

**Minutes**  
**North Lebanon Township Municipal Authority**  
**June 11, 2020**

The meeting of the North Lebanon Township Municipal Authority was held on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at the North Lebanon Township Municipal Building, 725 Kimmerlings Road, Lebanon, PA with the following Board members present:

Gary Heisey	Chair
Tod Dissinger	Treasurer
Brian Hartman	Secretary
Rodney Lilley	Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer
Amy Leonard	Henry and Beaver, LLP
Scott Rights	Engineer, Steckbeck Engineering
Cheri Grumbine	Township Manager
Lori Books	Assistant Township Manager
Ed Brensinger	Roadmaster/Supervisor
Absent:	Dawn Hawkins

Also, in attendance via Zoom was Molly Lum, Sewer Billing Clerk.

The meeting was called to order by Treasurer Dissinger and the pledge to the flag was recited.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no comments from the public.

Treasurer Dissinger asked for a motion to approve the May minutes.

**MOTION: Motion was made and seconded to approve the May minutes. Motion approved.**

Treasurer Dissinger asked for a motion to approve the invoices and requisitions for payment all subject to audit.

**MOTION: Motion was made and seconded to approve the invoices and requisitions for payment all subject to audit. Motion approved.**

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT – Amy Leonard**

Mapledale/Mandatory Connection Agreement – Two properties will fall under the mandatory connection requirements for public water and sewer once the Mapledale development is constructed. The initial property notification letter was circulated at last month's meeting. Both Rodney and Dawn agreed it was not as user friendly as it could have been. Amy and Lori worked together to tweak the letter using their suggestions. Rodney commented that the updated letter has significantly improved. The Authority

Board Members gave Lori the green light to mail out the letters.

Delinquent Sewer Accounts – Update – Amy has no new information for the Authority Board Members. Penalties are still not advised so she has not moved forward with any delinquents. Everything will remain at a standstill until further instructions are received from PMAA.

Lori reviewed the delinquent accounts with Molly to give the Authority Board an update. As of today, the February Billing has 115 customers that did not pay. There are typically around 300 outstanding at the point of Admin Letters being mailed out, so we are in good shape. The May Billing just ended as payments were due yesterday. The 10% penalty was not applied per the Municipal Authority Board Members. As of today, 474 customers are outstanding. There are typically 600 customers assessed with the 10% penalty so again, we are doing better than normal.

Ownership of Sewer Laterals – Ed asked the Authority Board Members in previous meetings what their preference would be when it comes to responsibility of the sewer line/lateral. Should the Authority take over the portion of the line from the main to the edge of the property or should the property owner be responsible for it all? The sewer specs state one thing while the Township ordinance states another. One should be amended so that they are consistent. Ed will support whatever they decide. He would just like to know how to respond to property owners when future leaks or breaks occur.

Brian asked Scott and Amy how other municipalities handle this situation. Scott answered the most common would be to take ownership from the main to the end of the Right-of-Way, but both he and Amy agreed that there is no definitive choice among their clients. It really comes down to preference of the specific municipality.

Brian is content with either option. He then wanted to know what everyone else thought. Ed can see both sides and can imagine how burdened a resident would feel if they had to dig up the streets, pay contracting costs, pay for any shut down of the roadway if it would be a state road, permits, etc. His suggestion would be to include a section stating if the issue would be on a state road and it becomes expensive, the Authority could step in and help as NLTMA would obtain the permit from PennDOT.

Brian expressed his concern of the costs the Municipal Authority would incur as more leaks are found. Lori stated that most times, the leak is at the joint or a cleanout which is typically behind the right-of-way line anyway. There is always the chance that the break is at the connection to the main, using Gary Heisey's situation as an example. With the level of seriousness taken with inspections today, it is not as likely to occur.

Gary explained his thoughts stating whatever work the homeowner paid to have done, that is the amount of line they should be responsible for. The Municipal Authority should pick up the remainder of the line to the main. The issue with that idea would be tracking/records. Who and how would someone keep track of the exact footage that the homeowner put in and where that ended? For everything already constructed, how would you go back and determine which piping was the homeowner, and which was not?

Tod stated he feels it is unfair to place all responsibility on the property owner when they do not have anything to do with the portion of the connection to the main. Look at his street, there are sinking spots appearing left and right and which may be due to the contractor years ago not back filling it properly. Or is it a problem with the street? That is something out of the homeowner's control. He would like to see the Municipal Authority take responsibility of the sewer line from the main to the end of the Right-of-Way.

Rodney is in favor of the Municipal Authority taking responsibility from the main to the end of the Right-of-Way. He has never seen it as "fair" to expect a homeowner to keep the Right-of-Way clear but also be completely responsible for any issues within it.

**MOTION: Motion was made and seconded to amend the sewer specs to be consistent with the Township ordinances. Motion approved.**

At this time, Treasurer Dissinger passed the gavel to Chairman Heisey to run the remainder of the meeting.

Rebecca Alley – An issue arose at the Board of Supervisors meeting regarding Rebecca Alley, which may become an issue for the Municipal Authority as well. A few property owners have complained about the condition of Rebecca Alley, between New Street and Water Street. The discussion then proceeded to the question of who owns the alley? The Township typically does not own or maintain any alleys. Amy brought this situation to the Municipal Authority's attention because they have a sewer line within Rebecca Alley, and it appears there are no utility easements on record.

Amy is inclined to believe at the time the sewer was installed, they thought this alley was owned by the Township. She pulled five different deeds from properties along this section and none of them go to the center line of the alley. They all go to the edge of it. So as of now, it seems no one owns this section of alley which creates a problem for the Authority. At the very minimum, a utility easement would need to be acquired.

This alley is not owned or maintained by the Township and does not show up on the liquid fuels map. The width of the alley is not wide enough to qualify for liquid fuels and therefore the Township cannot justify taking ownership and maintaining the alley as is. Although the Township cannot vacate an alley due to lack of maintenance, the property owners who are maintaining it could end up owning this section by adverse possession. That would leave the Municipal Authority unable to access their sewer system which may need repaired at some point in the future. Each property owner would have to agree to giving the Municipal Authority a utility easement as it would enter onto their property a few feet.

Gary suggested the Township offer to make some improvements to the alley in return for the sewer easement agreements.

Tod asked why the Municipal Authority could not just go in and take possession of the alley. Amy agreed that they may certainly move forward with the condemnation process, but she would not recommend it. This would be the most expensive route including Amy's attorney fees, an appraisal of all eleven properties abutting the alley, a second appraisal if

the homeowner requests it, the homeowners legal fees, etc. This would all be paid by the Municipal Authority if they pursued this option. The best and most reasonable solution would be to offer to repair/improve the alley in return for the Right-of-Way easements. Amy has already discussed this option with Ed, Cheri, and Lori. They are all in favor of pursuing this path.

Ed explained there are instances where the Township vacates an alley per the request of an adjacent property owner. An easement would still be in place if the Authority would need to make any repairs to the sewer lines. The alley would then be split between the adjoining property owners and would be up to them to maintain.

**MOTION: Motion was made and seconded allowing Solicitor Leonard to obtain the sewer easements along Rebecca Alley. Motion approved.**

**ENGINEERS’ REPORT – Scott Rights**

Stoever’s Circle – Stoever’s Circle, previously Cedar Crest Circle, submitted revised plans to the Municipal Authority. The initial review of the plans has been completed and Scott is currently working with Lori to prepare the review letter. No action is required at this time.

Paul Horn Subdivision – Revised plans were submitted to the Municipal Authority. They have a few minor comments that need to be addressed. Lori has not received the agreements back yet. No action is required at this time.

Crossings Phase 3 – The submitted plans for the Crossings Phase 3 are set to go before the Board of Supervisors in July for final approval. Scott has been in communication with the site contractor who plans to begin a few weeks after. The Municipal Authority can expect the construction of the sewer lines to begin in August.

Sewer Specs – Last month the Authority Board was presented with the idea of updating their sewer specs as the current set is 30 years old. Many practices and products have been discontinued. This information should be up to date as developers use this information to create their plan submissions.

Scott suggested last month that he could check with other municipalities who may want to share the costs with our Municipal Authority to create a base format. The base format would be created, and each individual municipality would then tweak it to match the details for construction that they would prefer.

After doing some checking, he has come back to report that South Lebanon is considering the idea and would need to present it to their Board Members. Cleona Borough was a no as they do not typically get any new development.

Scott put together a table of contents of everything that would be involved in the sewer specs and provided a copy for each member. He mentioned that even the Rockwood specs were done 10 years ago and include many outdated items. The Rockwood specs could be forwarded to Ed and the Wastewater crew to simply review and edit instead of starting from scratch.

Included would be an administration section, a technical specification section, a pumping station/grinder pump section, and the standard details. Fortunately, a lot of this work can be pulled from previous documents of the Municipal Authority and tweaked for updates. Depending on the involvement needed once started, Scott is estimating about \$4,000.00 to \$6,500.00 to create revised sewer specs.

Tod raised the question that after North Lebanon foots the bill for the new sewer specs, are other municipalities going to have access to that formatted document for a fraction of the cost. Scott explained that most municipalities would not want to use another's specs as each entity prefers their own detailed specifications. Ed also mentioned that there is not much control over who sees/uses our sewer spec information. It is public information and posted on our website so that developers and builders have access to them prior to drawing up a plot plan.

Tod is in favor of updating the sewer specs. Preferences and regulations should be written for the Municipal Authority to fall back on if needed. Gary asked what the time frame would be once Scott has the go ahead? Scott responded that he could have a draft completed by next month's meeting. A lot will depend on Ed's availability as well as the Wastewater crew. Having their input will save time and money.

**MOTION: Motion was made and seconded instructing Scott to work with NLTMA and create the updated sewer specs. Motion approved.**

Ed agrees with the decision of updating the specs. He used the example of Bennett Toyota. They are doing their sewer connection this week. Both the Site Contractor and the Foreman questioned Ed about needing a house trap installed. Ed answered yes, they need it and it was a detail included in the drawings. With plumbers having different regulations in each municipality, it is a good idea to have the clear point of reference.

**ASSISTANT TOWNSHIP MANAGER REPORT – Lori Books**

Pump Station Inspection Report – Lori and Tommy went out to do the annual pump station inspections. All are in great condition. The Hill Street pump station had some damage to the fence and some of the piping, which we reported last month. It is on the schedule to be repaired. Tommy will pressure wash the huts to remove the moss.

Zimmerman Family Properties – This property is along Route 422, across from 84 Lumber. Although this property has access to public sewer, the owners intend to install an on-lot septic system. The Municipal Authority does not allow connections to a force main. We granted them permission last year to move forward with onlot testing. There are revisions being made to the plan which is why the Authority Board is not reviewing them tonight.

Pertinent Issues – Lori provided a copy of the annual audit from BSSF to each Board Member. Representatives from BSSF will be attending next month's meeting to review the report. Tod would like Lori to send out a reminder to the members a week prior.

**WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT REPORT – Ed Brensinger**

May Activity Report – The Authority Board members were provided with a copy of Tommy’s report.

67 PA one calls were placed.

There were 4 new home connections to the sewer system.

Tony completed 3 grease trap inspections.

Tommy and Tony have been checking the sewer lines with the main video camera equipment and the push camera. They have viewed over 5,000 feet. Another broken lateral at the cleanout was found and is located on Redwood Lane. The homeowner was out with Tommy and Tony and agreed to have it fixed. There was some ground water infiltrating the line. The resident was incredibly grateful that NLT had found this break for him! A PA one call was placed.

Gill Weik has also placed a PA one call for his broken lateral on Twigg Avenue.

The Pump Station wet-well cleaning is scheduled for June. Ed was out and sprayed weeds around the stations. The paving rings have been picked up for future paving projects.

Tommy and Tony were called in on Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> by South Lebanon Township to help clean a backed-up sewer line. Tree roots had grown into/through the lines. Lori has billed South Lebanon for the Wastewater crew’s time and for the flusher truck.

Lori also billed the Relax Inn for the flusher truck use, employee time, and a bag of lime. Their cleanout had been broken off and clogged with a plastic soda bottle which caused an overflow on the ground and down the street right-of-way. Tony and Jared vacuumed the sewage on the ground with the flusher truck and spread lime over the contaminated area.

There is currently a glitch at the Frances Ann Pump Station. They think it is a malfunctioning float. Hopefully, the replacement will fix it and put an end to the false alarms.

The fence repair at the Hill Street pump station has started. The fence material for the work at the Rockwood pump station has arrived.

Gary questioned why the Hill Street Pump Station paving reported “needs work” on the inspection report. Lori and Ed stated that it is all broken up and a groundhog hole is located underneath the control box.

**Additional Comments and Questions**

With no more business for the good of the Authority, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Molly Lum  
Recording Secretary