

Palmer Township, Northampton County
Stormwater Authority Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2024, 5:00PM, 3, Weller Pl, Lower-Level Municipal Meeting Room

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

a. Present: Robert Blanchfield, Robert A. Lammi, Kendall M. Mitchell, Craig Swinsburg, David Pyle, Ryan Cummings, George White, Scott Kistler, Jamie Paetzell, James Farley, Philip Godbout, and Paige Strasko. Ann Marie Panella joined the meeting at 6:23PM.

b. The meeting was called to order at 5:04PM.

3. Public Comment, Other Communications

a. Blanchfield asked Strasko to give a brief update on stormwater communications, Township staff, committee members and PTSA members discussed a meeting with resident Jodi Hess concerning drainage in her area of Bayard Street, and Strasko summarized email communications received from residents regarding stormwater concerns.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 17, 2024, and February 13, 2024

a. Lammi made a motion to approve the minutes from January 17, 2024, and Mitchell seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

b. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes from February 13, 2024, and Swinsburg seconded. The minutes were passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. Reports

a. Solicitor

i. There was no legal action to report on.

ii. Lammi asked about the status of the Bylaws, and Strasko stated that she planned to add the Bylaws to the March workshop agenda to allow review time for the PTSA members.

b. MS4

i. Strasko reported that there will be a meeting scheduled with Tatamy and Stockertown boroughs to discuss possible projects for the Section 219 funding, she recently resolved an illicit discharge that occurred at NY Bagel and Deli, she sent out the multi-municipal newspaper ad required by MS4, that a pre-application meeting request form has already been received from a resident, she is working on compiling an inspection schedule, and reported that information is still being updated on the Township website to include new information.

ii. Strasko also discussed HRG's request for regional plan review of new developments when plans are submitted and discussed Township Manager Williams' thoughts on it and that developers would think that the Township was double-charging for the same review as the Municipal

Engineer. PTSA members, Township staff, and HRG discussed Strasko and Godbout completing plan reviews and communicating any concerns to HRG. White briefly discussed a GIS proposal for March.

6. Committee Reports

a. Engineering

i. Action Items

1. White discussed the February Engineering Report that was submitted to the Authority and discussed various projects in more detail.
2. White explained HRG is finalizing applications for PennDOT on the S. 25th Street project. Cummings discussed preliminary PRP studies and finalizing the Pollutant Reduction Plan (PRP) recommendations to reduce 109,161 pounds of sediment in the Lehigh watershed, and 85,603 pounds of sediment in the Schoeneck watershed, the number of projects needed to meet these requirements, and the Bushkill Creek not included in the PRP because it is not impaired by sediment, but by pathogens.
3. HRG and PTSA members discussed locations of possible PRP projects, point source pollution, the efficiency of different projects, and how sediment reduction is calculated for various retrofits.

ii. PENNVEST funding timeline approval

1. Pyle discussed the timeframe for submission of the next three projects that the PTSA has previously discussed for PENNVEST funding. Pyle stated that the timeline for submissions would be Old Nazareth Road in August, Wedgewood Drive in November, and PRP phase one in February of 2025.
2. Pyle and PTSA members also discussed an outline for the PENNVEST Proposal from HRG, the PENNVEST experts on the HRG team, general procedure outlines, and discussing the legal process and council with the PTSA solicitor.
3. Pyle and PTSA members also discussed the draft Capital Improvement Plan proposal in two phases. Phase one included reviewing known projects to group them together, assign priorities based on various factors, and deciding how to fund them. Phase two included condition assessments and prioritization of current infrastructure. Pyle discussed changes and input that Strasko had on the draft proposal including public outreach documents to explain to residents how projects were prioritized, and why. PTSA members asked how much detail would be included in the proposal work product, and how much effort this project would take. PTSA members also discussed the importance of organizing, categorizing, and prioritizing these projects for completion and to demonstrate to the public that work is being done.

4. Blanchfield briefly discussed the Fox Run project for the Township to complete. White explained that HRG designed the project for the Township and that it was a small municipal project Godbout would complete construction bids for.

b. Finance

i. Action Items

1. Farley stated that there were no updates still on the EIN number for the Authority.

ii. Dallas Data Update

1. Farley discussed and summarized changes and updates to proofs of the utility bills that Township staff has received from Dallas Data, including the different timing of service dates for services included on the utility bill. Farley also discussed having Pyle review some bill proofs when ready to minimize errors and corrections, and a delay in the billing cycle to ensure that the utility bills have the required information and that everything that is shown on the bill is correct. Farley stated that staff is expecting residents to receive paper bills between Monday and Wednesday next week.
2. Farley also briefly discussed the savings for utility billing by including stormwater on existing utility bills, and the ease of use for residents having all charges in one place.

7. Township staff comments

- a. Blanchfield asked Township staff for any updates or comments, and briefly discussed the maintenance report produced by Kistler. Kistler stated that there were no changes or updates from his crew and confirmed that the maintenance report on SharePoint would be updated monthly to reflect work completed. Township staff briefly discussed the tracking spreadsheet for maintenance work that will also be used to track administrative time dedicated to stormwater, and timing for information updates.
- b. White asked Township staff if they had a chance to review the GIS update with impervious area measurements. Strasko and Godbout stated that they have not reviewed the information yet but did see that it was updated. White briefly explained some of the new features and information available. Strasko clarified that the information is on the Township's GIS database and not for public viewing.

8. New Business

a. Meadow Avenue Public Meeting Summary

- i. Blanchfield briefly summarized the public meeting that occurred on January 30 to discuss proposed projects to help mitigate flooding on Meadow Avenue, how many residents were in attendance, and asked White for his opinion.
- ii. White summarized and explained the presentation that was given for the Authority members that were not present, the phases of the projects

proposed for the Authority to approve including timing of phases. White asked that the PTSA accept the recommendations for the Meadow Avenue Drainage Study findings, and direct HRG to proceed with the projects as outlined in the drainage study report.

- iii. Blanchfield asked clarifying questions about grant opportunities and discussed reasoning for the public meeting with White. White also explained that a public meeting was required for the FEMA funding, and it also shows the community the process, and study findings.
- iv. Lammi made a motion to accept the recommendations for the Meadow Avenue Drainage Study and Mitchell seconded the motion. The Meadow Avenue recommendations were accepted by unanimous voice vote.

b. Meadow Avenue Swale Proposal

- i. PTSA members discussed the monthly invoicing for this project, and how the structure of monthly invoices will be moving forward. White briefly explained the notification process for the Authority when the swale project is seventy-five percent complete, the total cost of \$45,000 for the project, plus expenses and any outside consultants that may need to be hired and why the outside consultant provision is included in this proposal, similar to the Kingwood Street project.
- ii. PTSA members asked clarifying questions regarding who would maintain the swale after this work is completed since the project area is outside of the Township boundary. White explained that he would be discussing with Bethlehem for a short-term solution.
- iii. PTSA members also asked clarifying questions about what is required for this project, how is this work allowed since it is not within Township boundaries, how easements are honored in this area, and the need for the PTSA to be listed as a co-permittee on a current NPDES permit for the site. Cummings explained that during a meeting with the Northampton County Conservation District (NCCD), the property owner already has an active NPDES permit for the site that the PTSA would be added to for completion of the swale project. Once the site is seventy percent stable, i.e. vegetation is growing, soil is stabilized and no other earth moving will occur, then the PTSA will be removed from the NPDES permit.
- iv. After consideration, PTSA members agreed to move forward with the project. Mitchell made a motion to approve the proposal for the Meadow Avenue Swale from HRG and Swinsburg seconded. The proposal was approved and accepted by unanimous voice vote.

c. Old Nazareth Road Drainage Improvements Proposal

- i. PTSA members and HRG staff discussed the price of the Old Nazareth proposal of \$141,500 that was misquoted during the workshop meeting, that construction observation would be a separate proposal for the Authority to consider and explained that this proposal will complete the drainage design and take the project up to construction bidding.

- ii. HRG also discussed items for completion to submit to PENNVEST for funding, and that no outside permits for the project make the application process smoother and quicker.
- iii. Kistler discussed residential drainage problems in the area slightly out of scope for the Old Nazareth Drainage proposal and asked if the scope would be expanded, or if the area would need to be treated as its' own separate project. HRG, Township staff and PTSA members briefly discussed Oak Lane drainage issues that Kistler was made aware of by a resident, and that Oak Lane may be an addendum for the proposed project.
- iv. Ann Marie Panella joined the meeting around this time.
- v. Lammi made a motion to accept the Old Nazareth Road Drainage Improvements Proposal and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote and the proposal was approved.

d. Wedgewood Proposal

- i. Blanchfield provided a summary of the history of Wedgewood Drive flooding problems that occurred in July of 2023, and the work that has been completed to date for remediation of the area. White explained that this proposal was a follow-up for the work completed in response to the July 16 flash floods and explained that the current thinking for the project is to design everything in one phase, but then construct it in two.
- ii. Mitchell made a motion to approve the Wedgewood Proposal and Swinsburg seconded. The proposal was approved by unanimous voice vote.
- iii. Kistler asked Swinsburg about the status of water authority projects, and if there would be a possibility of scheduling projects to occur simultaneously as they have done for past projects. Kistler also briefly discussed with Cummings including sanitary sewer surveys and expanding the utility scope, completion of the subsurface utility exploration (SUE), and possibly including sanitary work in the PENNVEST funding proposal, but HRG would need to confirm that could be done.

e. Website Updates

i. Invoice approval

1. Strasko explained that there was a misunderstanding and miscommunication with the original not to exceed amount of \$500, that there was more work completed than originally anticipated, and the website invoice totaled roughly \$2,500.
2. Blanchfield stated that the price was worth the product and that the PTSA were happy with how the website turned out.
3. Mitchell made a motion to approve the NA Studios invoice and Panella seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

ii. Reporting

1. Strasko mentioned that there was a stormwater report on the Township website for an inlet of concern. Blanchfield asked

clarifying questions and Strasko explained that she already shared the information with Kistler for inlet repair.

f. Kingwood Bid Approval

- i.** Cummings explained that the bid prepared for Kingwood Street was standard for what HRG submits for construction projects, and they customize the documents based on the project type. Cummings also explained that the processes are detailed in the bid documents, HRG's construction service group would be in the field and reporting back to him and the PTSA of updates to ensure the project is completed on time and within budget.
- ii.** HRG and PTSA also discussed PENNVEST projects must be awarded to the lowest qualified bidder and the use of PennBid for opening and awarding projects. Cummings explained that once bids are opened, he will write a review letter for the PTSA that recommends which bidder to choose, and a detailed scope of services. The construction administration and construction observation (CACO) for Kingwood is estimated at \$87,000. Cummings also clarified the CACO and needed info for bond requirements.
- iii.** Godbout and Cummings discussed the outstanding questions to finalize and advertise the construction bid including standard percentages for insurance and bonding requirements, using industry standard numbers, opening dates and dates for the Express Times newspaper advertisement, generating a bid scheduling once approved, bid security of ten percent, accepting certified checks or money orders, not needing a warranty bond, the number of days of notice to proceed, timelines, and a thirty day bid window to open inline with the Authority meeting.
- iv.** PTSA members briefly discussed and clarified that the bid would be finalized from Godbout and Cummings conversation and that approving the bid now would allow the process to continue. Mitchell made a motion to approve the bid for Kingwood Street and Lammi seconded. The motion and bid were passed unanimously by voice vote.

9. For the Good of the Order

- a.** There was nothing additional for the Good of the Order.

10. Next meeting: March 20, 2024

11. Adjournment

- a.** Mitchell made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Lammi seconded. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 7:02PM.