

**Palmer Township, Northampton County**

**Stormwater Authority Meeting Minutes**

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, 5PM, 3 Weller Pl, Lower-Level Municipal Meeting Room**

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

**2. Roll Call**

- a. Present: Robert Blanchfield, Kendall M. Mitchell, Matthew Gunther, Robert A. Lammi, Craig Swinsburg, Luke Gibson, David Pyle, George White, James Farley, Phillip Godbout, Scott Kistler and Zach Trexler.
- b. The meeting was called to order at 5:00PM.

**3. Reorganization**

- a. Luke Gibson asked for nominations for Chairman of the Board. Lammi nominated Bob Blanchfield. Mitchell seconded the nomination and Gibson closed the nominations. Bob Blanchfield was elected as Chairman of the Board by unanimous voice vote.
- b. Blanchfield asked for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Board. Lammi nominated Craig Swinsburg. Gunther seconded the nomination and Blanchfield closed the nominations. Craig Swinsburg was elected as Vice Chairman of the Board by unanimous voice vote.
- c. Blanchfield asked for nominations for Secretary of the Board. Swinsburg nominated Matt Gunther. Mitchell seconded the nomination and Blanchfield closed the nominations. Matt Gunther was elected as Secretary of the Board by unanimous voice vote.
- d. Blanchfield asked for nomination for Treasurer of the Board. Mitchell nominated Bob Lammi. Swinsburg seconded the nomination and Blanchfield closed the nominations. Bob Lammi was elected as Treasurer of the Board by unanimous voice vote.
- e. Bob Lammi made a motion to retain Salzmänn & Hughes as the Authority's Solicitor, and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- f. Gunther made a motion to retain HRG as the Authority's Engineering Firm, and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- g. Lammi made a motion to reappoint James Farley as the Authority's Financial Advisor, and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.
- h. Lammi made a motion to reappoint Matt Gunther as the Authority's MS4 Coordinator, and Swinsburg seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**4. Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

- a. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes from December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024, and Swinsburg seconded the motion. The minutes were passed unanimously by voice vote.

- b. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes from January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and Gunther seconded the motion. The minutes were passed unanimously by voice vote.

## **5. Public Comment, Other Communications**

- a. Pat McPherson – 214 Oxford Drive
  - i. McPherson asked how the fees came about. Blanchfield said we used the Engineers to provide us with a method of creating a fair way to implement the fees, which was then approved by the Authority. McPherson said this is not fair because HRG are not Township residents. She said we pay flat fees for garbage, but the tier system for Stormwater is ridiculous. McPherson said that 72% of the Township pays \$20 per month, but I am among the other 28% who pay more. She said this is not equitable. She said if you charge every resident \$25 per month you would collect more money annually through the fee. McPherson said the fee tier structure is unfair and not equitable. Blanchfield said that we believe the structure is fair, and we do not plan on changing it.

## **6. Reports**

- a. Solicitor
  - i. No report at this time.
- b. MS4
  - i. No report at this time.

## **7. Committee Reports**

- a. Engineering
  - i. George White stated that HRG submitted the January Engineers report and if anyone had any questions, they would be more than happy to answer them.
  - ii. Lammi stated that in previous documentation, the Schoeneck Creek Restoration project was estimated to cost \$700,000, but now you are saying it will cost somewhere between \$1.8-\$2.3 million and asked why there was such an increase. White said the initial number was pure estimation and that some additional length of the stream were added. White said the current numbers are preliminary and that some value engineering can be done to bring the number down.
  - iii. Lammi asked what project timeline is for phase 1 of the Wedgewood project, and White did not know off the top of his head. Pyle said if we can get the project into the May PENNVEST application, then we can begin bidding around November/December. Pyle said we can then begin to order materials over the winter. He said if we miss the May deadline, we will have to wait until August to apply, which means we won't be able to go out to bid until around February/March of 2026. Scott Kistler said he

is not completely against working through the Winter because we are working in an undeveloped area. White said the trick is to not allow for a break in the construction.

**b. Public Works**

- i. Blanchfield said we have a bill for \$73,626.31 that we will pay in our quarterly statement. Kistler said a large majority of that is materials and labor for the wrapping up of the Kingwood project. Blanchfield asked when the street sweeper is expected to arrive, and Kistler said sometime in February, with the flushing truck arriving sometime in March.

**c. Finance**

- i. None at this time.

**8. Township Staff Comments**

- a. None at this time.

**9. New Business**

**a. Invoice Packet Approval**

- i. Blanchfield said we have invoices from HRG totaling \$150,952.01, Salzmann & Hughes totaling \$8,958.78, Carroll Engineering totaling \$2,492.10, and Entech totaling \$652.50 for a grand total of \$163,055.39. Swinsburg made a motion to approve and pay the invoice packet and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**b. 2024 Audit, total cost of \$13,250, Approval**

- i. Lammi said we are using SEK, the same auditors that the Township uses. He said this cost includes the \$1,500 setup fee. Lammi made a motion to approve the hiring of SEK at the cost of \$13,250 to complete the 2024 audit and Gunther seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**c. Open Records Policy Approval and Appointment of Open Records Officer**

- i. Lammi said that as an Authority, we must have a policy that is separate from the Township. Luke Gibson reviewed the policy and made some corrections, making it ready for approval as 25-1. Lammi made a motion to approve policy 25-1, the Open Records Policy for the Palmer Township Stormwater Authority, and Mitchell seconded the motion. The motion passes by unanimous voice vote.
- ii. Blanchfield said that as part of this policy, we must create the position of Open Records Officer, and we need to appoint someone to that role. Gunther volunteered to fill this role. Lammi made a motion to accept Gunther as the Open Records Officer, and Swinsburg seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

**d. Old Nazareth Road Special Meeting – Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 7pm**

- i. Blanchfield asked if there was anything that HRG needed to facilitate the meeting, and White said we plan to prepare a PowerPoint presentation to give an overview of the project. White mentioned that they will feature a video of the stream of water from the 2020 storm to portray how large an issue the area has become, as well as other topics of conversation for the upcoming meeting. White said we will announce a second public meeting closer to construction commencing to be able to include the contractor.
  - ii. Mitchell asked if the retention pond that already exists will be able to handle all the water that will eventually be directed to this area. White said the pond is designed to fill up with water and spill over into the creek. Supervisor Bellis asked if this work would create another issue that needs to be resolved 10 years down the road, and White said it should not.
  - iii. Lammi asked how large of a storm this new system will be able to handle, and White said we are targeting a 25-year storm being able to be controlled by the new system.
- e. **Northampton County Conservation District Sinkhole presentation – March 25<sup>th</sup>**
  - i. Blanchfield said this presentation was confirmed this morning and that in addition to having Nate Pritchard, the District Manager, we will also have Sean Casey from our Geotech Engineering firm. He said we will invite surrounding municipalities to join as well.
- f. **Board of Supervisor Budget report – February 3<sup>rd</sup>**
  - i. Blanchfield said that he and Bob Lammi will be presenting to the Board of Supervisors the Authority's 2024 Annual Report as well as the Annual Budget and plans for 2025.

#### **10. For the Good of the Order**

- a. Gunther thanked the Public Works Department for their continual great work keeping the roads clear during the winter.

#### **11. Next meeting: February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

#### **12. Adjournment**

- a. Lammi made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mitchell seconded. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 5:44PM.