

Mercersburg Borough
Mercersburg Borough Hall
113 S. Main St.
Mercersburg, Pennsylvania 17236

Meeting Minutes
January 18, 2024, 7 PM

Call Meeting to Order:

The regular meeting of the Water Authority of Mercersburg Borough was called to order at 7:00 PM on January 18, 2024, by Chairman Ed Twine at Mercersburg Borough Hall.

Members Present:

Ed Twine, Jason Frey, Joe Creighton, Jacob Morgan, Michael Pedersen, and Water Plant Operator Donnie Keefer, Borough Secretary Matilda Gorman

Members Absent:

None

Public Comment/Guests:

Dawn Scheller – Solicitor
Andy Abel – Journal Reporter
Renee Kelly – Chamber of Commerce

Shelly Flickinger, 135 Loudon Road. Shelly Flickinger started the billing cycle before the last billing cycle she was charged for an exorbitant amount of water, 36,000 gallons. She indicated she felt this was incorrect. While she was aware of pinhole leak, the water was shut off and repaired by a plumber. Shelly indicated she felt she had been informed she could make payments on the total bill but was later informed a payment arrangement is not standard/supported. Twine indicated a new meter was installed. Twine indicated the meter can be pulled and tested for a \$50 fee to the customer. If the meter is found faulty the Authority will investigate and resolve the problem. General discussion/recommendation regarding how a customer can compare bills, to internal meter and external meter at the property on a monthly basis.

Richard Pritchard, 31 E Seminary Street. Richard Prichard indicated he owns a house serviced by the Authority that is currently rented. Richard Pritchard feels the last quarterly billing for 17,000 gallons received on October 20 was too high. He called and set a meeting with Public Works to meet at the property on Monday, October 23. The internal meter was replaced and tested. The external reader was also replaced. Requesting an adjustment to the current and last billing cycle. Richard Prichard asked about the status of the original internal meter that had been sent away for testing. Twine confirmed the original meter tested in perfect working order. Upon investigation the Authority has found a discrepancy of 7,000 gallons between the internal meter and the external reader. The Authority will reimburse the 7,000-gallon difference. It was

suggested an inoperable flush valve could be the cause of a high-volume difference. General discussion on how a customer can investigate high usage by isolating/evaluating individual fixtures. Shutting off the main valve and viewing the meter will turn off the whole house and not necessarily provide an indication of issues with individual fixtures. Recommendation for customers to track monthly rather than quarterly and contact the Borough as soon as any issues are noticed. In the near-term Public Works will check the meter weekly. Encouraged renter should take photos of internal meter weekly as well and send to office to be retained in the file.

Raymond Minton, 49 S. Main Street. Raymond Minton noted the boil water notice was only posted on the website and not on the “all call” system.

Mike Brus, 243 Overhill Drive. Indicated his children have been sick for the last two days, as well as himself. He wanted to know what, when, and why he was not notified of the dangerous bacteria. Twine briefed the boil water notice was required based on an operating permit that requires when the water level drops below five feet a boil water notice is issued. This was the case earlier this week. The water was tested at required intervals by a certified analyst throughout the event and no issues found and the boil water notice is being lifted tomorrow. Also noted the need for a notification system/process.

Vincent McCulloch – Interested in knowing if another cause created the water level to drop below five feet. Twine confirmed a few issues with the plant coupled with a large draw of water created the low-level circumstance. Recommends testing the “all call system” routinely – monthly, quarterly, or bi-annually. Morgan noted the system is in transition from an outdated version. Scheller noted there is a plan for communication that will also be reviewed and updated. Vincent recommended using the digital banners in town – the fire department and possibly the high school. How will the end of the boil water notice be communicated.

Extended general discussion continued relative to how a fixture/leak in a house can amount to a high volume of water flowing through. The Authority reiterated recommendations on how a customer can routinely review their usage and account in general and contact the office with issues/concerns.

Extended general discussion continued relative to notification system and alternate tools.

Treasurer Report & Bills Payable: Month Ending December 31, 2023

Treasurer's report month ending December 31, 2023

On a motion by Morgan/Pedersen the Authority unanimously approved the Treasure's Report as written for the Month ending December 31, 2023.

Bills Payable/Invoice List December 31, 2023

On a motion by Creighton/Frey the Authority unanimously approved the Bills Payable/Invoices for the Month ending December 31, 2023.

Election of Water Authority Officers

Pedersen nominated Ed Twine for Chairman of the Water Authority. The nomination was

seconded by Frey. The Authority unanimously voted Ed Twine as Chairman of the Water Authority.

Twine nominated Jason Frey for Assistant Chairman of the Water Authority. The nomination was seconded by Creighton. The Authority unanimously voted Jason Frey as Assistant Chairman of the Water Authority.

Twine appointed Matilda Gorman as Secretary/Treasure of the Water Authority. This appointment was seconded by Frey. The Authority unanimously approved the appointment of Matilda Gorman as Secretary/Treasure of the Water Authority.

Minutes: December 21, 2023, Water Authority Meeting. Morgan requested the meeting minutes be reissued with more detail. Twine asked Morgan to inform Gorman about the detail preferred. Morgan will provide his notes and details to Gorman. Scheller will provide guidance and recommend the December Minutes be tabled and reviewed in the February meeting.

On motion by Frey/Twine the council unanimously agree to Table the December 21, 2023 minutes to the February meeting.

Solicitor: Scheller requests the total amount of interim financing the Authority would like the solicitor to pursue. Twine provided a status on the water plant project. The DEP is on board with the plan. The E&S (Erosion & Sediment) permit is currently held in the Franklin County Conservation District (this is the permit to break ground).

Engineer's Report: Included. Keefer will cover. Morgan asked about the status of the prepurchase list. Keefer reported the tank and filter skids will be the longest lead items and will benefit from prepurchase. Keefer will request a list from Lance Hoover tomorrow to be provided to the Authority members. Scheller indicates this list will help determine how items will be funded (grants, credit, loans, etc.). Creighton requested a schedule of the funding milestone dates to ensure critical dates are met. Additionally, the financing schedule needs to be aligned with the project acquisition/construction schedule.

Plant Operators Report: Keefer reported the water system is back to full capacity. Buck Run is slightly lower than average. Power was lost at the plant on Saturday. The power company restored the power Sunday evening. During this process a surge was sent through the water plant and every breaker on the panel tripped. This burnt the starter motor in the Buck Run well. However, the status light on the pump motor showed green indicating normal operations. Keefer's Monday morning meter readings indicated Buck Run well was not running. The starter motor was repaired to get the pump operational. Pedersen asked how the two high volume draws in two days affected the situation. Keefer indicated (1) the recent high rain volumes stirred up the reservoir requiring additional treatment causing lower production (2) the Buck Run well going offline with the power issue along with the (3) two large volume water draws caused the tank to drop below the minimum water level (five feet). Currently the system is gaining, and the tank level is recovering.

Zim Well – Twine reported the Zim Well needs disinfected. Twine stated the cost comes in at \$3,500 from Negley's. On a Creighton/Morgan motion the Authority unanimously approved the \$3,500 expenditure to have Negley's disinfect the Zim Well.

Borough Manager's Report: Not scheduled to attend. Nothing to report.

Borough Secretary's Report: Gorman reported work continues on getting the notification system up and running. Kami Linger noted that working on the notification system will also help validate information in the billing system. Twine noted there is a billing gap sometimes created with rental properties when tenants change, the billing accounts may not get closed/transferred as consistently as it does with a property sale. Twine recommended investigation to develop a process to manage/track these transitions more consistently for more efficient billings.

General discussion about notification of events and the use of Facebook. The consensus is this is a topic to be addressed by the Council and/or the Property Committee.

Old Business: Nothing to report.

New Business:

To authorize Borough Secretary to contact the emergency water hauling company, TA Fulmer, and prepare/submit the required emergency water hauling permit retroactively to DEP on behalf of the Water Authority. The hauling of emergency water was discussed with the DEP by Lance Hoover on the day of the event with the understanding the permit submission will be forthcoming.

On a motion by Pedersen/Creighton the Authority unanimously approved the submission of the permit.

Correspondence:

Copy of posted Boil Water Advisory and Mandatory Water Conservation Notices to all customers dated 1/16/2024.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Twine/Morgan the Authority unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 pm.

Date Approved: 2/15/2024 Motion By: Morgan Seconded By: Frey


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