

TOWNSHIP OF NEPTUNE SEWERAGE AUTHORITY
December 18, 2024 Meeting

The meeting for the Township of Neptune Sewerage Authority was held on the above date with the following Authority Commissioners present: James W. Manning, Jr., Harry Devine, James Mowczan, Linda Johnson and William Jones. The following consultants were also present: Ms. Aldarelli, Mr. Fedorchak and Mr. Carleton. In addition, Executive Director Tina Cunningham and Superintendent Adam Holba were present.

Chairman Manning called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Moment of Silence and Flag Salute. Chairman Manning stated that the fire exits are located in the direction that he is indicating, in case of fire you will be notified by bell and or public address system. Chairman Manning requested a roll call.

Chairman Manning made the following statement. Adequate notice of this meeting has been approved by the delivering of the required advertisement to the Asbury Park Press and the Coaster on January 31, 2024 and by filing a copy of said notice with the clerks of the customer municipalities.

Chairman Manning stated that the Authority has one personnel action to be considered first before we proceed with the agenda. Chairman Manning recognized Mr. John Carleton who is representing the Authority as its Labor Counsel at tonight's meeting. He stated that on December 9, 2024, Operator Rich Campo was suspended with pay pending tonight's meeting due to the incident that occurred on December 9th. Mr. Campo was given a Rice Notice on December 9, 2024 and decided to have this matter discussed in open session. He stated that the Commissioners have been apprised of the events that occurred and the Executive Director along with the Personnel Committee are recommending to terminate Mr. Campo for violation of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy within the Personnel Manual effective immediately per TNSA resolution No. 5867.

Chairman Manning questioned the Commissioners if they had any comments and/or questions at this time before the resolution is considered. None noted.

Chairman Manning indicated that if any member of the public would like to comment at this time please come up and state your name and address for the record.

Mr. Campo questioned why he needed to state his address. Chairman Manning stated that it is for the record. Mr. Campo stated his full name and his ethnicity and that he loves where he lives and his community. He indicated that he has been with the Authority for about twelve years and tonight he missed the first ultrasound of his first unborn child and that would never happen again. He stated that he is not at peace when he comes to TNSA. He indicated that the incident that occurred on December 9th was a result of the rough relationship that he has with Mark Deeves. Rich stated that on December 9th he reacted in a way that he should have handled differently. He stated that he was carrying out the duties that he was assigned when Mark approached him with an aggressive tone like he normally does. He stated that Mark started pointing his finger in his face which almost hit him. He stated that in recent weeks he has talked to everyone in TNSA Management about him. He stated that Mark will not speak with him and the only daily form of communication is either text message or email. He stated that he has had multiple conversations,

multiple times a week with Adam Holba about how to handle the situation. He has spoken with John Manganaro on how he can maintain a job at TNSA. Rich stated that Mark has been verbally abusive towards him and in particular on December 9th he put his fingers in his face. He indicated that this is not the first time that he has been a victim of Mark's aggressive behavior. He stated that he harasses him on a daily basis. He stated that he was assigned to move hoses from the BioFor to the IOP through woods that contained poison ivy. He complained to Mark and minutes later he was in Tina's office with both Adam and Mark and was given two options. He stated that he didn't remember the options but he had no choice but to do the assignment. Rich indicated that he sent an email out a few weeks ago to Management about being scheduled to be on call for Christmas this year and next year. He stated that he was demoted and now has to work weekends. He indicated that Mark told him that there is nothing he can do to help him out. He stated that he sent numerous emails to Mark but never heard back. He alleged that he is forced to be on call Christmas week this year and next year. He stated that his employer has no understanding of how that would impact his first Christmas with his newborn son. Mark also forced him to work Thanksgiving this year which he never signed up for. Thankfully, Adam Johnson, also in attendance, was able to cover for him, he stated. He indicated that he spoke with Mark and Tina and neither one ever got back to him. He stated that he observed along with other operators, Mark sleeping in his office at 1:55 p.m. one day. A few weekends ago while working he was going to Laird Ave. P.S. and upon his return he noticed Mark and his grandson on the gator in the trunk line, he stated. He indicated that Mark was exposing his two year old grandson to dangerous gases around a manhole. He indicated that a couple of months ago he was brought into Mark's office and was threatened because he didn't like the way he was doing something. He stated that the conversation was getting loud so he got up and was ready to leave when Mark threatened to suspend him. Rich stated that he notified Tina of the incident and she brought us into her office. He stated that Mark while in the office, said that's bullshit and walked out the door. He also stated that every time he's in Mark's office he's humiliated. He indicated that when the forest fires occurred with heavy smoke in the air, he was forced to blow leaves by himself while everyone else was inside. He stated that he lost all motivation to get his license. He stated that he has recently started calling out of work because he is extremely uncomfortable with the work environment. He indicated that he recently witnessed two young operators quit because of how they were treated. He stated that TNSA has a hostile work environment and nothing is being done. He stated that operators are treated poorly by Management. He stated that he believes Mark is mentally ill and is not fit to be a supervisor. He indicated that he has proof that Mark watches the video surveillance cameras on the weekends. He stated that later in the day on December 9th, Mark sent out another email and the assignments for the day were altered and changed. He stated that five years ago he was sexually and verbally assaulted by a TNSA employee and nothing was done. He indicated that four months ago, Joe Awdiok of WRM used the "N" word twice while he was working in the Lab with John Manganaro and that individual was still able to work at TNSA. He stated that he is a victim of verbal abuse, harassment and a hostile work environment. He indicated that he was taken out of the lab recently, barely operates and demoted to being a landscaper while new and unlicensed operators are operating the plant. He stated that as a twelve year veteran at TNSA, he is subjected to cleaning basements and cutting grass while being completely removed from operations. TNSA has no human resources for any of its employees. Mark continually mistreat operators and it's unfair. He stated that December 9th was his breaking point. He indicated that he did everything in his power to avoid this situation.

Commissioner Johnson questioned the hostile work environment and where it's coming from because she always wondered why people were leaving TNSA. She stated that she is very sorry for Rich especially for having to deal with such a hostile work environment.

Chairman Manning questioned Mr. Carleton if these allegations were appropriate to discuss since we are discussing a specific incident that happened on December 9th.

Mr. Carleton stated that we should look into the allegations but we should be addressing this specific incident that occurred on December 9th.

Commissioner Johnson stated that things don't just happen and it sounds like he was harassed and we cannot allow a supervisor to abuse their power and we have a responsibility to correct that behavior. She stated that he should not be treated like an object and Management should not be allowed to mistreat employees. She stated that based upon Mr. Campo's allegations this is a toxic work environment.

Mr. Carleton stated that you are entitled to your opinion, but as a legal opinion, this is not a hearing nor a question and answer. He stated that this is not the proper forum for the Commissioners to be addressing these allegations.

Commissioner Johnson stated that if not now when it would be.

Mr. Carleton stated that down the line but not at tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Johnson stated that things just don't happen and it sounds like he had enough of the hostile work environment and snapped. She stated that what he is describing in the workplace makes sense with the amount of turnover.

Ms. Aldarelli stated that she is not aware of any issues at TNSA and TNSA has a Personnel Committee that can look into these allegations. She stated that the Authority's Workplace Violence Policy doesn't allow for excuses of such events.

Commissioner Johnson stated that based upon Mr. Campo's allegations it sounds like it's one sided and if somebody is in your face you are going to have a breaking point.

Ms. Aldarelli stated that you have all the documentation and a resolution is on the table and you should not be relying on any extraneous information that is being brought to your attention from Mr. Campo now. Ms. Aldarelli stated that there are two separate issues and they should not be combined with each other. She indicated that there is a resolution on the table to terminate Mr. Campo for violation of the Workplace Violence Policy and the other issues are allegations being brought up about a hostile work environment by Mr. Campo, she reiterated that these two issues are separate and apart from another.

Commissioner Johnson stated that there is a serious problem going on at TNSA. Chairman Manning stated, allegedly.

Mr. Campo answered Commissioner Johnson's question of why people are leaving TNSA and that it is due to the hostile work environment.

Chairman Manning stated that we will move to act on Resolution No. 5867 to terminate Mr. Campo for violation of the Workplace Violence Policy effective immediately for the event that occurred on December 9, 2024. Chairman Manning made the motion to move the resolution.

He stated that TNSA has an obligation to provide a safe work environment for employees, customers and the public and nothing has been raised to the Personnel Committee before tonight's meeting. He stated that specifically Mr. Campo is one of the employees that represents the operators and we met with Mr. Campo on numerous occasions and nothing was raised.

Commissioner Mowczan questioned if there were any witnesses to the event on December 9, 2024. Ms. Cunningham said yes.

Chairman Manning stated that our Executive Director looked into this incident, questioned both parties, looked at the video and it clearly showed Mr. Campo lunging at Mark, taking him to the ground and punching Mark multiple times. Chairman Manning stated that his personal opinion as a Commissioner is to make sure we have a safe work environment and no one should be in that position. He stated that you need to be able to walk away and talk to someone and not resort to violence. Chairman Manning stated that this is not an acceptable action by an employee and believes that we should have a zero tolerance for violence.

Commissioner Johnson suggested that the resolution be tabled.

Ms. Aldarelli stated that a motion is on the table.

Chairman Manning stated that the motion died because no one seconded the motion. He questioned the Board on how they want to proceed.

Commissioner Johnson stated that these statements by Mr. Campo need to be addressed before the Authority can make a decision on termination.

Ms. Aldarelli stated that we have no information on any of the statements by Mr. Campo.

Chairman Manning stated that we have an employee that got punched in the face and was taken down and punched multiple times on the ground.

Commissioner Johnson indicated that she is not saying that it didn't happen but why did it happen.

Chairman Manning stated, that is a different conversation and we are talking about two different actions. Chairman Manning stated that if we are not going to do anything as a Board it definitely sends the wrong message. He indicated that there are two separate actions on the table and that the allegations should be investigated for sure but questioned Commissioner Johnson if she is aware of any of the allegations being reported to the Personnel Committee.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she is not aware of any.

Chairman Manning agreed that nothing has been brought to the attention of the Personnel Committee and that we have met with Mr. Campo numerous times when we were negotiating the operator's contract.

Commissioner Johnson stated that was not the forum to discuss any allegations.

Chairman Manning stated that it is the forum because it's part of the contract. He questioned Commissioner Johnson during the negotiations if anything was expressed at that time.

Commissioner Johnson stated that the fact is he is expressing them now and it needs to be addressed.

Chairman Manning questioned Commissioner Johnson even outside of the negotiations if anything was ever expressed to the Personnel Committee. He stated that the operator representatives have an obligation to inform the Personnel Committee about any issues with the employees but there has been nothing until we are at the point when we have an employee that has been assaulted, punched in the face, knocked to the ground and punched multiple times on the ground. He stated that TNSA should have zero tolerance on violence in the workplace.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she is not saying that we should accept this behavior.

Chairman Manning stated that it certainly sounds like it tonight since there wasn't a second on the motion.

Commissioner Johnson stated that the problem is what led to this violent act. She stated that this man wants his job but is pushed to the point where he has lost it. She stated that there is something wrong when you have a work environment where this is happening and it is allowed to escalate.

Chairman Manning questioned Commissioner Johnson for her recommendation for tonight's meeting.

Commissioner Johnson stated that we need to investigate what is going on at TNSA.

Ms. Aldarelli stated that you have an obligation to investigate the allegations but Workplace Violence is separate and apart from these allegations.

Commissioner Johnson stated that we need to investigate and have an understanding of what is going on at TNSA.

Ms. Aldarelli questioned Commissioner Johnson on the motion being offered for Mr. Campo.

Chairman Manning clarified the motion of that being to continue the suspension until January 15, 2025 without pay for Mr. Campo effective immediately where action will be considered.

No. 5867 – Authorize to Continue Suspension of Rich Campo without Pay until the Authority's Meeting on January 15, 2025 where action will be considered:

Commissioner Johnson moved Resolution No. 5867 seconded by Commissioner Jones. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Nay.

Chairman Manning stated that there is zero tolerance for violence in the workplace and it is grounds for termination. He stated that he is fully supportive of investigating the allegations but there is no excuse for violence in the workplace and he stated that he will do everything he can to assist in the investigation.

Chairman Manning stated that the Engineer's Report was submitted for review. Mr. Fedorchak provided updates on the following projects:

- TWA Application – RVE has reviewed and is recommending approval of a TWA application for Wall 34 Realty and is recommending approval.
- Electrical Project – RVE is continuing the revisions to the plans and they are nearing completion.
- Roof Upgrade Project – The demolition and installation of the new roofs for the storage bldg. and control bldg. has commenced and the Authority received their first payment application.
- I&I Meetings – Initial meetings have concluded and we will be following up in January with the customer towns.

Chairman Manning questioned Ms. Aldarelli if she had anything to report. She stated that she had nothing pending for open session.

Chairman Manning questioned Mr. Holba if he had anything to report. Mr. Holba provided updates on the following projects:

- New operators – Training has started for the new operators and is going well. Ms. Johnson stated that we shall see.
- Penn Valley Pump (Train 2) – Quotes have been received for installation and the purchase of the pump.

Chairman Manning questioned Ms. Cunningham if she had anything to add to her report. Ms. Cunningham stated that she had nothing further.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Johnson moved, seconded by Commissioner Jones that the Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024 be approved as distributed. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

Commissioner Devine moved, seconded by Commissioner Johnson that the Executive Session Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2024 be approved as distributed. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

RESOLUTIONS

No. 5868 – Open Executive Session:

Commissioner Devine moved Resolution No. 5868 seconded by Commissioner Mowczan. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5869 – Adjourn from Executive Session:

Commissioner Devine moved Resolution No. 5869 seconded by Commissioner Mowczan. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5870 – Authorize to Amend December Payment of Bills:

Commissioner Johnson moved Resolution No. 5870 seconded by Commissioner Jones. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5871 – Authorize to Endorse a TWA Application for Wall 34 Reality, LLC:

Commissioner Mowczan moved Resolution No. 5871 seconded by Commissioner Johnson. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5872 – Authorize the Executive Director to Solicit for Proposals for Professional Services:

Commissioner Jones moved Resolution No. 5872 seconded by Commissioner Johnson. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5873 – Authorize to Reject Two Laboratory Bids Received due to Fatal Flaws:

Commissioner Johnson moved Resolution No. 5873 seconded by Commissioner Devine. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5874 – Authorize to Award the Laboratory Analysis Contract to Garden State Labs for 2025 & 2026:

Commissioner Jones moved Resolution No. 5874 seconded by Commissioner Johnson. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

No. 5875 – Authorize A Settlement Agreement for the West River, Inv. Litigation Subject Upon Final Approval:

Commissioner Johnson moved Resolution No. 5875 seconded by Commissioner Jones. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

A motion was made by Commissioner Devine and seconded by Commissioner Jones that the meeting be adjourned at 7:19 p.m. On a voice vote, the vote was as follows: Devine: Aye, Mowczan: Aye, Johnson: Aye, Jones: Aye and Manning: Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina M. Cunningham
Executive Director