

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP
WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY OF MAY 13, 2020**

The May 13, 2020 meeting of the Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman John Rankin. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Board, relying upon guidance from the Office of Open Records and General Counsel to the Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Association, conducted the meeting via Zoom. More precisely, the Authority Manager and one Board member (Mr. Beck) were present at the Authority office (thereby allowing physical access to the meeting by the public) while the remaining Board members and staff participated remotely, so as to ensure adequate social distancing. Those persons participating remotely included Board members John Rankin, Melvin Wright, Keith Weiss, and Bruce Knipe. Staff members attending remotely included Gary Weaver of Castle Valley Engineering (Authority Engineer) and Jack D. Wuerstle, Esquire (Authority Solicitor). No members of the public attended the meeting.

The format of the meeting was posted on the Authority website five (5) days in advance of the meeting. Although not required to do so because the meeting was open to the public had anyone wished to attend, the Authority elected to post the herein draft meeting minutes on the Authority website as a courtesy. Said minutes will be reviewed, discussed, and offered for approval at the next Authority meeting.

Following the formal Roll Call and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, Chairman Rankin called for action on the minutes from the March 2020 meeting of the Authority. The April 2020 meeting had been cancelled due to the COVID-19 issue and evolving restrictions concerning public gatherings.

A discussion of the March meeting minutes followed. Mr. Knipe identified one misspelling in the minutes. Subject to correction of that misspelling, Mr. Wright made a motion to approve the March meeting minutes. Mr. Weiss seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Rankin next called upon Mr. Groff for presentation of the Staff Report.

Mr. Groff reported normal operations for the water system last month, with the wells combining to pump just under 10.7 million gallons (or 55% of the capacity allowed by the Delaware River Basin Commission). Mr. Groff noted an increase in residential water usage of about 15%, seemingly due to the Commonwealth's stay at home order. Otherwise, work in the field continues as necessary with appropriate safety measures in place. In particular, water line flushing is going quite well; utilizing approximately 20% less water and with no complaints from the residents thus far.

The sewer system experienced normal operations as well last month, with no significant issues to report. However, because of anticipated increases in the phosphorus composition of influent due to increased cleaning, the testing regiment has been upgraded and chemical treatment is being modified accordingly. Mr. Groff also noted that PWTA has witnessed an increase in flow of about 20-30%.

As to capital projects, Mr. Groff reported that following discussions with Township personnel regarding landscaping at the new well site, it is now anticipated that approximately two (2) dozen trees will have to be relocated due to the positioning of the well building. In addition, some grading and a small retaining wall may also be needed.

In terms of current development projects, the Estates at Hilltown/Oskanian continues unchanged with 29 homes connected (water only). Phase 4 is complete at the Regency at Hilltown with 188 units occupied. Tice Estates has 21 homes built. All water and sewer mains at the Arbors at Hilltown have been tested and two (2) homes are connected.

Hilltown Walk has all 40 homes connected and the developer has satisfactorily completed the punch list. A motion was unanimously approved in March to release the Maintenance Bond once the Developer has paid all outstanding bills owed to the Authority. The Developer has not yet done so.

The Wawa project is also pursuing dedication. Work is complete, but outstanding bills exist. In addition, pursuant to the Construction Agreement, the Developer needs to provide the Authority with an Affidavit of Title. The Developer has been advised of both outstanding issues.

Regarding proposed projects, the Witkowski plans have been modified to include just two (2) homes (one already existing). As to the two (2) inter-municipal agreements involving the Chalfont-New Britain Joint Sewer Authority, a draft inter-municipal agreement is still being negotiated on the Lohin Tract (the property near the Berry Brow plant), while the final inter-municipal agreement on the Assal Tract (Mill Ridge) is heading to New Britain Township for approval. With regard to the project at 781 Minsi Trail, planning modules have been forwarded to PWTA for signature. Home construction has been halted on the single connection along Telegraph Road.

There was no Executive Session.

Chairman Rankin next called for the monthly Treasurer's Report and review of bills. Following discussion, Mr. Weiss made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report and payment of bills; seconded by Mr. Wright. The motion carried 5-0.

There were no escrow releases.

Under old business, Mr. Groff updated the Board as to progress on the proposed service extension along Route 313, including the Authority's intention to move forward with a wetland survey. Mr. Groff also updated the Board as to the DCNR grant application process for the proposed walking trail project.

In terms of New Business, Mr. Groff briefly reviewed with the Board the status of the Authority's accounts receivables in light of the ongoing public health crisis. Thus far, the Authority has not experienced any negative impact to its receivables profile. Staff will continue to monitor the situation closely.

With no further business before the Board, Mr. Knipe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 P.M., which was second by Mr. Beck. The motion carried 5-0.