Mercersburg Sewer Authority
Borough Hall, 113 South Main Street, Mercersburg
October 8, 2026
MINUTES

Attending: Chairman Jim Malone, Vice Chairman Joe Creighton, Member Tim Stanton, Member Ben Dugas, Water/Sewer Plant Operator Donnie Keefer, Assistant Borough Manager Constance Creighton, and Administrative Professional Angela Alleman

Absent: Member Josiah Guyer

Guests/Press: See Sign in Sheet

CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER/PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Jim Malone called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Justin Smith - 18 West Seminary Street -Reported speaking with several Borough residents about the proposed water rate increases. He requested that current and proposed rates, including base and meter charges with household bill examples, be published to illustrate the impact on residents. He also requested information on the new water treatment plant's estimated cost, grant and loan funding, anticipated debt payments, and projected impact on customer bills. He shared his plans to establish a nonprofit organization focused on assisting homeless veterans by providing housing, volunteer opportunities, trade skills training, and employment connections within the community, with the goal of helping veterans transition successfully into other communities. He asked to confirm if the sewer system has the capacity to accommodate tiny homes serving approximately five to ten veterans.

TREASURER'S REPORT/BILLS PAYABLE
MOTION: To approve September 2026 Treasure's Report and Bills Payable Report was made by Creighton, seconded by Dugas, all ayes, motion carried.

MINUTES
MOTION: To approve September 10, 2026 Meeting Minutes was made by Creighton, seconded by Dugas, all ayes, motion carried.

SOLICITORS REPORT
Not scheduled to be present.

MANAGER'S REPORT
Assistant Borough Manager Constance Creighton presented an overview of the transition to the new Neptune and MuniLink systems.

ENGINEER'S REPORT
Not scheduled to be present. Report was provided for review.

WATER/SEWER PLANT OPERATOR'S REPORT
Donnie Keefer reported that an unidentified substance caused the sludge in the digester and SBR No. 1 to turn green, disrupting biological activity and resulting in elevated fecal readings that remained below the daily limit. Both SBRs are recovering without additional treatment. He thanked the Authority for purchasing the new microscope to assist with monitoring plant biology. He also discussed the need for a flow meter on the Academy sewer line to monitor peak flows. Digester No.

2 continues to experience short-circuiting, with temporary repairs anticipated through the winter and epoxy coating repairs to be reconsidered in the spring. Overall, operations remain stable.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT REPORT
Report was provided for review.

OLD BUSINESS
Staff presented a revised letter that will be sent to the Mercersburg Little League requesting an update on the required sewer repairs.

Members reviewed the completed grease trap inspection reports and discussed noncompliant businesses and the extent of Donnie Keefer's enforcement authority. Staff will coordinate to draft a letter for the affected businesses and submit it to the Solicitor for review.

Members discussed the proposed 2027 Sewer Authority Budget, including aligning current codes with municipal account codes and allocating the 20% rate increase toward debt service rather than the Operating Fund. The budget is expected to be finalized at the November meeting, with a vote on releasing it for public advertising.

NEW BUSINESS
Donnie Keefer reported an overflow at the Keefer Drive Pump Station after the temporary single pump was unable to handle an unusually high sewage flow. Rosie's was called to pump out the station, and normal operations resumed. The source of the increased flow is unknown. He proposed adding approval of an effluent flow meter and chart recorder to the December agenda to monitor flow volumes and pump operation.

MOTION: To approve the purchase of a power washer to be split with MWA and Borough was made by Creighton, seconded by Stanton, all ayes, motion carried.

Members discussed the proposed 2027 base consumer fee increase and requested that staff compile base fee and meter rates from neighboring municipalities for comparison and discussion at the November meeting.

MOTION: To approve a 6:00PM start time for 2027 Sewer Authority Meetings was made by Creighton, seconded by Dugas, 3 ayes, 1 nay (Stanton), motion carried.

MOTION: To approve High Tide Invoice #779 ($3,707.44) was made by Creighton, seconded by Stanton, all ayes, motion carried.

MOTION: To approve the Salzmann Hughes 2027 rate increase was made by Creighton, seconded by Dugas, all ayes, motion carried.

Members discussed the electrical engineering proposal, including design drawings, equipment specifications, and subcontracting for fabrication. Members requested additional structural and related drawings for review. The Authority also discussed the proposed contract and agreed that it should be forwarded to the solicitor for review before approval. It was also requested to obtain references for Paragon Engineering Services and a budget estimate for 2027.

Members discussed USDA and PennVEST financing options for the proposed sewer plant, as well as re-engaging GMS for grant-writing assistance.

MOTION: To solicit a proposal for GMS services to start December 1, 2026 or January 1, 2027 was made by Creighton, seconded by Dugas, all ayes, motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE
None.

MOTION: To adjourn at 8:49pm was made by Creighton, seconded by Dugas, all ayes, motion carried.

Date approved: *11-12-26* **Motion**: *Guyer* **Seconded**: *Dugas*

Signature: _____
Borough Manager

SEAL