



## **Berkeley Township MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY**

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A Public Meeting of the Berkeley Township Municipal Utilities Authority was held on Thursday, **January 25, 2024** at 7:00 pm at the Berkeley Township Municipal Utilities Authority at 42 Station Road, Bayville, NJ 08721. Presided by Chairman Hale-present, Jerome Bollettieri-absent, Richard Elliott-present, Samuel Cammarato-present via tele-communication, Denise Pellecchia-present, William McGrath-present, Frederick Bekiarian-present.

Mr. Hale stated Commissioner Bekiarian will be seated as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

Also present: Mr. Budesa-Attorney, Mr. Chiaravallo-Engineer and Mrs. Nugent-Executive Director.

After the salute to the flag, Ms. Del Conte read the Open Public Meeting Statement.

Motion to approve the Public Meeting Minutes, Executive Session Minutes and the following reports from the meeting on December 14, 2023: Denise Pellecchia, second, Richard Elliott. The motion was approved by voice vote. There were no "nay" votes. Motion Carried.

- Executive Director's Report
- Engineer's Report
- Attorney's Report

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Mr. Bekiarian stated for the six week period (12/16/23-01/26/24) the payroll expenses totaled \$76,161.66 and the operational expenses totaled \$118,496.05.

Frederick Bekiarian and Richard Elliott reviewed the six weeks.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report: Samuel Camarato, second, Denise Pellecchia. The motion was approved by voice vote. There were no "nay" votes. Motion Carried.

Chairman Hale stated there are several members of the general public in attendance.

Motion to open the public portion: Denise Pellecchia, second, Richard Elliott. The motion was approved by voice vote. There were no "nay" votes. Motion Carried.

Mrs. Nugent advised the Board these residents each own one of the six houses outside of the Berkeley Terrace project. The six homes are obligated to connect to the water main once the main is turned over to the Authority

Jennifer Naputano of 163 Amherst Avenue: Mrs. Naputano raised concerns regarding the financial difficulties that will be incurred due to the connection fee and cost of hiring a plumber. She stated in 2017 the connection fee cost was \$1,100.00. The fee was increased to \$2,000.00 in April, 2021. She questioned why the cost is over \$6,000.00 as of May 2023.

Mrs. Nugent explained the calculation of the connection fee is based on a state formula. This formula takes into consideration the debt of the Authority, total number of rate payers and the actual cost of the connection. The Authority Auditor prepared that calculation and the Authority authorized the current connection fee schedule in May 2023. The Authority offers a five-year installation plan for the connection fee, which can be extended to ten years upon request. Chairman Hale stated due to rising interest rates along with the soaring costs of raw material the connection fee was raised to \$6,000.00 to cover all the associated expenses.

Andrew & Nellya Napolitano of 23 Norwood Avenue: Mr. Napolitano also raised concerns regarding the financial difficulties that will be incurred due to the connection fee and cost of hiring a plumber. Mr. Napolitano requested of the Board the possibility of being grandfathered into the lower cost connection fee. The Board advised him it is not possible to grandfather the lower connection fee cost because existing developers and residents must pay the same connection fees. Mr. Budesca advised once the rate is set it must be applied across the board, no special exemptions are permissible.

Mr. Napolitano questioned why the six additional homes are obligated to connect to the water system since the developer's townhome project is not directly on their street. Mr. Budesca stated due to State regulations the Authority is mandated to create a loop in the water system which is why the six homes are obligated to connect due to the developer's townhome project. The Township ordinance requires any home or structure adjacent to the installed water main to connect. Chairman Hale stated the Authority will offer the residents a payment plan to help ease the cost.

Motion to close the public portion: Denise Pellecchia, second, Richard Elliott. The motion was approved by voice vote. There were no "nay" votes. Motion Carried.

**Executive Director's Report:**

**Northern Blvd. Water Tower paint selection:**

The Board held a discussion regarding colors for the Northern Blvd. Tower. The Board authorized Pillar White with Deck Red lettering stating Berkeley Township.

**Engineer's Report:**

**Phase VII Water System Improvements:**

Mr. Chiaravallo stated CME is responding to comments from the DEP for the authorization to advertise the Phase VII project.

**Northern Boulevard Tank Rehabilitation:**

Mr. Chiaravallo stated CME is reviewing submittals with the contractor. The contractor will initiate the installation of the scaffolding.

**Annual Engineer's Report:**

Mr. Chiaravallo presented the Annual Engineering's Report. This report is a summary of work that occurred during 2023 and provides a brief description of the Plant operations.

**Accountant's Report:**

Will present at a future meeting.

**Attorney's Report:**

No Report.

**Committee Report:**

Old Business:

No Report.

New Business:

The Board gave instructions to provide the customers notices regarding the service line protection plan again in June.

Motion to adjourn: Denise Pellecchia, second, Richard Elliott. The motion was approved by voice vote. There were no "nay" votes. Motion Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra J Walker  
Office Clerk

The next meeting of the Berkeley Township Municipal Utilities Authority will be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 7 pm at the Berkeley Township Municipal Utilities Authority located at 42 Station Road, Bayville, NJ 08721.