

**Military Installation Remediation and
Infrastructure Authority (“MIRIA”)
Board Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2023**

In attendance:

BOARD:

Todd Stephens, Chair
W. William Whiteside, Vice Chair
Thomas Panzer, Secretary (absent)
Theresa Harmon, Treasurer (absent)
Tara Conner-Hallston
Scott DeRosa
Gregory Nesbitt (absent)

STAFF:

Larry Burns, Executive Director
William Gildea-Walker, Deputy Director
Mary Eberle, Esq., Solicitor

Mr. Stephens opened the meeting with a Pledge of Allegiance at 9:03 am in the Horsham Township Municipal Building at 1025 Horsham Road.

Mr. Stephens asked if there were any question or comments from the public. There were none.

Mr. Stephens asked for the will of the board regarding the October 6, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Whiteside motioned to approve the minutes to the October 6, 2023 board meeting. Ms. Conner-Hallston seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens noted the next agenda item was for the Executive Directors report and invited Mr. Burns’ comments. Mr. Burns noted he did not have much to discuss in his Executive Director’s report as MIRIA’s two projects, the 986 Easton Road “Grandma’s Grotto” property and the 100 Easton Road “Adam’s Pitstop” property are both on the agenda and will be discussed later in the meeting. He acknowledged that next month will be extremely busy, as early in the month we will know how much the MIRP award from Harrisburg will be, and before the 15th, we analyze the amount and hope to maximize the MIRIA grants to carious applicants and also designate funding for various MIRIA economic development and infrastructure projects that MIRIA will do in the future. He concluded his remarks and offered to answer any questions the board might have. Mr. Stephens asked if there were any, and there were none.

Mr. Stephens moved on to Bills and Communications and asked for the will of the board regarding the approval of the November 3, 2023 list of checks. Mr. DeRosa motioned to approve the November 3, 2023 list of checks to be paid from the MIRIA Operating Account in the amount of \$130,959.63 to fund MIRIA operating expenses, MIRIA project costs and to fund MIRIA grant

disbursement requests for Upper Southampton Municipal Authority and Horsham Township. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens asked for the will of the board regarding the approval of the November 3, 2023 list of checks related to shuttle bus operations. Ms. Conner-Hallston motioned to approve the November 3, 2023 list of checks to be paid from the MIRIA Shuttle Bus Account in the amount of \$10,772.40. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens indicated the board would move onto new business and consider the results of the West Moreland Avenue project and invited Mr. Burns comments. Mr. Burns confirmed that Horsham Council at a recent meeting approved awarding the bid based on approvals of MIRIA and on the Horsham Water and Sewer Authorities approvals. In reviewing the bid closely, the low bid came in at \$3,030,000. And the intersection improvement part of the project which MIRIA is to fund, came in at about \$2.1 million and was generally consistent with expectations in the \$1.7 - \$2 million range. That being said, the portion of the project related to the sewer extension that Horsham Water & Sewer was “piggy-backing” on MIRIA’s project, was estimated to cost in the low \$300,000 range and came in in excess of \$900,000.00, and the discrepancy was exceedingly large and too much for the HWSA to handle. In discussions with Tina O’Rourke and our engineers at Gilmore and Associates, it was concluded that perhaps a road improvement contractor was not the best contractor to bid on a sewer project, and that those types of projects are meaningfully different, and that with uncertainties of bidding a sewer project, it as a result was bid very high. Following those discussions, it is recommended that we reject the bid and that separately, MIRIA and Horsham Water & Sewer bid out our own projects, and we will endeavor to coordinate activities of both projects. Our engineers believe that rebidding is the best choice at this time and do not expect significant change in timetable as a result. Horsham Water and Sewer on Monday night did vote to reject the bid and to authorize rebidding in the manner we described. MIRIA staff would recommend that we do the same. Mr. Stephens remarked that in doing the projects together, there were expected to be some efficiencies and cost savings. With 2 separate bids and projects, will we be able to coordinate activities of both projects? Mr. Burns said that in talking with our engineer, Eric Garton of Gilmore and Associates, he was pretty comfortable we could coordinate the projects as the road contractor will stage work of realigning and improving the intersection, and then will have to wait for street light equipment before it is installed. In the period before equipment arrives, he envisions the sewer contractor extending service up West Moreland and across Easton Road. Eric was confident that the projects could be staged and coordinated together. Mr. Stephens asked for the will of the board regarding the bid. Mr. Whiteside motioned to reject the bid for the signalization at Easton Road and W. Moreland Avenue provided by Meco Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$3,030,000.00. Mr. DeRosa seconded. All were in Favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens invited Mr. Burns’ comments on the next agenda item. Burns confirmed the next item was a request to authorize the rebidding of the West Moreland Avenue project, in the

manner previously described. Ms. Conner-Hallston motioned to approve and authorize the solicitation of the re-bid of the Signalization at Easton Road and W. Moreland Avenue Project. Mr. DeRosa seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens noted the next piece of business on the agenda related to the proposed demolition of 100 Easton Road and invited Mr. Burns to discuss. Mr. Burns noted that earlier in the year, he was concerned about available funding and the 100 Easton Road project was put on the back burner as the Easton Road and West Moreland Avenue project was expected to cost about \$2 million and MIRIA had only about \$1.3 million in the bank to support the project. After the MIRIA compliance reporting period that ran from July 1 to September 1, information from our Compliance Consultant seemed to indicate that the 2023 cycle might be better than expected, and that there would in fact be funds available for MIRIA projects that will exceed the funding needed to complete the West Moreland Avenue project. With encouragement from the Chair and the Vice Chair to undertake the demolition of 100 Easton Road, staff reached-out to Fedele Contractors, who successfully took down a very similar building for the township at 298 Welsh Road. Fedele provide MIRIA a proposal to take down the 100 Easton Road building for \$22,400.00, and staff would recommend to the board that we move ahead with the project and engage Fedele for demolition services. Mr. Burns indicated he was hopeful the building could be down before the end of the year. Mr. Stephens asked if there were any questions? There were none. He asked for a motion and Mr. DeRosa motioned to approve and award the demolition services for the former Adam's Pit Stop property at 100 Easton Road to J.D. Fedele Construction Demolition, Inc. for an amount not to exceed \$22,400.00. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens noted the next item related to our auditor. Mr. Burns confirmed that at the December meeting, we will seek to approve the 2024 budget and awarding auditing services for 2023, would affix the related costs for the budget. We received a quote from our existing auditor, Maillie, LLP for \$12,600.00. Mr. Burns noted that in the memo on the subject in the board's package, that MIRIA's accounting systems are reasonably sophisticated and have a number of bank accounts as each cycle, a Grant and Project Escrow is established and cycle funding is never comingled. In addition to escrows for 2020, 2021 and 2022, we have a line of credit, an operating account and a bus operating account. In his experience, Mr. Burns indicated that any time you shop for an audit, the cost is generally north of \$10,000.00 and given the complexity of MIRIA's accounts, a fee of \$12,600.00 for auditor services appears fair and reasonable and staff would recommend engaging Maillie for the 2023 audit. Ms. Conner-Hallston motioned to approved and engage the CPA firm of Maillie LLP as the auditor for MIRIA for fiscal year 2023 for a fee not to exceed \$12,600.00. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens stated the next item related to a new bank account and he invited Mr. Burns' comments. Mr. Burns confirmed that in May 2020, the board did pass a resolution that

authorized staff to open accounts a First Niagara Bank, Uninvest and/or Huntingdon Balley Bank. He noted that there has been a merger and the name of the bank has changed, and it made sense today as an agenda item to seek the board's approval to authorize the opening of the new 2023 MIRIA Grant and Project Escrow account. Ms. Conner-Hallston motioned to approve and authorize staff to open a new "2023 MIRIA Grant and Project Escrow" account at First Citizen's Community Bank, a successor by merger with Huntingdon Valley Bank. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens asked if there was any additional business. There was none. He noted the next meeting of the board would be on Friday, December 15, 2023 at 9:00 am here in the Horsham Township Building. Mr. Burns noted that as we do every December, we expect to hold and Executive Session before the meeting, which will probably be scheduled for 8:30am.

With no other business, Mr. Stephens adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:14 am.

/s/

Thomas Panzer, Secretary