

DATE: Wednesday, August 27, 2025

The regular monthly meeting of the Womelsdorf-Robeson Joint Authority was held Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. in the Womelsdorf Borough Hall.

It was noted that in order to assist in the preparation of the meeting minutes, the Secretary records the meeting. The recording is deleted following the approval by the Board of the minutes and no permanent recording is kept by the Secretary.

The following members were present:

Steve Bright Ralph Honigmann Rod Lebo Mark Spotts Jack Morris Barbara Orth

Matthew Miller was absent.

Engineer, Fred Ebert, Solicitor Jestyn Payne, Dennis Miller and Jacob Sonnen (Authority Operators) were also in attendance.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge to the Flag of the USA.

Visitors: Will Hawke, Logan Neihardt, Jason Gahres, Kory Koehler and Joe Brackman.

Public comment began with **Will Hawke** asking for guidance on how to get biking back on WRJA land. Maybe working with Mark Spotts and form a committee. Even if its only for local riders. **Logan and Jason** also asking to get biking back. **Kory** stated that he is not taking anything for granted. He is also in favor of getting guidance or forming a committee. Open for discussion.

Joe Brackman: Reporting on timbering project. Spent last three weeks checking out the County Line Side Hill Trac – the Bosold acquisition which is about 130 acres. Timber sales will cover approximately 70 acres. Good thick timber there. Jestyn Payne will prepare the documents. Joe will get them out to potential bidders. Mark Spotts asked if tractor trailers will be able to get through? Joe said yes, he will note specifics on correspondence to bidders. Motion to proceed by Ralph Honigmann, seconded by Mark Spotts. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report:

The minutes of the meeting held Wednesday, July 23, 2025 were reviewed and approved on a motion by Rod Lebo, seconded by Jack Morris. Motion carried.

Correspondence: None

Treasurer's Report:

1. The Treasurer's Report showing a balance of \$2,000,752.78 and bills in the amount of \$71,501.75 were presented for payment, which were ratified or approved on a motion by Jack Morris, seconded by Ralph Honigmann. Unanimously approved.
2. Thanks to Kozloff Stoudt for nice discount!
3. Retirement information for MMO distributed by Treasurer.
4. Kappe invoice balance of \$353,880. Engineer suggested to make a partial payment. Steve Bright made a motion to pay \$250,000 and seconded by Ralph Honigmann. Hold the remaining balance until all paperwork and touch up work is completed. Unanimously approved.
5. Edward Jones statements are available upon request.
6. Still waiting to hear from Koch Associates.

Engineer's Report:

AUTHORITY REPORT

1. GOLD SPRING TANK

The tank has been filled and is now operational. EE, Inc. is following up with the contractor on the final report and certifications. Once EE, Inc. receives the final report, EE, Inc. will provide the construction certification to the PA DEP. There was a spot found of concern and also, paint flakes. Kappe will return in October to make any repairs. Engineer will check out the warranty period.

2. TANK 2

Chairman asked if there is a deadline date we need to sign the agreement for Tank 2? Dennis stated that prices will likely increase in 2026 but he will inquire.

Engineer talked about OBIC Advance RehabTechnology. They offer a 50-year life. May want to consider for Tank 2. Engineer will get price from them.

3. COMMERICAL METER POLICY

The current policy of the Authority is that the commercial customers own their metering facility but the Authority owns the actual water meter. As the water meters need to be replaced the Authority should have a policy in place that allows for their service or meter fee to pay for the replacement of the water meter. EE, Inc. is reviewing the fire line (w/o flow meter) charges that our other authorities are currently charging. There is no industry standard and the majority of our clients require a flow meter and they just pay the meter charge with no additional service or usage charges. The unmetered fire lines should be 4" - \$100/quarter, 6" - \$150/quarter and 8" - \$200/quarter.

4. SSM FILE TRANSFER

EE, Inc. is working on the transfer of files from SSM back to the Authority.

SSM wanted to coordinate the file transfer for the WRJA with the file transfer for the Newmanstown Water Authority files at the same time. EE, Inc. has requested a meeting date from SSM. EE, Inc. will coordinate with the Authority and board once dates have been provided by SSM. EE, Inc. will follow up so that a date can be identified prior to the Authority meeting.

5. WOMELSDORF - HIGH STREET PAVING

EE, Inc. has developed the construction cost estimates for the various options for the replacement of the existing water main in High Street and to loop the twelve-inch water distribution mains. EE, Inc. identified four sections of the water main so that the Authority can decide what sections it would like to replace as part of this project. The priority of the replacement are identified in the number system from highest to lowest priority. Engineer distributed a summary of costs of various scenarios as well as a loan analysis.

The **first section** (Section 1.0) is the replacement of the six-inch water main on High Street from Water Street to 2nd Street and then along 2nd Street to Jefferson Street with a twelve-inch DIP. This will interconnect the twelve-inch distribution mains through the Borough. This includes the replacement of all the water services and trench repair of the water main. The water services will be replaced by 'mulling' them under the road. The construction cost for this section is approximately \$1,676,830.00.

The **second section** (Section 2.0) is the replacement of the six-inch DIP water main from near Route 422 to Water Street with eight-inch DIP. This is the replacement of the old six-inch main that is near the end of its useful life. The construction cost for this section is approximately \$857,670.00.

The **third section** (Section 3.0) is the replacement of the six-inch water main in High Street from 2nd Street to 6th Street. This section extends beyond the Penn DOT paving project and will replace the remaining old six-inch water main with twelve-inch water main. This will complete the removal of the older pipe within Womelsdorf Borough. The construction cost is approximately \$1,370,065.00.

The **fourth section** (Section 4.0) is the replacement of newer six-inch water main from 6th Street to the edge of the Womelsdorf Borough with twelve-inch DIP water main. This would be the enlargement of the water main to service future growth. The construction cost is approximately \$993,035.00.

EE, Inc. has attached plan identifying the four sections of water main that can be replaced as part of this project along with the construction cost estimate for each section.

This project would be eligible for Penn VEST financing through a 20-year loan. The interest rate that was just received by the RWMA for their WWTP upgrade was 1% for the first five years and 1.743% for years 6 through 20 with an interest only period of up to three years for construction. Engineer would work on our grant and give board members talking points to contact our state representatives. Chairman would like to meet with Engineer and rate committee. Engineer noted need to hurry. He will set up a meeting with Penn Vest liaison, Tesra Shupp. The meeting would fall under educational scope so any/all board members could attend. Looking at week of September 8.

DEVELOPMENTS

6. BETHANY ROAD

This project will be updated after the file transfer.

7. MAPLE AVENUE APARTMENTS

This project will be updated after the file transfer.

8. EAST HIGH STREET

This project will be updated after the file transfer.

9. AIDEN ON SIXTH

The developer has received the recommendation for the required waivers from the planning commission and is now waiting for the Commissioners approval of the waivers. If these are received then the development plans will remain close to what was previously submitted. EE, Inc. will set up a design and review meeting with the developer and his engineer once they have direction from the municipality. Did not get back yet.

10. LIZZY LANE/HILL RD – Heidelberg Twp Easement Agreement

Access easement is for our benefit. Solicitor noted that our first interaction with this was in 2016. He will put standard paperwork together for joint easement. Should not be a WRJA cost. Mark Spotts stated that it is a gravel road and we would not want to be part of paving or maintaining paved road. Engineer will put their engineer in touch with Jestyn.

Solicitor's Report:

- 1. Berks Nature Potential Conservation Easements:** There is a new contact person...Andrew Fetterman. Dan Becker who is a partner at Kozloff Stoudt is on the Berks Nature board and said Andrew is focused and understands the real world. Jes thinks we can work with Andrew to bring us to a conclusion. After some discussion it was mentioned that we already have a draft. Will they accept that? Jestyn will send Andrew the draft. If he is agreeable, we can move forward. Ralph questioned if lack of funding, would we still be interested? Andrew should be able to advise.
- 2. Jeff Martin – 684 Hill Rd, Robesonia – Zoning Hearing:** Sagner acquired land from Newpher. Wanted to know more about short term rentals. Did some research and found that the law in PA is very undeveloped.
- 3. Fish Hatchery:** Per Chairman lease is the only option. They are doing surveying now.

Operator's Report:

1. **Freeman Street (Grande Project) update:** Ran pipe. Just about have the loop completed.
2. **Maple Avenue Apartments update:** Tap in fee is paid. Escrow fee not paid. There is no signed improvements agreement.
3. **Well 2 flooding:** Working on it. Allgyer coming back.
4. **Grosfillex Fire line meter pit:** Received check for \$24,000 towards unmetered fire line. Meter pit is ordered. Should be receiving another check for \$7,000 for contractor.
5. **Diversified Records update:** Dennis completed and sent for billing purposes.
6. **Clean up Right of Way near WRJA shop:** Clear Site is just about done. Steve Bright made a motion to approve. Ralph Honigmann seconded. Motion carried.

Other Board Member Comments:

None

Chairman's Report:

1. **Grade Reservoir Road:** Dennis met with Engineer. He will get prices on repairs.
2. **Uniform Allowance:** For boots, shirts, etc. Chairman made a motion to allow \$1,000 per employee per year starting in 2026. Must submit receipts. Mark Spotts seconded. Motion carried.
3. **Well Sites** - tabled.
4. **Tank 2 Budget estimate:** Chairman will call Jamie to inquire about deadline.
5. **AAA:** Chairman is on their board and there is money available through a safety grant. He will apply for grants for materials and equipment. Motion made by Steve Bright, seconded by Rod Lebo. Motion carried.
6. **Water Rate Increase:** Committee of Mark, Ralph and Steve met to discuss Phase II - distributed rate sheet to board. Phase I adopted 1/1/25. Phase II would start 1/1/26. We've expanded quarterly minimums for codes 6,7,8. These are more in line with what they should be. Other rates are increased as well. Asking board to take home and review for next meeting. As previously mentioned in the Engineers report, the private unmetered lines should be updated to 4" - \$100/quarter, 6" - \$150/quarter and 8" - \$200/quarter. Glenn Eberly brought to Marks attention about the fact that we charge all customers \$2.00 for fire hydrants. Why is the burden of the fire hydrant charged to WRJA customers when it is used for the entire community. Purpose is for public safety. Can WRJA bill every resident in each municipality/township the \$2.00 per quarter for the fire hydrant fee. Solicitor will investigate. The cost for a hydrant + labor is \$10,000. There are almost 2300 customers serviced by WRJA.
The current cost for all hydrants in our system is approximately \$1.44 million.

Pig Roast: Operators will check dates.

Motion to Adjourn at 8:52 PM, by Steve Bright, seconded by Barbara Orth. Motion carried.

Next meeting: *Wednesday, September 24, 2025 at 7PM at the Womelsdorf Borough Hall.*

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Orth

Barbara Orth
Secretary

Womelsdorf Robeson Jones Authority
A WATER AUTHORITY — SUPPLYING WOMELSDORF, ROBESONIA AND SHERIDAN, PA.

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Treasurer's Report July 2025

Balance June 30 \$57,295.03

Customer Collections

\$ 73,488.53

Cert. Fees

\$ 330.00

Interest Income

\$ 26.92

Meter Recovery Fee

\$ 1,738.00

Sewer shutoffs

\$ 700.00

Total Income

+\$ 76,283.45

\$133,578.51

Disburements for July

\$46,649.50

Total Disburements

-\$46,649.50

\$86,929.01

Treasury Notes

Expires 02.15.27 2.250%

\$100,000.00

Expires 08.15.28 2.875%

\$140,000.00

Expires 05.15.29 2.375%

\$105,000.00

\$345,000.00

+\$345,000.00

\$431,929.01

PLGIT

Interest 4.38%

\$ 765,232.30

+\$2,843.86

+\$768,076.16

\$1,200,005.17

Edward Jones account value of June 28-July 25, 2025

+800,747.61

\$2,000,752.78