

NEGAUNEE-ISHPEMING WATER AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
April 16, 2025
WATER TREATMENT PLANT

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Negaunee-Ishpeming Water Authority was held on Wednesday, April 16, 2025 and was called to order at 4:03 p.m. by Kristen Mariuzza.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Gravedoni, Kristen Mariuzza and Tony McGrath

MEMBERS ABSENT: James Bertucci and John Jackson (arrived later)

OTHERS PRESENT: Kristy Basolo, Plan B Publishing
Jake Forchini, NIWA plant manager
Ryan Morgan, GEI

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Tony McGrath made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2025 regular meeting as presented and place them on file. Paul Gravedoni seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

CLAIMS & ACCOUNTS:

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to approve the claims & accounts as presented and to pay the bills. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- State of Michigan Fluoridation Memorandum—The memo reiterates the stance of the state in favor of adding fluoride to the water.
- MCHD Fluoridation Statement—The memo reiterates the stance of the health department, which is in favor of adding fluoride to the drinking water supply.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to accept the statements from the State of Michigan and Marquette County Health Department and place them on file. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- State of Michigan EGLE Well Approval Letter—This letter gives final authorization from EGLE to drill by Teal Lake. It will be presented at the Ishpeming City Council meeting tonight as well. The NIWA board members asked questions about the document; Ryan Morgan said all specs are possible and standard. EGLE is giving their support for the project.

The board had questions about the well abandonment. Ryan said abandonment of Well #6 has not been bid out; EGLE has asked for a more formal abandonment than expected. He said abandonment won't be done until Well #12 testing is done and it is known to be viable. Kristen Mariuzza asked for a longer testing period of Well #12 before abandonment, suggesting maybe a month of getting water to the plant. Ryan said he will ask for a variance to accommodate that. Tony McGrath asked for a Total Organic Carbon (TOC) test be added to the agreement, which is not in the specs. Ryan also noted that EGLE agreed to 500 gpm, as NIWA requested.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to accept the well approval letter, noting the change to add the TOC test. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

John Jackson arrived and took over running the meeting.

- State of Michigan Dept of Agriculture Grant Recommendation for Funding—Jake Forchini said an extra \$100,000 for the Teal Lake Well Project will come from this grant. The board talked about how this works; Ryan Morgan said it will be a reimbursement to NIWA's SIGMA account. Jake and Ryan will work on the agreement to accept the grant.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to accept this correspondence and place it on file. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Jake Forchini said he has been working with both cities on let-runs and leaks. He said Jeff of Talsma Controls replaced the SCADA card; he is still looking for the radios, which may take some time to find. Jake also noted the mixer motor died and had to be repaired. NIWA has started having issues with thermostat on the mass air unit. Because that unit is no longer made, trying to find a thermostat that works with it has been a challenge.

Jake said Homeland Security came and did an audit and asked for payroll summaries, I-9s, etc. He did not foresee any issues with the outcome.

Jake talked to Casey Rose from the wastewater plant; NIWA now must sample for PFAS prior to any lagoon work. Jake noted that NIWA has no trace of PFAS.

Jake noted he has an employee who was out with hip surgery but is now back on light duty.

Kristen Mariuzza made a motion to accept the manager's report and place it on file. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Teal Lake Well Project Update—Ryan Morgan of GEI said two bids were received for the project and opened. Municipal was the low bidder and met all the bid requirements. Both bids came in higher than the original estimate. Ryan called Municipal to talk to them about the bid and asked questions; it made sense as to why it was higher once he spoke with them. GEI would like to tentatively award the bid to Municipal; Ryan does not think the project is at risk, but GEI wants to take some time to review and see where things can be tightened up. After awarding, he will talk to Municipal to see if there are things NIWA can do to lighten their load and therefore reduce mobilization costs.

Kristen Mariuzza made a motion to award the Teal Lake Well Project contract to Municipal Well, contingent on the engineers' final approval. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- EGGLE Laboratory 2025 Sampling Results—Jake Forchini said all lab sampling is done for 2025, as required by EGGLE. PFAS hits were the same as last year, measured in parts per trillion and well under allowable numbers — 2 or 3 ppt, compared to the 420 ppt MCL.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to accept the 2025 sampling results and place them on file. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- 1st Quarter Reports and Board Compensation—Jake Forchini said finances are tight this year, but are as expected with the projects going on.

Tony McGrath made a motion to accept the first quarter NIWA financial reports as presented. Paul Gravedoni seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- NIWA Website—Jake Forchini said due to the volume of calls about shut-offs and regarding the fluoride situation, he thinks its time to create a website for NIWA for people to access the basic information they are asking for. He created a simple, free website with board meeting dates, consumer confidence reports, board information, treatment plant information and other basics. The NIWA board agreed and wants to keep it simple. Kristen Mariuzza said anything on the website should be publicly available already, and anything else put on it should be reviewed by the board in advance. Jake encouraged board to look at the site and give comments.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to commend Jake Forchini in taking the initiative to create the website. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- Ishpeming Area WWFT/NIWA Lagoon Sludge Agreement—Jake Forchini said this is a new agreement as the old one was expiring. It is along the same lines as the old one, with a cost increase and additional regulations on PFAS sampling. The board discussed the PFAS issue at the wastewater plant and the cost increase for them to deal with it properly.

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to approve the WWFT/NIWA Agreement and authorize Jake Forchini to sign it. Tony McGrath seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- NIWA/Cities Compensation Committee—TABLED

ADJOURNMENT:

Paul Gravedoni made a motion to adjourn at 4:48 p.m. Kristen Mariuzza seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Prepared by Kristy Basolo, recording secretary

Approved and respectfully submitted by James Bertucci Secretary/Treasurer