

THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING WAS HELD BY THE VIRTUAL MEETING ZOOM PLATFORM AND IN PERSON ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026, AT 6 PM, IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM AT 711 BIRKBECK STREET, FREELAND, PA. PRESENT WERE MR. KAVITSKI, MR. FISHER, MR. THOMAS, MR. TIERNEY (via Zoom), MR. KUKLIS, ATTORNEY MALASKA, BRENDEN MILLER OF HRG, CHRIS FERDIK OF HRG (via Zoom), THE TECHNICAL MANAGER AND THE SECRETARY.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

For anyone who has lost someone.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Mr. Kavitski informed the citizens they need to state their name and address with five minutes maximum per person.

Michele Connors, Matthew Krone and Michael G. were present via Zoom but did not participate. Carol Skymba of 937 Washington St., Freeland, she has lived here her entire life and spoke about having freezing issues for many years. Neighbors do not freeze but she has frozen many times even with running water. She has had to have her water thawed many times and she runs her water. She said she was running her water, and it froze anyway. She called the Authority and did not receive any help from the Water Company. They do not tell you who you can call, no help at all. We are only responsible from the house to curb, and I had the guy come out, had no water for a week and flushed the toilet using melted snow. I called a few people and found a guy on Facebook. It took him four and a half hours to thaw, and he said it was all the way out in street. She has a bill for \$625 for the work. She is retired and does not have this amount of money for water. When I called, I spoke to a man, who said they are only responsible for the curb out, he said about reimbursement for the bill. I have the bill here.

Mr. Kavitski inquired about the statement of running the water, and it froze while the water was running. Carol Skymba said yes, I have lived in my house for forty-five years, my water freezes and I know it. I always run the water, and it still freezes. I pay my water bill every month. I have been retired for a few years now, before we retired, we took showers every day, and now we take showers twice a week, yet the bill has never gone down.

Mr. Fisher stated the water meters do not lie; they slow down when they get older, they do not speed up. Frank Skymba of 937 Washington St., Freeland, he stated when the guy finally showed up to thaw the line, because the Borough won't do it and no plumbers in area will do it, I guess because of liability. Called about no water due to frozen water main, the thawing process went out 42 and half feet. The bill reads water not frozen until after curb stop, approximately 24 feet from house and the curb stop is at nineteen feet and took four and half hours to complete the thaw - \$625 is the cost.

Carol Skymba had another question, a lot of people in the area froze because of how cold it was, there was a big article in the paper about this situation, the frozen water in Hazleton, if you call Hazleton they thaw the lines for a fee, why do we not have something like this in Freeland.

Mr. Kavitski stated it is because of the liability issue. Years ago, Freeland used to thaw lines, and there was almost an incident, a problem at a home, and the Board at that time, they decided to end the thawing of lines for homeowners; too much of a liability.

Carol Skymba inquired if it is the responsibility of the Authority to supply her with water.

Mr. Kavitski stated the water was being supplied and the point is, if you are running water, I run water at my home and continue to do so, even though it warmed up. Carol Skymba said she is too.

Mr. Kavitski said if you were running water consistently, I do not know how you are freezing. Carol Skymba inquired if she is accused of lying about it.

Mr. Kavitski said he has never seen running water freeze. Carol Skymba said she was running the water, running it in the bathroom sink upstairs and down in the kitchen.

Mr. Kavitski stated I am just speaking from experience and have over fifty years.

Mr. Skymba stated according to this; it did not freeze from our house because the first twenty-four feet the pipe was empty. It was out past the curb stop. The plumber claims he was melting ice way out past the curb stop. So, the water is freezing from the main, out in the street and into our house and that is why when we were running the water it stopped.

Mr. Kavitski stated the main in the street is not freezing because other people have water. If nobody had water on the street, then the main would be frozen.

Mr. Skymba inquired why his main is thirty-two feet from his house. Mr. Kavitski stated he cannot answer that question. Mr. Skymba asked why he needed his line to go completely across the street.

Mr. Kavitski said the measurements which the plumber took do not seem right.

Mr. Skymba stated the Borough needs to have some type of policy, to help with this. Mr. Kavitski stated again that the policy is the Authority does not thaw lines because of the liability which was agreed on by the Board.

Mr. Skymba said there are three houses on the block which do not have water. Some of the homeowners have their properties dug up and apparently there is a problem there.

Mr. Kavitski stated it was minus eight at times and that was the problem.

Mr. Skymba stated that it does not help with the \$625 bill.

Mr. Kavitski stated that it is part of the Rules and Regulations.

Mr. Skymba again stated I thought you were responsible for curb stop out to the street and you can read the bill yourself.

Mr. Kavitski stated I understand. I can read the bill, but it does not prove where it froze.

Mr. Skymba stated I came here with a receipt from a plumber from Delano when I live in Freeland, who took four and half hours to thaw this out.

Mr. Kavitski inquired if the man is a certified plumber.

Carol Skymba stated I am sure he is.

Mr. Kavitski stated the stories I have heard in the past couple of days, and we had warned the people that it was coming.

Carol Skymba stated we do not need a warning, we run our water. Mr. Skymba stated if the Borough was not going to do anything because of liability, and I had to try for six days to have someone come thaw my line. Was I supposed to wait until Summer for it to thaw itself and have no water. What is the remedy?

Mr. Kavitski stated the remedy is to find a good, certified plumber to take care of your problem.

Carol Skymba inquired if they found a good, certified plumber, would the Authority pay for it.

Mr. Kavitski stated no, because we are not responsible for thawing lines.

Mr. Skymba said why, past the curb stop, you are responsible.

Mr. Kavitski again stated he had been in the business for fifty years; I had never seen a water line that was running, freeze. Now, if you have something like an extraordinary circumstance, that may be what caused it, but I cannot even imagine what that would be.

Mr. Skymba stated you need to come up to 937 Washington St., to see how my curb box is caving in, and the line is probably broken and if the water is not coming into the house full flow, it is going to freeze, but it was not frozen there.

Mr. Kavitski stated even if the water is flowing a pencil like stream, the water is not going to freeze.

Mr. Skymba said his wife was there when the water was running, I got up at 2 am, went to the bathroom then downstairs to check it, and Carol got up at 4 am and there was no water. It was frozen from the street in, and this is what I am trying to say.

Mr. Skymba stated the plumber was feeding the line in and in and finally hit ice at twenty-four feet. The plumber went outside and measured and stated that it was in the street.

Mr. Kavitski inquired if that was at the main water line. How he could determine when he actually hit the ice I cannot know.

Mr. Skymba stated I watched him feed the line.

Mr. Kavitski inquired what he was running through the line. What type of line was he feeding.

Mr. Skymba stated hot salted water.

Mr. Kavitski stated it could have been thawing as it was going in.

Mr. Kuklis inquired if the water meter froze too or anything else in the basement.

Carol Skymba stated no it did not and nothing froze; we have a heat tape on the pipe that comes in the coal bin. I have lived in the house forty-five years and have always had problems with the water line freezing and no one around me freezes but me.

Mr. Kavitski stated that tells me there is some kind of problem there.

Carol Skymba stated yes there is and how I am supposed to find out what the problem is, I do not work for the Water Company.

Mr. Kavitski stated you gave your name and address, and the Authority will look at it. Does the Board agree to see if we see anything different. We are not saying we are paying the bill, we will look at your problem and if we find something that is not right, we will discuss it with you to see what we will do. It has to be something extraordinary, honestly, I never seen running water freeze. It was cold but not minus forty. I cannot envision why it did that, there may be some other factor there, but we just do not know.

Carol Skymba stated one time when the Borough came down to thaw it out, one of the guys who thawed the line told me that something is wrong because it freezes a lot. He told me that one of the pipes coming in is tipped up instead of being straight.

Mr. Kavitski stated normally a main water line, you have your pipe coming off it, and it has a little hump in it than goes into the house, that is normal installation. He may have thought that's what it was but that is normal. There is something else if you had running water twenty-four hours a day, and it still froze. There is something that I am not aware of.

Mr. Fisher inquired about neighbors to the left and right, do they have any issues and Carol Skymba stated no or even across the street. Mr. Fisher stated that it does not seem right.

Mr. Kavitski stated the time was up and both had over the five minutes. Mr. Skymba said he appreciated it.

Mr. Kavitski stated I am helping out by having our guys come there and look at things, so we are helping you.

Ashley Williams 1009 Chestnut St., Freeland, she stated she runs her water from October to May or her street freezes. When I first bought my house, we had a cold snap, ran the water and turned it off when it warmed up a little and it froze. Zola's came out and thawed the line it took them past the curb to hit the ice. Every year, I am running my water from October to May, and my water bill is up. It is expensive to live these days, and I have a child with special needs, and I get that in the cold snaps the water should be run but October to May it is too much. I cannot take the chance again to have it freeze and have a \$600- or \$900-dollar bill again. My question to you, is there any way to have our pipes looked at on Chestnut Street and my neighbor here has the same issue and there are two other people, who also on Chestnut Street are experiencing the same. I just would love the peace of mind that someone looked at how deep the pipes are, are they on top of the old ones or are they not deep enough. It is not fair to us to experience it.

Mr. Kavitski stated we can look at all of these, but we certainly cannot do it now when the ground is frozen, we cannot dig with the equipment. As soon as Spring rolls around, and as soon as the frost is out of the ground, we will come up and take a look around, if it warrants digging, we will dig and we will determine what we can see. We do not know what is underground there.

Ms. Williams stated they were doing work on the sewer line on Chestnut Street and does that have anything to do with it.

Mr. Kavitski inquired with Ryan Smith when placing the Sewer, did we do anything with water line and Ryan Smith stated we had to cross over one water line but that was it.

Ms. Williams inquired about the depth and Ryan Smith stated that line was very deep and it was not your line.

Mr. Kavitski stated this is what needs to be determined because there has to be a reason; like Carol Skymba said 45 years with this problem and that is a long time to put up with the problem.

Carol Skymba stated the Water Company used to come down and thaw the line.

Mr. Fisher stated we have not done this for years and Carol Skymba agreed it has been quite a few years and last time I had John Gera come and thaw the line and it cost \$500 and I am sick of it.

Mr. Kavitski stated we will look at both addresses.

Mr. Kuklis asked why Ashley Williams is running the water in October and Ashley Williams stated she is paranoid. Mr. Kuklis inquired if she received the announcements on the phone and Ashley said yes, but the year I froze I followed the instructions and still froze and if I stop running my water and it happens again, where does that leave me and I am stuck paying the bill.

Mr. Kuklis stated October there is no frost in the ground. Ashley stated the freezing took place in February not October, but I was told by this Water company that I need to run my water all Winter long. She stated to the employee that she has lived a lot of places and only ran water when cold, but he informed her to run water through winter, and she cannot say who informed her within the Water Company. I run the water, so I do not get stuck with another bill.

Mr. Kavitski stated the Authority will look into the matter and all I want is to make sure people do run their water, and I want to find out how water freezes when it is running because that is unique.

Raymond Yenshaw 1005 Chestnut St., Freeland, He stated he was dripping his water not running at full force in the bathroom upstairs and on the website, it says to drip faucets for your house pipes not ours. In 2018, when piping was placed up there; sewers on Chestnut, your people every other house had to be dug up, with a front-end loader and I know people up there have been there sixty years and never had their pipes freeze. Why after this work was done, we have problems now. Is it not deep enough or whatever. The roads up there are rolling so some pipes could be closer to the surface. When I called several times, I was told it is a liability issue. What is the liability issue?

Mr. Fisher stated a fire had almost started at a home during thawing of a line.

Mr. Yenshaw passed out paperwork with a picture of a thawing machine for almost \$3300.00. The back page shows you, this is what I think Zola's was using, I paid \$585 and they went out sixty-five feet.

Hazleton plumbers are not set up to thaw pipes out in the street, so I called people in White Haven that deal with septic and wells, and they came with that machine and my pipe from my wall is seven feet. My outside wall is eight feet to the turn off is eighteen feet, and the plumber was out over seventy-five feet with tubing and that's the other side of the street. What if I was a snowbird and I came home to my pipes all being frozen and busted or what if you are a realtor and have an empty house and you cannot even show the house because you cannot flush a toilet because the pipe is frozen outside.

Mr. Kavitski stated there are all types of solutions to those things. If you are a snowbird, you shut the water off and have the pipes professionally drained and blown out so you have no water in them and then you do not have any problems. There are all solutions.

Mr. Yenshaw stated my basement is sixty degrees, the house and pipes are insulated and the pipes still freezing in the street. That is not the homeowner's problem. The lateral off the main is freezing.

Mr. Kavitski stated it is called the service connection, but the point of it is, if it freezes out there and if we find a reason that it is we will fix it but if we do not find a reason for it freezing out there, there is nothing to fix.

Mr. Yenshaw stated how can a plumber go out seventy-five feet.

Mr. Kavitski stated we keep saying how do these plumbers do this I do not know but the plumbers that have come here and that I have talked to and I will be blunt, I would not recommend them. That is what I am saying.

Mr. Yenshaw stated look at the back page of the paperwork, and you will see how they do it.

Mr. Fisher inquired where the plumber hit ice first and Mr. Yenshaw stated he didn't until he got out seventy feet.

Mr. Yenshaw explained the machine his plumber used for the thawing and the process of how it was completed.

Mr. Kavitski stated he was not on the Board when work was completed in this area and again, we will look into it.

Mr. Yenshaw insisted the work was just completed in 2018.

Mr. Kavitski stated he really did not think so but thought it was a sewer line placed within that time frame, not water lines.

Mr. Yenshaw stated you need to spend the money and purchased the machine; it would only be a two-man job to complete.

Mr. Kavitski stated we do not want to do this; we want to solve the problem. If there is a line too shallow in the street, we will need to look at how to rectify the problem. Why would you want to de-ice the line every time it gets cold. That is not good business.

Mr. Yenshaw stated every time he called the Water Company and kept hearing the words liability, liability.

Mr. Kavitski stated that is the truth.

Mr. Yenshaw stated but at the same time, 3 houses up from me with a single line into a double home, and the girl has no water because it comes from the other side of the home and the line is frozen. Her landlord is out of state, he paid \$400 to a plumber, and the guy could not clear the line. I told her who I had, and the person showed up to do her line this morning. She did not have water since Wednesday, she called the Borough and the Water Company, and she has a three-week child at home with no water.

Mr. Yenshaw started to get very loud at this point and was informed he needed to calm down and stop shouting.

Mr. Kavitski stated he appreciated what Mr. Yenshaw was saying and he also informed him the plumbers cannot be operating the curb stop. The plumbers need to come to the Authority for the Authority to operate the curb stop. There are also plumbers removing meters and placing pex in by the meters completely. We will be setting up Rules and Regulations for fines for these things happening to make them understand you cannot do that. We have a lot of plumbers that do not listen and do not take it the wrong way, but we only trust a professional, certified plumber and this is why these things are discussed like they are. We will look at your street because obviously the street has problems and I heard rumors of that and we will look at it when the weather breaks, but we need to go to the people on Zoom now, which have the same complaints.

Mr. Yenshaw stated he found another device online that gives flows for possible leak detection.

Mr. Kavitski stated the Authority is installing new meters and they have these items built in.

Mr. Yenshaw inquired how much water should he be running per minute so the Authority pipe on the street does not freeze.

Mr. Kavitski stated all we have heard is that it is our pipe, but we do not know and we do not have documentation that will prove that. One of the customers stated there is documentation. Mr. Kavitski again stated we will look at this in the Spring and then you can come back to the meeting and we can discuss it. We need to move on and have allowed each of you sufficient time.

Carol Skymba stated I want to know if you are or are not responsible beyond the curb stop and that is what I want to know.

Mr. Kavitski stated the service line the Authority is responsible for, curb stop to the main line, but we are not responsible for freezing. The Rules and Regulations are set up but we do not know what is freezing there so that is why we need to do an investigation.

Scott Blumenfeld, he owns 965 Chestnut St., Freeland, he stated he is located in the same area but has more evidence than the other people do. He stated his property, the tenant contacted him on Wednesday, they stated they had no water. I had Waterworks come in and try to unfreeze the line and they were unable to get past the curb stop and unable to get the water to come through. I looked around and investigated, I have not seen this happen in thirty years there and we also have to factor in it has not been twenty-five below zero in a long time as well. I had another guy come in today and waited for the Borough guys to show up and stand there and they watched the guy complete the whole job. The guy thawed the line with a machine in the basement and he went out twenty-five feet past the curb line, where it branches off and that is what you are responsible for, your guys watched the process and he showed the guys how far he needs to go out and I now have two bills, and we are looking to resolve this through the Water Department or we will have our Attorney through Slusser Law Firm resolve it through the Borough. It is absolutely 100% a Borough Water Department issue. It is branching off and where it branches off it is freezing and that is your responsibility where it branches off past the curb stop and it is a fact.

Mr. Kavitski stated to Mr. Blumenfeld, like I explained to the other people, we will take a look at the system to see why it is happening.

Mr. Blumenfeld inquired how it will be done, sir.

Mr. Kavitski stated when Springtime comes and frost is out of the ground our guys may have to dig up the line in the street to see.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated perfect and are you willing to put that in writing for us.

Mr. Kavitski stated I do not know why it would need to be put into writing for you because it is part of the Minutes.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated I want it in writing stating you will be digging up my area because of spending \$635, and it needs to be solved because it is your water line and you are responsible for it in the street past the curb stop.

Mr. Thomas stated you can get a copy of the Minutes from the office.

Mr. Kavitski stated there are Minutes being done for the meeting and you can obtain a copy of the Minutes.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated he was sorry and he understood about the Minutes.

Mr. Kavitski stated he will be informed when the Authority will be looking at the area and we will need to wait until the frost is out of the ground in Spring.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated this is the area where everyone seems to be having a problem with the curb stop and past the curb stop is where they need to go and there is no issue or freezing inside the house. It has never been an issue, and I do have documentation from the two guys who were there stating it is definitely a Water Department problem. Your guys actually saw it happen today; they stood there the whole time and watched it happen.

Mr. Kavitski inquired with Ryan Smith, if Authority guys were there. Ryan Smith stated yes, two of the guys were there.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated he will be sending the two invoices to Atty Baranko at Slusser Law Office, and he will be dealing with the Borough of Freeland going forward.

Mr. Kavitski stated he will be dealing with the Freeland Municipal Authority.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated yes, the Water Department. Thank you. I have a tenant now, that is being told they need to keep their water running at a pencil stream, and she has one income and that should not be happening. Her water bill can go from \$120 a month to \$180, \$200, \$220, I do not know what it will be, we never had to do this before, so I do not know if the Borough is willing to restructure the bills, but they should not have to pay to stream water. I understand it is very cold and the Borough sends messages I do agree with that, that you run your water. We follow the rules, what the Borough says, I have been up there for thirty years and respect the Borough and respect everyone there but there are a lot of excuses here tonight. A lot of excuses and I am trying to be honest, a lot of excuses by that Board.

Mr. Kavitski stated we need to investigate the problem and get to the root cause and then take care of it.

Mr. Blumenfeld asked to be kept informed, and you will be speaking to the Attorney there and we will try to resolve this together. I want this on file for the courts so when this happens again that there won't be any excuses in the meeting again. There is an infrastructure problem there and people are trying to tell the people the wrong things there. It's freezing in their house, and it is not freezing in their house, it is past the

curb stop. I have two people telling me it is past the curb stop and your two guys witnessed it today. They stood there and witnessed it going past the curb stop. So, we will work together, I would like to work with the Water Department and hopefully we can establish something and resolve this.

Mr. Kavitski stated his time was up and we needed to speak to the others on Zoom.

Mr. Blumenfeld stated thank you and have a great day.

Heather Lawless, her rental property is 942-944 Burton St., Freeland, which is in the area of the other people. I have owned the property for twenty-two years never had a problem and this year I had a problem. It does not seem like anything will come of this, but it would be nice to at least admit maybe it might be on the Water Company's side and the homeowner's side. Maybe some type of agreement where the cost is shared between both of us.

Mr. Kavitski stated again like I have told Mr. Blumenfeld and the rest, as soon as the frost is out of the ground and the Authority can dig, we will go to these locations that we have discussed tonight, and we will find out if the Authority's line has any problem from the curb to the water main.

Ms. Lawless stated you are going to spend the money on digging up the roads.

Mr. Kavitski stated we do not know what depth the lines are at.

Ms. Lawless stated again you are going to spend the money digging up the roads to find out what the depth is.

Mr. Kavitski stated yes because if it is less than what it should be we will need to look at lowering it.

Ms. Lawless stated it sounds like a good plan to me and any type of reimbursement for all of us would be helpful at this time because of the cost of everything being high. We need to run more water, you want us to put heat in our basement, or heat tape, it is just not fair for anyone really.

Mr. Kavitski stated he understood but again, please let us investigate, we have your name and address to be able to contact all of you, when we are going to do it plus what we find and what will happen afterwards.

Ms. Lawless stated that was fair enough.

Mr. Kavitski thanked Ms. Lawless and inquired if there was anyone else who needed to speak. If no one else needs to speak we are going to continue with the meeting. Thank you.

Atty Malaska wanted to make a brief point. The Authority Rules are clear. When things thaw, the Authority can investigate. The Authority does not have to commit to anything right now and a decision will be made based on some future time. I do not want to get anyone's expectations up online or here in the room, but this is all we can do.

Mr. Kavitski stated that is the whole point they have voiced their opinion and we will look but if we find that the Authority line is correct. Atty Malaska stated there is nothing to do and Mr. Kavitski stated exactly so we will see and we need to take one step at a time.

Mr. Fisher stated it will take \$8000 or more just to do the investigation.

Mr. Kavitski stated it is up to the Board to decide about the investigation and Mr. Fisher agreed.

Mr. Thomas stated we need to figure out what is going on and Mr. Kuklis stated we need to find the root cause of it.

Mr. Kavitski stated he does not understand running water freezing. Mr. Thomas stated he was confronted by Mr. Yenshaw a few days ago and Mr. Thomas inquired with Mr. Yenshaw if he was running his water and Mr. Yenshaw said that was not the point and those were his exact words. Mr. Kuklis stated dripping the water is not enough, and flowing water should not freeze.

Atty Malaska stated if you run water and then shut it off it could freeze. Atty Malaska stated if the Authority receives any communications it should be forwarded to him.

Water and Sewer 2025 in Review

Mr. Kavitski stated Brittany put together a very nice package for us. All data in review for 2025.

Mr. Kavitski showed the reports to all on the computer.

Ryan Smith stated he greatly appreciated the files because they help with his Chapter 110, Annual Water Reporting.

Mr. Kavitski stated Brittany took the Hach Flow Meters at different locations throughout the system, roughly Manhole 20 and Manhole 5 are around the Sewer Plant and there is precipitation with the report and with days of rain someone needs to explain how we go from 190K and 200K to one million nine hundred and seven thousand gallons a day. The high flows need to be investigated.

Ryan Smith stated Manhole 20 and Manhole 5 are outside of the Sewer Plant, Manholes 101 and 102 are ahead of the CSO, and Manhole 107 is the leg from Citterio by Youngstown.

Mr. Fisher inquired with the little bit of precipitation how did the flows go up so high.

Mr. Kuklis inquired about the total figure going into the plant those certain days.

Ryan Smith stated the CSO was probably in bypass at that time. He also discussed his idea regarding the camera and smoke testing from PAWC. They did not check any pipes at the lift stations or the force mains within their system and down around the lift station it is very wet back there. There may be bad piping or connections to manholes in that area that need to be investigated by them.

Mr. Kavitski stated he is going to ask Brittany to add the Treatment Plant flows to these charts for comparison. The Board has all of these reports sent via email and they should take a look at all of the data which the Authority never used to track. Progress is being made and with Digital Twin on the Water Side we are making progress, but it is just unfortunate that other things come about that need to be fixed. He asked the Board to look at the reports and if they have questions to ask.

APPROVE MINUTES

Mr. Kuklis made the motion to approve the Executive Meeting Minutes dated January 6, 2026, and

Mr. Fisher second. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Thomas made the motion to approve the Executive Meeting Minutes dated January 13, 2026, and

Mr. Tierney second. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Tierney made the motion to approve Regular Meeting Minutes dated January 21, 2026, and

Mr. Fisher second. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Thomas made the motion to approve Executive Meeting Minutes dated January 21, 2026, and

Mr. Fisher second. Vote 5-0.

APPROVE JANUARY PAID INVOICES

Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve January paid invoices for the Water Division totaling \$396,239.36, and the Sewer Division invoices totaling \$206,437.22, and Mr. Kuklis second. Vote 5-0. (Ref. 2721-A).

CURRENT INVOICES

Mr. Thomas made a motion to approve payment of the current Water Division invoices totaling \$194,912.43, the Sewer Division invoices totaling \$97,471.15, and the Sandy Run invoices totaling \$296.78, and Mr. Kuklis second. Vote 5-0. (Reference 2721-B).

Ryan Smith inquired about Kaminsky Excavating not being paid yet and Carlene explained she is currently waiting for his W9.

Mr. Fisher inquired about Well 12 progress and Ryan Smith stated we are waiting on LB for piping repairs, chemical pumps have arrived, lights and heat are back on, VFD and RTU panels are awaiting delivery.

Mr. Kuklis questioned the testing of Well 12 prior to placing back online. Mr. Kavitski stated a coliform test should be done first.

FINANCIAL STATUS

The Secretary reviewed the Financial Status as outlined in Reference 2721-C.

ENGINEERING REPORT

Mr. Brenden Miller of HRG, Inc., presented the Engineering Report. (Reference 2721-D).

Sewer Area

-SIUA and IPP Items – Chris Ferdik of HRG (via Zoom) discussed this area of the report. Citterio is working toward full compliance slowly and steadily. Collaborated with Atty Malaska for the Citterio letter package, and working on the draft COA and review of the technical response to Citterio's document dated January 30th. Looking for Citterio's comments on the COA. DAF unit response was still vague. Citterio is looking for another settlement conference, not sure if it will be for attorneys only or HRG and FMA too or keep within their next draft of the COA. February 28th is their initial deadline for their response back. Citterio is looking for information from their RTK request. Citterio Permit was extended until October 30, 2026, and the revised draft COA contains a clause which will similarly allow for administrative extension action (without further permit revision or modification) through October 30, 2028, at the latest. Citterio must submit a renewed IWDP Application to FMA by May 4, 2028, for permit re-drafting and subsequent re-issuance. Citterio is still working through their Sanitizer Alternative Trial as far as we know, for the reduction of the use of the quaternary ammonia. Nothing new with the SPCC Plan. Virtual Meeting with HRG, FMA and Counsel on February 5th and Meeting on February 17th with EPA Region 3, FMA Board, Counsel and HRG, which was quite helpful. EPA is going to schedule a pretreatment inspection, possibly at the end of March or early April, which will probably be a full day. NOV 26-002 was issued and review of the semi-annual Citterio report and minor comments and feedback were given.

FOG Awareness Package nothing new to report. FMA 2025 IPP Report working on completion electronically by March 31, 2026. . IPP Headworks Analysis on hold until cyanide testing completed for the NPDES Permit. The Authority continues logging the TDS Data.

Atty Malaska commented he was disappointed with the Citterio Response Letter too. March 13, 2026, is a good date for me, Vince and HRG for another meeting with Citterio. Citterio RTK will be discussed in Executive Session at the end of this meeting. Involvement of the EPA, I think will be beneficial and I want to see what the COA response will be. Atty Malaska inquired about the FOG Response from Citterio and Ryan Smith and Chris Ferdik both commented that FOG does not settle.

Chris Ferdik stated what is vague is the response that following the initial removal of the FOG from the existing DAF as removal is presently conducted. Are they going to have DAF function like that in the future which is not clear. At one point they said they were converting it into a primary clarifier type roughing unit. They are saying they will remove the remainder by biologicals which we are dubious of and the clarifier should be used for waste active sludge and surface skimming settling tanks, but I am not completely sold on it.

Mr. Kavitski stated we need to see the actual design of what they are planning to do, not just words.

Atty Malaska stated in their response they committed to Exhibit B.

Chris Ferdik agreed with Dave regarding seeing actual design of their product. Maybe the EPA can drive home we need more than just a concept with Citterio.

Mr. Kavitski stated the fact they are asking for all of this information from the Authority, but it is their plant that has the problem and they need to solve it. It seems to be a stall tactic as far as I am concerned.

Atty Malaska stated we need to discuss this further in the Executive Session.

-Sludge Dewatering Project – Final Payment Request submitted to PENNVEST and PA DEP final inspection walkthrough is scheduled for March 3rd with HRG to go over all documents for the project. HRG has been in contact with the platform contractor supplier weekly for updates and a construction schedule should be provided this week. They are working on the submittals of the shop drawings last HRG heard.

-NPDES Permit Renewal – DEP was sent the first 10 weeks of testing for the Cyanide and DEP has come back to the Authority wanting additional testing for the Free Cyanide. There was a discussion with EPA regarding certified laboratories and their testing methods. DEP wants to use an average for the data. Late Spring or early Summer should be the timing for the finalization of the NPDES Permit based upon the additional 10 weeks testing for the Cyanide.

-ACT 537 Special Study – HRG is waiting for the PAWC Agreement to be finalized.

-Chestnut Street Sewer Project – Record drawings were sent to FMA staff on January 7, 2026. Nothing else is required for the project.

Water Area

-Oak Street Water Storage Tank – Job conference on February 5th, updated schedule received from both Contractors, and tank filling plan was discussed. No work was completed last month due to the arctic conditions. Linde has been held up by the Cathodic Protection manufacturer getting back to them. Everything has been ironed out between them, and Linde will be providing HRG with the draft this week. The tank filling plan was to rearrange the vault piping temporarily with a 2-inch double check valve back flow preventer. They did ask to use a normal 4-inch check valve temporarily to fill the tank. HRG informed Linde they could discuss if they formally introduced a plan.

Mr. Kavitski stated it must be a backflow check valve and you could call DEP and ask them.

Brenden Miller stated no that is fine. Linde has not officially asked with a formal submittal yet.

Mr. Fisher inquired about the piping and Brenden Miller said it will be temporary, so it is not connected to the rest of the system during fill.

Brenden Miller stated once the Cathodic Protection is completed, the rest of the contract should close pretty quickly, and both Contractors thought initially they would be completed by May. As soon as the weather breaks, the welders will be here to start the Cathodic Protection.

Mr. Kavitski stated the winter is not over yet.

Mr. Fisher inquired about the overflow pipe coming down off the tank; he thought it seemed pretty shaky. He has concerns about metal fatigue in the future.

Mr. Kavitski stated there is only one support and there is a lot of length with a lot of torque on it. It may need another support, that is all we are saying.

Brenden Miller stated he would look into it.

Mr. Fisher inquired if the only time it will have water in it is an actual water overflow and Mr. Kavitski stated yes and it will be tested when the tank is filled.

Brenden Miller stated Linde will be there during the tank filling and the overflow test.

Mr. Fisher inquired about an anti-climbing device to be placed there to prevent someone from trying to climb the tank now.

Mr. Kavitski stated we have asked for a flap gate with a lock at bottom of the ladder to get to that, this was requested but I guess they have not gotten to it yet.

Mr. Fisher is concerned about the liability right now.

Ryan Smith stated there is a fence around the perimeter with an FMA lock on it. It is gated, the building and the tank both.

Mr. Kavitski stated the missing section of ladder is the deterrent now, but we want the extra protection of the gate.

-SRBC Consumptive Use Mitigation Project – The Authority received the money on the grant for the Digital Twin Project. The Digital Twin Project should be utilized to figure where the aged water is for the Pigging Project. Mr. Kavitski thought we should wait until the Oak St Tank is online to investigate the Pigging Project area.

-Sandy Run Corrosion Control Study – DEP is still reviewing.

-Iron and Manganese Treatment – Grant application submitted in November 2025, and it will be awhile before decision on the grant awards and awaiting the PFAS information.

-ARPA Grant Administration – No update.

-CFA Small Water & Sewer Grant – The grant for the Water Pigging Project was awarded to the Authority, which is only a partial of the total grant application. HRG and FMA will need to meet to see exactly what can be done for the amount awarded which was \$245,851.00.

Brenden Miller stated HRG initially looked at transmission mains with higher water age within the System. We need to take a more comprehensive look to decide where to spend the money and I am assuming the Board would want to use grant money only.

Mr. Kavitski stated yes, spend grant money only.

Brenden Miller stated preliminarily we were discussing valves with this project, is this something we want to continue with or not. Mr. Kavitski stated I would think we should.

Brenden Miller stated the Pigging Company is COSTARS so they should be able to provide everything through the contract. I did contact the company for a meeting they are looking at the end of February in the afternoon not sure who on the Board would want to attend.

Mr. Fisher inquired about an idea for the area for the Pigging Project.

Brenden Miller will send the Board the original areas that were discussed after a hydraulic model was done by HRG.

Ryan Smith inquired with Mr. Kavitski the procedure for clearing the curb stops after Pigging and Mr. Kavitski stated you remove the water meter in the customer's basement and flush the service lines until it clears that is the only thing you can do; this is what we did in Conyngham along Main Street. The color of the water is worse than when you flush hydrants.

Mr. Kavitski stated it is a whole process and hope nothing gets stuck during the Pigging or you need to dig. The company Conyngham used was out of New York, I cannot remember the name, but they were great to work with, I would have to look through files to find their name.

Mr. Fisher inquired about the length of pipe that could be completed and Mr. Kavitski thought a couple thousand feet of pipe.

Brenden Miller thought it is around 4800 feet, but the grant award was about half of the asking so the length of pipe will be less.

Mr. Kavitski stated we will see how it works and later we may want to do more.

-SRBC Grant Application – HRG submitted the grant application last month for the Meter Replacement/Radio Read Project.

SEWER DIVISION

Mr. Kuklis made the motion to approve the Exele Software Annual Renewal for the amount of \$374.25 and Mr. Thomas second. Vote 5-0. (Reference 2723-A).

WATER DIVISION- No New Items

MANAGER REPORT

Ryan Smith presented the Technical Manager report. (Reference 2723-B).

He discussed the Well 6 pump failure alarm on February 13, 2026.

Mr. Kavitski stated we need to relook at the megaohms number that was given by Wireworx.

Mr. Kuklis inquired when the motor was placed in service and Mr. Kavitski stated 2014. Mr. Kuklis brought his concerns about the blasting in the area and if this shifted something.

Mr. Kavitski stated you just do not know, it could be, but it also could be something else. This Well has the Iron and Manganese just like Well 10 which could have affected the pump. When you pull it out you will see it. You obtained the quote; did they include the dual air lines and the 2-inch tube for the submersible.

Ryan Smith stated they are additional items which are included in the quote.

Mr. Kavitski inquired about the drop cable and Ryan Smith stated it would be an identical replacement.

Mr. Kavitski asked what good is that and Ryan Smith stated the shielded VFD cable, no one recommended that cable being placed in water and price was very high.

Mr. Kavitski stated he was not worried about the price; there is submersible VFD pump cable.

Ryan Smith asked instead of using the double jacketed cable and Mr. Kavitski stated it does not work; we do not get readings at Well 6, and double jacketed does not mean anything versus the VFD Shield; it is two different things. If you do not want to do this, be sure there are two air lines besides the drop for the electric. Ryan Smith stated right and Mr. Kavitski stated you are only pulling it once. Ryan Smith stated we need them to install two PVC lines; there is only one in there currently and the air line in there they could attach to the drop pipe and fish another one down and have a backup for the manual depth check.

Mr. Kavitski stated we are hoping to get the electric to work so it works like every other Well in the system.

Ryan Smith stated he understood what Mr. Kavitski was telling him and we need the submersible cable for VFD pumps.

Mr. Kavitski stated if they do not understand call Franklin Motor, who has a lot of our pumps.

Ryan Smith stated the issue we were having there was the interference between running the VFD with the depth sensor. It would not work for us only in bypass.

Mr. Kavitski stated there is something different with this VFD because all the others work.

Ryan Smith explained to the Board a violation was received by the Authority because the laboratory reported the wrong sample, it was not an error by the Authority even though it does count against us.

Well 9 and 10 are being piped by the guys in-house.

Kohl Bros Quote for Well 6; Pump & Motor with labor is \$19,400 and listed below are the add ons for the quote; Galv. Pipe for \$6,300, two check valves \$1,300, double jacketed submersible cable \$1,625 (will look into this more per Dave's directive), and PVC water level pipe \$460 and I will have them add another there. I would also like to check with Myers for a price quote.

Mr. Kavitski explained to the Board we are looking at approximately \$28,000 plus an additional \$7,000 for the submersible cable, that is a lot.

Ryan Smith stated the Budget Line for the year is \$90,000. Well 10 should we looked at the upgraded costs for it or should we table it. Mr. Kavitski stated we need to table it.

Mr. Kuklis inquired about Well 10 why the check valve is rattling. Ryan Smith stated that he does not have an answer for that, no.

Mr. Kavitski stated a weighted check valve is the way to go; it removes the vibration. There was a discussion on the piping size regarding Well 10.

Mr. Kuklis made the motion to purchase the Spill Containment System for Sandy Run from New Pig at the cost of \$693.00, which is a requirement of DEP, and Mr. Kavitski second. Vote 5-0. (Reference 2724-A).

The filtrate station pump 2 was mis-aligned and could not be removed to check orientation and it was completed by PSI during the Sludge Dewatering Project. HRG sent a defective work letter to PSI and they resolved both issues.

Mr. Fisher inquired if there is torque during start-up of these pumps and Ryan Smith stated you cannot see the pumps.

ENGINEERING INVOICES

Mr. Thomas made the motion to approve HRG Invoice #204230 \$3,854.65; Invoice #204232 \$355.00; Invoice #204334 \$22,194.00 and Mr. Kuklis second. Vote 5-0. (Reference 2724-B).

ATTORNEY REPORT

Atty Malaska has worked with Ryan Smith to submit the items to the Attorneys for PFAS.

Zoom Virtual Meetings after research there is nothing that requires the Authority to continue to hold them. Here are some thoughts regarding what we do from here. If you do not allow virtual participation for the public, how are you going to allow virtual participation for any Board Member who cannot attend.

Mr. Kavitski stated a separate link can be created.

Atty Malaska stated you have been using virtual participation for several years since COVID, my thought is one you adopt a policy, two is give notice to continue or discontinue the virtual meetings and third is adopt a policy to have people comply with identifying themselves for the record. You do not have to do this, but it has been out there for a couple of years and if you want to get rid of it, I prefer we create a paper trail that is not working or has more problems than benefits.

Mr. Kavitski stated the Board will discuss and decide what they would like to do.

Mr. Thomas stated we will discuss this in Executive Session.

PAWC has a new Attorney, and he has been very cooperative. The Authority asked for camera reports, PAWC wanted an NDA signed prior to receiving the reports and now the new Attorney said they would provide them without an NDA. Atty Malaska discussed with Ryan Smith the length of time it would take to go through them, so we asked for a camera summary report. PAWC initially said they did not have a summary report, but they are checking. We have an outstanding draft agreement to them, and we have not heard anything back and we will discuss how this effects Citterio in Executive Session.

Regarding Citterio, I would like to lock in the March 13th date for a meeting with them. I know Citterio wants to meet with PAWC, I do not know if we come to a global agreement without PAWC because capacity is the issue.

Mr. Kavitski stated I really do not have a comment on Citterio but unless they comply with the information we have requested, they will not need to worry about expansion, and I will let that up to the Board. They are looking down the road, but they have not fixed anything and all it is, is a dance.

Atty Malaska stated the RTK request from Citterio will be discussed in Executive Session.

OPEN/OTHER ACTIONS

Rainfall for the month was 1.33"

Mr. Kuklis made the motion to hire Stanley Sopata as a Laborer contingent upon passing all test results, background check and driver's license history and Mr. Fisher second. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Thomas made the motion to hire Thomas Meyers as a Meter Reader contingent upon passing all test results, background check and driver's license history and Mr. Kuklis second. Vote 5-0.

Mr. Meyers does understand that once the Authority has radio read meters he will no longer be needed, and he said he understood and that he walks for exercise.

Mr. Thomas suggested to ask him if he would want to cut the grass in the Summer.

Mr. Thomas made the motion to approve the F & L Doors Quote for the Annex Building for a garage door opener and controllers at the cost of \$1,920.00 and Mr. Kavitski second. Vote 5-0. (Ref. 2725-A).

Mr. Fisher inquired why the Authority is paying for the quote.

Mr. Kavitski inquired if the heater is fixed in the Annex Garage now and Ryan Smith said it is.

Discussion on 1121 Birkbeck Street, Freeland, owner called on Monday February 16th, she called the emergency callout phone. She said her water meter was Frozen/Broken and she had no water. The plumber removed the water meter and installed a straight pipe. When Authority staff went on Tuesday to install a new water meter, they found the meter on the floor with a straight pipe where the meter should have been, there was a fitting placed on the pipe which made it impossible for the Authority staff to install the meter. They informed the customer she needed to call her plumber back to have him remove the fitting so the meter spuds could be used again. Office Staff is asking if the Board wants to charge the customer with theft of service or charge the plumber or give the customer a warning.

Mr. Kavitski stated the plumbers need to understand any property of the Authority; they are not allowed to touch.

Ryan Smith stated he had the two-callout people go to the home to replace the meter on Monday and no one answered the door. The customer than called back on Tuesday to have a new meter installed and that is when the guys found a straight pipe in the home where the meter was to be.

Mr. Kavitski informed Atty Malaska the Authority has a Resolution regarding Theft of Service when a customer bypasses the meter, my question is what about the plumber who does this.

Atty Malaska inquired if the owner has any knowledge of it. Mr. Kavitski stated I do not know if the customer understands it, they should but again I do not know.

Atty Malaska stated we need to make the owner aware of it not sure if they are culpable or not. You will need to bring it to their attention so they can inform the plumber.

Mr. Thomas stated even in an emergency situation the plumber should not be touching the Authority equipment and how do we handle it. They should be calling here no matter what.

Ryan Smith stated we have an emergency callout phone for that purpose.

Atty Malaska inquired if they are certified plumbers or not. The Authority is not certain on the plumbers.

Mr. Kavitski stated the plumber who did this is not.

Atty Malaska stated to take the time to educate your customers, and let them know if it occurs, they will be charged and the customer could go back to the plumber. Adopt an ordinance, so you can bring to the owners' attention so they can inform the plumber to put things back the way it should be within so many days.

Mr. Kavitski explained to Atty Malaska we have plumbers turning people's water back on because they are off for non-payment. Atty Malaska stated that, is Theft of Services. Mr. Kavitski inquired who do you fine in this case, homeowner or plumber. Atty Malaska stated someone called the plumber to turn it back on and cite the owner. Atty Malaska inquired if the Authority has an alert system or other means of informing users about this coming up and we should have an ordinance.

Mr. Kavitski stated the Authority has a Resolution and maybe send a copy in the mail to the owners.

Atty Malaska stated the Board can authorize citing immediately or give the opportunity to correct the problem before citing. What happened is illegal.

Mr. Kavitski stated if we come across a property they are cited immediately because how long was a straight pipe in there and how much revenue did the Authority lose. It is in the books, and we can look it over later.

Mr. Kuklis stated should the Authority obtain a list of certified plumbers to keep here to give to customers and would it benefit us to do this.

Mr. Kavitski stated Pennsylvania does not certify plumbers it is all local municipality that certifies the plumbers, so we will have to ask the Borough if they do that.

Atty Malaska inquired if the Authority Staff does a yearly walk through and inspection of the meters.

Mr. Kavitski stated we are supposed to, but we need more staff to do this. We are supposed to do Lead and Copper inspections along with sump pumps, but it is random at best.

Mr. Kuklis stated to do every house every year you cannot get into every house, people work or house abandoned, etc.

Atty Malaska inquired the number of meters in the system and Mr. Kavitski stated around 2200. Plumbers need to be licensed and registered with the AG's office.

Mr. Kavitski stated it is a changing world, and I am sure if we did house to house, we would find tons of them. It is not like it used to be.

Atty Malaska stated back to Mr. Kuklis's suggestion of giving plumber names out, I would be hesitant on giving names, simple reason if you give a name and that plumber does something wrong, the person can come back to you and say you gave me that name.

Mr. Kavitski stated I agree with you we should not be giving any names.

Atty Malaska inquired how the Authority bills and is there any room to place a letter in the envelope.

Carlene explained we did newsletters and it is time consuming printing, folding, stuffing envelopes. We can do a newsletter and place a Rave Mobile Callout stating if you want one to call, if they do not have internet to read the newsletter on website.

Mr. Fisher stated we need to place it on Facebook and Carlene explained that when the Authority does a Callout Message Jean Johnson places it on the Freeland FB Page.

170 Alvin Street, Freeland, is being billed as two units. Customer questioned why the bill is so high, informed he was charged for two units. He said he only had one unit and agreed for the Authority Staff to inspect the home. There are two kitchens, one downstairs and one upstairs, the unit downstairs is not being used as another unit. The customer wants to be refunded for one unit which was not being utilized.

Mr. Fisher stated he has two kitchens and Mr. Thomas inquired about the number of meters. Carlene said there is one meter at the home.

Mr. Kavitski stated the owner just came to us and questioned the bill and it is being used as one unit so I think he should be billed for one unit from now on and the rest of the Board agreed.

Mr. Kuklis stated the owner should not have waited so long to question the bill.

Mr. Kavitski inquired if anyone else had anything further so the Board would be able to go into the Executive Session on the agenda.

Mr. Fisher inquired with Ryan Smith to question the guys what they saw at the house when they watched the thawing process.

Mr. Kuklis asked Ryan Smith to place the addresses discussed tonight on the task list.

Mr. Kavitski stated we are not going to dig all of them up first we will investigate and we will only dig a 2-foot square.

Ryan Smith stated the Authority has not completed measurements yet.

Mr. Fisher inquired about the service line depths. If the curb stop is below frost, the service line should be too.

Atty Malaska inquired if the people who were present at the meeting were all in the same area.

Mr. Kuklis stated all were from the top of the hill and we need to investigate it.

Mr. Thomas stated the one on Washington Street is not in the same area and I do not understand that home because no one else on this street is freezing in the vicinity.

Mr. Kavitski and Mr. Kuklis both stated they did not understand how the running water froze.

The Board went into Executive Session at 8:11 PM except for Mr. Tierney.

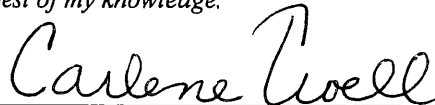
The Board returned from Executive Session at 8:31 PM.

Mr. Kuklis made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Fisher second. Vote 4-0.

These minutes are certified true and correct to the best of my knowledge.



Paul Thomas, Secretary



Carlene Troell, Non-Member Secretary