

READINGTON-LEBANON SEWERAGE AUTHORITY

April 26, 2023

OPENING: Dr. Schaible, Chairman opened this regular meeting and announced that the Sunshine laws have been satisfied for the convening of this meeting.

PRESENT: Dr. Schaible, Messrs. Burton, Villa, Heller, Mueller members, Mrs. Plesnarski, Administrator. Mr. Cichone did not attend.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of March 22, 2023 as written, was carried with roll call of ayes all, nays none.

APPROVAL OF INVOICES: Motion to approve the invoices for the month of April in the amount of \$ **146,391.93** along with the authorization for the Administrator to transfer this amount into the Operating Checking account on May 1, 2023, and approval of (2) invoices totaling \$ **22,275.00** to be paid from the General Fund also on May 1, 2023 was made by Mr. Burton seconded by Mr. Heller and carried with a roll call of ayes all, nays none.

APPROVAL OF BUDGET STATEMENT: Motion to acknowledge the review and approve the April Budget Statement without any exceptions noted as written was made by Mr. Burton seconded by Mr. Heller and carried with a roll call of ayes all, nays none.

NEW BUSINESS: *4th Quarter 2022 I&I Report* - Mr. Ponte, Authority engineer requested the postponement of the 2022 4th quarter I&I report and it be combined with the 2023 1st quarter I&I report at the next meeting.

Cost Proposal Scope of Work and Feasibility for Plant Upgrade – Permit renewal requirements are two pronged. There are more stringent limits than the existing permit and the need for additional capacity needs to be addressed. Ammonia, nitrate nitrogen and phosphorous limits are more stringent. Both process upgrades and capacity upgrades are

needed. The plant upgrade will be a good time to improve both simultaneously. We are in the planning phase. Although the nitrate nitrogen limit will not be stringent with this permit renewal, it must be considered for the very near future. Ammonia can be removed biologically requiring the need for two oxidation ditches. The existing second ditch will cost more to refurbish than replacement. Chemical removal is the most efficient to remove phosphorous with alum and filtration. The additional nutrient removal will need larger clarifiers or two additional clarifiers. The Authority has enough property for improvements. The influent pump station needs upgrading as there is only room for two pumps but due to the additional flow expected we will need at least three pumps. A new splitter box will also be required for the expected flow. An increase in UV lamps for disinfection due to increased flow will be required. Currently flow usage is 74.5% Readington, 25% Lebanon, .5% RV. Future plant flow of 1.2mgd total future capacity will be 15,000 for RV, 231,000 for Lebanon, and 924,000 for Readington. Readington has an increase of 423,439 projected, no projection was received from Lebanon. An increase of an additional 528,000 will increase capacity to 1.2mgd. March 2027 is the deadline for the project. The timeline for the upgrade is 7 months to plan, 16 months design, 27 months construction. Mr. Burton suggested that Mr. Ponte present to Lebanon to explain costs. Mr. Heller would like to restrict information dissemination to smaller groups first. The planning phase will consist of five progress meetings, survey property, a presentation of alternative nutrient removal methods, alternative to increase of capacity, and assistance in selection of alternatives. Costs have increased 2.4 times from the year 2000. Projected construction costs are \$13 million. Engineer, legal, admin costs usually 15-20% additional not including bonding and bond counsel. Mike Samuel reviewed financing options. IBank financing is ½ going rate. The IBank makes a direct application to the Local Finance Board. Mandates requirement to go to IBank first. Funds of 50% from state revolving funds from EPA. Can save \$1.2 million over a 20-year payback. Need bonds in place before design phase. It will take 6 months to get all bonding requirements in place. Mr. Samuels noted a second financing option, the Bipartisan infrastructure law. Can get loan forgiveness if rated as an energy and water efficiency project. American rescue plan has timeline constraint. Would be difficult to obtain. Recommend coordinate with bond counsel. Total preliminary planning is estimated to cost approximately \$200,000.00. The first phase of

the feasibility study would include an evaluation of alternatives, and establishment of project expectations at a cost not to exceed \$30,000. Motion to approve the first phase of the feasibility study for \$30,000.00 for plant upgrade was made by Mr. Heller, seconded by Mr. Burton, and carried with a roll call of ayes all, nays none.

Manhole Rehabilitation – Mrs. Plesnarski noted that \$75,000 has been earmarked in the capital budget for manhole rehabilitation. Five manholes will be rehabilitated. She is in the process of getting quotes for the rehab of a manhole in Readington Township, repair vents on two manholes in Lebanon Borough and repair two at Round Valley.

Travis Boyd Resignation– In accordance with the personnel policy an employee absent without approval or notification for five or more consecutive days is deemed to have voluntarily resigned. Mr. Boyd has been absent without approval for ten consecutive working days and is therefore considered to have voluntarily resigned. He will be terminated. We will look for new hire. We will need a S2 licensed operator not just a maintenance assistant in review of long-term planning. There is a possibility of losing two licensed operators in 2025 due to retirement. Mr. Burton questioned privatizing the plant. Mrs. Plesnarski noted that with contract operations they will operate the plant but not handle the upkeep and maintenance, nor permitting issues.

OLD BUSINESS: *Influent pump* – Mrs. Plesnarski noted that a spare pump was reconstructed, and we are now back to two working pumps at the influent pump station.

ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned by motion made by Dr. Schaible seconded by Mr. Burton and carried with a roll call of ayes all, nays none.

Respectfully submitted:

Jonathan Heller
Secretary/Treasurer

Jill Plesnarski
Administrator