

TO: Lisa Duffner, Board Secretary
Atlantic County Utilities Authority

FROM: Honorable Dennis Levinson, Atlantic County Executive

RE: Minutes of Meeting – June 19, 2025

I. The Minutes of the above referenced meeting were submitted pursuant to N.J.S.A 40:41A-37 et seq. on June 23, 2025.

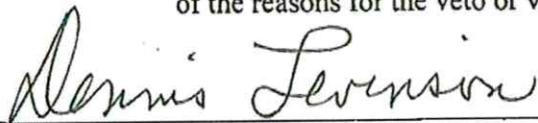
- (a) by the end of the fifth business day following the meeting.
- (b) as soon as practicable following the meeting where emergency action has been taken.
- (c) beyond the statutory period for submission.

II. I hereby return the Minutes of the above referenced meeting to the Authority and to the Board of County Commissioners, on the date set forth above, which is

- (a) within ten days of delivery.
- (b) within twenty-four (24) hours of delivery where the action at the meeting was deemed by the Authority to be in response to an emergency situation.

III. The following action is taken on the Minutes:

- (a) Approved in all respects.
- (b) Vetoed in all respects. A written explanation of the reasons for the veto is attached.
- (c) Approved in part and vetoed in part.
The specific items which are vetoed and a written explanation of the reasons for the veto or vetoes is attached.



Dennis Levinson, Atlantic County Executive



Arthur J. Murray, Assistant County Counsel
Approved as to Form and Entry

Date: 6/24/25

cc: Tara Silipena, Clerk to the Atlantic County Board of County Commissioners

ATTACHMENTS: Minutes
 Veto Message

ATLANTIC COUNTY UTILITIES AUTHORITY

June 19, 2025 – 3:00 PM

6700 Delilah Road, Egg Harbor Township, NJ

PRESENT FOR THE AUTHORITY

Marvin Embry	Chair
Fred Akers	Member
Laura Pfrommer	Member
Maria Mento	Member
Alex Marino	Member
Matthew DeNafo	President
Joseph Pantalone	Vice President Wastewater
Gary Conover	Vice President of Solid Waste
Linda Bazemore	Vice President of Administration & Finance/CFO/Acting Board Secretary
Thomas Ganard	Chief Engineer
Sharon Hunt	Director of Human Resources
Oren Thomas	Procurement & Contracts Manager
Brittany Poplawski	Senior Systems Analyst
Fredy Flores	Computer Analyst
Lisa Duffner	Executive Assistant/Board Secretary
Sonia Chowdhury	Executive Assistant/Assistant Board Secretary

ALSO PRESENT

Stephanie E. Farrell, Esq.	Nehmad, Davis & Goldstein
Arthur J. Murray, Esq.	County Counsel – Zoom
Timothy Edmunds	Atlantic County Improvement Authority - Zoom
Jessica Wheeley	Atlantic County Improvement Authority - Zoom
Derek Dailey	Marsh McLennan Agency
Jason Burke	Member of the Public
James Bertino, Liaison	Atlantic County Board of Commissioners - absent

Chairman Embry called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and announced that the notice of the 2024-2025 Meeting Schedule was mailed to The Press of Atlantic City, The Daily Journal, the Clerk of Atlantic County, and the Clerk of the Atlantic County Board of Commissioners on February 25, 2025, in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-6, *et seq.* and it was posted on the bulletin board of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority in the administration building and Notice of Live Streaming of this meeting was mailed to The Press of Atlantic City, The Daily Journal, the Clerk of Atlantic County, and the Clerk of the Atlantic County Board of Commissioners on May 28, 2025, and both notices were posted on the bulletin board of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority in the administration building.

Flag Salute

Roll call was taken by Lisa Duffner, Board Secretary, which reflected a quorum was present.

Chairman Embry	present
Fred Akers	present
Andrew Berenato	absent
Judy Ward	absent
Laura Pfrommer	present
Maria Mento	present
Alex Marino	present

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING ON May 15, 2025 – voted on and approved by all members.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

PUBLIC AND BOARD COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS: None.

Mr. DeNafo summarized where the Authority is regarding health insurance and prescription plans for Active Employees and Retirees. He stated that the Authority has been evaluating different options for approximately 18 months due to the fact that there have been double-digit increases in benefit costs; from approximately \$6 million to \$10 million in premium costs over the last 5 or 6 years, and the cost will continue to rise. Because of this, the Authority began a search for a broker of record and ultimately awarded a contract to Marsh McLennan to assist the Authority in acquiring new benefit plans. After evaluating all of the plans presented, Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey was chosen for the Authority's Active Employees, Early Retirees, and Supplemental Medicare.

Chairman Embry asked about the savings that will be seen next year in 2026 and what guarantees that. Mr. DeNafo replied that the contract the Authority has with Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey is from September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2026. Therefore, the Authority is guaranteed, for the next 12 months, once the ACUA implements this. Mr. DeNafo reported that last week the ACUA held an informative presentation for retirees. Approximately 45 retirees attended, in person and virtually. A website was also created for them with a link to access information and see side-by-side comparisons for Medicare, Aetna 15 and 20, Horizon Medicare Original and the Braven plan. Retirees can now search for doctors and copay information on this website. He said the plan was very well received by the retirees last week. Also, a recording of the presentation, with slides, was also put online so those who could not attend had access to the information and material presented. Mr. DeNafo said this was all a collaborative effort between the Authority's Human Resources Department and Ms. Bazemore, who made sure the Authority was asking the right questions and getting the correct information. He thanked them for all of their hard work as this took a lot of time and effort. Ms. Mento and Mrs. Pfrommer agreed and commended them as well.

Ms. Mento suggested that surveys be sent out to the retirees after the first six (6) months of having the new insurance, and then at the 1-year mark and six (6) months after that. She said it would be a good thing to do, and the Authority would know how the retirees are doing with their new insurance. Mr. DeNafo agreed and said the Authority will do this.

Mr. DeNafo noted that Tim Edmunds, Executive Director, and Jessica Wheeley, Comptroller, from the Atlantic County Improvement Authority, were also in attendance at today's meeting, via Zoom, to hear the presentation regarding the new health insurance plans. He said the ACIA has a small staff in their current health insurance benefits plan, and they are not able to take advantage of larger group plans. Therefore, the ACUA is exploring whether they can help the ACIA with a shared service and extend the rates to them.

Mrs. Pfrommer asked if the Authority's retirees get lifetime benefits. Mr. DeNafo explained that an employee needs 25 years of service in the pension system, and their employment must end at the ACUA. For example, if an employee retires from the Authority, with 25 years in the pension system, they will receive lifetime benefits. However, there is a cut-off date, if employee didn't have 20 years vested in the pension system by June 28th, 2011, then they would be required to contribute to a portion of the cost of benefits after retirement. Mr. DeNafo stated that the Authority is also looking to change the qualification for those benefits, to ensure an employee has contributed a certain portion of time at the ACUA. Mr. DeNafo pointed out that the ACUA is not the only organization in New Jersey that has this retirement benefit. There are hundreds of government agencies throughout New Jersey that do. Ms. Pfrommer pointed out that at full retirement, an employee has to go on Medicare, so the benefits from the government agency are secondary and Medicare is their primary insurance carrier. Mr. DeNafo agreed and said that the Authority's retirement benefits that are offered are cheaper due to this fact.

Mr. DeNafó stated the Authority needs to terminate with the State Health Benefits Program, which takes 60 days to complete. In order for the Authority to have an effective date of September 1st, 2025, the five resolutions that are on today's Agenda will need to be approved by the Board. If not, everything will get pushed to a later date and then the Authority will need a new claims history because it will be six months after the one they had done previously.

Mr. DeNafó then introduced Derek Dailey, a representative from Marsh McLennan, to the Board, who was present at today's meeting to answer any questions regarding the new health insurance and prescription plans for Active Employees and Retirees of the Authority. Mr. Dailey summarized the different plans offered and how the transition from their old insurance to the new insurance plans will work. Afterwards, Mr. Dailey asked if anyone had any questions. Ms. Mento asked if the retirees will have a seamless transition, and Mr. Dailey said they will, as will the Active Employees, Early Retirees and Medicare Supplemental. He said everything will be done electronically. He said retirees can continue seeing their doctors, and they will not have any co-pays. Ms. Mento also asked about those who are currently in Horizon/Medicare original, and Mr. Dailey said they will use the same card and have the same benefits.

Mr. DeNafó stated that if there are any issues, the Authority will be able to reach out to Marsh McLennan for support and not have to contact the State when there are concerns or questions. He then thanked Mr. Dailey for attending the meeting today.

Chairman Embry thanked everyone for their hard work and time regarding the new health insurance plans. He asked what the next step would be to finalize everything. Mr. DeNafó said the five resolutions that are on today's Agenda will need to be approved by the Board, and then the new health insurance plans will go into effect on September 1, 2025.

Chairman Embry asked if anyone had any further questions or comments. Since there were none, Chairman Embry moved Resolution 25-6-129 authorizing an Executive Session, which was seconded by Mr. Marino. By a roll-call vote of 5-0-2, the Board unanimously agreed to enter into an Executive Session at 3:22 p.m.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 3:49 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

ALL RESOLUTIONS APPROVED.

RESOLUTION COMMENTS:

Resolution 25-6-143: Authorizing a contract amendment to emergency contract with Lafayette Utility Construction Co., Inc. for Ventnor-Margate Force Main Emergency Repair on Wellington Avenue in Ventnor. Amount of increase is \$452,561.65. Not-to-exceed total to date is \$662,362.25.

Explanation: For payment of 2nd invoice for emergency repair of Ventnor-Margate Force Main. A final invoice is anticipated in the coming months.

Chairman Embry and Ms. Pfrommer asked what the final cost of the project will be. Mr. Ganard replied, although difficult to predict, he believes it will be approximately \$200,000 more. He stated that Lafayette Utility Construction is done and have been off-site as of 6/18/25. Mr. Ganard added that most of the big-ticket items are on the current invoice.

Ms. Mento abstained from the vote.

Resolution 25-6-150: Authorizing the receipt of competitive bids through Internet Auction Site for the sale of surplus equipment.

Explanation: Sale of equipment no longer used by the Authority.

Ms. Pfrommer asked if most of the equipment gets sold. Mr. Rocco replied that the equipment may sometimes be listed twice. If it does not sell after that, it is donated or scraped.

Resolution 25-6-152: Authorizing termination of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority's participation in the State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP), effective August 31, 2025.

Explanation: To terminate the Authority's participation in the SHBP, which includes the Medical and Prescription Coverage for Active Employees and Retirees.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 25-6-154: Authorizing termination of the Atlantic County Utilities Authority's participation in the New Jersey State Health and Prescription Program for Retirees, effective August 31, 2025.

Explanation: Termination of the contract, approved by way of Resolution No. 24-12-320, will result in a contract reduction in the amount of \$1,486,717.50.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 25-6-155: Authorizing an agreement with Horizon Blue Cross/ Blue Shield of New Jersey as an Extraordinary, Unspecifiable Service, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a)(ii) for Health and Prescription Insurance Coverage for Active Employees of the Authority, Early Retirees, and Supplemental Medicare. Amount not to exceed \$9,933,420.75, for contract term September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2026.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 25-6-156: Authorizing an agreement with Horizon Blue Cross/ Blue Shield of New Jersey as an Extraordinary, Unspecifiable Service, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a)(ii) for Health and Prescription Insurance Coverage for Retirees of the Authority Enrolled in Braven Health Medicare Advantage (PPO). Amount not to exceed \$752,006.67 for contract term September 1, 2025, through August 31, 2026.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 25-6-158: Authorizing a Shared Services Agreement with the Atlantic County Improvement Authority (ACIA) to perform certain administrative services. Contract term is from July 17, 2025, to July 16, 2026. Estimated revenue to the ACUA is \$5,000.00.

Explanation: The ACUA will perform Purchasing, Safety & Training, and HR processing services for the ACIA.

Ms. Pfrommer abstained from the vote.

Resolution 25-6-159: Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a Note to the I-Bank and the Execution and Delivery Thereof to the I-Bank as related to Phase 1A of the Solids Handling Project.

Explanation: The Authority is authorizing the issuance and sale of a Note to the I-Bank to evidence and secure the CFP Loan and authorizing the execution and delivery thereof in connection with the Authority's participation in the CFP Loan Program.

Chairman Embry asked if an amount should be in the Agenda description. Ms. Bazemore responded by stating that the Authority received documents from Archer & Greiner, and the amount is to be left blank until a final number from the NJ DEP is received. Ms. Farrell added the resolution has to be approved and the documents need to be done to get to the next step in the process, therefore, the amount does not need to be in the Agenda description.

Resolution 25-6-161: Authorizing payment of certain expenditures: \$8,544,300.19

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

PUBLIC AND BOARD COMMENTS:

Mrs. Pfrommer congratulated Ms. Bazemore on being inducted into the 2025 Atlantic County Women's Hall of Fame, and the Board and Board Officers congratulated her as well.

Chairman Embry asked if there were any further questions or comments. Since there were none, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Lisa Duffner, Board Secretary