

BOROUGH OF BUENA
MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY
P. O. BOX 696
MINOTOLA, NEW JERSEY 08341

The regular meeting of the BBMUA was held on March 27, 2024 at 7 p.m. This meeting notice was provided to The Daily Journal and the Atlantic City Press which are the BBMUA's official newspapers. Notices are also posted on the bulletin boards within the Municipal Building as well as the Borough of Buena and BBMUA's websites. The meeting took place in the large meeting room located in the Municipal Building, Minotola while practicing social distancing and complying with guidelines.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Delano.

Those present were:

R. Delano	M. Bertonazzi	S. Testa
J. Formisano	C. Santore	
J. Johnston	A. Zorzi	
D. Romeo	D. Horst	
J. Santagata	R. Casella in @ 7:04 pm	

Chairman Delano stated that a notice of hearing to property owners within 200' of subject property, public utilities and public agencies for a Land Use Board hearing that was held on March 26, 2024 for an application of Green Thumb Growing Company LLC was received. The company is seeking a site plan waiver and/or site plan approval to permit a Class 1 Cannabis Cultivation Facility and Class 2 Cannabis Manufacturing Facility to be located at 345 E. Weymouth Road designated as block 117 lot 5. Mr. Delano stated it really doesn't affect us at this point and they will probably be coming to us for whatever they need or want for that project.

David Horst of DeBlasio & Associates informed the board that he, Mark DeBlasio and Jessica Stilley met with Chairman Delano, Alan Zorzi and Jonathan Erber at the BBMUA Wastewater Treatment Plant and discussed the transition of the Authority's Engineering work.

Mr. Horst stated that one of the items they discussed was the Summer Avenue road project and coordination with the Borough of Buena. Mr. Horst provided the engineer's project cost estimate options. Option one estimate is in the amount of \$350,000.00 to replace the existing sanitary sewer pipe, manholes and laterals within the Right of Way (approximately 1,400 linear feet). Option two estimate came in at \$135,000.00 to clean the existing sanitary sewer pipe, remove protruding roots, repair one off set joint,

excavate and restore 12 test pits and slip-line the existing asbestos cement sanitary sewer pipe (approximately 1,400 linear feet). The existing manholes and laterals would remain.

The roadway paving work for option one would take place in the Borough of Buena's project.

In further discussion Mr. Horst's office was requested to look into USDA Rural Development Grant funding and to file a Loan Application for the replacement of various sanitary sewers. Under this option the Authority could use recently completed sanitary sewer inspection reports and supplemental reports if required as the basis to identify the sanitary sewers that should be included in the USDA predevelopment planning grant and subsequent construction grant/loan applications. As part of the process, the Borough will also utilize the roadway selections that were submitted for fiscal year 2023 Local Transportation Project Funds and fiscal year 2024 NJDOT Municipal Aid funding to cross leverage both grant opportunities.

Mr. Horst stated with the Authority's direction, DeBlasio & Associates can coordinate a proposal in conjunction with the Borough of Buena for professional engineering services to prepare and submit a USDA Rural Development Grant/Loan application for the replacement of various sanitary sewers.

Chairman Delano explained that the handwritten printed copy that was distributed to everyone at the meeting from Mr. Horst was the information that Mr. Horst found for the USDA Grant money. The Chairman explained that when DeBlasio and Associates met with him, Alan, and Jonathan the issue was they were looking at the project anticipating that there might have to be some USDA money to help offset the costs on a project such as this. However, for the initial application there is not. The Chairman explained that a project of this magnitude is not in our budget for 2024 so we will have to forgo the \$350,000.00 of doing this on our own. However, Chairman Delano wanted the project cost estimates so that it could be included on our project list and we could see what we could do for it to be included in our budget for 2025 and to look into applying for some possible USDA funds to offset some of the cost of the project. The benefit of trying to do some of these projects with the Borough is they will offset the cost of paying for repaving the road portion of the project. Chairman Delano stated that there is also a letter from the Mayor, Joseph Baruffi, stating that the Borough is committing to paying for half of the cost of the USDA Application fees as well as paying half the costs of all other mutually approved expenses incurred and not covered by the Grant as they occur. Chairman Delano said he is not exactly sure what those costs might be but the Borough already has some Grant money that has been awarded to them that they will have to delay because we are not prepared to do this project this year. If we can get it on our table for 2025 to do and it works that's great.

Chairman Delano stated that the USDA grant amounts are based on current Census information so what we may have gotten 4 years ago we will not be eligible for now. But Chairman Delano would like the BBMUA Board to approve DeBlasio & Associates to prepare a proposal to move forward with the Preliminary Application so that we will

know what kind of Grant funds we can anticipate so that we are prepared for next year and will be able to plan how we can blend the cost into our operation for the 2025 Budget year.

m/Johnston s/Romeo authorizing DeBlasio and Associates to prepare the Preliminary USDA Application and the cost to prepare the preliminary application of \$18,500.00 would be split evenly with the Borough of Buena so the cost to the BBMUA would be \$9,250.00. m/passed

Ms. Santore had a question for Mr. Horst regarding a flyer that she had given to the Engineer and the BBMUA Board a few months ago from the NJ I-Bank regarding available funding that is out there for both transportation as well as funding that we may be able to utilize for our portion of the project asking if he looked into this further. Mr. Horst said they have not looked into NJ I-Bank funding. Ms. Santore said that you may be able to do that in conjunction with the USDA money and asked if the BBMUA Auditor would be able to comment on the NJ I-Bank funding. Mr. Steve Testa stated that the NJ I-Bank, if the money is available, there is money for certain projects that are forgivable loans or principal forgiveness loans for projects that qualify up to two million dollars. He feels that we should look to see if this type of project fits into the scope of the funding. If it does you may be able to get into the cycle for some funds in 2024 but definitely for 2025. Mr. Testa says it is definitely worth looking into. He stated that the USDA is fine but there are a lot of hoops to jump through, not that the NJ I-Bank doesn't have them but there is a lot of funding available through NJ I-Bank that could be principal forgiveness funding.

David Horst stated for clarification purposes that the USDA funding will not cover the cost of the slip lining of the sewer lines and will only cover the cost of replacing the existing sanitary sewer piping. Chairman Delano said if the USDA funds come in at 10% it will not be advantageous for us to replace and we will look to slip line the existing piping on the ones that are necessary unless we can find funds from NJ I-Bank that would offset the cost of replacing. Ms. Santore asked Mr. Horst if, in previous meetings with associates from his office and representatives from the Borough it was discussed that once the preliminary application to the USDA is submitted that is when the USDA makes the determination whether the project is able to go forward for grant funds or not. Mr. Horst stated that is correct and the USDA would also give a percentage of the grant funds available if the project qualifies. Ms. Santore stated that we wouldn't necessarily be proceeding with the full application if the preliminary application came back stating the project was ineligible for funding. Mr. Horst stated that is also correct. It is a two-step procedure and the preapplication is the first step. Once that determination is made it will be the board's decision at that point how to proceed.

Mr. Horst asked if the board requires a formal proposal with all of the data. Chairman Delano stated that we do need a formal written proposal and once we have that in front of us the approval will be formalized with a resolution.

Chairman Delano stated that the email received from Maggie Matlosz of the NJDEP to Kevin Murphy regarding the proposed AutoZone at 119 Wheat Road showed Administrative Incompleteness so he doesn't think there is any action that the BBMUA Board needs to take at this time. Mr. Zorzi stated that no there is not. Mr. Zorzi received this email and wanted it to be put on record and distributed to the new BBMUA Engineer so they were aware of it. Robert Smith of Remington & Vernick had looked at this previously and picked up on the fact that the property they want to build this on is not in the sewer service area and that is what triggered the administrative incompleteness. But Mr. Zorzi wanted our new Engineer to know that this project is a potential down the road.

Robert Casella of Testa, Heck, Testa & White received a phone call from the Borough of Buena Solicitor, Rick Tonetta, regarding the installation of an amateur radio repeater on the BBMUA's water tower. Mr. Casella suggested that Ms. Santore reach out to Jerry Marinacci to see if he would be willing to make a presentation to the BBMUA Board at the regular meeting scheduled for April 24, 2024. Mr. Marinacci had given a note to Chairman Santagata back in October 2021 and the Chairman asked that the Solicitor obtain a legal opinion on the matter. At that time the legal opinion was due to the fact that there is emergency service communication equipment for Atlantic County Dispatch as well as equipment for AT&T for which an extension was negotiated and since September 11, 2001 stipulating all governmental facilities be closely regulated it was strongly suggested to refuse this and any future consideration to the rental to private individuals of public facilities. The board agreed this was a bad precedent to set due to the fact that if damage was caused to the tank, it would be very costly to repair as well as the safety of the person installing the equipment being a liability. That is why there was no action taken on the matter. Ms. Santore stated when she was reading through all of the information presented, she noticed it stated that the antennas are located on several buildings in the city of Vineland so she is not sure where exactly he wants to install the antenna. Mr. Tonetta also stated that Mr. Marinacci has a video that he showed so Mr. Casella suggested Mr. Marinacci come so everyone can see the presentation. Chairman Delano stated he feels this is a good idea but he would like to wait until we obtain the report back from Remington & Vernick regarding the water tower and that action not be taken until we know exactly what is on top of the tower and any work that it may need be completed. Ms. Santore will contact Mr. Marinacci and ask him if he is willing to make his presentation to the full Board.

m/Romeo s/Johnston adopt Resolution R-16-2024 authorizing the meeting of the Borough of Buena Municipal Utilities Authority closed to the public to discuss matters of potential litigation which involve attorney client privilege pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b)(7). m/passed

m/Romeo s/Johnston to open the executive closed session meeting at 7:35 pm. m/passed

m/Formisano s/Johnston to close the executive closed session meeting and return to regular session at 7:51 pm. m/passed

Mr. Steve Testa of Romano, Hearing, Testa & Knorr stated that he spoke with the BBMUA's consultant Maryann Chalow and she will be finishing up the work papers for the 2022 Audit. Mr. Testa and his associates continue to work on the testing procedures.

m/Romeo s/Johnston to accept the minutes of the last regular meeting held on March 13, 2024. m/passed

m/Santagata s/Romeo to accept the minutes of the last closed executive session meeting held on March 13, 2024. m/passed

Chairman Delano said that he has one comment to make before we move on. When we go into closed session his way of looking at this is that he wants everyone to speak their mind freely so we hear what everyone is thinking pertaining to the closed session matter. But remember that closed session matter is supposed to stay a closed session matter and is meant to be confidential to the board. This is what is in the best interest of the board and it does not jeopardize any case that may occur. The solicitor asked that this statement be made clear to everyone.

Plant Superintendent Alan Zorzi presented the board with the 2024 Grass Cutting Quotes that were obtained. Three quotes were attempted and Cutting Edge came in as the lowest quote in the amount of \$275.00 per cut at the plant with an estimated 16 cuts and \$275.00 per cut if additional cuts are needed and \$240.00 per cut at the pump stations for an estimated 6 cuts for a total estimated cost for 2024 in the amount of \$5,840.00.

m/Formisano s/Johnston to authorize Cutting Edge to perform the grass cutting services at the plant and pump stations for a total estimated cost of \$5,840.00 for the year 2024. m/passed

Mr. Zorzi received a letter from Michele Potter of the State of NJ DEP Office of Quality Assurance that was sent to Jonathan Erber stating our laboratory performed acceptably on all parameters it was required to analyze in the 2024 Water Supply Proficiency Test Study. Chairman Delano said this is a significant note to the competency of the folks at the plant and he wants to say thank you very much and he appreciates the hard work that they put into their jobs. Alan Zorzi said he gives Jonathan Erber a lot of credit because

when Jim Baals passed away who was our laboratory supervisor there was no one else qualified to fill that position and Jon stepped up and has been doing a great job. Plant Superintendent Alan Zorzi informed the board that the draft residual renewal permit will appear in the Press of Atlantic City and in the April 3, 2024 DEP Bulletin. The Bulletin is available on the internet at www.state.nj.us/dep/bulletin. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-15.10(c)1.i, the public comment period will close thirty (30) days after its appearance in the newspaper. They did have their DEP inspection for the Residuals and the NJDEP tour for the site inspection will be coming up on April 1, 2024.

m/Romeo s/Johnston to file all correspondence sent out for review without reading numbered 1 through 9. m/passed

The next regular meeting will be held on April 24, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

m/Romeo s/Formisano to adjourn the meeting 8:00 p.m. m/passed

Submitted by
Cheryl Santore-BBMUA Secretary