

SOUTH MONMOUTH REGIONAL SEWERAGE AUTHORITY
MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS
DECEMBER 31, 2008

INTRODUCTION

The South Monmouth Regional Sewerage Authority, hereafter referred to as the "Authority", is pleased to present its Annual Financial Report developed in compliance with the Statement of Governmental Accounting Standard No. 34, entitled "Basic Financial Statements – Management's Discussion and Analysis – For State and Local Governments" (hereafter "GASB 34").

Mission

The Authority was founded for the purpose of protecting and preserving the area's vital environment for current and future generations and by so doing ensure a healthy ecology, a robust economy and a high quality of life for our citizens.

The skilled and dedicated men and women at the Authority accomplish this by effectively treating wastewater from our service areas' eight participants and then recycling safe, clean water back into the natural ecosystem.

Our philosophy is to never lose sight of those who we are committed to serve; residents, businesses, public institutions and the thousands of seasonal visitors to the many attractions located within our service region.

All of the plans, improvements and system changes are crafted in an effort to continue to meet or surpass all mandated federal and state regulations and standards, and to operate the Authority at as low of a cost to our members and ratepayers as possible.

The Authority's mission extends far beyond its geographical boundaries by virtue of its many affiliations and participation in organizations dedicated to better serving the environment as a whole. The South Monmouth Regional Sewerage Authority (SMRSA) represents itself and its membership as an organization that is operating on the cutting edge of the industry. This is evidenced through numerous research and development projects targeted at better understanding or abating negative water quality effects in the Ocean Eco-System. By taking an active role in each of the watershed groups and agencies operating within our Service Area, the Authority continues to demonstrate its commitment to educating the public, in particular, our youth, on the importance of protecting and preserving the earth's most valuable natural resource WATER.

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Responsibility and Controls

The Authority has prepared and is responsible for the financial statements and related information included in this report. A system of internal accounting controls is maintained to provide reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded and that the books and records reflect only authorized transactions. Limitations exist in any system of internal controls. However, based on recognition that the cost of the system should not exceed its benefits, management believes its system of internal accounting controls maintains an appropriate cost/benefit relationship.

The Authority's system of internal accounting controls is evaluated on an ongoing basis by the Authority's internal financial staff. Independent external auditors also consider certain elements of the internal control system in order to determine their auditing procedures for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the financial statements.

The Finance Committee of the Authority's Board of Commissioners serves the role of an Audit Committee. It is composed of four members of the Board who are not employees and who provide a broad overview of management's financial reporting and control functions. Periodically, this committee meets with management and external auditors to ensure these groups are fulfilling their obligations and to discuss auditing controls and financial reporting matters.

Management believes that its policies and procedures provide guidance and reasonable assurance that the Authority's operations are conducted in accordance with management's intentions and to a high standard of business ethics.

In management's opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position, results of operations and cash flow of the Authority in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Audit Assurance

The unqualified opinion of our independent external auditors, Ferraioli, Wielkotz, Cerullo & Cuva, P.A., is included in this report.

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This section presents management's analysis of the Authority's financial condition and activities for the year. This information should be read in conjunction with the financial statements.

Financial Highlights

Management believes the Authority's financial condition is strong and the direct result of the stringent financial policies and guidelines set by the Board of Commissioners. The following are key financial highlights for 2008 and 2007:

- Total Assets decreased \$1,392,861, due mostly to an increase in depreciation of Authority Assets.
- Total Liabilities decreased by \$993,286, due mostly to a decrease in Debt Outstanding.
- Operating Revenues increased \$54,762, due to an increase in sewer usage charges
- Operating Expenses increased \$286,730, representing a 5.12% increase.
- Net Assets at year-end were \$19,541,553, a decrease of \$399,575.

Overview of Annual Financial Report

Management's Discussion and Analysis (MD&A) serves as an introduction to, and should be read in conjunction with, the basic audited financial statements and supplementary information. The MD&A represents management's examination and analysis of the Authority's financial condition and performance. Summary financial statement data, key financial and operational indicators used in the Authority's strategic plan, budget, bond resolutions and other management tools were used for this analysis.

The financial statements report information about the Authority using full accrual accounting methods as utilized by similar business activities in the private sector. However, rate-regulated accounting principles applicable to private sector utilities are not used by government utilities. The financial statements include a Statement of Net Assets; a Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets; a Statement of Cash Flows; and Notes to the Financial Statements.

The *Statement of Net Assets* presents the financial position of the Authority on a full accrual historical cost basis. The Statement of Net Assets presents information on all of the Authority's assets and liabilities, with the difference reported as net assets. Over time, increases and decreases in net assets are one indicator of whether the financial position of the Authority is improving or deteriorating.

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While the *Statement of Net Assets* provides information about the nature and amount of resources and obligations at year-end, the *Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets* presents the results of the business activities over the course of the fiscal year and information as to how the net assets changed during the year. All changes in net assets are reported as soon as the underlying event giving rise to the change occurs, regardless of the timing of the related cash flows.

The *Statement of Cash Flows* presents changes in cash and cash equivalents, resulting from operational, financing, and investing activities. This Statement presents cash receipts and cash disbursement information, without consideration of the earnings event, when an obligation arises, or depreciation of capital assets.

The *Notes to the Financial Statements* provide required disclosures and other information that are essential to a full understanding of material data provided in the statements. The Notes present information about the Authority's accounting policies, significant account balances and activities, material risks, obligations, commitments, contingencies and subsequent events, if any. *Supplementary Data (Budgetary Basis)* comparing the budget to actual expenses, as well as important debt coverage data, is provided.

Summary of Organization and Business

The Authority, a public body corporate and politic of the State of New Jersey was created pursuant to parallel ordinances adopted by the Governing Bodies of the member municipalities of Belmar, Lake Como (formerly South Belmar), Brielle, Manasquan, Spring Lake, Spring Lake Heights, Sea Girt and Wall Township in May, 1970, and the Sewerage Authorities Law, constituting Chapter 138 of the Pamphlet Laws of 1946 of the State as amended (the "Original Act").

The Authority has the statutory power to acquire, construct, maintain and operate sewerage facilities for the relief of waters in, bordering or entering the natural drainage area within the Southern Monmouth County as determined by the Monmouth County Sewerage Advisory Board from pollution or threatened pollution and for the improvement of conditions affecting the public health.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Act, the Authority consists of one Commissioner from each member municipality. The Governing Body of their respective community appoints each Commissioner for a term of five years. The Authority is administered by an Executive Director appointed by the Commissioners and is directly responsible to them. The Authority has 21 full-time employees and one part-time employee who are organized into the following departments: Finance and Administration, Operations, Systems and Mechanical.

The Authority currently has Service Agreements with eight member municipalities for the treatment of wastewater emanating from each municipality.

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Summary of Organization and Business, (continued)

The System consists of eleven pump stations, a series of force mains, and a treatment plant. The Authority's regional treatment facility provides for both primary and secondary treatment, effluent disinfection and sludge management processes. The primary treatment process consists of influent pumping, screening to remove large objects, aerated grit chambers for grit removal, and primary settling to remove suspended and organic matter. The secondary treatment process is composed of two High Rate Trickling Filters incorporating the use of synthetic cross-flow media wherein the biological oxidation of suspended dissolved and colloidal pollutants takes place and the bio-solids being produced there-from are subsequently settled out and removed in the secondary sedimentation process. Disinfection of the treatment plants effluent is achieved through the application of Sodium Hypochlorite; the residual chlorine byproducts are ultimately oxidized in the Aeration Pond. For the most part, the facility discharges by gravity its effluent into the Atlantic Ocean through a wye diffuser approximately one mile offshore. During extreme wet weather seasons (or as daily flows begin to increase) the plant is equipped with an effluent pumping station for the purposes of assuring discharge capabilities. Solids handling facilities include the usage of Anaerobic Digestion wherein volatile solid destruction and vector control are accomplished. The Authority maximizes the use of gases produced in the digester by converting the gases to energy which is then utilized to heat the administration complex and produce re-usable electricity via the use of micro turbine technology.

The Authority has no power to levy or to collect taxes. Operation and maintenance costs are funded from service fees and other charges. The acquisition and construction of capital assets are funded through Operating Revenues, General Fund, Federal and State Grants, Wastewater Revenue Bonds and New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust Financing Program Loans.

General Trends and Significant Events

TRENDS

The SMRSA is limited in its overall treatment capacity by restrictions applied within its' NJPDES permit (discharge permit). Quantitative limits are established by the NJDEP for annualized daily average flows at nine million one hundred thousand gallons per day (9.1 MGD) and for instantaneous maximum flows at a factor of 2.0 over the design flow of 9.1 MGD and or at any level wherein loss of treatment efficiencies is experienced. Throughout the latter half of the 1990's several seasonal wet weather events stressed the treatment facility to its quantitative and qualitative limits as defined in its NJDPES permit. As a reaction to this trend (and in an effort to abate regulatory actions), the SMRSA solicited the support of its member municipalities and sponsored a program wherein the SMRSA would be the lead agency in implementing a comprehensive plan to abate the inflow and infiltration of extraneous waters into the local municipal systems. The project required amending each of the existing service agreements to provide a mechanism wherein the SMRSA could perform work on local systems and bill the

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General Trends and Significant Events, (continued)

TRENDS, (continued)

respective municipality directly for those services in addition to the previously established system to bill for the bulk treatment of wastewaters. An Inflow and Infiltration Abatement Construction Project was planned and designed in 2004 with construction of repairs being underway in 2005. Long term financing of the project was arranged for by the SMRSA utilizing the low rate long term New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust and Fund Bonding. As of December 31, 2006, the NJDEP found the project complete and construction and environmental restoration acceptable. The total cost of the project was approximately \$5,690,000 representing an approximate \$500,000 favorable variance to the original budgeted amount of \$6,200,000. The overall success of this program will yield a greater integrity to the local systems infrastructures; reduce the addition of extraneous flows to the SMRSA facilities thereby lowering the SMRSA's exposure to regulatory action, and the need to invest millions of dollars to treat the extraneous flows. SMRSA is pending the receipt of final payback schedules from the DEP and is expecting to issue new and finalized amortization schedules for the repayment of this debt service to the participating communities in FY2009.

The SMRSA in 2004 was issued for the first time a general Stormwater Pollution Prevention Permit (SPPP) by the NJDEP. Said permit regulates the general operational activities at the Treatment Plant site and sets standards for the operation of existing stormwater structures as well as the design of new structures. In 2004 the SMRSA evaluated its existing facilities in terms of overall integrity and potential off-site impacts, which ultimately concluded in the incorporation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan into the general SMRSA standard operating procedures. The plan calls for a number of site work improvements to mitigate the potential of off site impacts. To date all but one of the site work improvement projects have been constructed, completion of the remaining project is scheduled for the summer of 2007. Funding is set aside for this project in the Capital Improvement Plan, and remains on budget. To date, all of the site work improvement projects have been constructed, and the SMRSA remains in full compliance with the regulations.

As the SMRSA collection system has continued to age the general maintenance and care of several major equipment components has been deemed to no longer be cost effective. As such, a series of Capital Improvements are scheduled over the next several years to restore and make the entire collection system integrity state of the art. Funds have been set aside for these projects in the Capital Improvement Plan. As each of these projects begins to develop each will be subject to a Vulnerability Analysis against both man-made and natural disasters. Although the "Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7" does not specifically establish a timeline for vulnerability assessments for our capacity of wastewater facilities, the Authority's commissioners, management and staff remain unanimous in requiring a plan and programs to either mitigate and/or respond to recovery from a crisis. SMRSA's Asset Management, Vulnerability Assessment/Mitigation Programs and Emergency Response Preparedness has set the standard for others to follow, which is further evident in the "events" section of this discussion and analysis.

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General Trends and Significant Events, (continued)

TRENDS, (continued)

The continuing trend in rising energy costs have over the past decade prompted the SMRSA to undertake a multitude of energy conservation efforts through either altering the methods of operation, replacing older equipment with new, and updated energy saving motors, lighting operators etc. In 2003 the SMRSA placed into operation a Microturbine which would evaluate the cost effectiveness of burning Waste Digester Gases and converting the derived energy into electricity which could then be placed back onto the treatment plants internal electrical grid thereby augmenting the daily treatment plant electrical requirements with in-house derived power. The pilot program although short lived (due to the temporary unavailability of Digester gas as a result of a temporary construction project) proved to be successful. On average 30 KW of energy was being produced daily with a capitalized pay back period of approximately 6 years and a system life expectancy of nearly 20 years. Management and staff in early 2006, placed the Microturbine back into service, and are currently considering the requirements to convert the system in general from a pilot program into a full service operation wherein the potential lies for generating up to 90 KW of electricity daily or nearly 25% of the existing electrical load.

EVENTS

Beginning in January of 2007, the SMRSA has amended its policy on scheduling its Sewer Use Rate and Connection Fee hearings such that they are now scheduled as early as possible in each fiscal year; thereby providing the member municipalities adequate time to make timely first quarter user fee payments in accordance with the provisions of the Service Agreements and limiting the possibility of late payments.

On June 10, 2004 the Authority experienced a rupture to its force main system due to an unauthorized excavation by an unaffiliated private contractor on an easement occupied by the Authority in Wall Township. Said force main break resulted in a total repair cost incurred by the Authority of \$153,198.58. Reimbursement of \$34,139.94 has already been received thru the Authority's insurance carrier with the balance of \$119,058.64 currently being subrogated in the court system.

In 2004, the SMRSA and each of its member municipalities adopted new Service Agreement Amendments (Amendment #4) wherein language was included to allow for the work to be performed and payments made to the SMRSA with respect to the I & I Program referenced above.

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General Trends and Significant Events, (continued)

EVENTS, (continued)

In 2007, the SMRSA was issued a new five year NJPDES permit to operate its treatment facility by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. A number of new reporting requirements are contained therein including but not limited to effluent reporting on ammonia, mercury, PCB's and dissolved oxygen. Meeting these new requirements has resulted in an increased financial burden on the Authority when considering the costs associated with laboratory analysis. However, the greater concern is that the possibility will not exist where in the near future permit limits may be imposed based upon the results of upcoming analysis. Should permit limits become an issue, the SMRSA will undoubtedly be confronted with an increased capital burden beyond that which is expressed herein. The SMRSA management team plays a key role in being proactive through their involvement and membership in industry organizations that support and promote sound science and water quality based reforms to the current rules and regulations governing water pollution control.

In 2005, the SMRSA identified a trend wherein flow rates at its Glimmer Glass Pumping Station were increasing steadily. Through a joint effort with the communities that are serviced by that facility, an exhaustive investigation took place over the following year and a half. In the end, a highly technical flow metering issue was discovered at the SMRSA facility which resulted in an over billing of sewer use charges to the communities affected. In March of 2007, the SMRSA amended its Sewer Use calculations to provide for an estimated billing for that portion of the Service Area. Concurrently, an engineered correction to the problem was designed and through the public bidding process a construction project was awarded, not only for the Glimmer Glass Pumping Station but for all of the SMRSA pumping stations. As of this writing, that project is approximately fifty percent complete and negotiations are underway to have the SMRSA reimburse the communities who may have been over billed due to the faulty metering system.

Financial Analysis

The following comparative condensed financial statements serve as the key financial data and indicators for management, monitoring and planning.

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Financial Condition

The Authority's financial condition remained strong at year-end with adequate liquid assets, reliable facilities and systems to meet demand, and a reasonable level of unrestricted net assets. The current financial condition, technical support staff capabilities, and operating and modernization plans to meet anticipated customer needs are well balanced and under control. The following data summarizes the Net Assets:

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Total Unrestricted Current Assets	\$6,635,648	\$6,409,115
Total Restricted Assets	6,047,575	7,279,138
Net Capital Assets	29,155,797	29,531,429
Other Assets	<u>194,454</u>	<u>206,653</u>
 Total Assets	 <u>\$42,033,474</u>	 <u>\$43,426,335</u>
 Total Current Liabilities Payable from Current Assets	 3,383,455	 3,242,386
Total Current Liabilities Payable from Restricted Assets	1,498,479	1,503,687
Total Non-Current Liabilities	<u>17,609,987</u>	<u>18,739,134</u>
 Total Liabilities	 <u>22,491,921</u>	 <u>23,485,207</u>
 Total Net Assets Invested in Capital Assets, Net of Related Debt	 11,102,303	 10,371,969
Total Restricted Net Assets	5,441,846	6,435,459
Total Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>2,997,404</u>	<u>3,133,700</u>
 Total Net Assets	 <u>19,541,553</u>	 <u>19,941,128</u>
 Total Liabilities and Net Assets	 <u>\$42,033,474</u>	 <u>\$43,426,335</u>

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Results of Operations

The following data summarized the Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets:

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Total Operating Revenues	\$5,848,757	\$5,793,995
Operating Expenses	4,466,193	4,178,035
Depreciation	<u>1,418,259</u>	<u>1,419,687</u>
Total Operating Expenses	<u>5,884,452</u>	<u>5,597,722</u>
Operating Income	<u>(35,695)</u>	<u>196,273</u>
Non-Operating Revenues/(Expenses):		
Interest Income	291,183	525,720
Increase in Unemployment Reserve	1,129	5,335
Cancelled Accounts Payable	50,000	
Bond Interest Expense	(699,551)	(760,384)
Amortization of Debt Issue Costs	(20,988)	(42,010)
Amortization of Premium on Bond	<u>14,347</u>	<u>14,262</u>
Total Non-Operating Expenses	<u>(363,880)</u>	<u>(257,077)</u>
Net Income/(Loss)	(399,575)	(60,804)
Net Assets, January 1	<u>19,941,128</u>	<u>20,001,932</u>
Net Assets, December 31	<u>\$19,541,553</u>	<u>\$19,941,128</u>

There were no significant budget-to-actual variances.

Statement of Cash Flows

The following data summarizes the Statement of Cash Flows:

	<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>
Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities	\$1,588,156	\$1,815,665
Net Cash Provided by Capital and Related Financing Activities	(2,884,369)	(4,722,510)
Net Cash Provided by Investing Activities	<u>291,183</u>	<u>1,121,021</u>
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	(1,005,030)	(1,785,824)
Balance, Beginning of Year	<u>13,284,495</u>	<u>15,070,319</u>
Balance, End of Year	<u>\$12,279,465</u>	<u>\$13,284,495</u>

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Rates, Billing and Collection Process for 2008/2007

The rate of charge per million gallons of sewage treated, known as the Bulk Rate, is set by the Authority on an annual basis in accordance with the Municipal and County Utilities Authorities Law and the Bond Resolution. The rates per million gallons for 2008 and 2007 were \$2,559.24 and \$2,401.09, respectively. The fiscal years of 2008 and 2007 total User Charges billed to the member municipalities were \$5,220,158 and \$5,159,979, respectively, representing an actual decrease in total billing of 1.67%.

Member municipalities are required to pay estimated Annual Charges to the Authority in equal quarterly installments. These Annual Charge payments are based on the previous calendar years actual wastewater flows and the current Bulk Rate. The amount of Annual Charge is stated in a certificate delivered to each municipality January of each year. The Participants are required to make Annual Charge payments on or before the 15th day of January, April, July, and October.

Pursuant to the service contracts, the Participants are required to pay interest at the rate established under RS 40:14A-21 on any annual charge payment or part thereof due to the Authority that shall remain unpaid for 15 days following its due date.

Accounting for Rate Stabilization Fund/Asset Management Plan

In October of 2006, management informed the Commissioners of declining revenue from both connection fee and interest income sources and stated that it foresaw this trend to continue into the foreseeable future. As a result of this discussion, the Authority approved a management plan - rate stabilization policy whereas the Authority would designate the entire balance contained in the Rate Stabilization Fund. For 2006, the plan/policy states that of the available 2006 balance, between 40 and 60% would be designated to protect the Authority and its ratepayers against an unforeseen and/or catastrophic event, 30% would be assigned to 'green energy projects' and the remaining balance be used for future rate stabilization.

Additionally, the Authority undertook an asset management program. This program includes creating a working document which will detail all components of the Authority's operational assets. When completed, the program document will contain valuable at-a-glance information enabling the Authority to make prudent and informed decisions regarding repair and replacement.

Capital Improvement Program and Debt Administration

The SMRSA Capital Improvement Program has been prepared in consultation with, and reviewed by the Authority's attorney, engineer, commissioners, and staff.

The Capital Project financing and purchases have been developed from specific reports. The Project Financing Plan does not include full lifecycle costs. Improved Asset Management planning is being developed to incorporate same.

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The proposed capital expenditure (illustrated below) includes the repair, renewal or replacement of process pump drives, auxiliary power generation systems, key and critical valve and pump assemblies. Additionally, system wide electronic and communication systems are to be updated including but not limited to the development of a full scale SCADA system. The cost's assigned to these projects will have little or no effect on service fees or user charges, particularly when considering that the financing has been applied over a 20-year period.

Proposed Year's Capital Improvement Plan

<u>Projects</u>	<u>Estimated Total Cost</u>	<u>Funding Sources</u>			
		<u>Unrestricted Net Assets</u>	<u>Renewal and Replacement Reserve</u>	<u>Debt Authorization</u>	<u>Other Sources</u>
Brielle Pump Station Rehabilitation	\$425,000			\$425,000	
Sea Girt Pump Station Rehabilitation	900,000			900,000	
Belmar Tank Closure	350,000			350,000	
Belmar Magnadrive	<u>50,000</u>	_____	_____	<u>50,000</u>	_____
	<u>\$1,725,000</u>	=====	=====	<u>\$1,725,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>

Final Comments

The Authority has adopted appropriate strategic operating, finance and capital improvement plans that insure the Authority will continue to provide the residents of our member municipalities with an exemplary level of service while maintaining reasonable and stable rates, with 21 dedicated full-time employees and 1 part-time employee. SMRSA provides extraordinary service to the residents of our eight-member municipalities 24 hours a day, 7 days per week, 365 days a year

In 2001, USEPA awarded the SMRSA the Region 2 the O & M Excellence Award in the Medium Secondary Treatment category and which was endorsed by the NJDEP.

In 2002, the Monmouth County Water Resources Association, (a County Environmental Organization), awarded SMRSA the Joseph C. Irwin Good Citizen Award for Exemplary Effort Demonstrating Civic Responsibility and Good Citizenship for our environmental efforts.