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PA PUBLIC UTILITY
SECRETARY'S BUREAU

July 18, 2019

Secretary's Bureau AND Office of Admin Law Judge
Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Commission's Secretary and Honorable Andrew M. Calvelli

I am writing to you today because I object to the application of PA American Water Co. to acquire the Exeter Township Wastewater Plant.

As an Exeter resident with a private well and public sewer, I have been disheartened at the increase we have seen in our bills over the past year and I am quite concerned with what will happen to them after January 1, 2021. In addition to this, we have seen a huge inconsistency with usage. At the time of this writing, we are still waiting for a response from the township's plumber to address the concerns with the discrepancies and the possibility of a faulty meter. My inquiry to the township 3+ months ago resulted in "lip-service" stating that my bills were indeed accurate even though they varied from 13,000 to 6,000 to 19,000 gallons by quarter. Never has my family of four used 19,000 of water per quarter and especially not now with one child being away at college. Our last bill stated that our usage was "0" and that is when I questioned it again with a visit to the township building on July 1, 2019. As previously stated, 2+ weeks later and I'm still waiting for a reply.

I am telling you this because it is my understanding that our sewer rates were raised by 29% incrementally over the past year as part of the agreement of sale. The notice that we received states that there will be no rate change prior to January 1, 2021. If we've already seen a 29% increase, I fear what rates we will see after that date. I am also concerned with the inconsistencies that I, as well as many other residents, have seen. If it is in fact due to faulty meters, have we collectively been overpaying and will this be resolved? Will we be required to pay for the installation of new meters if PA American Water Co. takes over?

It is also my understanding that the agreed upon price is \$96 million, which will be used to offset the debt service. Our wastewater treatment plant has been neglected over the years and I am wondering how much of this \$96 million will be needed to make necessary upgrades and repairs. Overall, I am concerned about the township assuming the debt service in the first place as this may be contrary to most contracts and I feel that PA American Water Co. is fully aware of what they would be purchasing and would not do so if they were uncertain about profiting from this acquisition.

The township has dangled the proverbial carrots under the taxpayers' noses by stating that they will eliminate the \$5 portion of our per capita tax and they will implement the homestead exemption (of up to \$50,000 of assessed home values) from township real estate taxes. I do not know what the

savings would be with the homestead exemption, but the \$5 savings of the per capita tax hardly comes close to offsetting the increases we have seen already, let alone future increases. Depending on what costs may be associated with the debt service, the township may not be making anywhere close to the agreed upon sale price. Therefore, it may just be a matter of time until our millage increase offsets whatever savings/exemptions they claim to be providing to us.

Is it possible that from the already applied 29% increase in our sewer rates, as well as without the "offerings" the township states they will be providing to us, they would have the funds needed to make the necessary repairs at the treatment plant?

As an Exeter Township taxpayer, I feel that what the township publications and the PA American Water notice are telling us all look good on paper but there is a lot to be read between those lines. The notice itself lists the average usage, current rates, potential average bill and increase per month. We are billed quarterly and I feel that if someone is reading over the notice they might not fully understand that the #'s listed would need to be multiplied by three to compare them to our current billing system. The lack of transparency or full disclosure should be concerning to all taxpayers.

I hope you will take these things into consideration before making your decision and I thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bradley K. Suruskie

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