

MINUTES of the Lower Township MUA
Meeting Date: November 5, 2025

Call to order: A meeting of the Lower Township MUA, was held at 2900 Bayshore Road, Villas, NJ, 08251. The meeting convened at 5:00pm.

ROLL CALL OF THE MEMBERS

Jacqueline Henderson Present
James P. Ridgway via Zoom
Harrison Bitting Present
Karen Rechner via Zoom
Bryan Steere Present

STAFF / PROFESSIONALS

Steven A. Morris, Esq., The Morris Law Firm, MUA Solicitor
Ronald N. Curcio, PE, Polistina & Associates, MUA Engineer
Stephen Testa, RHT & K, MUA Financial Consultant
Stephen Blankenship, Executive Director
Melissa Jasinski, Board Secretary

- Call to Order
- Determination of Quorum
- Sunshine Law
- Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence
- Comments or Questions from the Public on Agenda Items – There were none.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION / PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

RATE HEARING – Proposed Changes to the LTMUA Rate Schedules

Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner to close the Public Participation portion of the meeting.

Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye

*Rate Hearing closed at 5:19pm
Rate Hearing transcript attached.*

Resolution No. 137-2025 Approving Revisions to the LTMUA Rate Schedules for FY 2025-2026

Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 137-2025 Approving Revisions to the LTMUA Rate Schedules for FY 2025-2026.

Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes: October 1, 2025 Regular Minutes
2. Approval of Bills
 - a. **Resolution No. 138-2025 \$49,953.47** Operating Account (Authorizes payment of operating expenses up to \$50,000)
 - b. **Resolution No. 139-2025 \$592,014.94** Excess operating account (Authorizes payment of operating expenses in excess of \$50,000)
3. **Resolution No. 140-2025** Authorizing Transfer from the Sturdy Capital Improvement Fund Account to Sturdy Operating Account. For Payment of **Sewer** Capital items in the amount of **\$15,006.28**
4. **Resolution No. 141-2025** Authorizing Transfer from the Sturdy Capital Improvement Fund Account to Sturdy Operating Account. For Payment of **Water** Capital items in the amount of **\$162,110.91**

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5. **Resolution No. 142-2025 Customer Change Resolution Approving Reductions to Accounts**
Motion was made by Mr. Bitting for the approval of the Business Consent Agenda and seconded by Mrs. Henderson
Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye
The Chair asked the public if there were any questions on the Regular Agenda: There were none.

REGULAR AGENDA

6. **Resolution No. 143-2025 2026 Adopted Budget Resolution**
Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 143-2025 2026 Adopted Budget Resolution.
Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye
7. **Resolution No. 144-2025 Approving a Multi-Residential Sewer Application for 129 Fishing Creek Road by 129 Fishing Creek Road, LLC/Paul Burgin**
Mr. Curcio reviewed the commercial/residential sewer application for six (6) new single-family residences with three (3) homes fronting Marshall Avenue and three (3) homes fronting Lennox Avenue. The parcel was previously the site of a single-family home. An existing vacuum pit on Lennox Avenue can be used to service all three (3) homes fronting Lennox Avenue. The three (3) homes fronting Marshall Avenue will require the installation of a new vacuum sewer pit. Paul Burgin and James Walls, applicants, are in agreement with the items noted in Polistina's Review Letter, dated November 3, 2025. The applicant currently holds one (1) sewer allocation from the previous residence, and will be required to purchase five (5) additional sewer allocation fees.
Motion was made by Mrs. Henderson and seconded by Mrs. Rechner to table Resolution No. 144-2025 Approving a Multi-Residential Sewer Application for 129 Fishing Creek Road by 129 Fishing Creek, LLC/Paul Burgin subject to the conditions noted in Polistina review letter, dated November 3, 2025.
Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye
8. **Resolution No. 145-2025 Approving a Multi-Residential Sewer Application for 805/807 Walnut Street by Mark Bosetski**
Mr. Curcio reviewed the commercial/residential sewer application for two (2) new single-family residences on Walnut Street, Erma, along with his Review Letter, dated October 30, 2025. The project will require the installation of a vacuum sewer pit at the applicant's expense. The applicant will be required to purchase two (2) sewer allocation fees.
Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Henderson for Resolution No. 145-2025 Approving a Multi-Residential Sewer Application for 805/807 Walnut Street by Mark Bosetski subject to the conditions noted in Polistina review letter, dated October 30, 2025.
Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye

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Administrative Reports

Solicitor- No report.

Engineer

- Due to new flood elevation requirements, the current plans for the Pump Stations Project may be revised if the NJDEP is not willing to work with the Authority to mitigate the cost impacts from the requirements. A meeting with NJDEP is scheduled for November 12th. Updates will be provided at the next meeting.
- The contractors for the Ocean Drive Force Main Project and the Townbank Road Project are procuring the necessary materials.

Financial Consultant- Revenue and expenses for the current year are all in line.

Executive Director

- Met with staff concerning the rising health care cost, with the state health insurance rising 37-38%. A representative from Allen Associates gave a presentation to staff to address any questions and potential alternative options. The state will have a special open enrollment in April 2026, so the Authority will continue to look into possible alternatives through then.
- Worked on potential easement issues, one located between E Tampa Avenue and & Desoto Avenue, Villas, and one in the area of Rosehill Parkway and Wilson Avenue in North Cape May, where existing gravity sewer mains run through residential properties where now vacated streets once existed.

Public Comments- There were none.

Comments from the Board- There were none.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:39pm was made by Mrs. Henderson and seconded by Mr. Bitting. Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye

Rate Hearing Transcript
LTMUA Board Meeting- November 5, 2025

SOLICITOR: Good evening. For the record, my name is Steven Morris. I am the Solicitor for the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority. It is *Wednesday, November 5, 2025* and it is **5:01 PM**. This is a Public Hearing to consider proposed revisions to the LTMUA's sewer fees, water fees and rate structures. This public hearing is being conducted as required by law pursuant to New Jersey Statute 40:14B-23, which is the governing statute of the Authority. The Authority must demonstrate that the proposed changes are reasonable. Members of the public have the right to cross-examine witnesses who provide testimony on behalf of the Authority. The hearing is being transcribed, and the Board Secretary will prepare a complete transcript. Anyone desiring a copy of that transcript may obtain the same by contacting the Board Secretary at the LTMUA's Administrative Office or by calling 609-886-7146.

It is my understanding that tonight the witness for the Authority will be its Executive Director, Stephen Blankenship. At this time, I would ask that Mr. Blankenship be sworn in. Mr. Blankenship, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes

SOLICITOR: For the record, please state your name.

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Stephen Blankenship

SOLICITOR: And what is your position with the Lower Township MUA?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Executive Director/Chief Engineer

SOLICITOR: Are you fully familiar with the operations of the Authority?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes

SOLICITOR: Are you familiar with the proposed revisions to the sewer and water fees and rate structures?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes

SOLICITOR: MR. BLANKENSHIP, before establishing the reasonableness of the proposed revisions, did the Authority publish notice of this public hearing at least twenty days before tonight's meeting in two newspapers?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes, notices of the proposed changes were published in the Press of Atlantic City on October 9th, 2025, and the Cape May County Herald on October 8th, 2025. I have the proofs of the publication with me tonight.

SOLICITOR: I'd like the record to reflect that the affidavit of publication from the Press of Atlantic City affidavit is marked as Exhibit A and the affidavit of publication from the Cape May County Herald is marked as Exhibit B. Now, in addition to the notification and the publication in the two newspapers, did the Authority also send notice of the proposed changes to the Township of Lower, the City of Cape May and the Township of Middle?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes, certified letters dated October 3rd, 2025, were sent to the Clerks of the Township of Lower, City of Cape May, and the Township of Middle.

SOLICITOR: I would like the record to reflect the correspondence to the Township of Lower Clerk as Exhibit C; the City of Cape May Clerk as Exhibit D, and the Township of Middle Clerk as Exhibit E. Was a notice of this public hearing posted on the Authority's website?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes, the notice of the rate hearing was posted to the Authority's website on October 3, 2025.

SOLICITOR: Now, having established that the proper notice has been given, we can proceed to discuss the proposed changes. Regarding the proposed increases to the LTMUA's water and sewer fees, was an analysis conducted to determine whether the proposed fee increases were, in fact, reasonable and necessary?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: Yes, in conjunction with the Authority's Financial Consultant, Stephen Testa, and the LTMUA staff, the Authority completed an analysis, which was presented to the LTMUA Board on October 1, 2025.

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SOLICITOR: Now, MR. BLANKENSHIP, please provide information on the proposed changes to the LTMUA's water and sewer fees.

MR. BLANKENSHIP: The Lower Township MUA proposes the following sewer and water rates and fees changes for residential and commercial customers:

SECTION II: SEWER SERVICE CHARGES – YEARLY RATE

	FROM	TO
Single Family Dwelling	\$328.00	\$344.40
Boarding House 0 to 4 Rental Rooms	\$410.00	\$430.50
Each Additional Room Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
Apartment House Residential per unit	\$328.00	\$344.40
Apartment House Commercial per unit	\$328.00	\$344.40
Laundromat First Washer	\$410.00	\$430.50
Each Additional Washer Thereafter	\$246.00	\$258.30
Motel First Unit	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Unit Thereafter	\$164.00	\$172.20
Store less than 4,000 SF	\$410.00	\$430.50
Store more than 4,000 SF	\$2,050.00	\$2,152.50
Convenience Store more than 4,000 SF	\$2,562.50	\$2,690.63
Supermarket more than 4,000 SF	\$4,100.00	\$4,305.00
Fish Market	\$1,145.95	\$1,203.25
Garage Sales of Gasoline & Products (no repairs)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Garage Sales of Gasoline & Products (repairs)	\$656.00	\$688.80
Office (0 to 2 fixtures)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
Restaurant (0 to 10 seats)	\$656.00	\$688.80
Each Additional Seat Thereafter	\$32.80	\$34.44
Marina (0 to 2 Fixtures)	\$1,312.00	\$1,377.60
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$246.00	\$258.30
Car Wash First Bay	\$984.00	\$1,033.20
Each Additional Bay Thereafter	\$246.00	\$258.30
Fire Station (0 to 2 Fixtures)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
Church	\$328.00	\$344.40
School (0 to 35 pupils)	\$656.00	\$688.80
Each Additional Pupil Thereafter	\$16.40	\$17.22
Barber Shop	\$328.00	\$344.40
Beauty Shop	\$656.00	\$688.80
Gym / Health Club (0 to 4 fixtures)	\$1,025.00	\$1,076.25
More than 4 fixtures	\$1,383.75	\$1,452.94
Rescue Squad Building (0 to 2 fixtures)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10

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Light Industry (under 20 employees) 0 to 2 fixtures	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
Light Industry (20 and over employees)	\$1,312.00	\$1,377.60
Each additional employee over 20	\$32.80	\$34.44
Assembly Halls, Lodges (0 to 2 fixtures)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
RV & Travel Trailer sites: 0 to 3 sites	\$656.00	\$688.80
Each additional site	\$82.00	\$86.10
Coast Guard Base (0 to 2 fixtures)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
Swimming Pool (0 to 2 fixtures)	\$328.00	\$344.40
Each Additional Fixture Thereafter	\$82.00	\$86.10
Seafood Processing Facility per 1,000 gallons	\$3.78	\$3.97
Airport Industrial Park per 1,000 gallons	\$3.78	\$3.97
DRBA Ferry Terminal per 1,000 gallons	\$3.78	\$3.97
Convalescent Home per 1,000 gallons	\$3.78	\$3.97

SECTION I: RATE SCHEDULE OF QUARTERLY WATER SERVICE RATES AND CHARGES

<u>Residential</u>	5/8 inch meter	10,000		\$64.04		\$65.96
	3/4 inch meter	10,000		\$67.71		\$69.74
	1 inch meter	20,000		\$161.29		\$166.13
						\$0.00
<u>Commercial</u>	5/8 inch meter	10,000		\$64.04		\$65.96
	3/4 inch meter	10,000		\$67.71		\$69.74
	1 inch meter	20,000		\$161.29		\$166.13
	1-1/2 Inch meter	40,000		\$221.62		\$228.27
	2 inch meter	50,000		\$279.51		\$287.90
	3 inch meter	80,000		\$440.80		\$454.02
	4 inch meter	120,000		\$645.16		\$664.51
	6 inch meter	250,000		\$1,266.92		\$1,304.93
	8 inch meter	337,500		\$1,707.71		\$1,758.94
1	Excess usage	>10,000, 20,000<		\$3.70		\$3.81
2	Excess usage	>20,000		\$4.07		\$4.19
3	Annual Charge per Fire Hydrant (Public)			\$42.54		\$43.82
4	Annual Charge per Fire Hydrant (Private)			\$42.54		\$43.82
5	Annual Charge Per Fire Service Line (Sprinkler System)					
a	2-inch or less diameter			\$143.50		\$147.81
b	4-inch diameter			\$287.00		\$295.61

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c	6-inch diameter				\$430.50			\$443.42
d	8-inch diameter				\$574.00			\$591.22
e	10-inch diameter				\$717.50			\$739.03

SECTION III: BULK WATER SALES

1	September 16th to May 14th per 1,000 gallons	\$6.41			\$6.60
2	May 15th to September 15th per 1,000 gallons	\$8.01			\$8.25
3	Delivery charge per 1,000 gallons	\$1.64			\$1.69

SECTION IV: BULK WATER SALES TANK TRUCKLOAD: \$153.75 \$158.36

SECTION V: EMERGENCY BULK PURCHASES

1	September 16th to May 14th per 1,000 gallons	\$4.07			\$4.19
2	May 15th to September 15th per 1,000 gallons	\$6.41			\$6.60

SECTION II OPERATIONAL – LTMUA CONTRACTOR CHARGES

1	Repairer/Equipment Operator		per hour	\$55.00			\$57.00
2	Backhoe		per hour	\$80.00			\$82.00
3	Dump Truck (2 CY or less)		per hour	\$35.00			\$36.00
4	Dump Truck (more than 2 CY)		per hour	\$65.00			\$67.00
5	Sewer Rodding Machine		per hour	\$30.00			\$31.00
7a	Dump truck, combination machine & 2 employees			\$310.00			\$319.00
7b	Dump truck, combination machine & 2 employees			\$475.00			\$489.00
			Outside of regular business hours				

SOLICITOR: When will the changes in fees and rates take effect?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: December 1ST, 2025

SOLICITOR: Is there anything else you'd like to discuss about the Lower Township MUA fees?

MR. BLANKENSHIP: No

SOLICITOR: At this time, it is appropriate for any Board Member to ask questions of Mr. Blankenship.

CHAIR: (Asks each Member if they have any comments or questions.)

SOLICITOR: Now, it is appropriate to ask if there are any questions or comments from the public.

CHAIR: The floor is now open for questions or comments.

SOLICITOR: At this time, I recommend you adopt a resolution confirming the LTMUA Fee Schedule for Fiscal Year 2025-2026.

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Mr. Bidding moved to adopt Resolution No. 137-2025 Approving Revisions to the LTMUA Rate Schedule FY 2025-2026 and Mrs. Rechner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Bitting– Aye, Mrs. Henderson– Aye, Mrs. Rechner– Aye, Mr. Ridgway–Aye, Mr. Steere– Aye, Motion Approved 5-0-0

SOLICITOR: At this time, there should be a motion made to close the Public Hearing regarding all the rates and fees that were adopted this evening.

Mr. Bidding moved to close the meeting at 5:19pm and Mrs. Rechner seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Bitting– Aye, Mrs. Henderson– Aye, Mrs. Rechner– Aye, Mr. Ridgway– Aye, Mr. Steere– Aye, Motion Approved 5-0-0

SOLICITOR: This concludes the Public Hearing.