

**Military Installation Remediation and
Infrastructure Authority (“MIRIA”)
Board Meeting Minutes
SEPTEMBER 4, 2020**

In attendance:

BOARD:

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

STAFF:

Mary Eberle, Esq., Acting Solicitor
Larry Burns, Treasurer

Absent:
William Gildea-Walker, Executive Director

Mr. Stephens opened the meeting with a Pledge of Allegiance at 9:04 AM.

Mr. Stephens introduced PA State Representative Meghan Schroeder representing Warminster Township, Warwick Township, Buckingham and part of Bucks County. He noted Representative Schroeder was instrumental to passing the legislation that allowed for the formation of the MIRIA Authority.

Mr. Stephens confirmed that this meeting was being streamed over Facebook Live and asked those who speak today to sure to use the microphones to assure that the audio is clear.

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

Mr. Stephens asked for the will of the board regarding the August 7, 2020 meeting minutes. Mr. Whiteside motioned to approve the minutes of the August 7th MIRIA board meeting. Mr. DeRosa seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens asked if the Executive Director had a report. He confirmed Mr. Gildea-Walker was out of town today and that Mr. Burns would make the report. Mr. Burns confirmed the report was brief. With the assistance of a power point presentation he reviewed the MIRIA Critical Timeline of recent events and the timing of future MIRIA efforts. Parcel reporting was done July 1 through September 1. All parcel owners and businesses were contact by mail, phone and email where possible. Most were very welcoming and supportive of MIRIA efforts. Total number of parcel owners and businesses was 109. At the original meeting with PA Revenue, they set

expectations rather low and we were disappointed that in MIRIA's initial year, they believed compliance and participation would only be in the range of 30%. Given the complications of COVID19, face to face meetings generally were not available to MIRIA staff or to our compliance consultant and staff was concerned about our ability to deliver favorable compliance results. Based on the information available through September 1st, we are very pleased that 102 parcel owners and businesses have filed the required reports and that we achieved a participation or compliance rate of almost 94%. Things to come include today, we'll be addressing MIRIA Quick Response Grants, completion and the execution of Quick Response Grant Agreements and funding of those grants. Follow-up meetings with all applicants will be scheduled. Grant applications have all been reviewed by staff, and with regard to grants that will be seen today, we are confident that there are costs there that are reimbursable under the statute. In October and November, we'll continue those efforts. The December meeting is a big meeting as PA Revenue on December 1st will confirm the available tax funds available to MIRIA. The board meeting has been moved to December 18th, we'll look at final approval of the grants, submission of the 2021 budget and also on 12/16 we expect to receive a wire transfer from PA Treasury of the available tax funds. That's the report today, and if there are any questions, I'd be pleased to answer them.

Mr. Stephens inquired if the 109 number of parcel owners and businesses was the total number or the number that reported? Mr. Burns confirmed the total number of parcel owners and businesses was 109, the total that reported was 102 and that 7 parties chose not to participate. One business for example was a local office of a corporate structure. We talked with several people through the corporate structure and just were not able to get them to report this year. We hope to work with them next year and get us closer to 100%. Mr. Stephens confirmed that he thought the work that was done by Mr. Burns and our consultant, Deana at Forescore, was outstanding and exceeded expectations at almost 94% participation. Mr. Burns also noted that the Lancaster CRIZ was afforded a reporting extension due to COVID19 and that their reporting window was extended to August 31st. As a result, our compliance consultant this year was working on 2 zones when in normal times, the reporting of the zones is staggered through the year. Mr. Stephens made comment that most of the business owners had no idea what this program was about and were being cold-called by someone they never heard of before, and the fact that she could engage them and get their trust to work with them to insure almost 94% compliance. And your follow-up, I was cc'ed on a lot of emails with a lot of business owners. The last couple weeks we were all working in tandem trying to shake loose as many of these folks as possible. So, thank you Mr. Burns for your efforts and please pass those same sentiments along to Deana our compliance consultant. Are there any other questions or comments for Mr. Burns? There were none.

Mr. Stephens asked if there was a Solicitors report. Ms. Eberle confirmed that she and Mr. Burns had had some very long meetings going over and reviewing the grant applications submitted by the various providers. As Mr. Burns noted, we don't see any problem with the Quick Response

Grants that we've recommended for approval that we'll be addressing later in the meeting. We do need to sit down with each and every provider between now and perhaps the middle of October to just make sure their application forms are able to be processed and easily understood if we were to be audited by PA Revenue. And so, we want to sit-down with them and work through any issues to make sure things are crystal clear for anyone from the outside who would ever review them. That's what we'll be focusing on for the next 45 days. Mr. Stephens asked if there were any questions or comments. There were none. Mr. Stephens thanked Ms. Eberle for all her work and that we appreciate her help.

Mr. Stephens confirmed there were bills or communications in the list of checks. Mr. Stephens asked for the will of the board relating to the list of checks. Mr. DeRosa motioned to approve the list of checks totaling \$9,077.48. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens confirmed under new business, this is exciting and our first opportunity to award grants and get some of these rate payers assistance through these water providers. This is critical. This is why we are all here. With the help of the State we are finally able to start getting some funding and reimburse these rate payers for the expenses that they've been paying for several years to eliminate PFAS from their water. Moving on to the Quick Response Grant submissions and the request for approval. The first submission is from the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority for \$1,432,917.00. Mr. Burns, please correct me if I'm wrong, but those funds per the application are going to be used to reimburse residential rate payers who paid the surcharges over the last several years to remove PFAS. This is a reimbursement program that the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority has undertaken. Am I right? Mr. Burns responded that is primarily the purpose, correct. Mr. Stephens asked if there was a motion to approve the Horsham Water and Sewer Quick Response Grant? Mr. Whiteside motioned to approve a MIRIA Quick Response Grant to the Horsham Water and Sewer in the amount of \$1,432,917.00. Ms. Harmon seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens commented the next item on the agenda is consideration of a Quick Response Grant for the North Wales Water Authority in the amount of \$742,691.34. Mr. Burns, correct me if I'm wrong, my understanding is the North Wales Water Authority, who now serves Warrington Township residents, intends to use these funds to in some way reimburse the rate payers for the expenses they've paid to remove PFAS. I believe they intending to use it as a credit on the bill. Mr. Burns responded that is correct. Mr. Stephens asked if there was a motion to approve the North Wales Water Authority Quick Response Grant? Ms. Conner-Halston motioned for the approval of a MIRIA Quick Response Grant to the North Wales Water and Sewer Authority in the amount of \$742,691.34. Mr. Whiteside seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens commented that moving on to the third application for a MIRIA Quick Response Grant, the Warminster Municipal Authority has applied for a Quick Response Grant in the amount of \$500,000. Again, my understanding Mr. Burns, correct me if I am wrong, the Warminster Municipal Authority intends to use these funds to reimburse the rate payers in Warminster who have paid the cost of removing PFAS from their water or providing PFAS free water to their customers over the last several years. Mr. Burns responded Yes, that is correct. Mr. Stephens asked if there was a motion? Mr. DeRosa motioned to approve a MIRIA Quick Response Grant to the Warminster Township Municipal Authority in the amount of \$500,000.00. Mr. Panzer seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens confirmed that there is a supplemental list of checks that need to be approved as a result of the approval of the MIRIA Quick Response Grants. Mr. Stephens asked if there was a motion to approve the supplemental list of checks so that we might distribute those funds to the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority, the North Wales Water Authority and the Warminster Municipal Authority? Mr. Whiteside moved to approve the supplemental list of checks to be issued on September 21, 2020 in the amount of \$2,675,608.34 to fund MIRIA Quick Response Grants to the Horsham Water and Sewer Authority, the North Wales Water Authority and the Warminster Municipal Authority. Mr. Nesbitt seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stephens inquired if there was any other business? Mr. Panzer thought further explanation may be necessary for the public and the members regarding the grant applications which requested more grant money than was provided and asked for the brief rationale as to why applicants did not get the full amount of their request. Mr. Burns confirmed that as part of designing the grant program, the statute requires that we have a local effort amount in our possession on June 1st to set the possible PA Tax Revenue funding that might be available. Each applicant is required to put up a sizeable amount. As part of writing the grant guidelines, we thought that having that money sitting on the sidelines for six months was somewhat counter-productive to the efforts of water remediation. So, we designed the Quick Response Grant where applicants could receive up to 100% of their local effort that they posted and get to work on those water remediation efforts. We will in December look at the balance of the grants that exceeded those amounts and come to a conclusion and hopefully approve those grants and disburse sometime between December and early next year. Mr. Stephens confirmed he was happy that Mr. Panzer raised that point. We should have covered that earlier. It is important that people understand. The Department of Revenue won't be notifying us about the total amount of funds that we have available to distribute until December. And, so we will have additional grants to distribute in December. Rather than waiting until December, we wanted to get this money back into the hands of these authorities so that they can reimburse their rate payers as quickly as possible. Some of these rate payers have been paying surcharges for three years, four years at this point. In an effort to try to get them money back, the rate payers' money back in their pockets as quickly as possible, we wanted to do these grants as quickly as we could, and

then come back in December and distribute the funds that the Department of Revenue certifies for us at that point in time. Mr. Panzer responded Fantastic, thank you.

Mr. Stephens inquired if there was any other business? There was none.

Mr. Stephens reminded all that the next MIRIA board meeting was to be held on Friday, October 2nd at 9:00 am at the township building.

With no other business, Mr. Stephens adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:21 am.

/S/

Thomas Panzer, Secretary