

EAST BERLIN AREA JOINT AUTHORITY  
103 LOCUST STREET / PO BOX 37  
EAST BERLIN, PA 17316

February 19, 2025  
-SPECIAL MEETING-

A special meeting of the East Berlin Area Joint Authority Board called by Chairman Green to address the PFOAs situation. The meeting took place on February 19, 2025 at 103 Locust St., East Berlin, PA. The meeting was presided over by Chairman Green. Chairman Green opened the meeting at 7pm with a Pledge of Allegiance to the American flag.

**Members Present:** Chairman G. Green, V.C. R. Weidner, R. Teal, V. Krall

**Members Absent** W. Staub

**Also Present:** Solicitor Battersby, Engineer D. Young, Secretary M. Earp, Operator N. Boyer

**Guests:** Mr. J.T. Hand of York Water; Matt Scarpato of York Water, Mr. Marcus Kohl of PAWC

Sabrina DeLong, Donna Panusuck, Angela McKown, Charles Krall, Denise Forry, Brenda Miller, Mary McCauslin, Anna Devita, Martin Eichelberger, Nancy Geisler, Craig Schriver, Rocco Devita, Tammy Ingram, Kim & Ron Wright, James Dyksterhouse, Josh Smith, & Chauncey Garrett; all from East Berlin, & Members of the Press.

**Public / Guest Comment:** Chairman Green requested comments from the gallery.

**Remarks from Curvin Dennis as read by Angela McKown**

Not all wells are contaminated. Only the one on top of Brough Hill Road. That being said it is time to dissolve the Authority with Hamilton Township. Stop running the sewer line to nowhere. The people of East Berlin are paying for a partnership that never happened. If they need sewer, it's time they pay. The taxpayers of East Berlin have been paying since 2007 for an eight-plus million-dollar sewer plant. Not one dime from Hamilton Township. It seems as if someone has another agenda. Why else would the borough of East Berlin offer to pay for the sewer? This must stop now. If they try to sell our sewer and water we demand as taxpayers it goes to the people for a vote, not some self-serving board members. The system belongs to the people and not the board.

**Remarks from Angela McKown**

Good evening, my name is Angela McKown and I have been a resident of East Berlin for forty years. My concern is the PFOA levels surpassing drinking water standards to the current high level of 20 ng/l (nano grams per litre), the highest noted in Adams County. This exceeds acceptable levels of contamination of ng/l in Pennsylvania, which is 14 ng/l. The Joint Authority of East Berlin, I feel has not been transparent to the community in expressing all of these concerns. East Berlin Joint Authority did not immediately share this information with the public when they were aware of it in November. When Public Notice was granted on January 24, 2025, it was noted there was no immediate risk to the community. However, at the time the risk level since November have not changed therefore, the community, in my opinion has been at significant risk. It is not the Joint Authority's decision to decide what risk factors the community finds acceptable. This information should have been made immediately shared to the community members like myself (unintelligible) choice to protect themselves, family members, and even pets, which I consider them family members. The borough's lack of response is negligent. When the borough did notify the community, it downplayed the situation, saying there were not immediate risks. According to the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency, over time there may be adverse side effects including developmental delays, neuro behavioral changes, and skeletal changes or a decrease in immune responses. (unintelligible) as reported by the EPA, (unintelligible) Sarah Mack of WGAL shared in her report that the EPA clearly stated that this exposure to PFOA had increased certain cancers, impact women's reproductive systems, caused developmental delays in children and impacted people's immune systems. As an individual who has a family

member died of ovarian cancer, and I myself a pre cancer ovarian cancer survivor why would I willingly expose myself to such harmful toxins in my water that I've been drinking? Why was this information conveniently omitted from the letter released by the Borough to the residents of East Berlin? As a reminder the maximum level of containment in Pennsylvania is 14 ng/l. East Berlin is at 20 ng/l. As a community, there should be alarms going off, and the East Berlin Joint Authority should not be downplaying the situation. My family and I, including my pets, are not drinking the water. Instead, for our health, we are having shipped and delivered to our home, which is an additional expense, and yet we are still paying for water, that is unsafe to drink. The East Berlin Joint Authority did mention that home owners could purchase a carbon filter which could cost up to \$1000.00, once again at the homeowner's expense. Anticipating a time line of 18-24 months to fix this problem is not acceptable. Two years of drinking water that may cause cancer and many other significant health problems is not a risk that I am willing to take, or allow my family to take. There are many improvements in this community with the recent addition of the park, playground, skate park, dog park, et cetera. All of these things have been a positive impact to the community and are enticements for people to move into the East Berlin community. However, at this time, I would not recommend this town as a safe place for families until the water issue is resolved and made safe to the highest standard this community deserves. I recommend that the East Berlin Joint Authority expediate this concern and have a resolution to his problem in a timely manner, not up to two years. And I am also curious that if there is grants available from the EPA to fix this in a more timely manner. Thank you.

#### **Remarks from Martin Eichelberger**

I have four young children under the age of ten who drink the water, bathe in the water, do stuff in the pool water. My concerns are mainly that I had some issues back in June that I went to the doctor, found out I have a mild fatty liver, don't know why that happened but since December my side effects have spiked exponentially, I went to the doctor for it yesterday and he agreed that it could be related to PFOAs in the water and if you look it up, the number one side effect is liver damage and elevated liver enzymes, um I can't help that I live here, so I'm cooking with the water, drinking the water, bathing in the water. I mean, I have a two-year old son. I have a \$400.00 water / sewer bill (water: \$152.64, sewer: \$216.91, late fee \$36.96) which is just normal for my family, but now we can't use the water.

#### **Random questions from customers resulted in the following information:**

- Per PA DEP regulations, EBAJA began testing for PFOA and PFOS in 2024.
- Each well is tested quarterly. Results are based on a rolling four-quarter average.
- Notifications were sent in accordance with the regulations.
- Time frame on having the problem fixed was based on professional advice from the PA DEP.
- One well out of five is testing above state limits.
- The water is diluted by the time it reaches the tap; some areas of town have the potential to be more or less diluted depending on proximity to the source.
- The water is tested at the source, not the tap.
- Options include, removing the well from operation, carbon filtration, filtration, selling the system to a private entity.
- Public money for this project is funneled through PENNVEST in the form of grants and/or loans. Pennvest decides if awards are in the form of a grants, loans, or a combination of both.
- Homeowners wishing to exercise fortitude could consider installing a home filtration system. Product packaging should indicate certification NSF/ANSI 53 or NSF/ANSI 58 for PFAS reduction. Filters are available in all sorts of sizes and prices.
- Buying water may not be the solution because the chemicals are pervasive and there are less regulations on bottled water than on tap water.
- How, why, or where the water table is contaminated is unknown.
- Flushing the toilet is using the water.
- The decision on how to proceed will be made within the next month or two.

- Next quarterly testing is scheduled for March 3, 2025.
- All the water is drawing from the same aquifer, so there is no guarantee that the other wells won't become contaminated.

**Engineer's Report:**

- The contamination is treatable. Options include Granulated Activated Carbon (GAC) and Ion Exchange resins. The 18-24 month time frame to have a system in place includes a nine-month pilot testing period. There are waivers for pilot testing that depend on certain parameters required by the DEP. Pilot testing is required because even though the technologies to remove the contaminants are not new, they have not been implemented on a large scale until recently. DEP seems to favor GAC, which is more expensive to implement than Ion Exchange, and has more long-term operating costs.

Chairman Green invited water company representatives to address the board.

**York Water: Mr. J.T. Hand, President and CEO of York Water Company**

I am here tonight to offer opportunities and solutions. I'm here to talk to you about what could be an opportunity or a solution to the situation you have in front of you. I'm not selling anything to you, I'm not guaranteeing anything, I'm not committing anything, I'm simply presenting alternatives that at least should be taken into consideration.

A year ago, we were approached by the owner of the Pine Run Retirement Community 4000 feet outside of the borough. We were approached by the owner of that community because they were subject to a notice of violation and a consent order agreement because their drinking water supply was contaminated. The residents were drinking water that was contaminated with gamma radiation. They approached the York Water Company and asked us if we would provide water to them. York Water Co agreed to provide water to them under a contract negotiated agreement that York Water Co push 14,000 feet of pipe to connect the Pine Run community into the York Water Company's system. We did that 100% at the cost of the York Water company and as a result of that project 130 families who had been drinking water that was contaminated with Gamma Radiation are now on reliable, redundant, sustainable sources of (unintelligible) for York Water Company.

We are 4000 feet away from being able to do the exact same thing, to provide some, all, or whatever this community needs to address this emergency. We are prepared to do it, and I believe we can do that and have a solution in place within 6 months. That is working with DEP and getting some favorable responses from DEP, as they are regulators, they have their own time line, but I believe that DEP would look upon a solution like this as they looked upon the solution for Pine Run favorably that they would expedite the permitting process to allow us to push pipe and put an inter connect in to this community through which you can take all, or as little water as you need to satisfy what would be the terms of what would be an agreement with the York Water Company and the Authority (like a bulk water sale).

We talked earlier about the New Oxford Municipal Authority fire, the Miller Chemical Fire, about ten years or so ago, contaminated their source of supply. Okay, all the run-off from the fire, got into the creek, that was their source of supply. Fortunately for NOMA, prior to that happening, they had an intra-connect with York Water Co. they shut down their pumps, they shut down their intake, and for 89 days, they took 100% of their supply of water from the York Water Company. Not a single customer, not a single manufacturer, not a single commercial property, was interrupted for 89 days. Because NOMA had the foresight to have an alternative in the event they had a contamination event.

And basically, what I am here tonight to offer is the same provision to East Berlin Joint Authority. And if you decide that you want to get out of the water business, if you want to sell your water system, we would be happy to entertain that as well. If we were to do that, we may or may not take over the well systems currently in place, right, there may be a reason not to take over the existing wells and put millions of dollars into treatment, so it would just take 100% of the supply out of a direct connect with pipeline that is 4000 feet away.

York Water has three sources of supply, is 100% backed up with power generation, every single one of our systems there is not a single point of failure. Now there is a cost to that. We have had to invest in our system to ensure we had that redundancy, reliability, and sustainability of our system. But because we have made those investments, we have done all of our PFOAs and PFOSs sampling, we do not PFOAs and PFOSs.

**PA American Water, Marcus Kohl, PA American Water Director of Business Development**

Prior to being Director of Business Development I was the Director of Water Quality and Compliance, so the issue we are talking about is very near and dear to my heart. Before being the Water Quality Director at American Water I was also with PA DEP for twenty years, so I certainly understand the regulatory structure here.

We are the largest water provider in Pennsylvania. I don't know if folks around here recognize us, as we don't have a lot of facilities in this area, but we do serve approximately 20% of the population of Pennsylvania. We have experience in treating challenges like this, we have added PFOAs treatment at our Frackville facility and that has been in operation for about a year. The reason why it has been in operation for about a year is because while the regulations took affect and required testing beginning this year, we have been testing for years in preparation for what was coming down the pike. And so, we had the ability to, in advance of the regulatory thresholds, install treatment at our Frackville system. We also have experience in working with systems like this, we are in the process of acquiring a system in southeast Pennsylvania with the very same challenge, the wells have significant issues with PFOAs, again, working with the PA DEP to address those so that on Day One we can improve water quality in that community.

For us, it would be a little different situation as described by York Water. It's great for the community to talk about all these issues, understanding all the options available to them and making the best decision for their community. What we want to do is make sure that we're providing adequate information, the right information, for you to make the right decision for your community. We do not have the ability to make an interconnect here. We would be primarily interested in acquiring the system and adding the treatment. That would be what we could do for this community and we welcome conversations to that end.

PAWC Answers to Various Questions: An acquisition, and the regulatory process it faces will result in a similar time frame of 18-24 months until treatment would begin. Unlikely to start treatment / invest capital before the close of the sale of the system. They would take over the existing infrastructure.

**Solicitor's Report:** The solicitor suggested the board break into Executive Session to further discuss the letters of interest received by York Water Company and PA American Water Company and related potential contracts.

**Executive Session:** The Board broke into Executive session at 7:45 p.m. Adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Chairman Green instructed N. Boyer to shut down Entry Point #1 in the morning.

**Motion to adjourn** the meeting was made by V. Krall with a second by R. Teal. **Motion carried.**  
Meeting was adjourned by Chairman Green at 9:00 p.m.

The next monthly board meeting is scheduled to be held **March 6, 2025** at 103 Locust Street at 7:00 p.m.