

TO: Lisa Duffner, Board Secretary
Atlantic County Utilities Authority

FROM: Honorable Dennis Levinson, Atlantic County Executive

RE: Minutes of Meeting – August 20, 2026

I. The Minutes of the above referenced meeting were submitted pursuant to N.J.S.A 40:41A-37 et seq. on August 21, 2026,

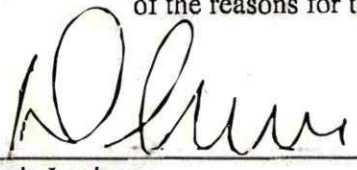
- (a) ☒ by the end of the fifth business day following the meeting.
- (b) ☐ as soon as practicable following the meeting where emergency action has been taken.
- (c) ☐ beyond the statutory period for submission.

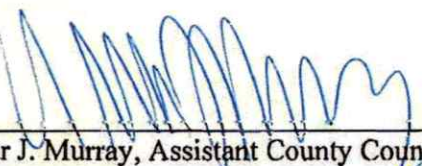
II. I hereby return the Minutes of the above referenced meeting to the Authority and to the Board of County Commissioners, on the date set forth above, which is

- (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: 8/25/26
cc: Tara Silipena, Clerk to the Atlantic County Board of County Commissioners
ATTACHMENTS: ☒ Minutes
 ☐ Veto Message

ATLANTIC COUNTY UTILITIES AUTHORITY
August 20, 2026 – 3:00 PM
6700 Delilah Road, Egg Harbor Township, NJ

PRESENT FOR THE AUTHORITY

Marvin Embry	Chair
Fred Akers	Member
Judy Ward	Member - Zoom
Maria Mento	Member
Michael Pullia	Member
Matthew DeNafo	President
Joseph Pantalone	Vice President of Wastewater
Greg Seher	Vice President of Solid Waste
Linda Bazemore	Vice President of Administration & Finance/CFO
Thomas Ganard	Chief Engineer
John Conover	Deputy Chief Engineer
Christine Longfellow	Senior Human Resources Generalist
Oren Thomas	Procurement & Contracts Manager
Kristi Aiken	Maintenance Resource Coordinator
Brittany Poplawski	Senior Systems Analyst
Lisa Duffner	Executive Assistant/Board Secretary
Sonia Chowdhury	Executive Assistant/Asst. Board Secretary

ALSO PRESENT

Stephanie E. Farrell, Esq.	Nehmad, Davis & Goldstein
Arthur J. Murray, Esq.	Atlantic County Law Department - Zoom
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 2026-2027 Meeting Schedule was mailed to The Press of Atlantic City, The Star Ledger, the Clerk of Atlantic County, and the Clerk of the Atlantic County Board of Commissioners on February 20, 2026, 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 Clerk of Atlantic County, and the Clerk of the Atlantic County Board of Commissioners, and also posted on the ACUA's Public Website, on August 3, 2026, 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 which reflected a quorum was present.

Chairman Embry	present
Fred Akers	present
Laura Pfrommer	absent
Judy Ward	present - joined the meeting, via Zoom, at 3:03 p.m.
Maria Mento	present
Alex Marino	absent
Mickey Pullia	present

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 16th, 2026, MEETING – voted on and approved by all members.

BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

ALL RESOLUTIONS APPROVED.

RESOLUTION COMMENTS:

Resolution 26-8-212: Authorizing the ACUA's transition from a Fully-Insured Health Benefits Program to a Self-Funded Employee Health Benefits Program, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:10-6(e), effective September 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027.

Explanation: To transition to a Self-Funded Employee Health Benefits Program which will provide greater long-term financial flexibility, improved transparency of healthcare costs, and enhanced control over plan administration while maintaining comprehensive benefits. Transition includes active employees and retirees under age 65, and over age 65 currently enrolled in the Horizon Fully-Insured Health Benefits Plan.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 26-8-213: Authorizing payment to Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey for Health Benefit Claims under the Authority's Self-Funded Employee Health Benefits Program, which will become effective on September 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027. Amount is not to exceed \$13,052,757 for the sixteen (16)-month period.

Explanation: The ACUA will implement a self-insured health plan in which the Authority is responsible for reimbursing Horizon for all medical and prescription claims incurred under the program as related to active employees and retirees under age 65, and over age 65 currently enrolled in the Horizon Fully-Insured Plan. To initiate the plan, the ACUA will provide Horizon with a deposit equal to seven (7) days of estimated claims activity. Horizon will then process and pay claims on behalf of the ACUA and issue a monthly invoice reflecting the actual claims paid.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 26-8-214: Authorizing the purchase of Stop-Loss and Aggregate Insurance, from First Symetra National Life Insurance Company of New York, as an Extraordinary, Unspecifiable Service, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-5(1)(a)(ii), for the Authority's Self-Funded Employee Health Benefits Program, effective September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2027. Amount is not to exceed \$1,263,550.

Explanation: The Authority will purchase Stop-Loss and Aggregate Insurance to protect the ACUA from unusually high medical claims. This coverage reimburses the Authority for any individual claim costs that exceed the established threshold. The stop-loss level is set at \$150,000 per covered individual, ensuring that the ACUA is protected from significant, unexpected expenses within the self-insured plan.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 26-8-215: Authorizing a contract 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 Third-Party Administration (TPA) services for the Authority's Self-Funded Employee Health Benefits Program. Contract term is September 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027. Amount is not to exceed \$380,043.

Explanation: Horizon will administer the Self-Funded Health Benefits Program and remit monthly broker fees on the Authority's behalf. Horizon will manage claims processing, customer service, and plan administration. The cost for services includes an estimated \$283,083 for TPA services and \$96,960 in broker fees paid by Horizon to Marsh McLennan.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 26-8-216: Authorizing a contract amendment to contract with Horizon Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey for Health Insurance and Prescription Program Coverage for Retirees enrolled in Braven Health Medicare Advantage (PPO), and extending the contract term through December 31, 2026. Amount of increase is \$275,000.

Explanation: The Authority will continue health insurance and prescription-program coverage for eligible retirees enrolled in Braven through December 31, 2026.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 26-8-219: Authorizing the adoption of an Updated Deferred Compensation Plan Document.

Explanation: Authorizing amendments to the Authority's Deferred Compensation Plan to comply with the Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement ("SECURE") Act of 2019.

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

Resolution 26-8-221: Authorizing payment of certain expenditures: \$7,059,446.47

Ms. Mento recused herself from the vote.

BOARD COMMENT:

Chairman Embry announced that the ACUA's Wastewater Division was honored with a Gold Peak Performance Award by the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA). This award is provided to agencies that demonstrate operational excellence and achieve 100% compliance with the National Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Chairman Embry stated that this recognition is a testament to the many employees who work hard each day to ensure the success of the ACUA's plant operations. He said the ACUA continues to do outstanding work to improve operations and uphold their mission to protect local waterways from pollution. On behalf of the Board, Chairman Embry congratulated the Wastewater Division for their outstanding work. He then asked Vice President of Wastewater, Joseph Pantalone, if he would like to address the Board regarding this prestigious award.

Mr. Pantalone thanked Chairman Embry and the Board. He stated that each month, the Wastewater Division is required to comply with standards that are set by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). He also gave credit and thanks to Peter Machotka, Director of Wastewater Operations, and the entire Operation Staff, who he said work hard every day and understand the process very well.

Mr. DeNafo added that regarding compliance, the ACUA is only required to meet an 85% removal however is in the 97% range every single month. He said that Wastewater Operations does not just meet this requirement, they always exceed it.

Chairman Embry asked how much of a capacity Wastewater can take in. Mr. Pantalone replied that flows, historically, have been trending downward, mainly because of Atlantic City and the lack of influence of casino gambling. He then explained the changes in flow trends over the years and stated that ACUA's capacity is more than sufficient to handle.

Chairman Embry asked if the ACUA must give permission for these growing housing developments. Mr. Ganard replied that yes, the ACUA must give permission, via a Treatment Works Approval (TWA), which is a DEP permit.

Next, Chairman Embry announced that Matthew DeNafo will be receiving the Corporate Leadership Achievement Award on Friday, August 21, 2026, during the Atlantic County Puerto Rican Parade's Annual Roots Awards. Mr. DeNafo was nominated by the Executive Board of the organization for providing exceptional and outstanding service as the President of the ACUA. On behalf of the ACUA Board, Chairman Embry congratulated Mr. DeNafo on receiving this award. Mr. DeNafo thanked the Board and said receiving the award is a team effort.

Mr. DeNafo stated that the ACUA's Solid Waste Division is currently featured in "Waste Today" magazine (July/August edition) which is a national publication. He said the ACUA is being recognized by the industry for its efforts in extending the life of the landfill, as well as the importance and how critical solid waste disposal really is -- not just in Atlantic County or in New Jersey, but across the country.

Mr. DeNafo gave a brief synopsis regarding the status of the Bel Aire Lakes' litigation. The Preliminary Injunctive Hearing began on July 20, 2026, and continued for approximately 2½ weeks. He said by the end of the hearing, the ACUA's legal counsel was satisfied with everything that was pointed out during the hearing. Mr. DeNafo said, overall, he thought the judge understands the issues at hand and the facts in question. Currently, the ACUA is in a waiting period. There is a small supplemental report that the plaintiffs' expert wants to submit, and then the ACUA will have about two weeks to refute. After that, there will be closing arguments. Mr. DeNafo said he believes within the next 6-to-8 weeks, the ACUA will have a decision from the court on the Preliminary Injunctive Hearing.

Ms. Farrell said the judge was very cognizant of the improvements that the ACUA has made regarding odor. Mr. Seher also added that Mr. DeNafo, and Sam Nutile, Director of Solid Waste Operations, both testified at the hearing and both did an excellent job stating the facts. Mr. DeNafo said that final judgment regarding this case will more than likely not be for approximately two (2) more years, and Ms. Farrell agreed, stating that the ACUA is looking at another year of discovery.

Chairman Embry asked if there were any further questions or comments. Since there were none, the meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Duffner, Board Secretary