

**MINUTES of the Lower Township MUA
Meeting Date: September 3, 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 | Present |
| Harrison Bitting | Present |
| Karen Rechner | Present |
| 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.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes: August 6, 2025 Regular Minutes
2. Approval of Minutes: August 6, 2025 Closed Session Minutes
3. Approval of Bills
 - a. **Resolution No. 112-2025 \$49,935.00** Operating Account (Authorizes payment of operating expenses up to \$50,000)
 - b. **Resolution No. 113-2025 \$236,794.15** Excess operating account (Authorizes payment of operating expenses in excess of \$50,000)
4. **Resolution No. 114-2025** Authorizing Transfer from the Sturdy Capital Improvement Fund Account to Sturdy Operating Account. For Payment of Sewer Capital items in the amount of **\$61,547.69**
5. **Resolution No. 115-2025** Authorizing Transfer from the Sturdy Capital Improvement Fund Account to Sturdy Operating Account. For Payment of Water Capital items in the amount of **\$8,178.22**
6. **Resolution No. 116-2025** Customer Change Resolution Approving Reductions to Accounts
Motion was made by Mrs. Rechner for the approval of the Business Consent Agenda and seconded by Mr. Bitting
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

7. **Resolution No. 117-2025 Annual Audit Review for the FY 2023**
Mr. Testa reviewed the final 2023 Audit and Exit Conference Reports. The audit concluded with an unmodified and clean opinion, and there were no findings, recommendations, or instances of non-compliance reported. The Authority's assets increased by about \$13.2 million; liabilities increased by \$10.4 million; and the net position increased by \$3.5 million.

MINUTES of the Lower Township MUA
Meeting Date: September 3, 2025

Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 117-2025 Authorizing an Annual Audit Review for the FY 2023

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

8. Resolution No. 118-2025 Authorizing a Contribution to the Township of Lower Pursuant to NJSA 40A:5A-12.1

Motion was made by Mrs. Henderson and seconded by Mr. Ridgway for Resolution No. 118-2025 Authorizing a Contribution in the amount of \$160,000 to the Township of Lower Pursuant to NJSA 40A:5A-12.1

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

9. Resolution No. 119-2025 Authorizing the Sale of Surplus Equipment to Lower Township

Motion was made by Mrs. Rechner and seconded by Mr. Bitting for Resolution No. 119-2025 Authorizing the Sale of a Morrison Concrete Mixer to the Township of Lower in the amount of \$1.00.

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

10. Resolution No. 120-2025 Authorizing an Application to NJDEP I Bank for the 2024 Pump Station Rehabilitation Project

The application proposes the original stations approved in Resolution No. 107-2025, 2024 Pump Station Rehabilitation Project, and adds two (2) additional pump stations to the project. The resolution is an NJDEP I Bank requirement.

Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 120-2025 Authorizing an Application to NJDEP I Bank for the 2024 Pump Station Rehabilitation Project

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

11. Resolution No. 121-2025 Awarding a Contract for NJ Licensed Electrical Contractor Services to Bowe & Gant

Quote specifications were advertised on the Authority's website, and quotes were solicited from four (4) vendors. One (1) proposal was received on August 6, 2025, from Bowe & Gant Electrical Services, LLC. Staff recommended awarding the "on-call" contract to Bowe & Gant Electrical Services, LLC, for a one-year period.

Motion was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 121-2025 Awarding a Contract for NJ Licensed Electrical Contractor Services to Bowe & Gant Electrical Services, LLC in the amount not to exceed \$53,000.

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

12. Townbank Road Interceptor Lining & Manhole Rehab Project – Phase II Bid Results

A bid opening was held on August 28, 2025, and one (1) bid was received. Vortex Services, LLC, is the low bidder with a bid of \$608,260.00. Staff and the Authority Engineer recommended awarding the contract to Vortex Services, LLC.

MINUTES of the Lower Township MUA
Meeting Date: September 3, 2025

Motion was made by Mrs. Henderson and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 122-2025 Awarding a Contract to Vortex Services, LLC for Town Bank Road Interceptor Lining & Manhole Rehabilitation Project- Phase II in the amount of \$608,260.00.

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

13. GIS Pilot Study

At the August board meeting, DeBlasio & Associates presented a report on the Authority's current GIS system. At that meeting, DeBlasio & Associates was asked to submit a proposal for a GIS data conversion pilot for the LTMUA's water, gravity sewer, and vacuum sewer systems. DeBlasio & Associates submitted a proposal dated September 3, 2025, for \$44,000.00. Staff recommended that the Board approve the proposal.

Motion was made by Mr. Bidding and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 123-2025 Awarding a Contract to DeBlasio & Associates for a GIS Data Conversion Pilot for the LTMUA Gravity Sewer, Vacuum Sewer, and Water Systems in an amount not to exceed \$44,000, as outlined in their proposal dated September 3, 2025.

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

Administrative Reports

Solicitor- Nothing to report.

Engineer

- Met with the contractor for the Diamond Beach PS Force Main Repair Project, which is projected to begin in 4-6 weeks.
- Worked to get the I Bank documents uploaded for the Pump Station Project for funding and principal forgiveness.
- Assisted the Authority in soliciting quotes for slip lining work throughout the township.

Financial Consultant:

- Work is continuing on the 2024 Audit and 2025-26 Budget.
- Completed and submitted required continuing disclosure documents for an outstanding bond for the year-end 2024.
- Reviewed the year-to-date revenue and expenses are all in line with budget expectations.

Executive Director

- In conjunction with the Personnel Committee, developed a proposed cell phone reimbursement policy for Authority supervisors and managers who are on-call 24/7.
Motion was made by Mr. Bidding and seconded by Mrs. Rechner for Resolution No. 124-2025 Approving a Cell Phone Reimbursement Policy for Authority Supervisors and Managers.
Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye
- The Township's Rotary Park Project- Phase II design is still being finalized. An update will be provided regarding a start date when received.
- As discussed at the August meeting, the Township Public Works complex design is moving forward and the Township is requesting assistance in installing a water main to service the complex. More information will be provided once additional details become available.

MINUTES of the Lower Township MUA
Meeting Date: September 3, 2025

- A local fire department expressed interest in a surplus vehicle, a 2019 Chevrolet Tahoe, and a price for the vehicle has been provided verbally. Once an agreement is reached, a formal resolution will follow for authorization.
- A WWTP rotary press and centrifuge used as part of the dewatering process is overdue for repair. The "GG" option, which has been used in the past, is being researched as an option.
- With the submission of the 2023 Audit, an email was sent to the Local Finance Board to request that the contract with Utility Services Group be included on their September meeting agenda for approval.
- A preconstruction meeting for the NCM Watermain Replacement Project-Phase I was held. Work is not scheduled to start until late November due to long lead times on meter setters.
- A meeting with the USDA is scheduled for next week as part of their five-year compliance review.
- Director of O&M, Steven Pierce, met with EPA enforcement for an inspection of the Authority's water system and did a great job with the review.

Public Comments-

- Mr. Kober voiced concerns about Bayshore Road traffic and was directed to address his concerns to the Township and County.
- Mr. Olivio spoke about a previous application he had submitted for water and sewer service for the construction of a duplex. He would like to utilize an existing sewer lateral, due to a five-year road moratorium on his street. The Executive Director and Director of O&M will review and schedule a meeting with Mr. Olivio.
- Ms. Conroy, an owner of a commercial property in the Villas, voiced concerns about a recent water leak that had occurred at her property.
- Mr. Dickinson, a resident of Villas, voiced disdain about the strong sewage smell coming from the LTMUA treatment plant, particularly on specific days.

Comments from the Board– There were none.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:55pm was made by Mr. Bitting and seconded by Mrs. Rechner.
Roll call vote: Mr. Bitting- Aye, Mrs. Rechner- Aye, Mrs. Henderson- Aye, Mr. Ridgway- Aye, Mr. Steere- Aye