

SPRING-BENNER-WALKER JOINT AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

February 25, 2019

ATTENDANCE:

AUTHORITY MEMBERS:	Spring	Gregg Heny Chris McMurtrie Dondi Smeltzer
	Benner	Brian Book Dan Hoffman Timothy Miller
	Walker	Dennis McDowell

GUESTS: John Kostas and David Wise

CONSULTING ENGINEER: Andy Johnson, P.E.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: N. Warren Miller

EMPLOYEES: Kelly Gill

CALL TO ORDER:

The February 25, 2019, Regular Meeting of the Spring-Benner-Walker Joint Authority was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Dennis McDowell, Chairman. Mr. McDowell thanked everyone for attending and stated that the meeting would be recorded for transcription.

ROLL CALL:

Dondi Smeltzer, Secretary, took Roll Call, recording seven members present. Mr. Galbraith and Mr. Swanderski were excused from the meeting. Mr. McDowell, Chairman, noted that with a quorum present, the Spring-Benner-Walker Joint Authority was permitted to conduct business under the laws of Pennsylvania.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mr. McDowell, Chairman, led the Board members, Employees and Guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. McDowell asked the Board if there were any questions and/or changes to the February 11, 2019 meeting minutes as presented. Mr. T. Miller asked that a statement he made during the February 11, 2019 meeting be added to Page 21 of the meeting minutes pertaining to the Centre County Recycling & Refuse Authority. **Mr. Smeltzer moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to approve the Minutes of the February 11, 2019 Regular Meeting as amended.** 6 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent, 1 abstention. **The motion carried.** Mr. Hoffman abstained from the motion due to his absence from the February 11, 2019 Regular meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE:

115 Cherry Ridge Court – We received a letter from Laird Breon, Jr. of 115 Cherry Ridge Court thanking our employees for being so friendly and professional during his in-home inspection. Mr. Breon stated our Authority provides a great service and indicated the rate increase was really not bad at all.

Penn State University Park Airport - We received a notice from the Director, of the University Park Airport (UPA), Bryan Rodgers, informing us that Bellefonte Borough Wastewater Treatment Plant (BBWWTP) has not accepted their spent aircraft deicing fluid since April of 2018 due to their upgrades. Mr. Rodgers indicated the deicing fluid is currently being hauled off-site for recycling or to be treated as wastewater at a different facility; therefore, he is inquiring if they must continue paying SBWJA for conveyance to Bellefonte's Treatment Plant.

Mr. W. Miller stated that as of May 2018 the BBWWTP was no longer able to accept aircraft deicing fluid or sludge due to construction at their plant. Mr. Book asked if the UPA still had the ability to discharge deicing fluid to the sanitary sewer system and inquired about the reservation of EDUs for future service. Mr. W. Miller stated the service is still available and indicated the UPA should likely pay a reduced user fee to maintain those EDUs. Mr. W. Miller will contact Mr. Rodgers of the UPA to discuss this further.

Energy Research Council – We received a Right-To-Know Request Form from James Moore, Ph.D. of Energy Research Council requesting a copy of our current electricity contracts and copies of our most recent electricity bills for each of our accounts. The requested information was sent to Mr. Moore on February 18, 2019.

Nittany Engineering & Associates, LLC - We received a project update from Robert Decker for the Bellefonte Borough Authority's Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrades.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: Mr. Heny reviewed the financial reports for the period ending 01/31/2019. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Smeltzer to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS:

Approval of Requisitions:

Revenue Fund Requisition 2012-141 – Mr. Heny presented the Board with Revenue Requisition #2012-141 in the amount of \$63,345.92. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the presentation of Revenue Fund Requisition 2012-141. **Mr. Hoffman moved, seconded by Mr. T. Miller to approve Revenue Requisition 2012-141 payable to SBWJA in the amount of \$63,345.92.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

GUESTS:

Shiloh Road Project – David Wise, Benner Township Supervisor, indicated an informational meeting was held at the Benner Township Municipal Building on February 18, 2019 to discuss the proposed Shiloh Road project. Mr. Wise stated the Benner Township Supervisors now have the task of determining if the Walnut Grove/Rock Road/Big Hollow residents will be required to connect to the sanitary sewer at this time or at a later date.

Mr. Wise indicated that he has been receiving numerous calls from the affected property owners and stated that approximately 99% of the objection to the project is the cost of the sewer laterals. Mr. Wise stated that a couple of the affected property owners have asked if the tapping fee could be paid up front, but delay connecting to the public sewer. Mr. Wise wanted to know if something similar ever occurred with past projects or if this Authority would consider this request. Mr. McDowell stated that he isn't aware of the Authority Board ever granting such a request and he was not in favor of allowing a delayed connection

Mr. Book stated Benner Township has a mandatory connection ordinance in place, which this Authority enforces. Mr. Wise concurred that Benner Township does have a mandatory connection ordinance in place; however, he stated that waivers have been granted in the past on a case by case basis.

Mr. Wise wanted to know that if the Benner Township Supervisors decide to delay connection of the Walnut Grove/Rock Road/Big Hollow residents to the public sewer for a couple of years (possibly phase II of the project), would the SBWJA hold the tapping fees at the current rate. Mr. Smeltzer and Mr. Hoffman both agreed that any delays with the connection to public sewer could cost both the SBWJA customers and the property owners substantially more money than connecting initially. Mr. Johnson stated

that to remobilize a contractor and have restoration of those construction areas completed all over again (roughly 70%) certainly would be more expensive than completing the work initially. Mr. Book inquired about the status of a contract for the completion of the Special Study to the Act 537 Plan amendment. Mr. W. Miller indicated Gwin, Dobson & Foreman Engineers have provided a proposal for the work; however, the SBWJA will not expend any additional monies until a decision has been made by the Benner Township Supervisors outlining the scope of the project.

Mr. Book inquired about the Authority's procedure for collection of the tapping fee, notice of connection to the sanitary sewer system and the last increase to the tapping fees. Upon completion of the construction project, the Authority will issue a certified notice of connection letter to the property owner indicating they have 60 days to physically connect to the sanitary sewer, complete a sewer permit application and pay the necessary tapping/inspection fees. Benner Township's ordinance provides for the 60 day connection requirement. Mr. W. Miller stated the last time the Authority's tapping fees increased was in 2005 when they increased from \$2,200.00 to \$2,500.00 per EDU. Mr. T. Miller stated that the Authority also allows the property owner to finance the tapping fee over a three year period if needed. Mrs. Gill confirmed that a connection loan agreement would need signed with filing fees being assessed due to a municipal lien being filed against the property and a low interest rate being charged.

Mr. Book also indicated that Pennvest has a loan available to households with low-to-moderate income for financing of the sewer lateral. This program is between Pennvest and the property owner. Mr. Wise stated that two property owners have indicated they do not have the necessary funds to pay the tapping fees, construct the sewer lateral and abandon their existing on-lot system.

Mr. Wise stated the Benner Township Supervisors are still working as a Board to decide if the homes in the Walnut Grove/Rock Road/Big Hollow area will have to be served by public sewer. Mr. Wise indicated that in January 2019 the Benner Township Board of Supervisors voted to move forward with providing sewer service to the Shiloh Road corridor.

Mr. Smeltzer stated that it was his understanding that there were some failing on-lot systems in the Walnut Grove/Rock Road/Big Hollow area that were in need of public sewer. Mr. Wise said that is not true—at least according to the Township's Septage Management Plan (SMP). Mrs. Gill stated that the SBWJA was provided with an email from a property owner in this area indicating they were unable to attend the public forum, but would welcome public sewer due to having problems with their on-lot system.

Mr. Book provided history of determining if an on-lot system is considered to be malfunctioning and the percentages at which the PA DEP would become involved with the requirement of public sewer. Mr. Book stated it was his understanding that the number of suspected, malfunctioning on-lot systems in this area were very close to the 35% requirement of the PA DEP in which public sewer would be planned. Mr. W. Miller confirmed Mr. Book's statement and Mr. Smeltzer then asked Mr. Wise if he was aware of this. Mr. Wise concurred with the statement, but stated that Benner Township's SMP has worked well by identifying no visible failures and no steel tanks were detected anywhere in the Township that they are aware of.

Mr. Wise then asked for a timeline associated with the construction and subsequent connection to the sanitary sewer. He was thinking the mainline and pump stations would be installed in late 2020 with connection to the sewer in 2021 or even delaying until 2022. He has had several residents request more time to allow for saving enough funds to pay for the connection to public sewer. Mr. Wise then stated the Township is considering waiving the mandated inspection/pumping of the on-lot system in 2020-2021 and making that part of the decommissioning of the system at the time connection is made to the public sewer. In that scenario, Mr. T. Miller asked if the residents would be willing to pay the normal quarterly sewer rental bill as though they connected to public sewer. Mr. Wise stated probably not. Mr. T. Miller said that's a real issue because this is being subsidized by the SBWJA customer base which had to connect to the public sewer within 60 days as required by Benner Township's ordinance. The SBWJA has a reservation of capacity fee that is charged to developers for the undeveloped lots.

Mr. Johnson indicated that if we can get started soon, the project could be bid for the 2020 construction season with connection being late 2020 or the Spring of 2021. Mr. Wise asked how it would be handled if the residents wanted to wait until 2021 to connect to the sewer system—when would the quarterly billing begin? Mr. W. Miller stated that once the project is complete and turned over to this Authority for ownership, a 60 day certified notice of connection letter would be sent to the property owner in accordance with Benner Township's mandatory connection ordinance. The SBWJA typically begins billing for service at day 61, even if connection is not made; however, there have been some circumstances where the Authority personnel have used their discretion with enforcement of the billing. Mr. W. Miller indicated those circumstances could be due to weather. Mrs. Gill stated there have also been extensions due to a contractor obtaining the contract for multiple sewer lateral installations, which may have caused some delays with timing.

Mr. Kostas asked if the Authority would be willing to add something to its website about the Pennvest Homeowner Septic Program, which the potential customer could use to finance the sewer lateral costs. Mrs. Gill stated that the USDA also offers a program for the financing of the sewer lateral and typically this information is shared with the potential customer during the public forum once all planning is approved and prior to commencement of construction. Discussion was held about the SBWJA website only being used by its existing customer that already have public sewer; therefore, it was recommended that Benner Township add the information to its website or Township newsletter. Mrs. Gill stated that she will email Sharon Royer, Benner Township Secretary, with the information surrounding the Pennvest Homeowner Septic Program and the USDA program.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Mr. W. Miller had nothing further to report.

ENGINEER'S REPORT: Mr. Johnson had nothing further to report.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no Old Business presented for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bellefonte Borough 4th Quarter 2018 Billings – Mrs. Gill informed the Board that she recently received the 4th quarter 2018 billings from the Bellefonte Borough Authority. The combined billings will be presented for approval at the next meeting and will total roughly \$1.7 million.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel & Community Relations Committee – Mr. Hoffman had nothing to report.

Facilities Committee: Mr. Galbraith was absent from the meeting.

Financial Committee: Mr. Heny had nothing to report.

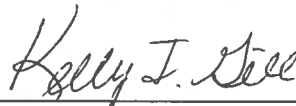
ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Hoffman moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Dondi Smeltzer, Secretary



Kelly J. Gill, Recording Secretary

CC: Benner Township _____
Spring Township _____
Walker Township _____