



HIGHRIDGE WATER AUTHORITY

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PRESS RELEASE

At its annual reorganization meeting recently John Stumpf of Burrell Township was reelected as Chairman of the Highridge Water Authority. Other officers elected were Vice-Chairman Michael Caugherty, Secretary James Mitchell, and Treasurer John McMullen.

Authority Executive Director George E. Sulkosky was also appointed as the assistant secretary/treasurer for 2019.

Authority meetings will continue being held on the third Tuesday of each month. Designated as depositories were Ameriserve Bank, First National Bank, Savings and Trust Bank, Indiana First Bank, and Pennsylvania Local Government Investment Trust (PLGIT). Approved as the Trustee was Wilmington Trust.

Professionals appointed were James Carmella, Solicitor; Gibson-Thomas Engineers of Latrobe, Engineer; and the Human Resources Group, Labor Relations Consultant. Retained to conduct the annual audit was Rennie and Associates from Latrobe.

In addition to approving service fees, water rates, and miscellaneous charges, adopted were new fire service rates for private hydrants and fire suppression lines.

Adopted during its regular monthly meeting that followed, was a \$3.7 million dollar spending plan for 2019. Personnel costs at \$1,184,000 and debt service obligations of \$1.4 million make up the bulk of expenses. Water rates at \$8.40 per thousand gallons and operation and maintenance fees of \$6.50 per equivalent dwelling unit remain unchanged however.

Executive Director George Sulkosky reported that Highridge personnel constructed 3 miles of new water line in Burrell Township and another 6,600 feet in East Wheatfield Township. DEP's Bureau of Abandoned Mines completed a 4,600 foot extension in Burrell Township during 2018. Combined, 46 customers were added to the water system which serves over 5,700 in Indiana, Cambria and Westmoreland counties. A 2.5 million gallon tank in St. Clair Township near Seward was also returned to service after receiving a \$500,000 renovation.

Capital projects scheduled for the upcoming year include construction of a pump station for customers in the Highrise Drive area of Burrell Township, installing additional fire hydrants and water meters throughout the system, replacement of a 20 inch water main near New Florence, and rehabilitation of the Authority's Tubmill Dam.

Board members welcomed Dr. Bonni Dunlap, who was appointed by the Indiana County Commissioners to fulfill Robert Kunkle's term.