employees regarding leak detection education. Mr. McCoy stressed the importance of this. Mr. Gouse replied that they have met with employees due to so many leaks being found on their own.

XVII. PROFIT & LOSS BUDGET VS. ACTUAL –

Mr. McCall questioned an account 450.1 operating labor. Mr. Gouse stated this is high due to compensation time being put into the wrong general ledger account. This is been corrected.

XVIII. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ACCOUNT REPORT –

XIX. VACATION/SICK/COMP REPORT –

Reviewed and discussed.

XX. ADJOURNMENT

ON MOTION OF MR. McCALL, SECONDED BY MR. YETSKO, THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY AGREED TO ADJOURNMENT AND EXTENDED TO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR PERSONNEL AND LEGAL MATTERS AT 7:41 P.M. BOARD MEMBERS VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY INCLUDED, MR. SCARTON, MR. YETSKO, MR. McCOY AND MR. McCALL AND MR. RISKUS.

XXI. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 16th, 2023 at 6:00 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Flowers, Business Manager