

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Stormwater Authority Committee Meeting Minutes

July 9, 2024, 2PM, 3 Weller Pl, Upper-Level Municipal Training Room

1. Roll Call

- a. Present: Kendall M. Mitchell, Craig Swinsburg, David Pyle, George White, Ryan Cummings, Lee Stinnett, James Farley, and Paige Strasko. Virtual attendees: Matthew Gunther, Robert A. Lammi, and Bruce Hulshizer.
- b. Absent: Robert Blanchfield.
- c. The meeting was called to order at 2:02PM.

2. Discussion Items

a. Appeal and Credit Update

- i. Strasko updated the group that she has responded to 278 appeals, 76 of them have been approved, there have been 22 completed pre-application meeting requests, 15 completed credit applications and 8 of them have been approved.
- ii. Pyle discussed updates to the PTSA credit policy to include language for a low-impact parcel credit, percent of the credit, timing for the update to occur, conversations with the Authority solicitor, and a previous conversation with Blanchfield regarding the percentage for a low-impact parcel credit.
- iii. Lammi discussed his previous experience with farms and working on a farm, and his opinion regarding property's that are farmed but not owned by the farmers in the Township.
- iv. PTSA members and consultants also asked clarifying questions regarding the low-impact parcel credit, if the credit would be automatically applied to properties that qualify for it, discussing the credit and percentage again in August, and needed updates to the Rules and Regulations for the change in the credit policy. Members decided to discuss again at the August workshop meeting and Strasko asked for clarification on the current credit policy, and how she should be responding to credit applicants for properties that are farmed, included in the farmers conservation plans, but not owned by the two farmers. PTSA members decided to continue the conversation in August.

b. Palmer School Stormwater

- i. White discussed a field meeting with Township staff, the Township's Municipal Engineer, and HRG for the Palmer Elementary School stormwater, that the system has been pumped and there should not be water flowing after light rainfall now. Lammi discussed with White his observations of flows in the neighborhood in the past two weeks and

routes where basin water was being pumped. White discussed that the school, Township, and engineers will monitor the flows from the basin and the basins' function moving forward.

c. Billing Information Flyer

- i. Strasko briefly discussed the billing information flyer that will be sent with the upcoming bills in August that included information about stormwater maintenance activities including how many inlets have been repaired, frequency of street sweeping activity, and how much debris has been collected during street sweeping this year compared to last year. There were also photos and information regarding the Kingwood Street project, and Strasko's MS4 outfall inspections.
- ii. Farley updated the group on receivables through the end of June for the utility fee, and the previously approved transfer of funds, status of the bank account and check order, and starting invoice approval in August. Farley also discussed asking for approval of new receivables in August after review during the August workshop meeting.
- iii. Stinnett briefly discussed moving forward with a fee agreement for his firm and the Authority.

d. HRG Project Updates

i. Kingwood Street Construction

1. White and Cummings stated that the contractor has completed the right-of-way clearing and that the pre-cast pipes are on back-order. Once the materials are received the contractor will begin work. White, Cummings, and PTSA members also discussed bike path closings, changes from what was discussed in the pre-construction meeting, and construction monitoring from HRG throughout the project.

ii. 25th Street Update

1. White stated that the second comment letter for the project was received from PennDOT, the Township will be working on drafting construction and stormwater easements for the project area, and next steps from PennDOT's review letter. Farley asked about the total cost of the project and White stated that he would work on bringing updated numbers to the Authority meeting next week. Farley briefly discussed other monies that the Township was holding from previous projects for maintenance work in the 25th Street area that may be used towards the culvert repair.

iii. Old Nazareth Rd Update

1. White stated the subsurface utility exploration (SUE) was ongoing and the contractor is out in the field now completing test holes.

White and Pyle also stated HRG is working on bringing plans for PENNVEST submission to review at the next Authority meeting and the PENNVEST application is due at the end of the month. Pyle briefly discussed two resolutions HRG staff need signed and approved for inclusion with the PENNVEST application and that Brooke Semanchik was working on sending them for review tomorrow.

2. Lammi asked for a list of required documents for the application submission and the process from PENNVEST.

iv. Meadow Ave Drainage Swale

1. White stated that the preliminary plans are ready to be reviewed with the property owner, but HRG has not heard back from them or their contractor.

v. Schoeneck Creek Update

1. White stated that Strasko and HRG staff were in the field last week at Schoeneck Creek to observe the site. Strasko explained she met with Meara Hayden, Joshua Sheetz, Philip Godbout and Lammi on the bike path to observe and collect stream data at the restoration site, the field conditions, and that Lammi hadn't visited that section of the trail previously. White explained that the project is moving forward with conceptual plans and models for the restoration work.

vi. Wedgewood Update

1. White stated that HRG staff were in the field surveying Wedgewood Drive and the surrounding area and are working on picking up the channel from Chain Dam Road. Crews should be out in the area again for additional survey work.

vii. Hobson Street Detention Basin Update

1. White and Cummings stated that the base mapping and survey work for the Hobson Street basin was completed, Shawn Casey is finalizing his geo-technical report, HRG is working on basin modeling and will adjust the model accordingly to Casey's report. Cummings stated they were roughly a month away from knowing the feasibility of a basin retrofit for Hobson Street.

viii. Bayard/Sheridan Update

1. White stated that about two weeks ago there was a meeting in the field with HRG staff, Palmer Township staff, and Bethlehem Township staff for the Bayard Street project, but the area was not on Bethlehem's radar currently due to previous improvements they made to the roadway in the adjacent neighborhood in Bethlehem Township. White and Cummings also discussed a long-term joint

plan between the two municipalities because if the PTSA makes any improvements upstream, it would only cause more damage downstream in Bethlehem Township. HRG staff, PTSA members, and Stinnett discussed an inter-municipal agreement for the two Township's and PTSA members asked clarifying questions about the process to receive and use grant money for joint projects especially if Bethlehem Township does not want to move forward. Cummings explained incentives for credit sharing in possible changes to up-coming MS4 permit regulations. HRG staff asked for the action item to be added to the Authority agenda to authorize Stinnett to draft an inter-municipal agreement. PTSA members asked more clarifying questions regarding cost-sharing and long-term plans and goals.

ix. PENNVEST Update

1. Pyle stated the PENNVEST updates were already covered under previous agenda items.

x. Capital Improvement Plan Update

1. Pyle discussed and displayed the priority matrix that HRG staff have been working on for the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Pyle explained the priority categories such as existing conditions, school routes, emergency access, and planned improvements, how categories are currently weighed to rank projects based on priority factors and showed how the matrix worked using two current stormwater projects. Pyle stated that he would share the matrix information with Authority members, and they could discuss and determine how each category should be weighed, and if the categories should be updated, or added more.
2. PTSA members asked clarifying questions about the priority matrix regarding cost estimates and Pyle explained that cost estimates are another layer of the CIP to determine priority or timing of projects based on grant funding or other revenue sources.
3. Lammi commented that the CIP document is necessary to do the job of the Authority and asked clarifying questions about priority categories and if property damage is considered. Pyle discussed how the consideration of property damage is included in multiple categories such as existing conditions and emergency access. Lammi asked to add a category specifically for property damage to consider in the matrix, to better communicate priority rankings with residents. PTSA members and HRG staff further discussed the CIP process moving forward.

e. Credit and Appeals Manual Review

- i. Pyle stated that this item was already discussed under previous agenda items.

f. Section 219 Funding Update

- i. Strasko updated the group that Mary Himmelberger from HRG was working on obtaining support letters from various Township, county and state agencies for the funding application including Palmer Township Planning Commission and Northampton County Conservation District.

g. Township Flood Mitigation Project Funding

- i. Strasko stated that Godbout asked to add this agenda item to discuss approvals, timing, and funding for projects that the Township will be leading including previously discussed areas on Stones Crossing Road and Old Orchard Park.
- ii. Swinsburg asked if these projects should be included in the CIP. Pyle stated yes, and that they would be indicated as in-house projects. Pyle also discussed a line item in the approved budget for projects that Public Works would have the time and resources to complete and that this could be considered the authorization to move forward with in-house projects as time allows.
- iii. Farley also discussed that Scott Kistler's monthly reports detail work completed for the month, and that any funding necessary for those projects would be included there and that the work depends on weather and other factors that may affect project timing.
- iv. Lammi discussed the possible flow of projects for the future and described Godbout and Kistler meeting in the fall to discuss projects and timing for the year ahead, and some ideas of what could be accomplished this year with the current resources.

3. Public Comment

- a. There was no public present to comment.

4. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 3:49PM.