

**Mercersburg Water Authority Meeting
Borough Hall, Mercersburg, PA 17236
February 20, 2025
MINUTES**

ATTENDING: Chairman Ed Twine, Member Joe Creighton, Member Dr. Michael Pedersen, Member Jacob Morgan, Water & Sewer Plant Laborer Donnie Keefer, Administrative Professional Pete Stotelmyer, Engineer Lance Hoover, Solicitor Sam Wiser

ABSENT: Vice-Chairman Jason Frey and Borough Manager Dawn Scheller

GUEST(S)/PRESS: Kira Wright & Marissa Price with GMS Funding Solutions, Tiffany Black 20 W Fairview Ave, Mercersburg, PA 17236

Chairman Twine called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and opened the floor to Public Comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Resident Tiffany Black stated that she was attending for the first time just to listen and observe. She asked if the connection to Bear Valley was still an option. Chairman Twine said that it was not an option presently but may be considered again in the future. Ms. Black stated that a flyer would be more effective in notifying the public of matters in the borough than the borough website.

TREASURER REPORT:

MOTION: to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month ending January 31, 2025, was made by Morgan, seconded by Creighton, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve the Bills Payable List for the month ending January 31, 2025, was made by Morgan, seconded by Creighton, all ayes, motion carried.

MINUTES:

MOTION: to approve the minutes from January 16, 2025, was made by Morgan, seconded by Pedersen, all ayes, motion carried.

GMS REPORT:

Kira Wright reviewed the Memo that was sent concerning funding for the two water projects in the borough. A 12-month extension for the PA Small Water & Sewer Program grant was approved, and the new expiration date is June 30, 2026. After much discussion on the Federal Community Project Funding through the EPA, the 2-million-dollar award was moved from the nitrate removal phase of the project to the iron removal phase. The Franklin County Impact Grant Program consisted of money from the ARPA funds that the county received. A total of \$199,000 was awarded, and there is \$35,970 remaining in the grant. The Statewide Local Share Account Program awarded \$335,700 to the authority for the nitrate removal phase. This expires on June 30, 2026. The PENNVEST loan to the Authority for \$2,061,800 loan was approved. With removing the EPA, PENNVEST has unofficially approved increasing the loan amount to over four million dollars. It will officially be approved at PENNVEST's board meeting on April 23, 2025. If the bids are more than the four million gap in funding, PENNVEST will approve increasing the amount to fill the gap. A second PENNVEST loan application for phase 2 – the Buck Run Water Treatment Plant, currently estimated to cost \$4,120,000, will be coordinated with and anticipated submission date of August 6, 2025. Member Morgan mentioned that some construction permits were due to expire and asked when they had to be renewed. Solicitor Wiser said that the permits need to be renewed prior to construction being started. Lance Hoover said the permitting renewal process has already begun.

ENGINEERS REPORT:

The Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting for the Park Ave Well Project was held along with a tour of the site on February 3, 2025. There was a good turn-out with seven general contractors and five potential electrical contractors. The potential contractors have submitted numerous questions, and JHA has had to do some revisions to the project as a result. The submission date for bids was extended to March 10, 2025, due to the PENNVEST requirement to “Buy American Build American”. This requirement is difficult for contractors to comply with and slows the process due to paperwork and certifications. Upon opening the bids, the amount will be announced, and it will be reviewed to see that the bid bonding is included. After opening, Lance Hoover and the solicitor will do a more detailed review of the bids and then provide an initial recommendation to the Authority at the March meeting. The information will also be sent to PENNVEST so they can arrange for any funding adjustments. Due to wage increases that were implemented in 2025 along with PENNVEST’s “Buy American Build American” requirement, Lance expects the cost of project to increase quite a bit. So far, Lance has sent five addendums to the contractors and Authority members based on questions that have been submitted from them.

On the Buck Run Well Project, JHA is working to finalize the electrical and control components as well as the design plans and specifications to create a construction set. From there, Lance will create the bidding package. That will occur after PENNVEST completes the funding process. Chairman Twine asked if an extension for the project is possible because it will not be completed by the current deadline. Solicitor Wisner said that an extension of time could be requested, and DEP typically approves extensions if progress is being made. Member Morgan asked about other less expensive options that were possible besides Buck Run Well. Lance Hoover explained what other options were possible, but source capacity and storage to supply daily demand would need to be sorted out. Chairman Twine asked Morgan to maintain communication with Bear Valley for service in the future, but we need to move forward with Buck Run Well.

Tiffany Black asked if the new projects will be covered by a grant. Solicitor Wisner said the authority has secured approximately 2.7 – 2.8 million dollars in grant funding for the projects with the total cost being roughly eleven million dollars. As a result, the water, sewer fees and rates were increased 20 percent starting with the April 2025 billing cycle to help cover the cost.

WATER AND SEWER LABORER’S REPORT:

Donnie Keefer provided a written report on plant operations, and he said the 6-month inspection of the PRV valves was completed. Member Creighton was pleased with the Monthly Water Usage Report that was provided.

SOLICITORS REPORT:

Chairman Twine asked what would happen if the bids on the project come in higher than originally expected. Solicitor Wisner said that the money would come from PENNVEST. Chairman Twine also asked about the bridge loans, and Wisner said there is an updated proposal from the bank for three million dollars which should be sufficient.

PUBLIC WORKS: Written report included.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

MOTION: to retroactively approve the Chairman's signature on Resolution 2025-01 and February 5, 2025, letter to DEP was made by Creighton, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to consider JHA proposal for Project 2025-0173 – Water Treatment Plant at Park Ave Well Project Construction Phase for \$283,437 was tabled.

MOTION: to retroactively approve to pay invoice \$AW00262135 for QuickBooks in the amount of \$4,800 for 5 years from the Joint Equipment Fund was made by Morgan, seconded by Creighton, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to retroactively approve to pay invoice from Ryan's Computer Consulting Services for \$250 to install QuickBooks at 3 workstations from the Joint Equipment Fund was made by Pedersen, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to retroactively approve to pay invoice from Ryan's Computer Consulting Services for \$325 for annual renewal of anti-virus software from the Joint Equipment Fund was made by Pedersen, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve to pay invoice for Ryan's Computer Consulting Services for the amount \$2,150 to replace billing clerk's computer in the office from the Joint Equipment Fund was made by Pedersen, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve purchase one fireproof filing cabinet in the amount of \$2,659.30 was made by Pedersen, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: to approve purchase of a Toughbook laptop for the water and sewer plants from Ryan's Computer Consulting Services in the amount of \$3,975 to be split between water and sewer was made by Pedersen, seconded by Creighton, all ayes, motion carried.

The authorities chose not to reduce the amount on the invoices to Cold Springs Distillery and Barbara Bridendolph for frozen water meters.

MOTION: to enter executive session to discuss personnel matters was made at 9:06PM by Creighton, seconded by Morgan, all ayes, motion carried.

Regular session resumed at 9:20PM.

MOTION: to adjourn at 9:21 PM was made by Morgan, seconded by Creighton, all ayes, motion carried.

These meeting minutes were transcribed with the use of Pete Stotelmyer's meeting notes and have been respectfully submitted for approval.

Date Approved: _____ **Motion Made By:** _____ **Seconded:** _____

Dawn L. Scheller, Borough Manager

SEAL