

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

The regular meeting of the BBMUA was held on February 26, 2025 at 6:30 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 David Romeo.

Those present were:

D. Carolla	K. Barbagli
J. Johnston	C. Santore
J. Marinacci	A. Zorzi
D. Romeo	J. Erber
J. Santagata	

Chairman Romeo opened the meeting informing the Board of a letter he received from Borough of Buena Mayor Joseph Baruffi requesting the BBMUA appropriate \$137,000.00 to Buena Borough for tax relief to the residents of the Borough of Buena in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:5A-12.1. Chairman Romeo stated he spoke with the BBMUA Auditor, Steve Testa as well as the BBMUA Solicitor, Robert Casella and this is money that the State of NJ does authorize Authorities to transfer to Municipalities to help when there are shortages in the budget. Since the Mayor has been on and DeBlasio has come on board as our engineer with the NJ I-Bank grant and other funding they saved us some money that will be used toward the water tower. DeBlasio just mentioned another grant that is available to us from Congressman VanDrew for the repairing of roads, sanitary sewer lines, and water lines which will be brought up in new business. Chairman Romeo said he was told that if we don't do this there will be a significant jump and hit to our rate payers and tax payers of the Borough. The Chairman believes this is a good gesture to help the Borough and our rate payers and tax payers and asked what everyone else's thoughts are. Joseph Santagata said he feels it is a good idea and Jerry Marinacci said the same. It was asked by one of the members if the BBMUA has a surplus of funds that they can release without affecting our Budget. Chairman Romeo said that Steve Testa gave him information yesterday of how the 5% would be allocated from the unrestricted funds. Chairman Romeo said that this does not affect the money in the sewer and water that is held for Capital Projects if he remembers correctly. Chairman Romeo said that Steve Testa told him if everyone was in agreement tonight, we would need a motion to do a letter of intent to adopt a budget amendment for the amount of \$137,000.00 to be transferred to the Borough. Ken Barbagli asked if this money would

affect the workers payroll in any way. Chairman Romeo said no it would not. Plant Superintendent Alan Zorzi said that money is usually budgeted and set aside for any emergencies that might arise.

m/Marinacci s/Santagata for a letter of intent to prepare a budget amendment to appropriate the amount of \$137,000.00 to be paid to the Borough of Buena.

m/passed

The BBMUA's Engineer DeBlasio and Associates provided copies of the letters transmitting all executed contracts received to date to the suppliers that were put out to bid for materials and maintenance services.

Secretary Cheryl Santore provided the email received from the NJ I-Bank regarding the 2025 Seminar Series to be held on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 or Wednesday, March 26, 2025 which will highlight program and financing changes coming in SFY 2026 for anyone interested in attending. Ms. Santore stated she will forward the link to sign up for the seminars as soon as she receives it to anyone that is interested. Joseph Santagata stated he would like the link when she receives it.

m/Santagata s/Marinacci to accept the minutes of the last regular meeting held on February 12, 2025.

m/passed

Assistant Plant Superintendent Jonathan Erber provided the board with a copy of the interlocal services agreement with the Board of Education of the Buena Regional School District that was received for the renewal of services to be performed by Jonathan Erber. This agreement will begin in July 2025 through June 2026 after Alan Zorzi has retired. Mr. Zorzi chose not to continue with his position at the school district upon his retirement and Mr. Erber stated he would be willing to take over the position. The agreement was to be executed and sent back to the school district.

m/Johnston s/Marinacci to adopt resolution R-13-2025 authorizing an interlocal agreement with the Buena Regional School District for services to be provided by the BBMUA's employee Jonathan Erber.

m/passed

A quotation was received from Hach in the amount of \$16,065.03 for turbidity meters for the MBR plant. These items were included in the adopted 2025 Budget and are critical pieces of equipment for the MBR plant that monitor the performance of the system and the health of the membranes. The current ones we have are failing and are no longer supported.

m/Marinacci s/Johnston to approve the purchase of turbidity meters for the MBR Plant from Hach in the amount of \$16,065.03.

m/passed

An email was received from William Cathcart to Freddie Schwindt of Buena Connection Brewing Company informing him of the next steps they would like to try in regard to the

wastewater from his processing and further testing the Engineer would like to have run to see if and how it effects the treatment process at the wastewater treatment plant. Mr. Erber stated that tomorrow, February 27, 2025 they will have a meeting with Mr. Schwindt and will witness him discharging into the system and will test the discharge. Alan Zorzi said they are going to try to dilute the wastewater to see how it will affect the plant. We have very strict limits. In the Pinelands we have some of the strictest limits in the Country. Therefore, we have to be very careful with some of the new facilities and industrial users coming online that could potentially upset the plant and cause the BBMUA to have significant fines. So, we are trying to take new businesses on, the cannabis industry and the brewery, and bring them into the system a little bit slower to make sure it doesn't impact the plant. Looking at the amount from the brewery we don't believe it will but we will see. If this does affect the plant they would have to pretreat before dispensing into the system. This protects the BBMUA and that is how the rules are written that they could be required to do that. Dennis Carolla said the last thing you want is to deal with the Pinelands on an issue. Mr. Zorzi said the unfortunate thing with us is that we are heavily regulated by the Pinelands and the NJDEP and we don't have just one permit. We have multiple permits and get inspections pretty regularly. Recently we have had inspections almost once a month. The rules and regulations are always changing and you have to stay up on it.

m/Marinacci s/Carolla to file all correspondence sent out for review without reading number 1 through number 7. m/passed

Chairman Romeo stated he spoke with David Horst the other day and there is a new grant from Congressman Van Drew for municipalities and utility authorities. They do not know what the amount is yet but it will be the same agreement we have now that we are in with the Borough. They are working to identify roads and sanitary sewer and water lines that need to be updated. David Horst said we just need to adopt a scope of work for the next meeting to work in conjunction with the Borough of Buena Mayor and Council to adopt a future resolution to repair the roads and sanitary sewer lines and water lines that are failing in the Borough. This would be identified from the plant as to which lines may be compromised and if it is a candidate for the roads to be repaved and the lines to be replaced. Plant Superintendent said for the record so everyone knows if one of our lines are failing the BBMUA has to fix it. As licensed operators if we know that the lines are failing and there is a problem, we have to fix it immediately. If we do not, we can be fined heavily by the NJDEP. There is no such thing as planning to repair sewer lines. That is why we have money in reserves to address issues immediately. We cannot wait to obtain loans or bonds. That is why we do I & I studies and try to find areas where there could be a potential problem for failing sewers. We then televise the line to see what is wrong and make sure the lines look good. If we know there is a problem and a line is failing the licensed operators must fix the lines and come to the board and inform them that these lines need to be fixed immediately and address this because that would mean there is wastewater going into the ground. Dennis Carolla asked if this is for water and sewer lines and basically does it apply to both or just sewer. Mr. Zorzi said just wastewater. In regard to water, we have an unaccounted water report that has to be reported. Mr. Erber said we are allowed up to fifteen percent and anything over the

fifteen percent we would have to go out and do a study. That is when we would have to find out where we are losing the water. That is why we ask the firefighters if they are having a drill or there is a fire to give us an idea of how much water they used so that it doesn't have to be reported as unaccounted. That is also why when people want to purchase water off of us, we make them pay for the water and come to the plant and we meter how much water they are purchasing. So, if you see someone hooked up to a hydrant on the street, they are stealing water and that is when we get a lot of brown water complaints because they are scouring the line and stirring up sediment in the line and if we don't know about it that can be part of the unaccounted water. If we know of a failing line it has to be reported and it has to be taken care of immediately. Mr. Zorzi stated we do not have any lines that are failing that we know of and we need to stop using the terminology of failing lines. Chairman Romeo said instead of saying failing we should be saying this a proactive project to prevent the failing of a line.

Joseph Santagata asked Mr. Zorzi if there are any areas in the Borough where he thinks we should extend the water lines or sewer lines. Alan Zorzi said that would be based upon new projects. For example, if we were ever to put a new well in, one of the areas for a new well might be on Brewster Road and out that way and you would look to loop the system. Any time you have a new project, the first goal is to loop the lines to connect from more than one direction. That way you always have fresh water and good fire suppression because you have water pressure from both sides. If there is a dead end that is when you get drinking water complaints because it is stagnant water. If there is a fire and you are at a dead end you only get so much water because the line can only produce so much water out of that hydrant. Mr. Santagata said his thought is if we can get grant money there may be some areas where we want to expand a sewer line or water line and it might cover the cost.

Mr. Zorzi said one of the items that needs to be addressed and Jon Erber is aware of this, when we paint the water tower we want to try to loop that line to that water tank and come in from Cass Avenue and maybe from the Commerce Center so there is water coming in from more than one area so if we have to take the tank down we can maintain the pressure at 20 psi which we are required to do by law.

Mr. Zorzi said another project that we have looked into doing in the past was a septage receiving station. Back when Joseph Santagata was Chairman, we had everything drawn up and ready to go but financially we did not want to do that project at the time. Septage is a huge revenue for the BBMUA and that would be another option if we receive grant funds that we can utilize for that.

The last Chairman had discussed with Alan and discussed with Jon about taking over for Alan as Plant Superintendent when he retires in July. This Board needs to address that because you are required to have a licensed operator and an assistant licensed operator to run the plant when he is out of town.

Chairman Romeo thanked Alan for bringing up these items and asked that everyone bear with him because this is all new to him and he has been taking notes and move forward.

Chairman Romeo said for right now he needs a motion to adopt a future resolution to work with the Borough for a grant from Congressman Van Drew.

m/Johnston s/Carolla to adopt a future resolution to work with the Borough of Buena for a grant from Congressman Van Drew. m/passed

Chairman Romeo stated for the next meeting we will have to have proposals for the engineer for the NJ I-Bank grant for 2026. The items we are looking for are a new well, completing lines, completing sanitary lines, a septage receiving station, tank painting. Chairman Romeo said we do not have to vote on anything at this time but the engineer is looking for a proposal of what we are looking to do as a board and what we want to accomplish. Alan Zorzi stated we have an asset management plan for drinking water. This was established approximately 10 years ago and at that time the State was requiring that you have a 10-year plan so that Utilities don't have to bond to make necessary repairs and improvements and can put money away to do these projects. The Chairman is required to certify that we are putting this money away for these projects down the road. Each year a report is prepared to show what we did and what we haven't completed yet.

The Chairman stated he received a call today from Mayor Joseph Baruffi stating that Senator Polistina would like him to contact him regarding connecting St. Augustine Prep to the sanitary sewer system. There are many issues with that, the first being it is not in our town and the allocation in the MOA and what is allotted to Buena Vista Township and who will pay for the extension and connection. Plant Superintendent Alan Zorzi stated that this is not new. The previous Mayor had contacted him and had previous discussions with him in the last six or seven years. Chairman Romeo said he will speak with the Senator and bring a report back to the Board and we will see where this goes. He feels the first step would be to sit down with the Township, the Senator and himself and see what they are expecting. Mr. Zorzi stated one of the things that the Township is required to do according to the MOA is within 10 years run a sewer line down to the Municipal Building so that is part of the way down if they honor that part.

Chairman Romeo said they are going to have a closed session to have settlement talks for Liberty Village and try and come up with a solution to get that settled. The Borough of Buena Land Use Board approved the second property on Central Avenue at their meeting last night. Therefore, we want to get the first one cleaned up before we move on to the second one if at all possible.

The next regular meeting will be held on March 12, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. The Chairman requested the Professionals to attend that meeting instead of the March 26, 2025 meeting and for a closed session resolution to be placed on the agenda for the meeting as well.

m/Johnston s/Marinacci to adjourn the meeting 7:02 p.m. m/passed

Submitted by
Cheryl Santore-BBMUA Secretary