

SPRING-BENNER-WALKER JOINT AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

September 26, 2022

ATTENDANCE:

AUTHORITY MEMBERS:	Spring	Joseph Galbraith Richard Kuzemchak Rodney Maney Christie McMurtrie
	Benner	Brian Book Willis Houser, Jr.
	Walker	Dennis McDowell Joseph Swanderski

GUESTS: None present

EMPLOYEES: Will Barton & Kelly Gill

CALL TO ORDER:

The September 26, 2022, 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 purposes.

ROLL CALL:

Joseph Swanderski, Secretary, took Roll Call, recording seven members present. Mr. Book entered the meeting at 7:02 p.m. and Mr. Hoffman was 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 and Employees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. McDowell asked the Board if there were any questions and/or changes to the September 12, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. **Mr. Galbraith moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to approve the Minutes of the September 12, 2022 Regular Meeting as presented. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. The motion carried.**

Mr. Book entered the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE: There was no Correspondence presented for discussion.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: Mr. McMurtrie reviewed the financial reports for the period ending 08/31/2022. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Swanderski to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS:

Approval of Requisitions:

Revenue Fund Requisition 2020-59– Mr. McMurtrie presented the Board with Revenue Requisition #2020-59 in the amount of \$43,777.67. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the presentation of Revenue Fund Requisition 2020-59. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Swanderski to approve Revenue Requisition 2020-59 payable to SBWJA in the amount of \$43,777.67. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.**

GUESTS: There were no Guests present for the meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT: Due to Mr. Miller's absence from the meeting, Mrs. Gill provided an overview of the Executive Director's Report.

Job Fair/Recruitment of Employees – Mrs. Gill informed the Board that we've had an open position in the maintenance department for months and have been unable to find a suitable candidate to fill the position. Our typical methods of advertising for the position (PWEA, PRWA, local newspapers, PA Career Link) haven't produced the number of qualified candidates we have experienced in previous years; therefore, we will be looking into expanding our recruitment options. Mrs. Gill stated the job market is very competitive at this time.

There are two upcoming job fairs being held and the Authority's management will be attending those events. Mrs. Gill stated that earlier this year a job fair was held at CPI, but due to the cost of attendance at the event and not knowing what to expect from a job fair, the Authority personnel didn't attend.

The Authority's management will be attending a job fair at the Millbrook Plaza in Clinton County the afternoon of October 5, 2022 and one being held at the Nittany Mall the evening of October 13, 2022. Mr. McMurtrie inquired about the cost of the job fairs and Mrs. Gill indicated there was no cost for the one at the Nittany Mall, but the cost of attendance at the Clinton County job fair was \$25.00.

Mr. Galbraith stated that he doesn't believe the wage being paid and the benefits are the issue with recruitment, he believes it is the amount of work the maintenance crew performs. He continued by stating there is a lot to learn and do in this job. Mr. Galbraith stated he believes that if the Authority would offer some type of training program, similar to an apprenticeship, we may be able to attract potential candidates. The potential candidate could work so many hours, training in a variety of tasks and receive a raise after successful completion of the tasks. Mr. Galbraith believes that in today's world, that's the only way to learn because the schools don't teach it and it's a unique job. Mr. Galbraith stated we are lucky to have the employees we have.

Mr. Barton stated he supports the idea of a training program, but is unsure how we can find candidates that would even be considered for such a training program. Mr. Book stated it appears as though Mr. Galbraith is recommending that we attempt to establish a training program at the high school level or possibly with CPI and Mr. Galbraith concurred. Mrs. Gill stated that earlier this year Mr. Miller reached out to CPI to see if there would be any candidates in the construction field looking to obtain employment immediately after graduation, but there was no interest. Our maintenance crew even assisted the students with the repair of some of CPI's privately owned sewer facilities for the new medical facility hoping to draw in some potential job seekers, but that was unsuccessful as well. Mr. Barton stated the maintenance personnel showed the students how to use a pipe laser and how to properly make the repair. Mrs. Gill stated the issue is we aren't getting anyone interested to even apply except for the few applicants that have large gaps in employment history and have limited skills.

Discussion was held about the requirements of the job such as obtaining a wastewater operator license within two years of employment and the need for an employee with a commercial driver's license. Mrs. Gill informed the Board that the requirements for obtaining a commercial driver's license changed earlier this year and the federal government now requires the individual to successfully complete driver training through a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) approved training provider such as CPI. As a result of the change in requirements and expense of training, we are not requiring a CDL at this time.

Mr. Swanderski stated that just prior to his retirement from PSU and the COVID-19 pandemic he was working with Guy Woodard of CPI to establish a program where the students in the wastewater/water operator training program would obtain the hands-on portion of their training from PSU. In connection with the classroom work received at CPI, this would allow the student to have the required hands-on experience so they would have the opportunity to be a licensed operator in the Commonwealth after successfully passing the required exam. Mr. Swanderski stated he doesn't know if any other business picked up that training aspect. Mrs. Gill stated that Mr. Miller has been assisting CPI with accreditation requirements for their wastewater/water operator program that is starting back up and perhaps he could contact CPI to inquire about the possibility of hands-on training at our Authority with the hope of attracting potential employees.

Mr. Kuzemchak asked how many maintenance employees were needed. Mr. Barton stated we currently employ six (6), but seven (7) is the bare minimum needed. Mr. Barton stated he could provide work for as many as ten (10) employees. Mr. Barton stressed the importance of cross training of employees so certain tasks are not limited to certain employees. Mr. Galbraith stated he doesn't understand why all employees were required to obtain a CDL to begin with. Mrs. Gill stated that when on a job site and certain equipment is needed to make the repairs you don't want to limit yourselves so that only certain employees can drive certain equipment. Mr. Barton indicated that with limited staff, you almost have to put the employee where they are best utilized which doesn't allow enough opportunity to train at new tasks especially when it's an emergency situation.

Mr. Barton asked if a new employee would be interested in obtaining their CDL would the Authority consider paying for the required training. Mr. Swanderski inquired about the cost of obtaining a CDL. Mrs. Gill stated that due to the new FMCSA requirements, we would have to look into the cost for the training, but up until this point the Authority paid the difference in cost to maintain a CDL as opposed to a Class C driver's license, which was minimal. Mr. Houser stated the last time he looked at the CDL course at CPI the cost was over \$5,000. Mr. Barton stated there is also additional training required for the hazmat endorsement as well. Mr. Barton stated a CDL is required to operate the Authority's Mack dump truck and Vactor truck.

Mr. Galbraith stated we can discuss this further going forward. Concern was stressed about paying for the cost of the training and the employee terminating employment shortly after receiving the training. It was also recommended to add a clause about repaying the cost of the training if the employee terminates employment within a certain amount of time.

Mr. Houser indicated he would possibly like to attend the job fair at the Nittany Mall to talk to any potential candidates about the work we do.

SBWJA Solicitor – Mrs. Gill informed the Board that Mr. Mix will be retiring at the end of 2022 so our Authority will need to solicit proposals for a Solicitor in the near future. Mr. Book asked about the procedure for hiring the Authority's professional services. Mr. McDowell stated that a request for proposal (RFP) would be prepared and the proposals would be submitted to the Board for a final decision. Mr. McDowell stated that Mr. Miller and Mrs. Gill would solicit proposals and provide a recommendation to the Board, but the final decision belongs to the Authority Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

Review of Township Act 537 Plans – Gwin, Dobson & Foreman provided a draft of their review of the Township Act 537 Plans for discussion at the October 10, 2022 meeting when Mr. Johnson is in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS:

Benner Pike Shopping Center (13.44 EDUs) – Mrs. Gill indicated the Benner Pike Shopping Center in the amount of 13.44 EDUs has met all of our requirements and is ready for approval. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to approve the Agreement of Dedication for the Benner Pike Shopping Center in the amount of 13.44 EDUs. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.**

QUESTIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Mr. Miller was absent from the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel & Community Relations Committee: Mr. Hoffman was absent from the meeting.

Facilities Committee: Mr. Houser had nothing to report.


Financial Committee: Mr. McMurtrie had nothing to report.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Mr. McDowell recessed the Board for an Executive Session at 7:38 p.m. to discuss litigation. The meeting reconvened at 7:53 p.m.

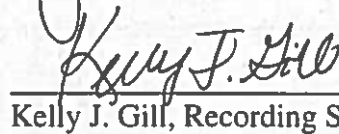
ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Houser to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. 8 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph Swanderski, Secretary



Kelly J. Gill, Recording Secretary

CC: Benner Township _____
Spring Township _____
Walker Township _____