

MINUTES  
HEALTH & SANITATION COMMITTEE  
SEPTEMBER 3, 2024

The Penn Township Health and Sanitation Committee convened on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, at 6:41 p.m., following the Finance Committee Meeting. Present were Chairman Berlingo, Commissioners Baile, Brown, Elksnis and Heiland. Also present were Police Chief Hettinger, Fire Captain Kevin Adams, Engineer Bortner, Zoning Officer LeFevre, WWTP Superintendent Lank, and Township Secretary Sweeney. The following items were discussed:

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were none.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: The minutes of the August 5, 2024, Health and Sanitation Committee Meeting were approved as submitted.

CITIZEN’S COMMENTS: There were none.

REFUSE AND RECYCLE CONTRACT FUTURE: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported a representative from Public Services is scheduled to attend the October committee meeting, which will begin at 6 p.m. Confirmation was received via email, and the representative will send a packet to the township to display on the projector during the meeting. The committee requested Superintendent Lank to extend an invitation to the AFSCME union representative and steward to attend the meeting.

OAK HILL HERSHEY HEIGHTS PROJECT: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported there have been no changes regarding Oak Hill and Hershey Heights since the last meeting. The connection process is still pending for residents who are being hooked up with the assistance of county funds.

BREEZEWOOD DRIVE SEWER PROJECTS: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported the solicitor is reviewing documentation for a pending agreement for the Breezewood Drive property.

FINE SCREEN PROJECT: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported he reached out to the manufacturer again and we should receive notification of completion at any time. Once that notification is received, we will proceed to schedule the installation.

GRANDVIEW ACRES PROJECT: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported all the necessary materials have been ordered and they were able to keep it below the bidding threshold and hope to have this project completed before the end of the year.

NEWSLETTER/SHREDDING EVENT: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported 1,200 copies of the newsletter were ordered and received and distributed to the offices on August 20<sup>th</sup>. To date, \$2,624 has been spent on printing, compared to \$3,565 in 2023, so we're already seeing savings. There were only 120 to 150 copies left over from the spring distribution, so the initial order was reduced to 1,200. He has had discussions with Roller Printing, and there is no minimum or maximum order requirement—50, 100, or 200 copies can be ordered to meet any

additional needs. Commissioner Elksnis offered to take copies to Weis Markets, Giant Markets, and the Smoker's Outlet.

Superintendent Lank reported that the next shredding event is scheduled for Saturday, October 12<sup>th</sup> from 8 am to 1 pm.

2025 BUDGET: Superintendent Lank reported Refuse and recycle expenses have increased by 2.75%, with enough funds left to purchase a year's supply of bags if the contract is extended. The sewer collection budget has seen a significant rise of 35%, primarily due to vehicle and equipment replacements, pump station upgrades, and a planned generator purchase. Excluding capital expenditures, the increase is less than 1%. Salaries have not been factored in yet, but a 25% increase in health insurance is anticipated. Sewer disposal costs have risen by 9.6%, or 4.5% when excluding capital outlay, with vendors indicating a minimum 5% increase in costs for next year. There was discussion about a flow swap with Grandview Acres, which will add 132 EDUs to the borough. Changing to a toter service could significantly alter the budget, removing the need for current collection costs. Commissioner Heiland reminded the department heads to update and share any budget changes promptly, and he suggested using SharePoint for live document collaboration in the future. Superintendent Lank is also monitoring potential grants for the coming year.

OTHER MATTERS: WWTP Superintendent Lank reported he received a call from DEP, followed by an email, regarding a 902 grant application for the chipper. We're currently under review, and they requested proof of the passed ordinances. Secretary Sweeney provided all the official copies, which we forwarded to them. They're satisfied with the documentation and mentioned that decisions on the allocation of funds should be made within a couple of weeks.

CITIZEN'S QUESTIONS TO THE COMMITTEE REGARDING DISCUSSION ITEMS: Mr. Rob Gunnarsson, 48 Cardinal Drive, questioned the committee about the potential shift to a bin system for trash collection instead of the current bag collection method. The Committee clarified that various options are being considered. The current bag system contract extends until 2026, with the base contract ending at the end of next year. There are two optional years available, which include set increases based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). It was explained that CPI measures inflation, and for example, a 3.7% CPI increase would result in a corresponding increase in costs for trash pickup. He added that there's another rumor circulating that the price of trash bags is set to increase at the end of this year. Commissioner Heiland responded that we currently have no plans to raise prices and no discussion has taken place. Superintendent Lank added that Walmart has stopped selling trash bags due to an issue with their inventory system, specifically a barcode and programming problem. This decision was entirely on their part and had nothing to do with the township's efforts. Once Walmart stopped selling the bags, customers went to other stores like Giant, which subsequently ran out of stock due to the increased demand.

Mr. Gunnarsson asked about arranging a tour of the wastewater treatment plant for his boy scout troop. Superintendent Lank mentioned that a previous manager put a stop to such tours due to concerns over child safety laws and background checks, he expressed a willingness to resume them, as they enjoy conducting these tours and have hosted a few groups. Mr. Gunnarsson brought up the request because one of the boys needs the tour for a rank advancement related to environmental issues. Secretary Sweeney was instructed to verify with

our insurance provider whether we can conduct tours and if there are any required forms or waivers to ensure all necessary precautions are in place.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M. Sweeney  
Township Secretary