

**MNUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE FREEBURG MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY**

Approved Nov 14, 2024

October 10, 2024

Members Present: Thomas Gingrich, William Hoffman and Bruce Blades, via phone.

Others Present: Attorney Matthew Cravitz, Josh Owens, PESI; Josh Satteson, HRG; John Wiegler, John Reichenbach, Margerie Sweeney, and Jim Crisswell and Wanda Kantz.

William Hoffman called the regular meeting to order.

There was no meeting on September 12, 2024 due to a lack of a quorum

The August 15, 2024 meeting minutes were available for review. *Thomas Gingrich moved to approve the minutes, William Hoffman seconded, the FMA members unanimously approved the motion.*

The paid bills for September 2024 were presented for reviewed, *Thomas Gingrich made a motion to ratify the September 2024 paid bills, Bruce Blades seconded the motion, the FMA members unanimously approved the motion.*

The paid bills for October 2024 were presented for review. *William Hoffman made a motion to approve the October 2024 paid bills, Thomas Gingrich seconded and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion.*

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

5 West Market Street – Property owner, Marjorie Sweeney, is concerned about the current bill for water & sewer service of \$632.00 (39,000 gallons) for the third quarter of 2024. There is a significant leak at this property and it was discovered there was a leak on the authority side of the shut-off valve, this leak has been repaired. Property owner doesn't believe the recorded amount of water actually when through her meter, and requests and adjustment on her billing. **The authority will have the meter reread after the October 10th meeting and before the November 14th meeting and review the usage. Any decision regarding the 3rd quarter billing will be made at the November 14th, 2024 meeting.**

306 East New Market Street – Property Owner, Jim Criswell, is concerned about the current bill for water and sewer service of \$2,504.00 (195,000 gallons) for the third quarter of 2024. There is a significant leak at the property after the meter, which in a meter pit and before the home. This leak would not have been found if not for the significantly high water meter reading. After discussion and review, *Thomas Gingrich made a motion to reissue an adjusted third quarter billing, average uses over the last three quarters, William Hoffman seconded and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion.* Wanda Kantz will reissue a adjust bill by October

15th, 2024. Also, the pipe for the meter pit is crocked, but after review it was decided to not take any action on this issue since it you entail cutting and digging up the property owners paved driveway.

103 West Market Street – This property was scheduled for shut-off for non-payment on September 30, 2024. The operator tried to turn off service and found that the shut-off was inoperable. Rusty’s Water Service repaired the shutoff on October 3rd and the property’s service was shut off on Thursday, October 4th. The property owner then tried to turn on this water service himself over the weekend of October 5th and 6th damaging the new shutoff that was installed. The operator tried to turn water service back on Monday, October 7th due to receipt of payment and was unable to turn service on due to the damage from the property owner. **Property owner was informed he will be responsible for the cost of the second shutoff valve installation, shut-off fee and a turn on fee. If the property owner doesn’t make restitution for the repairs, possible legal action will be need.**

OLD BUSINESS:

PESI Report – The PESI report for October 2024 was reviewed, completed issues PESI has done:

- All the monthly DEP Reports for have been submitted with no violations.
- Completed more service line inspections
- Updated Dep monitoring calendar
- Read and repaired meters
- Address CL2 residual issues
- Worked on curb stop valve at 5 West Market Street
- Conducted PFAS sampling
- Worked on Lead & Copper service line project
- Repaired brine tank pump
- Unladed filter and water plant
- Preformed all quarterly calibrations

Action Items:

- Finished Water Line – Repair work will be scheduled once level monitoring system is completed.
- Regulators – Waiting on last regulator, 1 installed.
- Filter Items – Pall sent list of required repairs., repairs included as part of Grant #2
 - Repairs and filter modules replaced 10/7/2024 thru 10/9/2024
- SLI – Ongoing, Onsite 8/13/2024 for remaining inspections, 3 not done.
 - Report due October 15, 2024
- FPPE – Filter Plant Performance Evaluation was conducted November 7 & 8, 2023
 - DEP Exit meeting was held on Jan 30, 2024 at 10 am

- Waiting for final report
- Heater – Having issues finding a cheaper XP rated heater
- Brine Pump – First brine pump died; replacement installed
 - Discussion about ordering another backup pump
- Modules – Aria Filter took a module to shop to clean and test.
 - Will provide update on condition and whether it is worth it or not to keep and use the old modules.
- pH Meter – The SC200 for pH monitoring needs to be replaced, cannot calibrate it anymore.
- Leaks – Leaks repaired at 105 East New Market St. & 5 West Market St.
- Air Compressor – Soliciting Atlas Copco for pricing

Water usage for last month: Average GPD: 61,000 Maximum GPD: 103,000

Replacement Heater in Chemical Room – Josh Owens shared that the heater in the chemical room is not working and needs to be replaced. A quote from Paige Electric was presented for review, the quote was for \$1,600.00 to replace the heater. Josh Owens has reached out to Kitner Electric for another quote, having trouble getting a cheaper quote on a XP rated heater.

Nitrate Level Issues

Consent Order from DEP – Consent Order & Agreement (COA) has been terminated by DEP effective June 27, 2023.

Nitrate Levels – Current daily nitrate levels are between 4.6 mg/L and 5.5mg/L

PA Small Water and Sewer Grant - Grant request has been submitted. Freeburg Municipal Authority was awarded a PA Small Water and Sewer Grant in the amount of \$418,302.00.

Remaining balance on grant is \$42,479.85.

Grant had been extended to June 30, 2025, * (Extended from June 30, 2024) *****

Level Sensor System – PSW&S Grant has approved this as reimbursable with the grant money.

- TRA Electric was awarded the project - \$22,465.00
- Installation should occur the week of May 27, 2024
- Project completed by June 2024.
- System working as it should.
- Bill was submitted to Grant #1 for reimbursement.

Line of Credit – **Current Line of credit balance is \$140,000.00.** Currently making interest only payment. Wanda Kantz will check with the bank on the date when the FMA will need to start making payments on this loan.

Salt Usage – It is estimated that the nitrate removal system will use about 56 lbs. of salt per day to treat 40,000 gallons of water. Monthly salt deliveries have been set up with Cole’s Hardware from Selinsgrove, PA, recently we changed to Cole’s Hardware in Middleburg for deliveries.

Nitrate System Brine Pump Issues – There are issues with the Nitrate system brine pump, the tape used on the connections has disintegrated and the brine solution is leaking directly on the pump causing corrosion and damage to the pump. Photos of the issue were sent to HRG on April 2, 2024. The construction warranty expired on April 4, 2024. HRG will contact J P Environmental to look at the issue, and possibly come up with a solution for this issue. Galene and Riordan both noticed the leaking during service visits. The system design appears to contribute to the issues. This issue should have been addressed on the punch list for the general contractor and was not. Authority member feel that this repair should not be the responsibility of the municipal authority.

Letter to Engineers - It has been suggested to send a letter to the engineers overseeing the project detailing this issue and requesting their assistance in resolving this issue. William Hoffman made a motion to have Attorney Matthew Cravitz send a letter to the engineers (HRG), Thomas Gingrich seconded the motion and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion. Attorney Cravitz sent a letter to HRG stating the FMA position on this issue. Joshua Satteson presented a response letter, but after discussion, Josh Owens commented that Dave Madl was present during discussion regarding the brine pump issues. Joshua Satteson will do some further investigation on this issue and report back at the next FMA meeting.

Replacement Pump Purchase – Replacement pump has been ordered, quoted cost is \$755.00, pump will be delivered to PESI, PESI will install new pump as needed. Attorney Cravitz will follow-up with HRG regarding reimbursement for cost of pump. Replacement pump has been installed.

Second Replacement Pump Purchase – Since the backup replacement pump has been installed; Josh Owens suggest we purchase another back up pump. *Thomas Gingrich made a motion to purchase a seconded replacement pump, William Hoffman seconded and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion.* Josh Owens will place the order for the new pump.

Second PA Small Water & Sewer Grant Application #2– The Freeburg Municipal Authority has received a \$80,000.00 grant.

New quotes from AriaFiltru on May 9, 2024, are less than the original quotes received from Pall Corp. The new quote from AriaFiltru for the membranes was \$48,000 including installation service. This quote was approved at the May 16, 2024 FMA meeting.

- Thomas Gingrich made a motion to purchase the equipment from AriaFiltrat at a cost of \$48,000, including installation, Bruce Blades seconded the motion, the FMA members unanimously approved the motion (6-13-2024).
- Joseph Volinskie made a motion to authorize Wanda Kantz to sign AriaFiltrat order documents, Bruce Blades seconded and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion (July 11, 2024). **All parts have been ordered.**
- Air Compressor can be reimbursed under grant #2 as a micro purchase as long as it comes from a Costars approved vendor. Joshua Owens will contact Atlas Copco for a quote for a new air compressor.
- **Membrane Operations Panel Display** – The membrane operations panel display has died. Josh Owens and Josh Satteson are working on get costs for the replacement and seeing if this can be covered under the Grant #2 as a possible micro-purchase.
- **pH Meter** – The SC2000 pH Meter needs to be replaced, it can not be calibrated anymore. Josh Satteson & Josh Owens will check with Hack Controls and JS instruments on cost for a replacement pH meter. Also, Josh Satteson will check to see if this purchase can be covered by Grant #2 as a micro-purchase.

System Water Leaks – Two leaks were recently repaired, one at 5 West Market Street (15,000 gallons/day) and one at 306 East New Market Street (12,000 gallons/day). Current water level is 40,000 gallons/day after these repairs

Source Water Protection Plan– The complete Source Water Protection Plan has been reviewed. The approval of this plan has been shared with the community

2024 Steering Committee Meeting – The committee met Thursday, Feb 29, 2024 at 1 pm. The 2023 report has been submitted and accepted by DEP

Water Shed Grant Program - Snyder County Conservation District does not have enough money available to help with the water shed project at the well site. Joshua Satteson suggested the FMA apply for a 319 Water Shed Grant. Josh Satteson said he would help with the application at no cost to the FMA. Thomas Gingrich made a motion to authorize Joshua Satteson to complete the 319 Water Shed Grant application on the FMA's behalf, Bruce Blades seconded and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion (6-13-2024). Joshua Satteson will start working on the application process, for an October 2025 submission.

American Tower Discussions – American Tower has requested a review of the previous submitted offer. The authority has decided to table this issue again.

Holes in Reservoir Roof – There are some holes in the plastic panels on the roof of the reservoir. This issue will be discussed at a future meeting.

Water System Replacement Priorities Committee Update - The Committee includes Thomas Gingrich, William Hoffman, HRG representative and a PESI representative, Joshua Owens.

Joshua Satteson presented updated cost estimates for system wide repairs of the water lines and connections. Current estimated is 5 million dollars. Larson Design can provide technical assistance for developing a phased plan for the upgrades. Thomas Gingrich suggested creating a committee to review option for water line improvements and prioritizing projects. Wanda Kantz will check with Penn DOT on scheduled repair projects on Route 35, Whitetop Road and Reservoir Hill Road.

- Josh Satteson has developed a phased capital improvement plan at a total cost of \$5,109,000
- Penn vest can offer a 60% grant with a 1%fixed interest rate for 20 years.
 - For a PennVest Grant/Loan design must be completed and permits must be in hand to apply.
- USDA is currently offering a 30 years loan at 3.25%
- The H2O program is not going to funded for 2024 per governmental sources.
- Contacting SEDA-COG regarding possible CBDG Grant.
 - Send out education materials regarding the survey in the newsletter.
 - Request Shannon Rudy to attend a future FMA meeting.
- To complete a system design it will take 1 to 2 years, at an estimated cost of \$200,000 to \$250,000.00.
 - Permits alone would cost \$45,000.00 (estimated)
- 2023 Project to finish Front Street to South Street and replace the main serviced line from the Reservoir was estimated at \$720,000.00. Projected current cost increase of 10-15% for 2024 costs
- 2023 Reservoir Hill and Market Street project was estimated at \$2,138,000.00. Projected current cost increase of 10-15% for 2024 costs
- CDBG money can be used for Planning & Design.
- Local Share Account – The State Local Share Account is a possible funding source for engineering cost for the water replacement project. Josh Satteson and Wanda Kantz will research this funding source further. There is a 1 million max on this grant.
 - ***Thomas Gingrich made a motion to approve Wanda Kantz to submit an application on the FMA's behalf, William Hoffman seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by the FMA members.***
 - Submission deadline is November 30, 2024.
- CDBG surveys will be completed the fall of 2024. Residence will be posted with a survey letter and the survey form with a stamped return envelope to return completed surveys to the borough office.
- The Authority will not qualify for a federal Public Works Grant Program as a possible source of funding for the project.

Lead & Copper Service Lines Inspection – Service lines for customers need to be inspected by October 2024 for lead and copper pipes according to DEP and Federal mandates. PESI submitted a cost for the lead, copper and sewer service line inspection of \$280/day for two PESI employees to do the inspections. This cost would be split with the sewer authority. **There are 2 suspected lead service lines.**

Water Meter Replacement Project – The FMA will start planning to replace water meters in the 2025 budget, due to most meters being at least 20 years old. Meter replacement would cost an estimated \$300 per meter. Josh Owens and Josh Satteson, both suggested implementing a Transfer of Property Ordinance like other boroughs are using to have the water meter replaced and sewer connections inspected before the property transfer can be completed. This would be at the seller's expense.

Property Transfer Ordinance – The FMA is reviewing an ordinance that would require all properties that are being sold to replace the water meter at the owner's expense before transfer of ownership. This ordinance will be approved for advertisement at the August 20, 2024 Borough Council meeting. The FMA will approve a resolution for assigned contractor and fees after borough council approves the ordinances.

Paydown on Northumberland National Bank Construction Loan – The construction loan balance is current at \$140,000.00. The FMA has been making interest only payments. The loan is due in full by October 5, 2026. Thomas Gingrich suggested paying \$40,000.00 towards the principal on the loan and refinancing the remaining \$100,000.00 balance. Attorney Cravitz will contact the bank regarding the FMA wishes and share any developments at the next FMA meeting. The bank recommends possible refinance at the end of the loan term.

Review of 2025 Draft Budget – The 2025 draft budget was presented for review. Currently in the proposed budget there is a shortage of almost \$46,000.00. Expenses have been reviewed and cut as much as possible. A rate increase will be needed to close the shortfall. Wanda Kantz presented some possible rate increase options. FMA members suggested a possible rate increase of \$30.00 per quarter in the base rate and corresponding rate increases for the extra water usage rates. Wanda Kantz will work on the proposed rate schedule for the September 12, 2024 meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

NEW BUSINESS

2025 Rate Increase – Wanda Kantz presented a rate increase worksheet for two possible rate increase options, one for \$30.00/quarter and one for \$35.00/quarter. After review and discussion, ***Thomas Gingrich made a motion to approve the \$35.00/quarter rate increase option to balance the 2025 budget, William Hoffman seconded and the FMA members***

unanimously approved the motion. A Rate Increase Resolution will be approved at the November 14, 2024 meeting. Wanda Kantz will rework the 2025 budget with the new rates for approval at the November 14, 2024 meeting.

2025 Insurance Renewal – The 2025 insurance renewal quote was presented for review. There is a \$1,083.00 increase from the 2024 premium. *Thomas Gingrich made a motion to approve the 2025 insurance renewal quote, William Hoffman seconded and the FMA members unanimously approved the motion.* Wanda Kantz will inform the insurance carrier of the approval.

Resignation of Jospheh Volinakie – Jospheh Volinskie would like to resign his position on the Freeburg Municipal Authority, effective upon the appointment of a replacement member for his spot.

Appointment of New Members – John Wiegler & John Reichenbach have agreed to become members of the Freeburg Municipal Authority. The current FMA members would like Wanda Kantz to recommend these to gentlemen for appointment to the FMA by the Freeburg Borough Council at their October 16, 2024 meeting.

AUTHORITY MEMBERS/EMPLOYEE CONCERNS - None

Thomas Gingrich made a motion to adjourn, William Hoffman seconded, the motion carried. The Freeburg Municipal Authority's meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

The next FMA meeting will be **Thursday, November 14, 2024 at 7 pm.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Wanda Kantz, Secretary
Freeburg Borough / Freeburg Municipal Authority Secretary/Treasurer

2024 FMA officers are:

Robert Heintzelman, President

Bruce Blades, Vice-President

Joseph Volinskie, Treasurer

Wanda Kantz, Recording Secretary & Assistant Treasurer.