

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
MOUNT LAUREL TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY**

November 16, 2023

Vice Chairwoman Coco-Capri called the regular meeting of the Mount Laurel Township Municipal Utilities Authority to order at 7:04 p.m. via in person and videoconference. A sign with the call-in information was posted at the Elbo Lane Water Treatment Plant Facility Meeting Room and posted on the Authority’s official website.

Those in attendance were:

Cheryl Coco-Capri	Vice Chair
Elwood Knight	Secretary
John Francescone	Member
Jim Kehoe	Member

Also in attendance were:

Pamela Carolan	Executive Director
Russell Trice	Operations Engineer
Jonathan Sears	Director of Finance
Diane Ordille	Administrative Assistant
William Long	Consulting Engineer
George Morris	Solicitor

Vice Chairwoman Coco-Capri announced that the notice requirements of the “Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act” have been satisfied. Annual notice has been transmitted to two newspapers; it has been prominently posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board and filed with the Mount Laurel Township Clerk.

**Public Comment – General**

No public in attendance

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-119 Resolution Acknowledging Service and Retirement of Brian Scott with 34-Years of Service, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone, and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

**Minutes**

Following a motion made by Mr. Knight and seconded by Mr. Francescone the Board unanimously approved the minutes for the October 19, 2023, regular meeting, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, and Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstention, 1 absent

**Developments/New Connections**

No Developments or New Connections

## **Operations**

### **Water System Summary**

Ms. Carolan advised about annual preventative maintenance at the Elbo WTP and shared a video of our personnel cleaning the finished water storage tank.

Ms. Carolan said there have been 2 water main breaks since the last meeting.

Ms. Carolan reported that every 5-10 years ISO rating comes in and does flow testing on a number of hydrants, so they can come up with the fire rating for the town, which occurred today.

### **Sewer System Summary**

Ms. Carolan reported that 4 pump stations were working outside of normal parameters plus the 3 that have construction on-going.

Ms. Carolan noted that we did another courtesy septic tank cleaning at Laurel Acres for the Township.

### **Underdrain System Summary**

Ms. Carolan stated we have been working with the Township including several recent meetings on the underdrain system (UD) where we are encouraging them to upgrade at least one station a year. Golf Lane was updated over a year ago. Ms. Carolan added that the biggest item the MUA wants with each of the UD pump stations is an alarm system.

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

Mr. Long presented the report.

### **Active Projects in Construction**

#### **Replacement of Part of Library Force Main and Millstream Force Main Connection, M-180-322-003**

The project includes replacing a section of the existing PVC library force main with 10" HDPE (via directional drill), beginning at the pump station, through the adjacent wooded area to Route 295, and cleaning and televising the force main crossing under Route 295/NJTP. The project also includes replacement of the connection of the Millstream force main to the primary force main in Union Mill Rd. Project will be financed via an NJIB loan. Contract awarded to JVS Industrial and Commercial Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$1,219,000.83 on April 20, 2023. Construction is 50% complete. The Library piping is installed. Work on Millstream to start December 4, 2023.

#### **Atrium & Hooton Pump Station Upgrades, M-180-347-001**

This project included electrical and control system replacement and upgrades at both the Atrium and the Hooton Road stations. The Atrium station work also included pump replacement and replacement of the emergency generator which also connects to the adjacent Horizon Way Water Booster Station. Financing via NJIB Loan. On December 16, 2021, a contract in the amount of \$1,177,150.00 was awarded to Eagle Construction Services. Ongoing issues with the alarms and communicating with the cloud, same as the issues we had with the Devonshire project.

#### **Air Release MH Improvements 101 Hartford Rd & Isolation Valve Removal Pike Rd M-180-392-000**

The project includes the replacement of the air relief valve at 101 Hartford Road and the removal of the valve and fittings for the Pike Road isolation valve. A contract No. 2022-14 in the amount of \$599,670.00 was awarded to J.F. Kiely Construction, Inc. at the March 2023 meeting. The isolation portion of the project on Pike Road is basically complete. The air release manhole portion on Hartford Road was to begin in November, however, still working on this with the County.

Water Main on Hainesport-Mount Laurel Road County Bridge #B4.71 M-180-393-000

This project is for repair of a leaking 12” water main which is strapped to the side of the County bridge. A contract was awarded to JVS Industrial and Commercial Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$109,000.83 during the July 2023 meeting. Construction to being in November.

Active Projects in Design

Pump Station Monitoring System, M-180-365-000

No change in status. This project includes updating the alarm system at 29 of the Authority’s 41 sewage pumping stations. In addition, condition monitoring will be included with the system. The Authority authorized the start of design work with a construction completion of March 2021, which was not met. Financing for this project was originally planned for NJIB bundle #1 but the Authority was able to get I-Bank approval to move this to a separate financing so the remainder of bundle #1 can go to loan closing. Authority comments addressed on plans and specifications. Plans and specifications to be submitted to Authority.

Air Release Manhole Improvements Union Mill Road M-180-390-000

No change in status. This project includes the replacement of a force main air relief valve at the intersection of Union Mill Road and the entrance to Signature Place. The project scheduled is to coincide with the Township project to improve Union Mill Road. Priority and construction schedule will be done when UMR is closed for improvements.

Manual Transfer Switch Installation-81 Elbo Lane M-180-394-000

No change in status. This project is to install a transfer switch with the capability of connecting an existing portable generator to it when needed, at the Authority’s Engineering Office Located at 81 Elbo Lane. This has been changed from automatic to manual transfer switch. Nothing has been done yet to revise the plans and specifications from automatic to manual.

Well No. 4 Redevelopment-M-180-395-000

This project is for the redevelopment of Well no. 4, including removal and rehabilitation of the existing pump and well piping, redevelopment of the well and installation of Authority supplied pump and well piping. On tonight’s agenda with recommendation to award to A.C. Shultes, Inc. in the amount of \$117,600.00.

Mr. Trice reported on the following projects as they are being designed by firms other than Alaimo Associates:

Sanitary Sewer System Modeling, Capacity Assessment and Master Planning (Engineer: Mott MacDonald)

The hydraulic model has been completed and calibrated. Mott MacDonald used the model to develop and analyze alternatives for alleviating operational problems experienced in the system and to evaluate alternatives identified by the Authority in the initial SOW. Final report is now expected by the end of October, but some projects were already included in the Authority’s FY24 and subsequent years capital budgets. The Authority is pursuing relocation of the replacement plant headworks off-site in order to address high pressures in the primary force main. Yesterday we received the final copy of the hydraulic modeling and system performance evaluation. This information along with other data gathered will be put together and given to us by the end of the year.

Elbo Lane WTP HVAC Replacement (Engineer: Mott MacDonald)

This project includes the replacement and rehabilitation of the HVAC system at the Elbo WTP. Financing will be via the NJIB. MM indicated that the final copies of the plans and specifications will be submitted to DEP and the IBank for review today.

Ramblewood Pump Station Generator Replacement (Engineer: Remington & Vernick)

This project includes the replacement of the existing standby generator at Ramblewood Pump Station. A contract was awarded to Lee-Way Electrical in the amount of \$173,400.00 at the February 17, 2022, meeting. Generator scheduled to be shipped tomorrow and will take at least a week or two to arrive.

HRWPCF Sludge Dewatering Equipment Replacement (Engineer: Colliers)

This project includes the replacement of the sludge handling and dewatering equipment in the sludge dewatering building which was originally constructed in 1996. Colliers indicated that the final plans and specifications will be submitted to the Authority and the DEP by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Chapel Hill Road and Trefoil Terrace Water Main Replacements (Engineer: ERI)

No change in status. This project included the replacement of approximately 1,020 feet of 6" and 8" water main and 45 services on Chapel Hill Road and Trefoil Terrace. Contract No. 2022-07-84 was awarded to CTX Infrastructure in the amount of \$430,673.50 in July 2022. Construction is complete except for final documentation needed before the project can be finalized.

Tricia Meadows Force Main (Engineer: ERI)

This project is for the replacement of a section of the Tricia Meadows force main from the vicinity of the PS to Moorestown-Mt Laurel Road. A contract was awarded to CTX Infrastructure, the low bidder, in the amount of \$223,875 at the September 2023 meeting. The contractor started clearing the route for the force main. Once complete the surveyor will lay out the base for the force main. Work anticipated to begin the first week in December.

Hartford Road WPCF Headworks Facility (Engineer: Mott MacDonald)

No change in status. Mott MacDonald performed an evaluation of the existing comminutors and grit removal facilities at the Hartford Road WPCF. The scope of work includes the evaluation of new screening and grit removal equipment technologies and the ability to construct new headworks at both on and off-site locations. The final report is complete and has been submitted to us for review.

Cornwallis Drive and Carteret Court Water Main Replacement (Engineer: ERI)

Project includes replacement of 1000 feet of 8" water main on Cornwallis and 570 feet of 6" water main on Carteret Court. The project has been advertised with bids to be received on December 14, 2023.

**Closed Session**

A motion was made by Mr. Francescone, seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously approved to pass Resolution 2023-11-120 to close the meeting to discuss Litigation and Potential Litigation which are exempt from open meetings under the Sunshine Law, at 7:30 p.m., with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Litigation, Potential Litigation and Regulatory Matters – SEE CLOSED PORTION OF MEETING

The meeting was re-opened at 8:06 p.m., following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight with unanimous agreement from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously agreed to remain a member of the 3M and Dupont class action lawsuits, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe  
Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

### **Contracts**

Following a motion made by Mr. Knight and seconded by Mr. Kehoe, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-121 Resolution Authorizing the Release of Maintenance Bond for the Door and Window Replacement, Various Locations - MUA Contract No. 2020-05, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.  
Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Knight and seconded by Mr. Kehoe, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-122 Resolution Approving the Award of Well No. 4 Redevelopment to A.C. Schultes, Inc. in the amount of \$117,600.00, MUA Contract No.2023-10, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone, and Mr. Kehoe.  
Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Knight and seconded by Mr. Kehoe, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-123 Resolution Authorizing the Mount Laurel Municipal Utilities Authority to enter into a Cooperative Pricing Agreement with the Camden County Education Service Commission, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.  
Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Knight and seconded by Mr. Kehoe, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-124 Resolution Authorizing Agreement with AEP Energy, Inc. to Supply Electric Service for the Mount Laurel Township Municipal Utilities Authority from November 7, 2023 to November 7, 2027, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.  
Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

### **Accounting and Financial**

#### **Discussion of Rates:**

Mr. Sears explained that although the Board agreed with a \$2.00/month increase on the fixed charge for each water and sewer during last month's meeting, after speaking with Mr. Grossman about how residential customers would bear the brunt of the increase, and largest use customers will see virtually no increase, it was decided to modify the increase proposal. Mr. Sears continued to say that the newly proposed increase would change from \$2.00/month to \$1.50/month on the fixed charge for each utility for all residential, municipal and apartment customers. The 5/8" commercial customer would be \$2.00 on the fixed charge for each utility which the commercial meters over 1" at \$19.34 for water and sewer per month. Mr. Sears stated that this will better match the percentage increase between all classes of users as the customers with larger commercial meters are also bigger water users.

Mr. Sears reiterated that for a residential user with both water and sewer service, the total increase will be \$36 per year, and for commercial customers with 5/8" meters it would increase by \$48 per year.

Mr. Francescone asked if this increase would bump us up in comparison to other towns, which Mr. Sears showed a comparison with these proposed rates, and in the chart, there wasn't any movement from where the MUA was in general ranking compared with prior to the proposed increase.

The Board understood and had no further questions.

Mr. Sears added with regard to the increase in the connection fees, with the proposed increase it will be a total of \$964 more per year for new residential connections to the water and sewer systems.

Mr. Morris asked about developers who still owe us for connection fees for ongoing phases. The Board determined that once the new rates are in place, that existing developments can pay their remaining connection fees at the old rate if they pay prior to the February 1, 2024, increase.

Audit:

Mr. Sears took a moment to highlight sections of the audit, specifically the MD&A, and reviewed some key costs and expenditures and billing collection rates.

Mr. Sears mentioned that a separate audit had to be performed due to the money borrowed from the IBank.

Mr. Sears thanked everyone involved with completing the audit.

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-125 Resolution Concerning Reviewing of Annual Audit Report, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-126 Resolution Regarding Corrective Action Plan Adopted in Response to Annual Audit Report for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Mr. Sears explained that regarding Resolution No. 2023-11-127 we are asking that the parameters be changed to make it more reasonable. Mr. Sears explained the fixed limit was \$500 for capitalizing an asset with one year of useful life and we're requesting it be changed to \$5,000 and five years.

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously approved Resolution No. 2023-11-127 Resolution Approving Increase to Increase the Fixed Asset Limit Threshold as Defined in N.J.A.C 5:30-5.6, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously approved the Treasurers Report for September 2023 and Payment Plan Status Report for November 2023, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

Following a motion made by Mr. Francescone and seconded by Mr. Knight, the Board unanimously approved Requisition #649 in the amount of \$1,452,543.52 for the Accounts Payable Vouchers, with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

There were no bills from the Acquisition and Construction Bill List

Following a motion made by Mr. Kehoe and seconded by Mr. Francescone the Board unanimously approved Requisitions #5996 through #6012, in the amount of \$146,617.25 from the Renewal and Replacement list with affirmative votes from Ms. Capri, Mr. Knight, Mr. Francescone and Mr. Kehoe.

Total votes: 4 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions, 1 absent

**Comments:**

Ms. Carolan said that she wanted to let everyone know that the previous Executive Director of the MLTMUA, Lou Russo, passed away this week.

Ms. Carolan added that he was the second ED of the MUA and served from 1991 to 1999 and that she learned a lot from him.

Mr. Sears reminded the Board that the rate hearing is Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm.

Following a motion made by Mr. Kehoe and seconded by Mr. Francescone and with unanimous agreement from the members, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.