

GREATER POTTSVILLE AREA SEWER AUTHORITY

BOARD MEETING OF MARCH 25, 2026

The Board Meeting of the Greater Pottsville Area Sewer Authority was held on the Third Floor City Hall, Sewer Authority Conference Room on Wednesday, March 25, 2026 at 5:00 P.M. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

PRESENT

Dr. Barry Dewitt	,	Chairman
Charles M. Dries	,	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chairman
James T. Muldowney	,	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman
Ronald C. Zimmerman	,	Treasurer
Henry J. Minnig	,	Assistant Treasurer
John G. Botto	,	Secretary
Jonathan Morris, P.E.	,	Assistant Secretary
Edward M. Brennan	,	Solicitor
John R. Poff, P.E.	,	Consulting Engineer
Matthew J. Peleschak, P.E.	,	SDE Engineer
William Orłowski, P.E.	,	Executive Director
Christina M. Q. Herndon	,	Authority Secretary
Lynn Strausser	,	Office Manager

GUESTS

Brian Dries	,	President - Borough of Palo Alto
Vince Riotto	,	Vice President- Borough of Palo Alto
Jean Towle	,	Executive Director of Pottsville Library
James Quinn	,	Office Employee
Brenda Schuettler	,	Billing Supervisor
James Laux	,	Plant Manager
Chris Landis	,	Customer

PUBLIC COMMENT

Brian Dries, President of the Borough of Palo Alto, asked the Board if there will be any motions after the Executive Session. Solicitor Edward M. Brennan replied maybe. Mr. Dries asked if the Executive Session could be at the end of the meeting so we don't have to sit here for hours.

The minutes of the regular meeting for February 2026 were approved by John G. Botto, and seconded by Charles M. Dries.

REQUISITION NO. 715

Payee	-	Greater Pottsville Area Sewer Authority Mid Penn Bank A/C #56-185-1
Amount	-	\$ 346,087.48
Date	-	March 25, 2026

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt asked if there is a line item with the monthly itemized breakdown.

Motion to table by Jonathan Morris, and seconded by Roanld C. Zimmerman, the Board unanimously approved to table the approval for Requisition No. 715.

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt requested approval of the payment of cost of Change Order to Port Carbon Borough's FEMA/PEMA retaining wall project along the Schuylkill River.

Discussion followed.

On motion of Ronald C. Zimmerman, and seconded by Henry J. Minning, the Board unanimously approved the Change Order.

Jonathan Morris abstained.

William T. Orlowsky, Executive Director stated we should move the Executive Session to the end of the meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director's report for March 2026 presented by William T. Orlowsky, P.E.:

1. Presented for the Board's information on March 6<sup>th</sup> there was an incident at the Main Plant. The dry pit pumps failed and were under water. D.E.P. was notified. Two (2) portable Godwin pumps were brought onsite to restore pumping activity, to minimize the potential of another such failure. Plans are being made to replace the influent dry pit pump with submersible pumps.

Discussion followed.

D.E.P. required us to have the employees work at the Main Plant for twenty-four (24) hours until resolved, we have been working for three (3) shifts since March 6<sup>th</sup> and by March 30 we will be back to only one (1) shift.

Lynn Stausser, Office Manager/Pretreatment Coordinator stated in the Board's packet there are reports from James Laux, Plant Manager and Tim Schultz, Chief Operator, and also the report Tim Schultz sent to D.E.P.

Mr. Orlowsky stated he wanted to thank our staff and the street crew who came on site and helped the Godwin pumps to be set up and move an incredible amount of rigid pipe, and also Dallago Backhoe was fantastic. Mostly everyone stayed and helped to get the pumps up and running until the situation was in satisfactorily contained level.

2. Light-Heigel Associates invoices were paid on March 13, 2026, and as of today the files have been given to our new Engineers at SDE.

3. Presented for Board's information regarding Division Street plans were re-sent to the City of Pottsville Solicitor and their Interim Engineer on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

John R. Poff, P.E. will discuss the bonds from Arthur "Pat" Aungst. Mr. Poff stated he thought we had the bonds and he will check tomorrow.

Lynn Strausser stated the bonds were requested from Mr. Aungst but have not been received.

Coordination with Verizon and PPL to avoid conflict with new stormwater line between Second and Third Street.

Mr. Orlowsky presented a map regarding the Division Street Project.

Potential Change order for Mr. Aungst to do all of Centre Street and stop at Bonnie DiCello's property.

Discussion followed.

4. Presented for the Board's information on the Mahantongo Arch Replacement Project. We need to finalize the pedestrian portion on the project.

The LSA Grant application decision is expected by the end of the Summer, and we need to finalize the plans and specifications and advertise so this can proceed in the Fall.

Jonathan Morris stated he was approached by multiple people about the new hotel purchase and the barricade around the bathrooms and what is the status of this project.

Discussion followed.

5. Presented for the Board's information a complaint was filed by Mr. Landis at 1511 Mahantongo Street, 1514 Howard Avenue property sewage is coming down into his yard.

Mr. Orlowsky displayed a map explaining the situation.

Discussion followed.

Solicitor, Edward M. Brennan stated he spoke with the City of Pottsville Solicitor Gretchen Sterns and discussed this issue and he would like to discuss this in the Executive Session. Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Orlowsky if a customer works on a lateral do we inspect the work. Mr. Orlowsky replied anything from the curb to the owner home is the home owner's responsibility. The Authority is responsible from the curb to the lateral.

Discussion followed.

6. Presented for the Board's approval for the hotel accommodations in State College, PA on Thursday, March 26, 2026 for the GPASA staff: Mike Botto, Jarett McCabe, Brice Brazinsky, Ryan Clark and Joe Devine. They are taking the operator's certification exam on Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>.

On motion of Charles M. Dries, and seconded by Henry J. Minnig, the Board unanimously approved to provide the hotel accommodations for the Plant employees.

7. Presented for Board's information Mr. Orlowsky contacted by Emma Clark, a student at Virginia Tech, and her course of study her major is in Water Resource Policy Management. She will be a great fit and she is taking classes in GIS, and using an intern to do the data entry for GIS will save the Authority money. Miss Clark can work from mid-May to mid-July. Miss Clark will begin at a rate of eighteen (\$18) dollars an hour.

On motion of Jonathan Morris, and seconded by James T. Muldowney, the Board unanimously approved the rate for Miss Clark.

8. Presented for the Board's approval to purchase a Godwin pump from Mahanoy City Sewer Authority (MCSA). The pump's curve is appropriate and will not exceed \$2,500.00.

Discussion followed.

Dr. Barry Dewitt asked what a new pump would cost, Matthew Pelachak, P.E., SDE responded \$100,000.00.

Discussion followed.

James Muldowney stated we need more information before we make this decision.

Mr. Orlowsky stated he will get all the information and costs for the April Meeting.

On motion of Henry J. Minnig and seconded by John G. Botto, the Board unanimously approved the Executive Director's Report for March 2026.

## SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Solicitor's Report for March 2026 Board Meeting:

1. Solicitor, Edward M. Brennan stated most of his report will be discussed in the Executive Session.
2. Solicitor Brennan stated we received a Right to Know request from Mr. Chris Landis.
3. Solicitor Brennan followed up on the Richter claim and there is a new adjuster who will reevaluate the claim and as an entity we are not happy with the customer service from our Insurance Company.
4. Solicitor Brennan stated regarding the Mahantongo Project and Divison Street Project he spoke with Mrs. Bonnie DiCello about the Easement and he also prepared an Agreement with the City of Pottsville and the Parking Authority for Mrs. Bonnie Dicello to have four (4) parking spaces in the Mahantongo Garage lot.
5. Solicitor Brennan also stated the Authority must pay for the handicapped ramp removal, and this Agreement will be between the Authority, the Redevelopment Authority, who funded the original project, and the City of Pottsville.

Discussion followed.

Solicitor Brennan requested we schedule a meeting with the City of Pottsville to discuss this project.

Discussion followed.

6. Solicitor Brennan stated we had twenty (20) Liens satisfied so that means homes are purchased in the Upset Sale and Sheriff Sales and we are now getting paid. Last year we received \$20,000.00 for Liens satisfied.

On motion of Jonathan Morris, and seconded by James T. Muldowney, the Board unanimously approved the Solicitor's Report for March 2026.

## CONSULTING ENGINEER'S REPORT

Engineer's Report for March 2026 Board Meeting:

1. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. stated to the Board Mr. Orlowsky asked if the Authority needs a Pretreatment Coordinator. Mr. Poff replied based on the EPA Pretreatment Program and its regulations yes you must have a named Pretreatment Coordinator. That individual could perform other duties for the Authority but you must have a Pretreatment Coordinator named.

2. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. stated their GIS Coordinator Jim Frank and he were here Monday to talk about the GIS with Mr. Orłowsky and his staff and John Botto. We have a budgetary estimate of costs licenses would be \$3,400.00 annually, backup of the system would be \$1,200.00 annually and costs with the I.T. people, GPS equipment \$11,000.00, correction service would be \$1,000.00 annually, the cell plan would be \$1,000.00 and you would need a tablet, and SDE implementing cost would be \$17,000.00, and SDE support because you will just be getting started and the estimated start date is June 1, 2026 estimated at \$23,000.00.

Discussion followed.

Ronald C. Zimmerman stated this is something we need but, the original budget was 6.6 million, and he would like to have the Budget Committee meet and go over the budget.

On motion of Henry J. Minnig, and seconded by James T. Muldowney unanimously approved the GIS limitation cost approximately over estimated by about \$60,000.00 year one (1) and the ongoing annual cost around \$15,000.00 after that

3. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. stated SDE personnel will meet and go to Leiby's Dairy to discuss the possibility of GPASA taking their wastewater and treating it at the treatment plant.

Discussion followed.

4. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. stated the treatment plant catastrophic failure on influent pump failure on March 6<sup>th</sup>, SDE provided Engineering support during this event, and filed a permit and termination letter to switch the Authority's existing Fairbanks Morris Pumps to comparable flight submersible pumps and D.E.P. approved that request.

Discussion followed.

Matt Pelachak, P.E. stated when the failure happened, we were able to access what was going on. Tim Schultz, Chief Operator, was able to walk him through the headworks but afterwards talking with Mr. Orłowsky he wanted us to access the headwork from where the sewage crosses the property line until it is pumped out of the pump station.

The professional service agreement to completed this project would be up to and not to exceed \$35,000.00 for time and material.

Discussion followed.

James T. Muldowney asked if this is something we must vote on tonight.

Dr. Barry Dewitt stated just based on this situation and the bills coming in, are there any Insurance carriers that cover this emergency situation.

Solicitor, Edward M. Brennan replied most likely it will not be covered, but we would have to see if the Authority is covered.

Dr. Barry Dewitt stated the Board agreed to table this decision until we have more information.

5. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. stated Mr. Orłowsky is looking into installing a UV disinfection system at the treatment plant to eliminate the chlorination system. SDE will prepare a proposal because the Authority will need a water quality permit, a permit revision, and an Engineering report, etc.

Discussion followed.

6. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. stated down the road there will be a proposal for an electrical evaluation for the Main Plant to eliminate a blower to save money, and a proposal for Engineering services for assistance on replacing the grating.

Mr. Orłowsky stated the blower takes extreme amounts of electricity to run.

Discussion followed.

7. Mr. John R. Poff, P.E. also stated for the collection system SDE will prepare a proposal for the Engineering costs for the Mahantongo Street Project and also to finish the 537 Plan, and SDE has a proposal to Division Street Project the estimate is \$21,250.00 billed for time and materials.

Discussion followed.

Ronald C. Zimmerman stated the Authority is waiting on the City of Pottsville for the answer on Division Street Project and if the Authority finishes the work on our part of the project, what if the City of Pottsville does not finish their part of the project.

Solicitor, Edward M. Brennan replied the City of Pottsville and the Authority will have to schedule a meeting to finalize these issues, Mr. Orłowsky attends the City Council Meeting and has a better repour with the City of Pottsville.

On motion of Henry J. Minnig, seconded by Charles M. Dries, the Board unanimously approve to authorize the SDE Engineer's proposal for the Division Street Project subject to the agreement with the City of Pottsville

Mr. Orłowsky stated he appreciated the quick response from SDE. They were at the treatment plant as soon as the pumps failed.

On motion of James T. Muldowney, and seconded by Henry J. Minnig, the Board unanimously approve the Engineer report for March 2026.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session began at 6:32 pm and reconvened at 7:22 pm.

## NEW BUSINESS

1. The Authority must appoint an Open Records person. Mr. Orlowsky proposed Lynn Strausser, Office Manager / Pretreatment Coordinator, as the Open Records person.

On motion of Charles M. Dries, and seconded by Henry J. Minnig, the Board unanimously approved Ms. Strausser as the Open Records person.

2. John Botto reported on the PMMA seminar he attended. The first speaker stated an Authority did not raise their rates for many years because they let their maintenance go, and when that Authority finally did raise their rates it was by 24% and the customers went crazy. And another example of an Authority raised their rates often and by 3% to cover the cost of operation and the other 1% in an account for any major issues.

3. John Botto reported on the West End Pump Station signs. We have 14 signs and each sign is \$2,100.00 and we have a surplus of \$29,000.00.

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt is requesting a motion to schedule next month's meeting a week earlier to April 22, 2026 at the same time.

On motion of James T. Muldowney, and seconded by Charles M. Dries, the Board unanimously approved the Board Meeting to be changed to April 22, 2026 at the same time.

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt is requesting a motion to adopt the agenda with some flexibility to consider personnel issues with the respect to the Plant Manager and Bookkeeper positions.

On motion of James T. Muldowney, and seconded by Henry J. Minnig, the Board unanimously approved to the flexibility of the agenda.

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt stated it has been determined by the Executive Director, William T. Orlowsky, P.E., to terminate the relationship with James Laux, Plant Manager under advisement of the Executive Director.

On motion of John G. Botto, and seconded by James T. Muldowney, the Board unanimously approved to terminate James Laux, Plant Manager.

The Board thanks Mr. James Laux for his service.

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt stated there is a recommendation by the Executive Director, William T. Orlowsky, P.E. to terminate our relationship with Mr. James Quinn, Bookkeeper.

On motion of James T. Muldowney, and seconded by Henry J. Minnig, the Board voted 5 to 1 to terminate Mr. James Quinn. Mr. Charles Dries voted no.

The Board thanks Mr. James Quinn for his service.

### OLD BUSINESS

None.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. James Quinn stated he would like answers.

Mr. Chris Landis, owner of 1511 Mahantongo Street, read a statement.

Solicitor, Edward M. Brennan asked Mr. Landis to give him his Lawyers information and address this situation.

Mr. James Quinn screamed he would like answers, seriously!

Chairman, Dr. Barry Dewitt replied this is an opportunity for public comment and we do not have to respond.


Mr. James Quinn replied who do I have to have my lawyers contact, do I talk to Ed first or the Board.

Chairman Dr. Barry Dewitt replied if you retained counsel then you should contact our counsel.

Mr. James Quinn replied ok.

### ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m. on the motion of Charles M. Dries, seconded by Ronald C. Zimmerman.

  
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JOHN G. BOTTO, SECRETARY