

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR AUTHORITY MEETING OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY HELD ON MARCH 18, 2026 AT THE AUTHORITY'S ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, LAFAYETTE, NEW JERSEY

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m.

The following were present: Chairman Ronald Petillo, Vice Chairman John Drake, Commissioners Karl, Meyer, Thomas Madsen, Andrea Cocula, Wayne Dietz, John Wesley, John Finkeldie, Mario Poggi, Executive Director Joseph Sesto, Timothy Day, Comptroller, Solid Waste Superintendent Jonathan Morris, Wastewater Superintendent Timothy Phillips, WRWMG Director Nathaniel Sajdak, General Counsel John Napolitano, Special Counsel Thomas Prol, and Recording Secretary Tara Kronski

Also in Attendance: County Commissioner Henderson, Keith Mitchell of Acrisure, Michael Vreeland from Van Cleef Engineering on behalf of Hardyston Township, and Thomas Graham of Dykstra Walker Design Group on behalf of Crystal Springs.

2. PUBLIC STATEMENT REGARDING SUNSHINE LAW

Chairman Petillo stated that the meeting has been duly advertised, and notice given thereof, as required by P.L. 1975, Chapter 231.

3. OPEN TO PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Petillo opened the meeting to public comment. No comments from the public. Mr. Petillo closed the meeting to public comment.

4. AGENDA APPROVAL

Chairman Petillo requested a motion to approve the Meeting Agenda. No changes were requested. Commissioner Drake moved to approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Finkeldie. On voice vote: Ayes (9); Nays (0). The motion carried.

5. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Madsen moved to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Drake. No discussions were requested. On voice vote: Ayes (9); Nays (0). The motion carried.

6. MINUTES

Chairman Petillo requested a motion to approve/acknowledge the email distribution of the March 4, 2026 Pending Action Summary Sheets (PASS) to the County Commissioner Board in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:14B-14(e). Commissioner Drake moved the PASS, seconded by Commissioner Poggi. On voice vote: Ayes (9); Nays (0). The motion carried.

Commissioner Cocula moved to approve the Open and Closed Minutes for the February 18, 2026 Authority Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Poggi. On roll call: Ayes (8) Commissioners Madsen, Cocula, Dietz, Petillo, Drake, Wesley, Finkeldie, Poggi; Nays (0); Abstain (1) Commissioner Meyer. The motion carried.

There were no minutes distributed to the Commissioners at this meeting.

7. BUSINESS

a. Wastewater Program

**Watershed Director's Report**

Mr. Sajdak reported that he was honored with the 2025 Peter Homack Award from the New Jersey Section of the American Water Resources Association. This award recognizes individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the multidisciplinary understanding and management of water resources in New Jersey. Mr. Sajdak was selected in recognition of his decades of leadership in watershed management, particularly his efforts to reduce non-point source pollutant loadings, improve water quality, and promote long-term watershed health through riparian ecosystem enhancement, stormwater management, and agricultural outreach and assistance in Sussex County. He attended the NJ-AWRA Water Leadership Forum on March 11, 2026, where he formally accepted the award.

**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Sesto gave the floor to Thomas Graham (Dykstra Walker Design Group) and Michael Vreeland (Van Cleef Engineering), who presented on the issue of high sewer flows to the Crystal Springs Shotmeyer Pump Station. They explained that during periods of high demand, the existing HTMUA pumping station is nearing capacity. Additionally, planned construction of residences will further increase flows and place additional strain on the existing pump station. As part of their proposed solution, they requested approval for a forth connection point to the SCMUA force main. This would allow the Shotmeyer Pump Station to be separated from the HTMUA Pump Station and instead discharge directly into the SCMUA force main. The Commissioners noted that SCMUA has historically not permitted direct connections into its force mains after initial construction is completed. They further stated that, during the original construction, Crystal Springs was allocated three (3) direct connections, which were installed accordingly.

Following the presentation, the Commissioners asked several questions, including whether alternative solutions had been explored. The Commissioners indicated that they will review the request and provide a decision at a later date.

**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Sesto reported that Hamburg Borough and Hardyston Township are building thirty-six (36) two (2) bedroom units. Six (6) of the units in Hardyston Township are outside of the Sussex County Sewer Service Area and an application was prepared for an amendment to the Water Quality Management Plan, which has been endorsed and approved by Hardyston Township. Mr. Sesto has reviewed the application and recommends endorsement thereof; a resolution was prepared for Commissioners' consideration. Commissioner Cocula moved to approve the endorsement resolution, seconded by Commissioner Drake. On roll call: Ayes (9) Commissioners Meyer, Madsen, Cocula, Dietz, Petillo, Drake, Wesley, Finkeldie, Poggi; Nays (0); Abstain. The resolution passed.

**#26-071** RESOLUTION RE: SUSSEX COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY'S (SCMUA) ENDORSEMENT OF SITE-SPECIFIC AMENDMENT TO THE SUSSEX COUNTY WATER QUALITY MANGEMENT PLAN (WQMP) FOR THE SMS HAMBURG, LLC DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT BLOCK 14, LOT 21.02 IN HARDYSTON TOWNSHIP

Mr. Sesto reported that Special Counsel Prol issued a first priority lien to Bright Horizons, LLC for an unpaid connection fee to the Upper Walkkill Pollution Control Facility for a total amount of \$213,472.75. Mr. Prol noted a copy of the lien was sent to the Vernon Township Clerk, Mayor and Tax Collector, as well as the Developer of Bright Horizons.

Mr. Prol reported that it is a breach of the SCMUA's Service Contract to issue a CO to the Developer without receipt/proof of connection fee payment to SCMUA and Vernon Township failed to honor this statutory obligation. Commissioner Cocula moved to confirm and acknowledge that Special Counsel Prol filed a Notice of Breach to Vernon Township's Attorney declaring Vernon Township to be in breach of the 2013 sewer service agreement with the Authority in addition to its failure to honor its statutory duty to enforce the first priority lien claim on Bright Horizons Development, LLC., seconded by Commissioner Finkeldie. On roll call: Ayes (9) Commissioners Meyer, Madsen, Cocula, Dietz, Petillo, Drake, Wesley, Finkeldie, Poggi; Nays (0); Abstain. The motion passed.

b. Solid Waste Program

**Superintendent's Report**

Mr. Morris provided an update on preparations for the demolition of the blue house located on the Solid Waste Property. He reported that approval was received to cap the well, and that work has been completed. Mr. Morris also met with JCP&L regarding the removal of electrical service to the house. He noted that a new power source will need to be installed, as the entrance gate is currently powered through that connection. Additionally, the phone system servicing the site is routed through the house from Route 94, and he will continue coordinating efforts to ensure a smooth transition prior to demolition.

**Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Sesto reported that he received proposals for lab testing services for the Solid Waste Facility. The low proposal was received from Pace Analytical Services for \$35,668.00 for one (1) year. A resolution was prepared to award Pace Analytical Services for a one-year contract for laboratory testing services for the Solid Waste Facility. Commissioner Cocula moved the award resolution, seconded by Commissioner Madsen. On roll call: Ayes (9) Commissioners Meyer, Madsen, Cocula, Dietz, Petillo, Drake, Wesley, Finkeldie, Poggi; Nays (0); Abstain (0). The resolution carried.

**#26-072** RESOLUTION RE: AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF A ONE-YEAR CONTRACT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SUSSEX COUNTY MUNICIPAL UTILITIES AUTHORITY (SCMUA) AND PACE ANALYTICAL SERVICES LLC FOR LABORATORY TESTING SERVICES AT THE SOLID WASTE FACILITY (CONTRACT 26-20)

c. General Authority Business

**Comptroller's Report**

Mr. Day prepared a resolution authorizing the destruction of certain SCMUA records, which has been part of the storage house demolition. All records have been approved for destruction by the State of New Jersey Division of Archives and Records Management. Commissioner Madsen moved the resolution, seconded by Commissioner Wesley. On roll call: Ayes (9) Commissioners Meyer, Madsen, Cocula, Dietz, Petillo, Drake, Wesley, Finkeldie, Poggi; Nays (0); Abstain (0). The resolution carried.

**#26-073** RESOLUTION RE: AUTHORIZING DISPOSAL OF VARIOUS SCMUA RECORDS

d. Executive Session

At 3:30 p.m. Commissioner Finkeldie moved the adoption of the following resolution authorizing a Closed Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Poggi. On voice vote: Ayes (9), Nays (0). The motion carried.

Chairman Petillo noted the Closed Executive Session should be approximately 20 minutes and discussions shall include: Vernon Township Litigation Bright Horizons Lien Claim, Upper Wallkill Service Rules, and Personnel Matter.

**#26-074** RESOLUTION RE: AUTHORIZING CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:00 p.m. Commissioner Cocula moved to close Executive Session, seconded by Commissioner Finkeldie. On voice vote: Ayes (9), Nays (0). The motion carried.

Chairman Petillo confirmed discussions held as specifically set forth in the resolution authorizing Closed Executive Session included: Vernon Township Litigation Bright Horizons Lien Claim, Upper Wallkill Service Rules, Personnel Matter.

d. Personnel Matters

**Solid Waste Superintendent’s Report**

As discussed in Executive Session, Mr. Morris prepared a resolution to authorize an intermittent leave of absence for SW employee FR4672. Commissioner Madsen moved the authorizing resolution, seconded by Commissioner Cocula. On roll call: Ayes (9) Commissioners Meyer, Madsen, Cocula, Dietz, Petillo, Drake, Wesley, Finkeldie, Poggi; Nays (0); Abstain (0). The resolution carried.

**#26-075** RESOLUTION RE: AUTHORIZATION OF A ONE (1) MONTH "OFFICIAL INTERMITTENT LEAVE OF ABSENCE WITH PAY" FOR FR4672

8. Financial Transactions

a. Payment of Bills

FINANCIAL CONSENT AGENDA – Chairman Petillo requested a motion to approve the Financial Consent Agenda (FCA). On roll call:

Res #26-076 Financial Consent Agenda						
Commissioner	1st	2nd	Yea	Nay	Abstain	Absent
MEYER			x			
MADSEN			x			
COCULA			x			
DIETZ			x			
PETILLO			x			
DRAKE		x	x			
WESLEY			x			
FINKELDIE			x			
POGGI	x		x			

**#26-076** RESOLUTION RE: CONSENT AGENDA – BILL PAYING LIST

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments.

10. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS/REQUEST

Commissioner Board congratulated Watershed Director Nathaniel Sajdak on being awarded the 2025 Peter Homack Award from the New Jersey Section of the American Water Resources Association. A well deserved recognition for work in all facets of water quality efforts.

11. ADJOURN

At 4:00 p.m. Commissioner Poggi moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Drake. On voice vote: Ayes (9); Nays (0). The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Cocula, Secretary