

STRASBURG BOROUGH AUTHORITY
JANUARY 21, 2021 – 8:00 A.M.
MINUTES

Members Present: Ray Reeder
Ray Garraffa

Will Mullin (by Zoom)

Others Present:

F. Steven Echternach, Borough Manager	Ed Zalewski, Public Works Director
Andrew Prosser, ELA Group	Tom Stonerook, R. A. Stonerook
Mark Magrecki, PennTerra Engineering	John Mroz
Chris Lehman	

CALL TO ORDER: Ray Reeder, acting as Chairman, called the meeting to order; followed by the salute to the flag. Ray Reeder announced that the meeting is being audiotaped and maintained until the minutes are approved.

REQUESTS TO BE HEARD: John Mroz, a resident of Strasburg Commons, stated he appreciated the work the SBA does for the community. Regarding the fire service fee rate increase he asked the SBA to consider another perspective for the residential fee. He stated he received the letter notifying the residents of the rate increase and ask that the SBA cancel the fee outright for the 64 homes affected. These systems are only in one neighborhood in the Borough, a 55 plus community, with residents on a fixed income. There are a few issues he has with the letter; a \$5-\$10 discount on insurance, increased resale value, but the systems were paid for by the homeowner; the increase storage and line size for these homes is insignificant when compared to overall utility service. The actual usage by these homes has no impact on the system. The systems are installed differently and with different meters in the homes, and that is not taken into account in the fee. The SBA has been charging the residential fire service fee for seven years while commercial properties were ignored, which would represents a very large reserve capacity. John compared data from surrounding utilities such as Lancaster City, which charges \$8.43/qr. for a 1inch service and \$110.25 for a 4” service. On an ABC news story PA American Water stated that they will not impose a stand by charge on owners of residential structures because they are equipped with a fire service line. At a rate of \$22.05/qr., \$5644.80 would be generated against income of around \$700,000.00. This is less than 1% of the income but to the consumer it is approximately 15% of their water bill. The fee seems out of line for the customers. I ask the Authority to reduce this fee to zero for the residential customers or consider a zero fee for homes that qualify for the homestead exemption on taxes. If SBA is not aggregable to that I would ask that the fee be lowered to lessen the impact on a small subset of senior citizens in the community.

Chris Lehman, a resident of Strasburg Commons, stated the way his system is set up, if he has a fire in his house the water would be metered and he would be charged for it. Also the homeowner, what if he shuts that valve off that goes to the fire suppression system, can he say he no longer needs it and he wouldn’t have to pay the bill. If so he will shut his off. It is a matter of principle; this is an increase to people who are on fixed incomes and he doesn’t see the justification for it.

Ray Reeder stated SBA would like to reply/reconsider this issue but two SBA members are not in attendance. The comments will be considered and addressed at the February SBA meeting.

Andrew Prosser added that the issue when comparing SBA with other utilities is the customer base. There are only a total of 68 customers with private connections in the Borough. With such a small

connection base it is inherently disproportional from a paying stand point. We used equivalent connection units to normalize the study. AWWA standards and design manual were used in the fire service fee study. Areas like Lancaster City have a much bigger customer base to distribute the costs to.

A motion was made by Will Mullin, seconded by Ray Garraffa, and passed unanimously to table this discussion until the next SBA meeting.

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2020: The approval of the December 17, 2020 minutes was tabled until the next SBA meeting since a quorum from the meeting was not present.

REPORTS:

Manager: The monthly Borough Manager’s report was reviewed. Steve Echternach also notified the SBA that both tenants at 1305 Village Road rental property have now passed away. The January and February rents have not been paid because the daughter is still in the process of setting up the estate account.

Engineer: The monthly Engineer’s Report dated January 21, 2021 was reviewed with mention of the following items:

General Projects: ELA reviewed a proposed stormwater facility that was at 18 Mt. Pleasant Road in Strasburg Township that conflicted directly with the existing water main. ELA strongly recommended that the facility not be constructed in the proposed location for maintenance reasons. Steve Echternach stated the resident is reconsidering the location and that the Borough will keep an eye on the project.

Fisher Well Allocation Justification: A formal application document will be provided to SBA at the next meeting for review.

Springs Monitoring: At the next SBA meeting data logging will be discussed.

East Main & South Decatur Street Waterline Replacement: Surveying is underway and ELA anticipates designs in late January/early February. UGI may be interested in coordinating with this project to install gas line on East Main Street.

Public Works: The monthly Public Works report was reviewed.

Delinquent W/S: Steve Echternach stated that properties were posted earlier this week for shut off. As of this morning there will only be one out of the eleven scheduled for shutoff. Of the roughly \$8,000.00 delinquent amounts due, we have collected \$2,300.00 this week and the most of the remaining amounts due are on payment plans except for the one who has not contacted us yet.

CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin and passed unanimously to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda with a note that Ray Reeder has reviewed the checks for November and December of 2020.

Payment of Bills dated 12/15 & 12/30/2020, 01/06 & 01/12/2021.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Commercial/Industrial Wastewater Discharge Letter: The letter approved at the previous meeting has been revised with ELA’s assistance to better clarify/simplify the letter for the recipients.

A motion was made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin and passed unanimously to approve the revised Commercial/Industrial Wastewater Letter to be mailed at the beginning of each calendar year.

Inactive W/S Balances: A motion was made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin, and approved unanimously to write off the remaining two inactive account balances that were due to settlement errors totaling \$338.92.

Pump Station #5, Wexcon Payment Application & Time Extension: A motion was made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin and passed unanimously to approve Wexcon's second payment application for Pump Station #5 and make payment in the amount of \$112,086.00, and the request for a time extension. Will Mullin noted that due to past experiences he would like to make sure that they are really doing the work that is being paid for and in a timely manner. Andrew Prosser verified that they are; the delays are related to materials ordered by SBA not being delivered on time.

Pump Station #5, Hirneisen Payment Application & Time Extension: A motion was made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin and passed unanimously to approve the Hirneisen's first payment application for Pump Station #5 and make payment in the amount of \$17,307.00 for certified payroll, and the request for a time extension.

NEW BUSINESS:

Water Shed/Woodland Evaluation: The Borough Manager stated that in the 2021 budget one of the items in the que is that every ten years we have the water shed/woodland evaluated for forestry. Gerber Forestry Service has done it previously for SBA and has had a good relationship with him. He has identified a problem with some oak trees and recommends getting the dead timber out, and now is a good time of year to mark everything.

On a motion made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin, and passed unanimously to adopt the Gerber Forestry Service proposal.

R. A. Stonerook Strasburg, LLC: Mark Magrecki from PennTerra Engineering presented the R. A. Stonerook Strasburg, LLC building plan for water and sewer. This will be a 15,000 square foot medical clinic on Historic Drive. They have resubmitted to the Borough for land development and are on the Planning Commission's February agenda and plan to come back to the Authority once they have some more direction. They are here to address the extension of the sanitary sewer line across the frontage of the property to the adjacent township property. They are not opposed to providing an easement for that extension but are looking to not actually install the 600 ft. extension. Steve Echternach stated the Historic Drive bypass is a limited access roadway. Penn Dot will never allow, from 896 at North Decatur to 741, any additional inlet or outlet access to this roadway. The township property could only be accessed by North Star Road, Fairview Road, or through the R. A. Stonerook property. The Planning Commission felt there was not a significant benefit to extending the sewer line since it will lie as a dormant line. Mark will be resubmitting their plans to Andrew Prosser and wanted to address this issue. Andrew Prosser stated that ELA's reason for providing that comment was because during the Rutter's development process there was discussion of whether or not to make Rutter's extend the sewer across the entirety of their property. This development is substantially benefitting from SBA making Rutter's extend their sewer line. In addition, we can suppose what is going to happen on these parcels, but things

change. That was why ELA made the recommendation to extend the sewer. He understands if the Authority does not want to require the extension at this time. SBA should have an easement provided and an agreement between the SBA and the property owner if the adjacent parcel does get developed. At that point they would be responsible for extending the sewer. Mark Magrecki pointed out that the Rutter's property was bought from Mr. Smoker. Mr. Smoker was the one that required the sewer line to be installed across the frontage of the property because he owned the adjoining property and knew that it would be developed at some point. They are looking for SBA's affirmation that the sewer line would not need extended across the property frontage, with the Chair and Vice-Chair not in attendance they can continue with the plans showing the easement and will return to SBA next month after they have met with the Planning Commission and Council.

OTHER BUSINESS:

CITIZEN COMMENTS: None

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Ray Garraffa, seconded by Will Mullin, and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

F. Steven Echternach, Borough Manager