

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Stormwater Authority Meeting Minutes

December 18th, 2024, 5PM, 3 Weller Pl, Lower-Level Municipal Meeting Room

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Roll Call

- a. Present: Robert Blanchfield, Kendall M. Mitchell, Matthew Gunther, Robert A. Lammi, Craig Swinsburg, Luke Gibson, David Pyle, George White, James Farley, Phillip Godbout, Scott Kistler and Zach Trexler.

- b. The meeting was called to order at 5:00PM.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 20th, 2024, and December 10th, 2024

- a. Lammi made a motion to approve the minutes from November 20th, 2024, and Mitchell seconded the motion. The minutes were passed unanimously by voice vote.

- b. Mitchell made a motion to approve the minutes from December 10th, 2024, and Lammi seconded the motion. The minutes were passed unanimously by voice vote.

- c. Blanchfield discussed the transition with Paige Strasko accepting a new job. He announced that Matt Gunther would be replacing her within the Township, and that Trexler would continue to help administratively.

4. Public Comment, Other Communications

- a. Palmer Township Supervisor, Charles E. Bellis III

- i. Bellis asked if this Board is in charge of the Stormwater Authority and clarified by asking if they report to the Board of Supervisors. Blanchfield confirmed that they do not answer to the Board of Supervisors.
- ii. Bellis asked the representatives from HRG if they thought it was fair that the Township Engineer was only given one week to review the plans for Old Nazareth Road, and White said they would discuss it later in the meeting but that the timeline has already been adjusted, pending Board approval.

5. Reports

- a. Solicitor

- i. Gibson stated that an executive session was held prior to tonight's meeting to discuss one litigation item.

- b. MS4

- i. No report at this time.

6. Committee Reports

- a. Engineering

- i. Kingwood Street Update

1. Scott Kistler, Director of Public Works explained that Palmer Township took over the project at this locations. He said they have done some fine grading and yard restoration work behind the curb, additional compaction work, and reestablished and put new topsoil and seeding down to get us through the winter. He said they will be back when the winter season is over to do some touch up work and re seed again. He also said that driveways were completed permanently. He mentioned there was a sinkhole incident and a water main break while they were working that were both remediated. He said after all of that, they televised the pipe underground that was just laid and found that it was compromised in two sections due to not being installed properly. He said the pipe will be evaluated by a pipelining company to see what is needed to resolve the issues, with an answer hopefully coming in early January. Kistler said that Bracalente Construction has come in and done some profile milling and placed a temporary blacktop on the road to get it through the winter. He said the project will be complete when the winter is over but that it looks great. White said the Township did a great job picking things up where Kobalt left them.
- ii. Old Nazareth Road Drainage Improvement Construction Plan
 1. George White, HRG, walked the Board through the site plan for the project. He pointed out that they would be picking up the drainage from Eldridge which is where they would begin replacing the pipe. He explained details of the project and the pipe that would be installed. He mentioned that two new spurs would be installed going up Westgate and Maplecroft to alleviate some existing drainage problems. He said the water will be discharged under the bridge on Route 248, and the existing drainage field will be filled and fenced. Lammi asked how much larger the pipe will be, and White said the capacity will be almost tripled with the new pipe installed. Bellis asked if this would be large enough to handle the excess from nearby streets, and White confirmed. Gunther asked if we have any clarification on if the other utility work will be completed prior to this project. White said that it will be done as we are opening things up. White said that one utility pole will need to be relocated as well as a portion of the sanitary sewer line and that they have been in contact with both responsible parties. Marks asked if the 15-foot culvert is precast or if it is poured on site, and White said that it is precast and interlocking. Bellis asked about a

specific property owner's issues with a pipe in their backyard, and White said they will be working with all property owners in the affected area as far as easements go. Lammi asked how construction will be affected if a large storm occurs while working, and White said that usually work begins at the bottom, and then it progresses towards the top one section at a time. Blanchfield asked when a good time would be to meet with neighbors to get their input and inform them of the project, and White said they would propose moving the bid date back to February 2nd, 2025, which would help align everything with Board meetings and PENNVEST funding and closeouts. Blanchfield suggested that this is a good idea so that all invested parties can review the plans and have conversations about the project rather than rushing it, and that we could target sometime in late February to have a meeting with residents. Gunther asked what the bid opening date would be, and White said that bids would be reviewed at the March 11th Workshop meeting. Swinsburg asked if it would make more sense to bring the Old Nazareth pipe into the box culvert to avoid another bottleneck effect, and White stated they had to avoid the area due to a large telephone pole.

b. Finance

- i. Farley stated that there was a period early in the year when the Township was covering the startup costs of the Authority because the bank account was being set up. In that time, the total cost covered by the Township was about \$250,000.00. He said the Authority will have to decide how to pay it back, whether it gets paid all at once or over the entirety of the year. Blanchfield said a decision will be made at the next Workshop meeting in January.

7. Township Staff Comments

- a. Godbout commented that 2 appeals and 1 credit application was received in the last month. He said they were categorized and will be responded to accordingly. Bellis asked if they were new appeals or repeats, and Farley said that he believes they are new.
- b. Godbout also mentioned that the project at 1440 Stones Crossing Road will begin soon, with work lasting about 4-5 days.

8. New Business

a. Carroll Engineering Preliminary Plan Review

- i. Blanchfield summarized that Carroll Engineering has given them a preliminary not exceed of \$2,500.00 that the Board needs to approve for them to review all plans. Gunther made a motion to approve the not to

exceed amount of \$2,500.00 for preliminary plan review and Lammi seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

- ii. Blanchfield summarized that Entech Engineering has given them a preliminary not exceed of \$1,000.00 that the Board needs to approve for them to review all plans. Lammi made a motion to approve the not to exceed amount of \$1,000.00 for preliminary plan review and Swinsburg seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

b. Invoice Packet

- i. Lammi stated that the invoices are primarily from HRG and the Solicitor for a total of \$86,282.62. Lammi made a motion to approve the invoices and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. White stated that HRG's bills moving forward will include more detail about what work is being done.

c. Fourth Quarter Fund Transfer

- i. Lammi stated that the fourth quarter bills include items from Public Works during October and November, and that items from December will be included in the first quarter of 2025. He also mentioned that the cost reflects work being done by Public Works on Kingwood. He said the cost comes to a total of \$658,216.79. Lammi made a motion to approve the fourth quarter fund transfer in this amount and Swinsburg seconded. Gunther announced that for this vote presently and in the future, he will be abstaining. With one abstention, the vote passed by unanimous voice vote. Blanchfield asked if this completes the billing for the stormwater events of 2023 and Farley confirmed that the bill will now be going away. Bellis asked if the Township bills the Authority at a fixed rate or on an hourly basis, and Farley said it is a fully loaded cost.

d. Old Nazareth Road PENNVEST Additional Services Project Assignment Supplement 1

- i. Blanchfield stated that there is a request for an additional \$47,300.00 for assignment supplement 1. Pyle said that this funding will get us through the end of construction for Old Nazareth Road. Swinsburg made a motion to approve the additional services project assignment supplement 1 in the amount of \$47,300.00 and Gunther seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. Mitchell asked if this money then gets charged back to PENNVEST, Pyle said he is not sure and that he will clarify.

e. 2025 Meeting Dates

- i. Blanchfield summarized the Authority's 2025 meeting dates. Gunther made a motion to approve the 2025 meeting dates and Mitchell seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

f. Wedgewood Avenue Emergency Repairs Review

- i. Kistler summarized the work that needs to be done at the site. He said he met with the Geotechnical Engineer and a representative from Schlough on site to discuss options for another temporary repair. He said a plan was agreed to that would reposition some of the riprap that was placed there in the past, restabilize the yard, and place some additional riprap before locking it all in with concrete. Kistler stated that the contractor would be on site December 23rd for one full day of work. He said the cost estimate is \$15,300.00. Mitchell asked if the tree on the property was being removed, and Kistler stated that the homeowner originally asked for the tree to be removed, but then changed her mind when she found out the permanent repair plans for the property did not include altering the tree. Once the tree was evaluated by all parties, it was discovered that the tree is not in good condition, but that since the property owner did not want the tree removed, any alterations to the tree are now up to the property owner. Gunther asked if this temporary work would affect the permanent work to be done in the future, and Kistler said no, it is only stabilizing the area until the permanent repairs take place. Swinsburg made a motion to approve the method of billing for this project and Gunther seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

g. Open Records Policy Discussion

- i. Lammi stated that the Authority should have their own Open Records Policy and that he would be taking the Townships policy and converting it into their own. He said an Open Records Officer will need to be appointed as well. Lammi said the policy will be voted on at the next meeting.

h. Earth Stewards Presentation

- i. John Marks, Earth Stewards of Palmer, presented the Palmer Proud Project to the Board, which culminates into the Township wide cleanup event on August 23rd, 2025. Marks discussed the work that the Earth Stewards of Palmer do for the Township regarding litter cleanup. He stated that they are looking for the full support of the Township and all of its committees and Board's. Bellis asked how many members they have, and Marks stated they have 8 core members and 11 associate members. Bellis stated that the day they picked is so that it falls directly after Community Weekend. He also stated that the State is planning on giving out an award to the group that takes pride in keeping their Township clean, and he is hoping that the Earth Stewards will be front and center. He then said that the Federal Government, in 2026, will be giving out an award of the same nature. Marks thanked everyone for their time. Mitchell thanked them for all they do for the Township. Blanchfield stated that, to make it official, he would like to make a statement endorsing the Earth Stewards and their

Palmer Proud mission as well as the Township wide cleanup event on August 23rd. All agreed to support the endorsement. Lammi asked if the work that this group is doing could be counted towards MS4 credits, and Gunther said it is something he will look into.

9. For the Good of the Order

- a. None at this time.

10. Next meeting: January 22nd, 2025

11. Adjournment

- a. Lammi made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mitchell seconded. The motion was passed unanimously by voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 6:24PM.