



245 Main Street
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Phone (570) 788-0608
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October 27, 2020

The Conyngham/Sugarloaf Joint Municipal Authority met for a Regular Session on October 27, 2020 at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held online using GoToMeeting's virtual conferencing service. It was called to order by Vice Chairman Olander, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll call was taken.

Present: Marc Eble, Andre Marchese, Greg Olander, Ed Gregory (Operations Manager), Peter O'Donnell (Solicitor), Dorothy Pisano (Office Administrator), Rich Harrison (Engineer)

Absent: Joseph Gallagher, Marguerite Woelfel

Public Comment on Agenda Items: None

Invited Guests: Ralph Stola, Walter Ackerman

Mr. Stola explained his reason for attending tonight's meeting. Stola always aspired to live in the Sugarloaf Valley. He and his wife have finally found the property they would like to purchase and build their home on. Unfortunately, to their dismay, they were informed of the unlikelihood of obtaining an EDU or being approved to install a private septic system. Upon hearing this, Stola desired an answer and explanation from the board.

Vice Chairman Olander confirmed the Authority does not have any EDUs to grant. He went on to explain that an Act 537 Plan is underway with the state. It has yet to be determined if any EDUs will become available. Secretary Eble expressed the board's regret to inform such facts before Engineer Harrison went on to give more details.

Connecting to a private lateral is unacceptable. A proper lateral must be established by extending a main near or adjacent to the property. He went on to say there are two issues with this. First, it would need to become a public sewer and be installed per the Authority's standards. For example, it would require an 8-inch sewer main. Secondly, installing a gravity sewer is preferable to a septic system. This is agreeable by most townships and DEP.

Eble explained the Act 537 Plan's purpose to help Stola further comprehend the delay of requesting additional EDUs. After, Operations Manager Gregory asked Stola if his property is within 150 feet of the sewer main. Stola stated his property is approximately 400 yards from the main and 200 yards from the nearest service lateral. It is Gregory's understanding that if these numbers are correct there should be no issue installing a private septic system. Gregory then asked Mr. Ackerman if he can visit the property. Ackerman agreed to meet Gregory, tomorrow, October 28 at 10:00 am.



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Operations Manager Gregory is to submit a report with his findings. After reviewing, the Board will approve or deny Mr. Stola's request to install a private septic system on the property.

Motion

Motion to Remove September 22, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes from Tonight's Agenda – Eble. Second –Marchese.

Questions on the Motion: None

No Roll Call – Three (3) Yes, Two (2) Absent. Motion carries.

Treasurer's Report:

Item 1: Vice Chairman Olander read the Treasurer's Report aloud. The document was also displayed on the video call. A copy of the report is on file and available for review.

Motion

Motion to Approve the Treasurer's Report ending September 30, 2020 – Eble. Second – Olander.

Questions on the Motion: None

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Eble	-	Affirmative	Gallagher	-	Absent
Marchese	-	Affirmative	Woelfel	-	Absent
Olander	-	Affirmative			

Item 2: Details of the Accounts Payable Report were read by Vice Chairman Olander. A copy of the report is on file and available for review.

Motion

Resolution #29: Motion to approve the Payment of Invoices and Unpaid Bills totaling \$51,951.26 – Eble. Second – Olander.



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ROLL CALL VOTE:

Eble	-	Affirmative	Gallagher	-	Absent
Marchese	-	Affirmative	Woelfel	-	Absent
Olander	-	Affirmative			

Solicitor’s Report:

Item #1: Solicitor O’Donnell notified the Board that there were two liens filed on properties during the month of October. If further information is desired as to the addresses or owners, he may be contacted at a later time.

Item #2: A copy of Sugarloaf Township’s approved minutes will soon be provided to Solicitor O’Donnell. As of now, he has not received a response from DEP in regard to the conditional approval of the Authority’s subdivision. O’Donnell is under the assumption that this should be deemed approved and the 1-acre sale will begin to be finalized.

Engineer’s Report:

Item #1: Engineer Harrison drafted a letter to notify residences of defects in their sewer laterals found while smoke testing. The draft lists numerous items that need attention. Alongside each item is a box to be checked if associated with said property. The billing addresses of each property must be obtained from the Authority’s office. Those with damaged lateral pipes will be addressed together once CCTV work is completed. All other items are fairly inexpensive to fix.

A second letter was drafted for more significant and costly defects found while performing a CCTV video inspection. This version lists the actions that can be taken. It also includes details and photos of the inspection as well as information on an existing loan. There are approximately 30 properties at this stage.

After hearing feedback, Harrison agreed to send the Board revised copies prior to next month’s meeting. He also asked members to consider incentives for full lateral replacements such as service discounts. It must also be determined how repairs will be inspected and the fees associated. Solicitor O’Donnell stressed the importance of office employees being knowledgeable when speaking to the public and forwarding messages. Secretary Eble added that resources should be on the Authority’s website to further educate and address questions prior to mailing any notices. These should be sent early next year.

Item #2: In addition, Engineer Harrison recommended a sewer replacement program in the public sector. A map of those selected for this program was visible on screen. Those included

October 27, 2020

have I&I reduction from structural failures and adverse conditions. They were also prioritized by grant applications. The capacity of these sewers would not change making permits from DEP unnecessary. Listed on the initial report were other sewers that could also be added to the project. Vice Chairman Olander declared that those absent should be present for this decision.

Manager's Operation Report:

Item#1: The Manager's Operation Report was presented to the Board by Operations Manager Gregory. It was also displayed on video. A copy of the report is on file and available for review. One item was added to the report verbally. That being a leak found in the Brookhill subdivision. It is located inside an apartment. The customer will be sent a certified letter notifying them that the repair is their responsibility.

Item #2: Operations Manager Gregory asked the Board to further explain why the meter replacement project is being delayed. Members agreed that entering customer's homes could be problematic due to the ongoing pandemic. Gregory asked that they reconsider this seeing as it would take at least 6-months to begin work after being approved. He went on to explain that the Authority is losing an estimated 15% in revenue that can equate up to \$150,000. Completing the program would also meet TA and DEP requirements for finding unbilled water. Replacing meters pays for itself. It is a return on projects and investments. Members agreed to reconsider and further discuss approving the program at next month's meeting.

Old Business:

Item #1: During last month's meeting, the Board had discussed inspecting the sewer main that is along the creek from the park to the sewer plant. Secretary Eble went on to say that he had spoken to Gary from the Conyngham Borough's council about the need to clear the land there and of thoughts to permanently maintain it for recreational use. The councilman was very receptive to the idea and even stated that the Borough themselves could possibly clear the land and help maintain it. Solicitor O'Donnell reminded everyone that there would be other items to address, such as insurance and worker's comp, if this were to be agreed upon. It would however be a good option. Secretary Eble is to discuss the idea further with Borough representation and report any new details.

New Business: None

Public Comment: None

Executive Session was held prior to the October 27 meeting for personnel issues.



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Motion

Motion to Adjourn the meeting at 8:12 pm on Tuesday, October 27. – Eble. Second – Marchese.

Questions on the Motion: None

No Roll Call – Unanimous.

Attest:

Marc Eble
CSJMA Secretary