

**BETHLEHEM AUTHORITY**  
**Minutes of the Regular Meeting**  
**Of the Board of Directors**  
**September 14, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Bethlehem Authority (“BA”) was held on September 14, 2023, in the Conference Room B504 at City Hall, Bethlehem, PA and remotely via Microsoft “Teams”. The meeting was called to order at 3:30PM by Mr. Dennis Domchek, Chair.

Also in attendance were:

Ms. Sharon J. Zondag, Vice Chair  
Mr. Thomas Donchez, Secretary  
Mr. Carlos Almeida, Treasurer  
Mr. John Tallarico, Assistant Sec./Treasurer  
Mr. James Broughal, Esq., Broughal & DeVito via teleconference  
Mr. Ron Madison, PE, Colliers Engineering & Design  
Mr. Stephen Repasch, Executive Director via teleconference  
Ms. Sandra Zapf, Administrative Assistant  
Mr. Eric Yeakel, Police Officer In-Charge

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

C. Almeida moved and J. Tallarico seconded to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2023, Regular Meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

Dr. Wandalyn Enix, City of Bethlehem, Council Liaison  
Ms. Michele Liberto, City of Bethlehem, Deputy Controller  
Mr. Steven Antalics, Private Citizen

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

There were no comments during Courtesy of the Floor.

**CHAIR**

Governance Document. D. Domchek reported that the HR/Governance Committee met again on August 30<sup>th</sup> to discuss the status of the Governing Documents. The electronic links have been added so the only thing needed for completion is the short summary of the responsibilities of each of the committees. D. Domchek anticipates presenting the final package to the board at the October meeting.

D. Domchek also mentioned that the format on the “Agenda” has been changed to reflect a more organized structure based on the Committees and clarified the Chairs of each: Property &

Infrastructure Committee Chair is T. Donchez; Finance Committee Chair is C. Almeida, and Governance & HR Committee Chair is S. Zondag

## **PROPERTY & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE**

**Watershed Management.** S. Repasch reported that there hasn't been a lot of activity; the turnpike sale timber contractor stopped and went to another job, then it got real wet these past few weeks. The contractor is expected back and finish up early fall.

**Williams/Transco Pipeline.** S. Repasch reported that the construction work is mostly completed on BA property

**Interconnection Evaluation.** E. Boscola had a meeting with AECOM about their proposal for the designs of the interconnections improvements; he had asked for a couple of revisions and as soon as they are received, further discussions with the two adjoining water systems will continue as to who will do what and when. The partners have budgeted design work for 2024.

**Wind Energy Project Zoning.** The argument hearing is scheduled for September 25<sup>th</sup> at Carbon County Court and S. Repasch will be in attendance.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**Investment Summary.** C. Almeida presented the Investment Summary as of September 1, 2023. In August, three CDs in the MRF matured and were reinvested. At the very end of August in the Construction Fund, a \$6 Million investment matured and was also reinvested; \$3 Million went into a SLG's Fund (State and Local Government Securities) with a variable rate currently 4.26%, very liquid and safe, and not subject to arbitrage; the other \$3 Million went into a Treasury Bill for 9 months at 5% APY that is subject to arbitrage.

C. Almeida also mentioned that the arbitrage report for the first-year of 2022 bonds resulted in a \$71,619.00 credit; \$46,196.00 was applied to the positive arbitrage ending August 31, 2023 and the remainder credit will be applied to offset additional positive arbitrage going forward.

C. Almeida also wanted to mention that the \$9 Million in the Construction Fund needs to be used or allotted for by the end of August 2025 or would have to be returned.

**Controller.** J. Filipos' report for the month of August 31, 2023, was circulated and filed with regular interest and expenses recorded. C. Almeida mentioned receipt of the \$230,875.78 in Carbon Credits were deposited into the Capital Reserve Account and interest of \$207,774.00 from a U.S. T-Bill was deposited into the Construction Fund.

**2023 Income and Expense Projections.** S. Repasch presented the report showing regular revenue and expenses through August 31, 2023. Revenue is at 95% of budget or \$660,491.00 which includes the Carbon Revenue of \$230,876.00. Professional Service expenses are at 59% or \$56,223.00; Security & Property expenses are at 54% or \$34,088.00; Administrative expenses are at 35% or \$186,936.00. Total expenses are 40% or \$277,247.00. Projected Operating cash on hand at the end of September 30, 2023 is \$130,344.00. On the Capital Reserve side, total

expenses through August 31, 2023, are at 90% or \$58,656.00; Total projected Capital Reserve cash on hand as of September 30, 2023, is \$320,615.00 and Total projected cash on hand on September 30, 2023, is \$1,380,977.00.

**2024 Pension Plan.** S. Repasch presented the Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) for the 2024 Pension Plan that the BA will owe at the end of 2024. The MMO expense is \$16,135.00 and will be included in the 2024 budget.

S. Zondag motioned and C. Almeida seconded to approve the 2024 MMO Pension Plan. Motion passed unanimously.

**Resolution 490 – Approval of Expenses.** D. Domchek presented Resolution 490 to the Board for expenses through September 14, 2023, from the General and Reserve accounts totaling \$42,074.20 and \$338,174.54 from the Construction Fund for Water Capital Expenses.

C. Almeida motioned and J. Tallarico seconded to approve Resolution 490 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

**2024 Budget.** S. Repasch reported that work for the 2024 budget has started and anticipates presenting a draft for the Finance Committee in early October.

## **GOVERNANCE & HR COMMITTEE**

**Governance Documents.** S. Zondag stated that the Governance Document that has been worked on since April to summarize all the documents that are used to perform our work as board members is pretty much done. This document will allow electronic access to BA documents and be a boon for new members as well as City council members to orient themselves to policy and procedures.

**Employee Manual Revisions.** S. Zondag stated that these items will be addressed in Executive Session.

## **SOLICITOR**

J. Broughal had no report.

## **CONSULTING ENGINEER**

R. Madison presented a new Recommendation and Action Tracking Spreadsheet as requested at the last board meeting. Changes were made to simplify the list of annual recommendations and what actions are to be taken. This was reviewed with E. Boscola to make sure this ties into his 10-year capital plan.

C. Almeida recommended that next year, the spreadsheet be updated with a simple color-coded highlight (green-completed, yellow-on-going and red-not completed) for a quick glance of progress.

### **SPECIAL POLICE**

Police report for the month of September was circulated and filed. E. Yeakel remarked that the lantern festival was delayed due to rain and will be held on September 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> and will take place in the exact location as last year.

### **WATER REPORT**

The Water Report for the month of August 2023, was created and filed by E. Boscola. The reservoirs are at a combined capacity of 97.93%.

### **CITY OF BETHLEHEM DIRECTOR OF WATER AND SEWER RESOURCES**

The Director's Report was filed and circulated reflecting financial status through August 31, 2023.

Major capital expenditures for June include:

- a. Replaced to-date about 300 lead service lines; this project is winding down and will be looking into another possible round of PennVest funding next year to continue with replacements.
- b. Meter replacement – about 2,000 have been replaced so far this year (in-house and contract forces); on pace to replace 4,000 for the year. About 10,000 customers now on the AMI platform.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

S. Repasch reported that he made a presentation on the COB and BA water system to a group of middle school students at the Arts Academy; site visits to Wild Creek and Penn Forest dams with this same group are planned for next week so they can see where their water actually comes from.

### **COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

S. Antalics stated that at the last Council meeting a person from Carbon County testified that sludge from the Bethlehem Wastewater Treatment Plant was being used as fertilizer in Carbon County and could involve a lawsuit and asked if the BA should be concerned about this. S. Repasch didn't believe the argument should be with the COB but with the State that allows this and monitors it to make sure it meets all of the standards that are set. There are no issues with the BA's water because there is minimal farming done within the watershed property.

### **NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for October 12th, 2023, at 3:30pm.

### **MEETING SUSPENDED**

J. Tallarico motioned and T. Donchez seconded to suspend the regular meeting and the Board went into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 4:13pm. Motion passed unanimously.

The regular meeting was called back to order at 4:49pm by D. Domchek.

S. Zondag then moved and John Tallarico seconded a motion to revise the BA Employee Work and Benefits Guide with the addition of a Whistleblower Policy and to allow Part Time Regular Employees one (1) paid Personal Holiday for each year of continuous employment, with a cap of twenty-five (25) total days after twenty-five (25) years. Motion passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

T. Donchez moved and Carlos Almeida seconded to adjourn the meeting at 4:52pm. Motion passed unanimously.

*Thomas Donchez*  
Board Secretary