

**RICHLAND TOWNSHIP
BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

RESOLUTION NO. 22-17

**A RESOLUTION OF RICHLAND TOWNSHIP OPPOSING THE SALE
OF BUCKS COUNTY WATER AND SEWER AUTHORITY'S ASSETS TO
AQUA PENNSYLVANIA**

WHEREAS, Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority (BCWSA) provides services to about 100,000 households, nearly one-third of the County population, in 31 municipalities and is the largest single provider of water and sewer services in the County; and

WHEREAS, BCWSA is considering an offer from Aqua (Essential Utilities Company) to purchase its assets for \$1.1 billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, Aqua's rates are set through rate-making procedures before the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and Aqua has a history of increasing its sewer rates substantially, including those municipalities which sold their private wastewater systems to Aqua including Limerick Township whose rates increased 82%, East Bradford Township whose rates increased 64%, Cheltenham Township whose rates increased 65%, East Norriton Township whose rates increased 57% and New Garden Township whose rates increased 53%; and

WHEREAS, Aqua in May of 2019 offered to purchase the wastewater system owned by Warrington Township for \$40,200,000.00, and anticipated a rate increase of 66% when Aqua next appeared before the PUC; and

WHEREAS, in September of 2019 Warrington Township sold its wastewater system to BCWSA for a base price of \$16,150,000- far less than half of what it could have received from Aqua based on its belief that BCWSA had no intention of selling its system to a private utility; and

WHEREAS, the Public Utility Commission recently approved a rate increase of 59% for Aqua's wastewater customers, less than the increase that Aqua requested; and

WHEREAS, at a time when costs are increasing for all Bucks County residents, through no fault of our local elected officials, residents can scarcely afford an increase in sewer fees; and

WHEREAS, the Richland Township Board of Supervisors believes it is unconscionable for BCWSA to sell its assets to Aqua as the long-term financial impacts that major increases in sewer rates will have on the residents and businesses being served and on Bucks County in general; and

WHEREAS, Wastewater services such as those provided by BCWSA are essential to protecting the environment and it is imperative that those services be provided at cost-effective and reasonable fee structures; and

WHEREAS, privatization of BCWSA's assets ultimately results in negative impacts for local municipalities and their residents.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Richland Township Board of Supervisors is opposed to the sale of BCWSA's assets to Aqua, Pennsylvania, and implores BCWSA to abandon negotiations with Aqua and to continue to operate as an independent, non-profit agency.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Richland Township Board of Supervisors respectfully implores the County Commissioners to take all reasonable and necessary steps to compel BCWSA to abandon its negotiations and to continue operating as an independent, non-profit agency, as intended when it was created in 1962 by the Bucks County Commissioners. If there is no other recourse, we believe the County should disband the BCWSA and take over the assets and operation of the sewer system until a public entity is found to sell the system to.

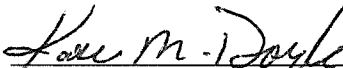
RESOLVED AND ENACTED this 8th day of August, 2022

Attest

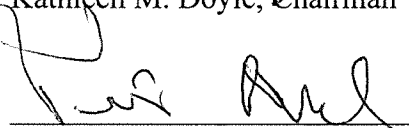
Richland Township Board of Supervisors



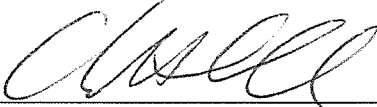
Leslie Huhn
Secretary



Kathleen M. Doyle, Chairman



Tim Arnold, Vice-Chairman



Christopher Vanelli, Member