

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

A regular meeting of the Board of The Plum Creek Municipal Authority was held on August 20, 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, Corby Lewis and Ryan Achenbach. Also, in attendance was Joe Zerbe (PCMA Attorney), Dave Smith (SES) and property owners – Joe Haggerty, Richard Hardy, and David Mengel.

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

Jim Ridderhoff welcomed Ryan Achenbach. Ryan was appointed to the PCMA Board by South Manheim Township Supervisors.

The minutes for the July 2019 meeting were accepted by motion of Corby Lewis, seconded by Jerry Weiss, carried by all.

The Treasurer's report for July 2019 was reviewed and accepted by motion of Corby Lewis, seconded by Jerry Weiss, carried by all.

David Smith (SES) gave the manager's report: Mike Kreiser (SES) could not attend.

- Copies of the following information has been submitted by SES to PA DEP on the authority's behalf and are viewable via PA DEP website via the eDMR.
 - Discharge monitoring report and Discharge monitoring report supplemental report
- There have been no water system violations and no wastewater system violations during this time.
- We plan on locating and marking water main valve boxes and curb stop boxes. If needed, schedule a repair or replacement of the broken curb or valve box.
- New tires were put on the Western Star pump truck.

- The Wester Star pump truck is getting new kingpins installed at Bashore Truck Service.

In water operations, David reported that:

- Normal operations continue.
- All wells are operational. Currently running three wells at approximately 178 gpm.
- A water leak was repaired at 525 Cherokee Drive. There was a large crack in a 4" plastic line. The leaking section was removed and replaced with a section of schedule 40 plastic pipe was installed.
- The Comprehensive Monitoring Plan was completed and sent to PA DEP. PCMA does not need to do any additional testing.
- The Uninterrupted Service Plan was completed and sent to PA DEP. There was one deficiency found. The Booster Station at the water tanks needs backup power. You have six months (from the date you sent the report in to DEP) to send in a reply to DEP as to what you are going to do. I would recommend you go through your electrical engineer and have him look at it. You are going to need something to run the booster pump and the lights in the building. It is going to be expensive, I am just guessing, maybe around \$35,000 to \$40,000.
- PCMA is switching labs from Suburban Water Testing to MJ Reider starting September 1, 2019 for water and wastewater.
- Booster Station is at 13.8 PSI, as of August 18, 2019. (14.2 PSI=full).
- Booster Station: All pumps operational and rotating on monthly basis.

In sewage operations, David reported that:

- Normal operations continue.
- Plant ran well for July 2019.
- A new (Draft) NPDES permit was issued. There have been several changes made by DEP. One change is that they require an Influent 24-Hour Composite Sample for BOD5 and TSS. That is going to require purchasing a second sampler. Mike Kreiser (SES) has a used one for \$700.00. Also, a Dissolved Oxygen Meter needs to be purchased. A daily Effluent DO is now required if discharging. A DO meter is a good tool for operations, and I

would like to monitor the DO in the Aeration Basin. Fecal coliform, that is done by an outside lab, that was once a month but now it is going to be once a week. There is going to be a lot of additional testing but a lot of them are going to be done annually.

- Both EQ tanks have a large amount of sediment in both tanks. Recommends having both tanks cleaned out.
- Approximately 14 septic pumps are in the backlog.

David Smith said Keenan Engle (PCMA employee) is planning on getting his CDL license in September.

In engineering matters, Dave Bright (SSM), who did not attend, but touched base with Jim Ridderhoff before the meeting. Jim said PCMA just received, from SSM, the Act 537 Official Plan Update Revision, for both townships, and the Board members will review the documents. Jim said SSM is also going to review the draft NPDES permit and give their comments. Jim said Dave mentioned in June and July that the average total well production was the lowest monthly averages in years. Other than those comments, Dave had nothing new to report.

Jim Ridderhoff opened the floor to those in attendance. Joe Haggerty said he was disappointed to see last month's motion that the POA's request to access and inspect the Sewage Treatment Plant was denied. Joe said they understand the condition of the plant, that it is old and tired, and they appreciate what they heard from Pat Caulfield (SCMA), yet none the less, we still are not completely sure where we are going to end up with Deer Lake and we hope that we end up in the right place as far as discharging the treatment of our sewage. But if that doesn't play out there is still a reason that we would like to see the plant.

Jim Ridderhoff said to Joe Haggerty - we have had this discussion several times – that the POA wants to review the plant, to review what our engineers (SSM) said was wrong with the plant, and the dollar value of fixing it. Joe said they would like to see it, confirm, and verify. Jim said you want to double check our numbers – is that what you are saying? Joe said they want to see if they come up with the same conclusion – if you want to interpret that to be double checking your numbers – fine. Jim said that is your point of view. Jim said we have taken the engineer's (SSM) report, we have digested it, and in February 2019 we made a motion to abandon the sewage treatment plant.

Jim Ridderhoff said that decision is done, and we are not going back on that. Jim said he fails to understand why the POA Board of Directors is spending good

money (of property owners' dues) to question that issue. Joe Haggerty said that is one of many issues that are associated with your decision. Your decision involves running this plant, running the trucks and so forth. Joe said they have a responsibility to the property owners to make sure this is done properly. Jim said we also have a responsibility to the community and our responsibility is the sewage and that is what we are addressing. Jim said our Board has determined that the plant can no longer satisfy the needs of this community.

Joe Haggerty said they understand that PCMA wants to shut the plant down (we know where you are coming from) but what happens when you shut the plant down. Joe said you want to bring in several haulers in to service the community and we struggle with that issue. Joe said they are hoping Deer Lake can receive the trucks and that the waste can be hauled down there. That is an important part of the equation and if that doesn't happen then that plant might still have to have something done to it. Joe said it is very important that the Deer Lake scenario plays out – if it doesn't – what happens. Jim Ridderhoff said the haulers will haul the waste to where they are dumping at now. Joe said if the haulers haul to where they are dumping at now it will be economic catastrophic for the community because that goes back to the type of rates that SSM had in their initial study. If it goes down to Deer Lake, where they have excess capacity, and it is a nearby plant, the economics of that are probably going to be favorable to the community. That is why we are hoping that plays out that is a very good alternative.

Richard Hardy said he is looking at the plant and personally I don't see the dollars adding up to what you have described. The cheapest low-price alternative is to keep the plant going and just because it is old doesn't mean it isn't going to work and that is my perspective.

Jim Ridderhoff said even if the plant gets fixed – it is still a 40-year-old temporary plant. We cannot spend the money and charge it to the people and keep giving them service at a plant that will never get better. Joe Haggerty said he knows what Jim is saying. Joe said remember a year ago or two ago you applied for a grant and at that time you were willing to spend that money. Jim said yes, but then it was free money and it was not the homeowners paying for it. Jim said he is not going to put that bill onto the community. Joe said he thinks it is crazy to spend money here because you have the capacity down here at Deer Lake. If we have a problem here and it doesn't work out at Deer Lake – then we are probably going to have to push back. Jim said did you hear our manager's report talking about upgrades, things that need to be done to the plant, one of which is to buy some equipment for more

testing on the sewage end, which is becoming more strict because of DEP – they are making it tougher. Jim said it is only to get worse it is not going to get better.

Corby Lewis said you have to think of it like this – the sewage is only making about half of what it needs to with the pumping at what it is right now. If you decide to continue running the plant – you have to put money in there to maintain and upgrade that plant. That is going to be well over what the outside haulers are going to charge you. Corby said he did the numbers.

Joe Haggerty asked the Board to reconsider the POA's request to access and inspect the plant. Jim Ridderhoff said the Board decided and it is still no.

Richard Hardy asked what is the big cost to keep that plant running? Jim Ridderhoff said one of first things, and it is of critical importance, is going to be to replace the two equalization tanks, which have been there for 40 years, are steel, buried underground, which could cost at least \$250,000.

David Mengel said he has complained before about flushing the hydrants on a regular basis and he was told this reason and that reason as to why they couldn't do it. David said with the problems with the sewage, as a resident, it makes you worry about the water system. Jim Ridderhoff said we live with a water distribution system - the mains in this development that were put in early 70's and they were put in poorly.

David Mengel said he is disappointed that the guy that was offered (through POA's letter) wasn't appointed to the PCMA Board. Jim Ridderhoff said the decision for a new Board member does not have anything to do with the PCMA Board – Board members are appointed by the Township Supervisors.

Ryan Achenbach said his question is – if the POA came in and inspects the plant and your numbers are different then SSM's – then what road does this take – then you would need a third party to try to corroborate both sets of numbers.

Joe Haggerty said it is so important that we use Deer Lake and if we can't use Deer Lake then the economics of this plant might still work. Joe said if SSM study is right and we bring in the outside haulers it is going to cost us \$400.00 to \$600.00 per pump and maybe \$400.00 on the septic's – that is kind of excessive.

Richard Hardy said he has no problem with going down to Deer Lake what he has a problem with is the added cost added on to our customer's. The other problem is the control you guys have now, how the system is set up, you look at the water

going in, water coming out, and you know pretty much when the tanks must be emptied.

Jim Ridderhoff said he wanted to clarify a few things:

1. When you are talking hauling & prices - you guys are specifically speaking of holding tanks. Jim said when you are talking water in & what is pumped out – that is a holding tank. Richard Hardy said yes.
2. Jim said we do not go out and check your tanks – water in and what gets pumped out. Richard said he was notified a couple of times, previously, that he had more water coming in and less being pumped out of his tank. Jim asked if he is in South Manheim Township and Richard said yes. Jim said the Township monitors that. The Township appoints a person that checks the reads and then gives PCMA a “High Users List’ and then we must go and pump the holding tank out.

Richard Hardy said if the rates are going to be so high, like going out to Deer Lake, then he feels they should be subsidized, for a period of time, so that the people with the holding tanks would have time to be able to put in an inground system. Richard said now you are subsidizing sewage with the water give the people that must pay 300% more to have their tanks emptied some period of time so they don’t have to be hit with a brick suddenly.

Corby Lewis asked how long this has been going on with shutting down the plant? Jim Ridderhoff said we have been talking about shutting down the plant for more than two years. Nancy said in 2012, Jen (Office Manager) did a write up that was put in with all the bills about prices going up and maybe homeowners should check into switching over.

Jim Ridderhoff said you are talking to me about numbers playing a role in the decision-making process – if you have a holding tank and you want to switch over to an inground system – what is an approximate cost to do that? Richard Hardy said around \$12,000, his was done a while ago, so say \$15,000.

Jim Ridderhoff said you know there is money available to loan, less than 2% interest, for a 15-year loan it is a \$100.00 a month – your payment. So, if you install a \$15,000 inground system - you would be paying back a \$100.00 a month which is less then what you are paying for a holding tank pump. Jim said tell me where economics isn’t a valid point on that.

Corby Lewis said the leniency of drainage, when they do your perc test now, it is a lot less stringent then it was years ago. Corby has a friend, who lives in Lake

Wynonah, he had a holding tank because years ago it didn't perc for even a sand mound and he just got a standard system. Ryan Achenbach said there is new mound systems that don't have to be nearly as high. Ryan has been on a few under construction and it has been 24 inches.

Jim Ridderhoff said for years, I mean 20 years at least, this Authority has undercharged holding tank pumps because we felt sorry for homeowners and didn't want to raise those rates. Jim said to Joe Haggerty - you are making a comparison of what you are paying now to what you may pay later based on a false low number - that is not a true number. We don't know what outside haulers will charge but you can check with them if you want.

Jim Ridderhoff said the Sewage Management Program will be managed by the Townships in the same manner that it is being managed now. There will be a nominal cost attached to it and the Township will make their own charge.

In legal matters, Joe Zerbe said routine legal matters were addressed, including satisfying some liens, and Nancy and I got a list of properties together that are up for Tax Upset Sale. We do this every year and get the list to the Tax Claim Bureau in case they get sold and the Authority is owed money. Joe said since the last meeting he did send an email to the POA's attorney indicating we wanted to open a line of communication, but he never heard back from the attorney.

Jim Ridderhoff said included in the Board's packets was a copy of the correspondence Joe Haggerty sent to Jim. Jim said Joe wanted to get together. Jim said he asked Joe what does the POA really want. Joe said they do not want to abandon the sewage treatment plant, we want to check it out, we want a guarantee that the Sewage Management Program is being administered properly (like it is now), and we don't want a whole bunch of trucks in the lake. Jim said Joe is afraid the trucks won't be able to go up and down the steep driveways. Corby Lewis said it is going to be the same amount of trucks. Jim said a week later he sat down in the POA's office with four POA Board members and we talked through this whole thing again. Jim said he explained what we are doing - how the plant is going to be shut down and we are going to turn it over to outside haulers. At the meeting two months ago, when Pat Caulfied was here, Pat said (the POA was here) that the plant is a disaster looking for an accident to happen and they basically agreed with it.

Jim Ridderhoff said the plant is going to shut down and you guys agreed to it and they orally said to me, at that time, they agreed that the plant was going to shut down. Jim said a week later he got the second correspondence from Joe Haggerty

saying he knows we considered it, but they are questioning it again they want to check out the plant. Jim just wanted to let the Board know what is happening. Jim said he also met with Jamie Lorah (SSM) and answered some of her questions because they had to revise some things. Jim said he would like the rest of the Board and Joe Zerbe to look at it (Act 537 Plan Update Revision) and call or email the office with any of your questions or comments. Jim said we will coordinate our thoughts and questions and get back to Jamie (SSM) and then next month we can pass this thing.

Ryan Achenbach asked is this really all about holding tank prices. The rest of the Board answered yes. Ryan said you have a community that was built as a vacation community – with a plant and water system that was built for a vacation community – and it doesn't work now that we are a full-time community.

Ryan Achenbach said he knows that Deer Lake is trying to fast track us to being taken over. Ryan asked how the Township can possibly leave us linger with no sewage pumping if we can't go to Deer Lake and this plant is shut down. Jim Ridderhoff said Deer Lake doesn't have to take us – there are other places to haul to like Pine Grove, etc. Jim said he also talked to some of the local haulers who would be glad to service Lake Wynonah.

Joe Zerbe said they brought literature back from the DEP meeting regarding loans. Nancy said the literature, for Pennvest, is laying on the front counter and some homeowners have called the office, and we gave them the information and website. Jim Ridderhoff said he would like to include the Pennvest flyer in the next billing for homeowners who have holding tanks.

Jim Ridderhoff said he also attended South Manheim's township meeting and presented our scenario on what we are doing just as an update to the township. The Township Board asked a couple of questions – how we are doing and where we are going. Jim said he got to talk to a lady (she was late to the meeting) and she wanted to know about what we are doing. Jim said he explained to her what we are doing, and she said you are telling me exactly what has been in your minutes for the last number of months but that is not what I hear at the POA Board it is entirely different. Jim said South Manheim is fully behind us in what we are doing, and he is convinced Wayne is also. Jim said he will also be attending Wayne Township's meeting and will explain the same thing.

There being no further business, Corby Lewis motioned for adjournment, Jerry Weiss 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.