

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE  
PLUM CREEK MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY  
February 2019**

A regular meeting of the Board of The Plum Creek Municipal Authority was held on February 19, 2019 at the Plum Creek Municipal Authority Business Office Building, South Manheim Township, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania.

Board members present at the meeting were Jim Ridderhoff, Jerry Weiss, Matt Gruber, and Corby Lewis. Others in attendance were Dave Bright (SSM Engineering), Joe Zerbe (PCMA Attorney), Keenan Engle (PCMA Operations Manager – Select Environmental), Joe Clemas (PCMA Field) and property owners who signed the attendance sheet: George Ankenbrand, Jean Schreiber, Paul Purcell, Joe Haggerty and Ronald Larson.

Jim Ridderhoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The first order of business was Reorganization. Upon motion by Jerry Weiss, seconded by Matt Gruber, and carried by all, the PCMA Board officer positions for 2019 are: Jim Ridderhoff – Treasurer & Co-Chairman, Jerry Weiss – Secretary & Co-Chairman, Matt Gruber – Co-Chairman, and Corby Lewis – Board Member.

Upon motion by Jerry Weiss, seconded by Matt Gruber, and carried by all, the engineering firm of Spotts, Stevens and McCoy (SSM Group) was engaged for the year 2019.

Upon motion by Matt Gruber, seconded by Corby Lewis, and carried by all but Jerry Weiss (who abstained), the legal firm of Derenzo and Zerbe was engaged for the year 2019.

Upon motion by Jerry Weiss, seconded by Matt Gruber, and carried by all, the accounting firm of Jones & Co. was engaged for the year 2019.

Upon motion by Matt Gruber, seconded by Jerry Weiss, and carried by all, the insurance agency of Seltzer Insurance was engaged for the year 2019.

The minutes for the December 2018 meeting were accepted by motion of Matt Gruber, seconded by Corby Lewis, carried by all. There was no January 2019 meeting due to no quorum.

The Treasurer's report for December 2018 and January 2019 were reviewed and accepted by motion of Corby Lewis, seconded by Matt Gruber, carried by all.

Keenan gave the manager's report.:

- There have been no water system or wastewater system violations during this time.
- Copies of the following information – Discharge monitoring report and Discharge monitoring report supplemental report - has been submitted, by Select Environmental Solutions (SES), to PA DEP on the Authority's behalf and are viewable via PA DEP website via the eDMR.
- Yearly reports are being completed. The Chapter 110 (Water) and Chapter 94 (Wastewater) reports are completed. Currently working on the CCR (Water Quality Report) and when that is completed, I will work on the DRBC (Water Audit).
- We have been working on various projects around the grounds and keeping the grounds clean. Some of the projects consist of a new cabinet for our testing materials to keep them from getting contaminated, making new shelves, and various painting/upkeep around the grounds.

In water operations, Keenan reported that:

- Normal operations continue.
- All wells are operational. Two wells are currently online, and the wells are being rotated to avoid Booster tanks overflowing.
- Daily average water production is approximately 170 gpm from two wells.
- Meter replacements are being scheduled and completed for the fourth quarter 2018 discrepancies.
- Dave Bonkovich was in to do leak detection and found two customer side leaks. The information was relayed to the customers and the leaking water has been rectified.
- A customer was informed of their leak on November 14, 2018 and it was approximately 10K per day leak. They failed to repair their line and on January 22, 2019 they were again informed of their leak with a notice that if it was not repaired by February 7, 2019 their water would be shut off. On February 7, 2019, PCMA personnel went and listened to their line and determined that the line had not been repaired and we shut off the curb box valve to their property.

- The Booster Station is at 14.0 psi, as of February 19, 2019.
- All pumps at the Booster Station are operational and are rotating on a monthly basis.

In sewage operations, Keenan reported that:

- Normal operations continue.
- Plant is operating very good.
- Approximately 11 septic pumps are in the backlog.
- The Ranger is currently operational. The F250 is no longer operational. The plow snapped off and the blade is laying in the bed of the truck. We are having trouble starting the truck and we think the starter is going. Recommend that we put out a bid for a newer truck.
- The Mack pump truck is operational. The Western Star pump truck is at Trans Edge (previously Blue Mountain Mack) for engine repair.

Keenan said the Western Star pump truck has been at Trans Edge for a little more than a month. The latest update was that they cannot get an engine sensor to work right. Keenan has attempted, several times, to contact them but never gets an answer or a return phone call. When time allows, Keenan said he will be going over in person to see what is going on and see when we will be getting the truck back. Corby Lewis asked if the work on the Western Star pump truck is still under warranty? Keenan said he doesn't think so. Joe Clemas said it was over at Trans Edge and we brought it back to the plant and the engine light came on...so it was taken back and four weeks later they still don't have it fixed. Jim Ridderhoff said we should find another vendor. Corby recommended taking the truck to Bashore Truck Service – they are located on route 443 and Matt Gruber said he takes his vehicles there. Keenan said he will reach out to Bashore's and see about them looking at the pump truck.

Corby Lewis asked Keenan what broke on the plow? Keenan said the two pins on the bottom snapped off. Joe Clemas said he was having trouble with the plow going up, down, left and right. Corby said he was working on the truck at the booster station, had it running, and just got done hooking up the transmission. Corby would like to take the battery out of the F250, since it is not running, and put it in the white truck and make sure everything is working properly (transmission, four-wheel drive, etc.). Corby said it does have a miss – more than likely it is a quill pack or plug. Corby said it is icy at the booster station so when

Keenan can get there safely...just let him know. Corby said there is no reason to tear the engine out of the F250 if the other truck runs.

In engineering matters, Dave Bright (SSM) reported that work is under way on amending the Act 537 plan. Dave said they had some correspondence with DEP, but they got that straightened out. Dave said they are at a point where they had some questions on how to prepare some of the documents - which Dave will send in an email to the Board Members. Dave said the letter to Mr. Stermer (DEP) and the TAR (Task Activity Report), that is somewhat of a formality, just in case the state ever makes funding available. That way we are on board to be eligible but also to keep them aware of what is going on. Dave needed to get some signed documents from the townships which he did.

Joe Haggerty asked Dave Bright what he means by - if funding becomes available? Dave said the state used to fund reimbursements to Municipalities, fifty percent of the cost, they incurred, for amending Act 537 plans. They haven't for some years but in case it did happen again the Authority would be eligible for reimbursement. We needed to go through this step that Dave corresponded with Mr. Stermer about. Dave said the Authority would still be eligible (as a Municipality) and as designated by the two townships. Dave has made that clear in the correspondences that were sent to the townships, prior to getting them to sign off on these documents, that the Authority is incurring the costs for the work that is being done on behalf of the two townships for the Lake Wynonah community. Dave said they emphasized that this is just for Lake Wynonah - it is not dealing with sewage facilities planning anywhere else in the townships.

In legal matters, Joe Zerbe said routine matters were addressed such as filing and satisfying liens. Joe said he ran an advertisement for the truck bid, and he understands no bids were received. He also filled out the audit letter, for the accountant, for the annual report last week.

Upon motion by Jerry Weiss, seconded by Matt Gruber, and carried by all, the 2019 Budget prepared by Jim Ridderhoff was reviewed and approved.

Upon motion by Jerry Weiss, seconded by Corby Lewis, and carried by all, the 2018 write-off of delinquent accounts in the amount of \$16,825.46 was approved. The write-off process is an accounting procedure that is performed yearly, but the monies owed remain and are not physically removed.

Jim Ridderhoff said the next item on the agenda is to address the Sewage Alternatives Analysis that we asked our engineers to do for us last year. They came

up with an analysis which gave us six options on how to proceed concerning our sewage treatment plant.

As a review:

- Option A - Continue with the current method of providing sewer service, but establish sewer rates sufficient to generate revenue which will cover the cost of operating and maintaining the sewer system and treatment facilities without using water rental revenue.
- Option B – Continue the current practice of the PCMA’s pumping out septic and holding tanks, but haul sewage to other nearby plants for disposal and treatment. The PCMA’s sewage treatment plant would be removed from service.
- Option C – Discontinue the PCMA’s use of its trucks for pumping and hauling, remove the PCMA’s sewage treatment plant from service, and require each property owner to contract with a private hauling company to pump out tanks. The wastewater would be conveyed to the treatment plant(s) with which the private hauling company has a disposal agreement.
- Option D – Construct a central sewage collection system, with treatment provided at a new PCMA plant or at an existing nearby wastewater treatment plant to which the sewage would have to be conveyed.
- Option E – Sell the existing sewer system to another entity.
- Option F – Continue with the current method of operation as described in Option A, but upgrade the existing septage receiving facilities with the intention of accepting septage from private haulers in order to generate a new source of revenue.

Jim Ridderhoff said it is time to come to an agreement on which Option we are going to proceed with.

Joe Clemas, PCMA field, said we are in the best position to service the lake and the minute we are called out we are usually out right away. When projects needed to be completed (another pump truck & painting the storage tank) we got them done. Joe feels throughout the years we have not raised up rates to where they should be for the pumps. Joe said for years we were not charging customer’s the extra hose charges and since we have been doing that – it brings in an extra

\$12,000 to \$14,000 a year. Joe said the decision is up to the Board, but he just wanted to say something. Jim Ridderhoff thanked Joe for his comments.

Jim Ridderhoff said in Dave Bright's report it is noted that the existing sewage treatment plant constructed, in 1976, was never intended to serve as a permanent solution for Lake Wynonah's sewage treatment needs; but it remains in service over forty years later.

Jim Ridderhoff said the engineering reports (about a year ago) came back for what we needed to do to fix the sewage treatment plant and the numbers were about \$750,000. If, we spend \$750,000 to fix that plant, we still have that plant which is forty years old, which was never intended to last in the first place, and I cannot see spending \$750,000 to put a band-aid on an old plant. Jim said that is my opinion. Jim said he can't see all the people in this community spending that money because they will be the ones to pay for it, ultimately, to do that.

Joe Haggerty said he respects what Jim Ridderhoff is saying but that is not the impression he got earlier from Jamie Lorah (SSM). Joe said he got the impression that if we spent the \$750,000 or the \$800,000 that it was extensive enough and he did not consider it to be a band-aid. He thought that it would bring the plant up that it would have a 10-15 year remaining life after those improvements were made.

Dave Bright (SSM) said he would not describe it as a band-aid, but he would describe it as spending \$750,000, which is for the amount of flow that you're getting, and what you are using it for, it is just an excessive amount of money. Dave said just so everybody is aware, the work SSM is doing on the Act 537 Plan, although the Board hasn't officially voted, certainly the sense that we have gotten and the direction we gotten, is that the Board's desire is to proceed with Option C – discontinuing pumping and closing the plant. That is the direction that we are assuming the Board wants to go and that is the basis that we are updating the Act 537 plan. If that is not what the Board wants to do, then we can stop what we are doing. Jim Ridderhoff said that's what this vote is all about.

Joe Haggerty said probably about two years ago, maybe longer, he knows the PCMA applied for a grant (\$500,000) for the work on the plant. So, at that time, you're thinking was if you got the grant you were going to do it. Jim Ridderhoff said if we got the \$500,000 it wasn't our dollars. So, we could kick the can further down the years, use the \$500,000, fix the plant, and address the situation later. Dave Bright (SSM) said his impression is that the question of the overall picture hadn't been looked at when the Board applied for that grant. When the grant didn't come through Dave believes that there was an eye opening on the Board to is this

what we want to do. When you look at the numbers and Dave's sense is no this isn't what we want to do - there is a better way.

Joe Haggerty said from a financial perspective, your right, it doesn't make sense to do this plant when you have extra capacity adjacent to us. Joe said he believes Deer Lake runs at 25-29 percent. So, when you have the excess capacity down the road there must be a solution here – maybe we still run the haulers and take it down to Deer Lake and get it processed. Corby Lewis said Deer Lake is not set up to take outside haulers and they do not know when they will be ready. Nancy said Pat Caulfield (SCMA) stopped in at the PCMA office to get some reports, from Keenan, and Pat said they are still in the permitting phase at Deer Lake and it is not Schuylkill County's number one priority on their to do list.

Paul Purcell said the Authority is here to service the community and you have been our one stop shop for septic and water. There is no reason for you to abandon that part of it. You should still be pumping, hauling, testing, doing all the record keeping and whatever needs to be done. If you want to shut down the plant... fine...but your trucks, your people or people you contract with, and are responsible for, should be the ones who are pumping and treating the waste. That is what you are here for. The lake has to admit the pump trucks, into the community, that is not a forgone conclusion. It is a private community. Jim Ridderhoff asked if that is a threat? Paul Purcell said no - it is just a statement.

Joe Haggerty said he knows the \$800,000 supposedly buys us 15 years. If you take that and break it down into projects and prioritize - are there certain things that you don't have to spend too much money on - it would start to buy the Authority a couple more years. Dave Bright said but all you are buying is a couple more years and the people who use water are subsidizing the operation of the sewage system.

Ron Larson said his question is - in 1976 if the Board knew the plant was only going to be a temporary system.....why didn't this Authority do anything for the last forty years to make it happen? Dave Bright said he can only assume that the permit plant was based on the idea of putting in central sewage. Dave said he is not aware of anybody wanting to pay for it. Joe Zerbe said Dave Bright and his firm went back through the history and it was supposed to be a temporary plant till a central sewage collection system was put in. Joe said it just became economically unfeasible.

Corby Lewis said he looked at the numbers and they don't look good. Corby had voiced his opinion, at the last meeting, that it was something he would like to see continue. But the more he looked at it, as far as money wise, the way the rates

would have to go up to achieve what we need to - he doesn't know how. You would have to charge more than an outside hauler in order to accommodate the cost.

Joe Haggerty thought the Board could not make a decision unless DEP approved this plan. Joe Zerbe said the Board is taking a vote on what direction they are going in. Joe Zerbe said DEP and the townships would still have to approve on what the Board is doing. Joe Zerbe said the Act 537 would have to be amended in accordance with it. Jim Ridderhoff said when they spoke with Rob Stermer (DEP), at the meeting, we spoke of going in the direction that we are speaking of right now and he did not give us a negative on that opinion.

Jim Ridderhoff said he was talking with the Auditor and he said last year's figures (which have not been published yet) show we had fewer pumps last year in the sewage area (both septic and holding tanks) which meant our revenue was down. One of the reasons we had fewer pumps was because we had trouble with the sewage treatment plant with various things breaking down and we could not fix them appropriately. We had trouble with trucks that were breaking down and we could not get them working. We could not work at our full potential.

Jerry Weiss and Matt Gruber asked if the Sewage Facilities Alternatives Analysis was made available to the public. Nancy said a summary and the full report was posted on our website as soon as it was completed by our engineers – SSM (Spotts, Stevens and McCoy).

Jerry Weiss asked Dave Bright if this (one of the options) goes through a whole DEP process? Dave Bright said updating the Act 537 plan requires a publishing of a notice and that the entire report is available for review. There is a comment period and any comments that are received needs to be addressed and finally it needs to be approved by the two townships before it gets sent to DEP. Dave Bright said this could take months – through the rest of the year.

Joe Zerbe said if the Board makes a decision tonight to shut down the plant and go with outside haulers that will only take effect once DEP and the townships approve. Dave Bright said (the decision) all it does is confirm the direction the Board is heading in so he can move on with the next steps he just described.

Upon motion by Jerry Weiss, seconded by Jim Ridderhoff, carried by all, the Board approved to adopt Option C -- (Discontinue the PCMA's use of its trucks for pumping and hauling, remove the PCMA's sewage treatment plant from service, and require each property owner to contract with a private hauling company to



pump out tanks. The wastewater would be conveyed to the treatment plant(s) with which the private hauling company has a disposal agreement.) -- as the formal position of the Board moving forward with the proposed amendment to the Act 537 Plan of both townships.

Corby Lewis said one thing that needs to be addressed, in the future, is the replacement of the water lines.

There being no further business, Jerry Weiss motioned for adjournment, Jim Ridderhoff seconded the motion, carried by all. Jim Ridderhoff adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

Meeting minutes were taken, prepared, and submitted by Nancy Wesner.