

TOMS RIVER MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY
Meeting Number Twelve Hundred Eighty Six

The regular meeting of the Toms River Municipal Utilities Authority was held on Tuesday, January 28, 2025 at 4:30 P.M. at the office of the Authority, 340 West Water Street, Toms River, New Jersey 08753.

The following were present:

Charles S. Valvano, Chairman

Tariq M. Siddiqui, Vice-Chairman

Philip I. Brilliant, Commissioner

Joseph G. Bilotta, Commissioner

Katarina Sevastakis, Alt. Commissioner

Sam Ellenbogen, Alt. Commissioner

Bernard Rutkowski, Executive Director/Sec'y.-Treas.

Joseph D. Coronato, General Counsel

Mike Lee, Chief Financial Officer

Greg Myhre, Safety & Compliance Officer

Cindy Toye, Human Resources Manager

Christina Diamante, Executive Assistant/Assistant Sec'y

Meeting #1286 was called to order at 4:30 p.m., January 28, 2025 by Chairman Valvano.

Ms. Diamante, Assistant Secretary, reported that in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, P.L.1975, c. 231, notice of this meeting was posted in the Asbury Park Press, The Star Ledger, filed with the township Clerk's Office, posted on the Township bulletin board and the Authority bulletin board.

Ms. Diamante called the roll. Mr. Ellenbogen, Ms. Sevastakis, Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano were present. Dr. Manforti was absent.

Chairman Valvano announced the very sad passing of the TRMUA's former Chairman of the Board, Juan Carlos Bellu, along with the TRMUA's former Executive Assistant, Donna Henry. A moment of silence was had.

Minutes of Meetings for Approval

A. Meeting #1285 - December 10, 2024 - New Submission

A motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Siddiqui to approve the minutes of Meeting #1285 December 10, 2024 as written. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes. Mr. Brilliant and Mr. Ellenbogen abstained as they were absent from the December meeting.

Disbursements

A motion was made by Mr. Siddiqui and seconded by Mr. Bilotta to approve payment of the Operating Expenses as listed in the amount of \$956,691.20. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Siddiqui, Mr. Bilotta and Mr. Ellenbogen all casting affirmative votes. Mr. Brilliant voted yes with exception to check #13860. Mr. Valvano voted yes with exception to check #13942.

Trust Fund for Contracts

A motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to approve the release from the Trust Fund for Contracts as listed in the amount of \$69,181.32. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

Ratification of Monthly Transfer & Investment Resolutions

A motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to ratify the monthly transfer and investment resolutions. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

Financial Reports

A motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to enter the financial reports 6A-6F into the record. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

Finance & Investments: 6G

A motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to reinvest the available funds of \$4,354.41 into the Ocean First Trust Custodial Account. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

Operating Reports

A motion was made by Mr. Siddiqui and seconded by Mr. Bilotta that the operating reports 7A-7G were accepted as presented. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Siddiqui, Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

Development Applications-Major Sub Divisions

There were no applications submitted for approval.

Authority Meeting

The next Authority meeting was confirmed for Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. in the TRMUA conference room. This is the 2025 Reorganization meeting.

Adoption of Resolutions

9A-2 – A motion was made by Mr. Siddiqui and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to authorize the execution of the Shared Service agreement between the Toms River MUA and The Brick Township MUA. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Siddiqui, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Ellenbogen and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

9A-3 – A motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Ellenbogen to authorize the Field Engineering Assistant's retirement. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

9B - Unfinished Business

None.

Committee Reports

Legal

None.

Personnel

An Executive Session is needed.

Engineering/Technology/Regionalization

Commissioner Siddiqui reported that Mark from Morgan Engineering has been doing a good job as our consulting Engineer, and not much money has been spent so far on engineering services from him.

Land

The Executive Director informed the Board that NJNG, in lieu of an Access Agreement, asked for just a memorandum stating they can access our back property, to which Mr. Rutkowski replied absolutely not, he wants a Hold Harmless in place and all the normal documents you would ask for in this scenario. Mr. Rutkowski thinks this project will likely start sometime in the Spring.

Finance/Chairman

Chairman Valvano reiterated that next month's meeting is the reorganization meeting which is a long and important meeting. He also stated that the W2's were mailed out and to let HR know if you haven't received yours yet. Lastly, he repeated about the MEL Risk Management seminar where if the Board completes the training the Authority gets a \$250 insurance reimbursement per member who completes it.

Public Comments

Seeing no public comments, Chairman Valvano closed the public portion of the meeting.

Correspondence

None.

Resolution to Enter Executive Session

A motion was made by Mr. Brilliant and seconded by Mr. Bilotta to adopt the resolution to enter Executive Session at 4:47 p.m. to discuss personnel matters, litigation/potential litigation and contractual matters. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

Public Session Reconvened at 5:46 p.m.

Mr. Rutkowski and Ms. Diamante were asked to return to the meeting.

Back in Public Session, a motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to authorize the Executive Director to enter into negotiations to hire an IT Manager after the background check is complete as per the discussion in Executive Session. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.

~~Another motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to approve the following: remove the "Receptionist" position from the Organization Chart, name Cindy Toye the "CFO in Training" as well as her current position. As of February 1st, give Courtney Jacquemot a \$7,000 increase in salary, Alexa Bramante a \$3,500 increase in salary, Christina Diamante a \$4,000 increase in salary and establish a new contract, replacing the old one, for Bernie Rutkowski, for 5 years with all the same terms, with a \$29,000 salary increase. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes. This motion was rescinded with a vote of 4-1 at the February 2025 reorganization meeting.~~

Commissioner Ellenbogen then acknowledged and gave his appreciation to the employees, who stayed for the whole meeting as members of the public, for all their hard work they give the Authority and the town every day. He also thanked and gave his appreciation to Dr. Al Manforti for his dedication all these years as a Commissioner on the Board, as well as Rick Tutela for all his years of dedication and hard work as a long running employee of the Authority. Chairman Valvano also added his gratitude to Dr. Manforti, who gave his resignation earlier today.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Mr. Bilotta and seconded by Mr. Brilliant to adjourn the meeting at 5:53 p.m. A roll call vote was taken with Mr. Bilotta, Mr. Brilliant, Mr. Ellenbogen, Mr. Siddiqui and Mr. Valvano all casting affirmative votes.