

NORTH HUNTINGDON TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY
 REGULAR MEETING, JANUARY 11, 2017, 7:00 PM
 YOUGHIOGHENY WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT
 4222 TURNER VALLEY ROAD, NORTH HUNTINGDON, PA 15642

ROLL CALL:

Jeffrey Fisher	- Absent	Michael Branthoover, General Manager	- Present
Thomas Hempel	- Present	Christy J. Raspotnik, Finance Director	- Absent
Timothy Hondal	- Present	Christopher Sanner, System Superintendent	- Present
William H. Miller	- Present	Michael Henao, Asst. System Superintendent	- Present
		Daniel J. Hewitt, Solicitor	- Present
		Amber Leechalk, Solicitor	- Present
		David A. Coldren, KLH Engineers	- Present

The Regular Meeting of the North Huntingdon Township Municipal Authority was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Timothy Hondal, Chairman. Michael L. Branthoover called the roll and a quorum was present.

CITIZEN'S INPUT

Ms. Tracy Hawley speaking on behalf of her parents Donald & Shirley Austin, 13161 St. Clair Drive.

Ms. Hawley stated she's not an attorney, she's just here to speak on her parents behalf. She said her parents have been residents of the township living in Penn's Woods over 40 years. Mr. Hondal I believe you have a brief knowledge of the incident that occurred at her parents' house on December 27 of last year after having a conversation with her dad yesterday. Mr. Branthoover I understand that you are also aware of the incident that occurred at my parents that night. I think you heard details from both Mr. Sanner and Mr. Craig Couchenour or both who to my understanding work for the municipal authority. Just let it be noted that both gentlemen were at her parents' house that night. Mr. Branthoover I think you also had a phone conversation with her dad on Monday. For the Board Members who are not aware of the specifics please allow her to give a recap. On Tuesday, December 27 of last year her mom, Shirley Austin returned home at approximately 9:30 PM to find that raw sewage had spewed from the downstairs toilet, the downstairs drains and the shower. It had spread and covered the entire finished game room, laundry room and the garage. They are estimating the sewage backup was sometime between 3:00 PM and 9:30 PM. 3:00 PM is when her mom left the house exiting through the game room into the attached garage. At 9:30 PM she returned and having parked the car into the garage, walked into the game room and then walked into the muck. At the time she wasn't quite sure, the light wasn't on yet. When she turned the light on she could certainly see what it was and could smell it. I'm sure you can all imagine if this happened in your own home or your parent's home, the acts following were quite hectic and very chaotic. Her parents were very distraught, stunned in a state of panic. The whole lower level of their home, our childhood home, was

covered in raw sewage. Her dad immediately called the North Huntingdon Township Police Department to report his sewage backup. Sadly she learned that neither the police nor the Hartford Heights Fire company responded to her parents' house. Whether they were not dispatched or they chose not to come and answer the call, that's not for this Board but she wants it to be noted. Her parents called her and his sister. They along with their husbands immediately came to their parents' house. Her dad called their family friend Bill Sombo. They had learned sometime in the course of that evening that North Huntingdon Police did contact the sewage authority at some point. The person on call, Mr. Couchenour and he in turn contacted Mr. Sanner.

Mr. Sanner said no, the North Huntingdon Police called him and he dispatched our guy out.

Ms. Hawley said also during this time, her dad contacted State Farm Insurance who has been their carrier through the past 54 years. After several times being put on hold, they were finally able to have their claim processed. Sadly the next day they were shocked to learn the claim coverage is not valid. In reading the very fine print, there was no sewage rider on their policy that they paid for therefore there is no claim with State Farm. Also during the time while their dad was on their phone, she and her sister Erin did a quick research of raw sewage. In addition to its being gross they found out that sewage is just murky water but it contains waste product from your household, organic waste, solid waste, human excrement and all of these things are hazardous to your health. The human excrement brings the deadliest and highest risks because it contains microorganisms and coupled with raw sewage it produces a lot of illnesses like Ecoli, hepatitis, headaches, fever, stomach ache. Possible causes yes, likely to happen probably not, but they weren't going to take the risk. They erred on the side of caution and chose not to clean it up themselves. They chose to keep their parents upstairs. Her dad immediately got on the phone and tried a couple restoration companies. Finally he was able to connect with a Disaster Restoration Company, Mr. Paul Blazovich. He spoke with her dad and assured him he would be there the next morning around 8:00 AM. At 7:45 AM he was there. Before they left the house that night she wanted to take pictures. But having learned about all the hazards of raw sewage she made certain she had on rubber boots, rubber gloves and a mask. It was everywhere that she looked. Fast forward it's now 1:00 AM. The stink is overwhelming. It's all throughout the house and it's very hard to breath. They packed a few things and went to her sister and brother-in-law's house. The next day, seven hours later, Mr. Blazovich arrives and speaks to her parents. By 9:00 AM he had a team dispatched at the house and they began the clean up on the 28th of December. After two weeks they are still cleaning up. Yesterday and today they were at the house cutting in the plaster, drywall and insulation because they had tested and found that was contaminated from the sewage. That's the incident in a nutshell. Chairman Hondal, Mr. Branthoover and members, I'm hoping that I told you enough. Now I want to ask a couple questions. She has no expectations of answers tonight. She asked if they know what might have caused this. It's been two weeks since it occurred and were there any conversations about how did this happen. She's been told the lateral to the residence was replaced. The second question

is, has the sanitary sewer been separated from the storm sewer. Her dad said yes it was separated. If so, were back to why did it happen and why only her parents' house that night. Question three is was there a check valve installed to prevent backflow from the mainline and was that check valve designed for storm water or sewage flow and have all check valves been engineered to handle a heavy storm. Something forced this. When this happened, nothing was going on in the house. Her mother wasn't home so there was no laundry being done, the dishwasher was running, she wasn't cooking, and her dad wasn't showering. They are presuming that is happened certainly from something. There was no clog in the drains to the house. It doesn't appear that it was from too much use. Question four, if the check valve was installed, what was the calculated maximum pressure expected at this location. Was there any safety margin added to the specified reading of the check valve? What was the specified slope of the lateral? Can the installer provide a record the actual check valve installed including the details of the size and pressure rating? Can the installer provide documentation the check valve was installed with the correct orientation and the slope of the lateral was correct? These are all questions they feel are necessary. Did the sewage authority inspect the installation of the lateral before it was backfilled and is there record of that inspection and what is the name of the person doing the inspection? Can the check valve be inspected with some form of fiber optic to make sure it's not damaged and that it's oriented properly and to ensure the sewage backup doesn't occur again. Those are the formal questions. She thanked Mr. Sanner for making copies. Her parents also spoke with a couple neighbors as the weather was nice and they've been outside. About three weeks or so an employee from the municipal authority removed a check cover in their yard presumably to inspect the valve. Although the time was coincidental, that was just a few weeks before the backflow into their house. She asked why this is done. Is this routine inspection? Is there an alarm or some kind of indicator that's somethings wrong? She respectively said if the municipal authority has protocol and standard operating procedures in place, it's her hope these will be relatively simple questions they will be able to answer and that they can resolve. They are here for two reasons. First and foremost why raw sewage backed up into her parents' house on December 27. They are all in agreement that the water and the sewer system are separate so something had to happen. That leads them to believe that the problem does lie somewhere with the work of the municipal authority. That leads to the second purpose that's in hopes that the municipal authority will acknowledge and recognize the responsibility. She has to emphasize they are looking for answers and someone to be held accountable. During these past two weeks they've heard many responses people telling them it's not their problem. She doesn't mean neighbors she means officials and representatives of the different authorities. It's not our problem. We're immune. The law says you can't sue us. It saddens and angers me that we live in such a litigious society that the go to solution is to sue someone. It also makes me angry those in authority with decision making power also make that their immediate response using the same statement you can't sue us without having looked at the facts, assessing the situation, determining the cause. This is not our intent or our first course of action, we have not sought legal counsel or hired an attorney. We are not threatening any course of action but instead are here on behalf of her parents to appeal to your compassion, to your empathy for your

care and concern for all residents of the community of North Huntingdon Township. But most specifically tonight I am speaking about two of your residents, my parents Don and Shirley Austin who are 80 years old, who have lived in the same house in your community for over 54 years. Our parents don't deserve this, truthfully no one deserves this. But through no fault of their own, mom and dad's lives have been turned over in the last few weeks. The basement level of their home was flooded with several inches of raw sewage. Their home reeks of sewage and now added to the mix is bleach and other disinfectant products. She brought photos they can look at. In conclusion, I am hoping that you are better than what society dictates you to be. That you are kind, compassionate and empathetic. I am asking you and trusting in you, that you do the right and honorable thing. The health and wellbeing of our parents has been put in peril and we not respectfully ask that the North Huntingdon Township Municipal Authority take immediate action in the matter.

Mr. Hondal said as you're aware some of the Board Members were just told about this today. We need time to address all the questions. We will have Dave work with our management team to get the answers you're requesting. We did file a claim with our insurance carrier.

Mr. Branthoover said our representative from Philadelphia Insurance will be calling you.

Mr. Austin said they called today and hopefully will be coming tomorrow.

ENGINEER'S REPORT

Mr. Coldren requested authorization to advertise the Penn's Woods Phase IV and Markvue Manor Phase I Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project.

Motion:	Hempel	Motion to advertise the Penn's Woods Phase IV and
Second:	Miller	Markvue Manor Phase I Sanitary Sewer Replacement
		Project.

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Attorney Hewitt said some items relating to litigation were discussed during Executive Session and other items will be discussed under New Business.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Motion: Hempel Motion to approve the minutes of the Work Session on
Second: Hondal December 14, 2016.

Motion Carried 2 – 0 – 1 (Miller abstained)

Motion: Hempel Motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting on
Second: Hondal December 14, 2016.

Motion Carried 2 – 0 – 1 (Miller abstained)

Motion: Hempel Motion to approve payment of the bills:
Second: Miller

Capital Reserve Requisition #192 --	\$ 19,166.50
Operating --	\$182,468.27
Payroll --	\$127,972.37

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

OLD BUSINESS

There no items under Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Attorney Hewitt requested authorization of the annual resolution allowing the Authority when necessary to undertake condemnation and properties to achieve the installation and repair of the sanitary sewer system. Resolution #1 of 2017 specifically indicates it is always our intention to get amicable negotiated settlements with individuals but where necessary this does allow us to use condemnation and eminent domain to undertake those projects.

Motion: Miller Motion to approve Resolution #1 of 2017 that will cover
Second: Hempel us for the 2017 calendar year.

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

Attorney Hewitt stated there is a line that goes into the Colonial Manor area that a developer now wishes to extend to get to his development project. This is going to require an NPDES permit in an area that there are some wetlands. The developer has asked for the authority to be the applicant and permittee for the NPDES permit with the developer bearing all costs. This is a line extension, this is not part of the development project it is so the developer can get to our sewer line.

Motion: Hempel
Second: Miller
Motion to authorize the Authority to serve as the named applicant for an NPDES permit for the extension of the sanitary sewer line from Colonial Manor Road. The purpose of the line extension is to extend sewer service for a subsequent development by Shuster RWS Development. All costs of the permitting process and construction of the line extension will be the sole and complete responsibility of Shuster RWS. The motion authorizes the authority staff to execute all necessary documentation.

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

Attorney Hewitt stated there is a development in the McConnell Plan which is a plan laid out many years ago. The property was purchased by Fred Crack about two years ago. There was a development agreement for the installation of the sewer line which is now complete. Everything has been tested and approved. They are now looking to convey the line to the system. Approval is being requested for the Conveyance Agreement as of when it is signed by Fred Crack.

Motion: Miller
Second: Hempel
Motion to approve the Conveyance Agreement as of when it is signed by Mr. Crack.

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

Mr. Branthoover requested approval of the 2017 depositories. That will be S&T Bank, Wilmington Trust NA which is an affiliate of M&T Bank, PLGIT (PA Local Government Investment Trust), PSDLAF (PA School District Liquid Asset Fund) and PNC Bank.

Motion: Hempel
Second: Miller
Motion to approve of the 2017 depositories.

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

Mr. Branthoover requested authorization to advertise our 2017 meeting dates and times. The meeting dates will continue to be the second Wednesday of each month with the Work Session remaining at 5:30. We'd like to change the language stating the time for the Regular Meeting as follows: The Regular Meeting will immediately follow the Work Session but no earlier than 6:00 PM.

Motion: Hempel Motion to approve the advertisement of the 2017 meeting
Second: Miller dates and time.

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

ANNOUNCEMENTS

An executive session was held prior to the Regular Meeting for the purpose of discussing legal and personnel matters.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Hempel Motion to adjourn.
Second: Miller

Motion Carried 3 – 0 – 0

Meeting adjourned at 7:32 PM.

William H. Miller, Secretary