



**Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority**  
1989 Wyoming Avenue  
Forty Fort, PA 18704

**Minutes**  
**July 18, 2023 Regular Session**

**Call to Order**

On July 18, 2023, at 1:01 P.M., the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority Board convened their regular monthly meeting at the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority Administrative Offices, 1989 Wyoming Ave, Forty Fort. It was noted that all meetings are electronically recorded.

Mr. Yannuzzi, Chairman, called to order the July 18, 2023, meeting.

**Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

**Present**

Mr. Dominic Yannuzzi, P.E., Chairman  
Mr. William Hardwick  
Mr. Jay Delaney  
Mr. Gordon Dussinger  
Mr. John Maday - *Absent*

**Also Present**

Christopher Belleman, P.E., Executive Director  
Jeffrey Rockman, Esq., Slusser Law Firm, LCFPA Solicitor  
Amy Grevera, CPA, Grevera and Associates, LCFPA Accountant  
Laura Holbrook, Mitigation & Outreach Specialist  
Deana Prochaska, Administrative Assistant (Recording Secretary)  
Kayla Roselle, LCFPA Intern  
Eric Mark, Reporter, Citizens Voice

**Public Input**

None.

**Regular Meeting**

**Motion was made to ratify the minutes of the Authority meeting held on June 20, 2023.**

Motion by: Mr. Hardwick

Second by: Mr. Dussinger

Motion passed by a vote of 4-0. "AYES" – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

## **LCFPA Activities/Projects**

- A. Staff Activities/Project
- B. Board Activities/Project

## **Bills and Communications**

**Motion was made to approve the payment of the bills as presented.**

Motion by: Mr. Delaney

Second by: Mr. Dussinger

Motion passed by a vote of 4-0. "AYES" – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

## **Report of the Treasurer**

**Motion was made to submit the report of the Treasurer into the record as stated.**

Motion by: Mr. Hardwick

Second by: Mr. Yannuzzi

Motion passed by a vote of 4-0. "AYES" – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

## **New Business**

**2023 Levee Fee Collections Update.**

**Request motion to award the "LCFPA Command Center Tenant Upfit", to Bognet Inc., 1298 N. Church Street, Hazle Township, PA, in the amount \$108,480.00. The work was publicly advertised and Bognet was the lowest responsible bidder out of 2 received. Contract price and award is contingent upon receipt of a fully executed lease agreement with the United States General Services Administration (GSA).**

**Above motion was amended to award the "LCFPA Command Center Tenant Upfit", to Bognet Inc., based on their low bid and the alternates selected by the United States General Services Administration. The contract price and award is contingent upon receipt of a fully executed lease agreement.**

***On the question:***

**Mr. Hardwick:** Will these upfit costs be paid by the new tenant over time or is it solely the burden of the Authority?

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** It is covered under the lease so, we're making the changes and it is amortized through the lease amount. It's based on the lease term and currently we are negotiating a 5-year term, they may want to extend that to amortize it longer or shorter, it all depends. We were hoping to be at a time where we previously signed the agreement with the U.S Government, however things are moving slower than we had anticipated. We are ready to go and are just waiting for them to get their information to us.

Motion by: Mr. Yannuzzi

Second by: Mr. Delaney

Motion passed by a vote of 4-0. "AYES" – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

**Motion was made to approve an agreement with the A+E Group, Inc., 140 Maffet Street, Wilkes-Barre, PA to provide professional building design services on the “Forty Fort Levee Maintenance Facility Project” in the amount \$97,325.00. See attached proposal. This project was identified for reimbursement under our ARPA grant award.**

***On the question:***

**Mr. Hardwick:** Is this where we are considering not using the maintenance building or is this altogether different?

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** No this is the upgrade to the existing levee maintenance building.

**Mr. Hardwick:** So, tearing it down?

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** Tearing it down and building a new one.

**Mr. Hardwick:** I have to admit, I don't know. I am no engineer, but it would seem the cost to move everything out of that building to a different site, be off site while all of the construction is taking place, then bring everything back. It's not just \$97,325.00.

**Mr. Belleman:** Our consultants, A+E Group, recommended to us that it would probably be more cost effective to demo the existing building and build new. If we go in that direction, what we are thinking is by the time the A+E Group completes their design work, the Delaney Street building in Hanover Township should be complete. So in the interim we could temporarily relocate our levee maintenance operations down to Delaney and work out of that location.

**Mr. Hardwick:** If you didn't have to remove that building for this project then you wouldn't have to move anything out.

**Mr. Belleman:** That is correct, yes.

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** The A+E Group did a value analysis of that, and they recommended it would be more cost effective to build a new structure than to retrofit.

Motion by: Mr. Yannuzzi

Second by: Mr. Dussinger

Motion passed by a vote of 3-1. “AYES” – YANNUZZI, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

“ABSTAIN” - HARDWICK

**Motion was made to approve the purchase of one (1) 2023 Sullair Model 185 CFM diesel portable air compressor from Cleveland Brothers, 441 Route PA-315, Pittston, PA, in the amount \$28,400. The purchase is under the COSTARS procurement program and was identified for reimbursement under our 2022 LSA grant award.**

***On the question:***

**Mr. Delaney:** Just a follow up, I know at closures located at Brookside and Solomons Creek we have the same issue, and they must absolutely be maintained. I think it's an excellent investment.

Motion by: Mr. Hardwick

Second by: Mr. Delaney

Motion passed by a Roll Call Vote of 4-0 “YES” – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

**Motion was made to approve the purchase of two (2) Harper ATM 72LC Hillside Mowers from Trius Inc., 6475 Ruch Road, Bethlehem, PA, in the amount \$60,491.00 per unit (\$120,982 for both). The mowers need to be built and will be ready for delivery by Spring 2024. The purchase is under the COSTARS procurement program and was identified for reimbursement under our 2022 LSA grant award.**

***On the question:***

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** Once we get these two, how many new levee slope mowers will the Authority have?

**Mr. Belleman:** Four (4) units. These new units are replacing our aging fleet of the Hillsider Hustler mowers which are 20+ years in age. It's hard-to-get replacement parts and the units are towards the end of their service lives.

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** When did we purchase the other one, did we purchase one this year as well?

**Mr. Belleman:** We purchased one last year and I think the year before if I recall correctly.

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** OK so we are going to have these four levee slope mowers, how many old mowers did we have that were taken out of service?

**Mr. Belleman:** We originally had six (6) Hustler slope mowers. Two or three of these original mowers have been decommissioned and harvested for parts. So we still have three or four functioning Hustler mowers that are still in our fleet.

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** So now that we have four, are these four more efficient than the six that we used to have?

**Mr. Belleman:** We have done an extensive search, and to our knowledge these Harper ATM mowers are the only commercially available mowers out there that's rated for slopes. On the levee system we have slopes that range from 30 to nearly 40 degrees and with these mowers the operator stays in an upright or vertical position. This is important for operator comfort and safety.

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** So, in summary these four hillside mowers in a sense are replacing the six old ones. So, it's more efficient, great.

Motion by: Mr. Yannuzzi

Second by: Mr. Hardwick

Motion passed by a vote of 4-0. "AYES" – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

**Closing LCFPA Comments:**

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** After this meeting we are going to be welcoming some members of the Luzerne County Council and provide them with a tour of our new command center which we purchased with ARPA funds that were allocated to us. It makes our operations more efficient and keeps us in a facility that is next to our levee maintenance building and closer to the flood protection system. It was a great investment and again we want to thank the Luzerne County Council for the allocation of those funds.

**Mr. Dussinger:** Recently I read an article in the newspaper about the repair of Luzerne County roads in rural areas of the county. I want to make myself perfectly clear, I am not against that. It reminded me of a topic that comes up here every so often. I live in the floodplain, and if you live in the floodplain you pay a levee fee amount. It is not expensive; I think it is a deal. My main complaint is that you could probably relieve some of these costs to the ratepayers, especially the businesses along Wyoming Avenue. People that live out of the floodplain, and live along Toby's Creek, Abrahams Creek, and Solomons Creek may not pay a cent because they aren't in the floodplain. But they affect the floodplain. Toby's Creek is one of the places that washes down and raises the water and causes a flood. It also causes a lot of inconvenience for those people but yet they do not have to pay anything at all.

I think for me the solution isn't simple but should be worked on. The solution for me would be that everybody pays a fair amount. I think it is time that this be considered and made more equal. I don't think maybe they should pay as high as we do but they should pay a fee because they are affected. If you don't think they are affected, just think of the Back Mountain and Mountain Top areas. The word to describe them is right there "Mountain", the water all runs down to the Susquehanna, and it contributes to flooding conditions in the floodplain. So, they are part of this deal in my book. I don't think it has to be decided and I'm not making a motion at this moment, but I think it's something worth looking into in the very near future.

**Mr. Hardwick:** I agree with you but legally I don't think the Authority could just say we're going to take the fee and spread it around to new areas.

**Mr. Dussinger:** Yes, I don't think that would be up to us. I think that would fall back to the council. We would have to get guidance on that.

**Mr. Yannuzzi:** Just to add to that Gordon, I agree with you also and the levee system protects twelve (12) municipalities that have about 100,000 residents since I last checked and that total is about 1/3 of residents of Luzerne County. Without that tax base if something were to happen to those properties the tax base would drastically change in Luzerne County. I agree with you, and talking with our solicitor it would have to be discussed with county council.

**Next Regular Meeting**

July 18, 2023 at 1:00p.m.

1989 Wyoming Ave

Forty Fort, PA 18704

**Adjourn**

**Motion was made to adjourn the July 18, 2023 meeting of the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority Board.**

Motion by: Mr. Delaney

Second by: Mr. Dussinger

Motion passed by a vote of 4-0. "AYES" – YANNUZZI, HARDWICK, DUSSINGER, DELANEY.

Meeting adjourned at 1:44 P.M.

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Respectfully submitted,



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Deana Prochaska  
Recording Secretary