

SPRING-BENNER-WALKER JOINT AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

January 22, 2024

ATTENDANCE:

AUTHORITY MEMBERS:	Spring	Joseph Galbraith Douglas McKee Chris McMurtrie
	Benner	Brian Book Willis Houser, Jr.
	Walker	Dennis Brown Dennis McDowell

GUESTS: Emily McGrory & Talaya Coffey

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: N. Warren Miller

EMPLOYEES: Will Barton & Kelly Gill

CALL TO ORDER:

The January 22, 2024, 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:

Willis Houser, Jr., Secretary, took Roll Call, recording seven members present. Mr. Hughes and Mr. Maney 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 January 8, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. **Mr. Galbraith moved, seconded by Mr. Book to approve the Minutes of the January 8, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. The motion carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

Centre County Board of Commissioners - We received a letter from John Franek, Jr., Centre County Government Administrator, requesting our Authority grant the Reduced User Fee for their properties located at 502 & 512 Valentine Street. The homes located at these addresses were demolished and the County has no immediate plans to rebuild at this time, but would like to ensure sewer capacity is available if needed. Mr. Miller explained that the sewer laterals were exposed and properly capped; therefore, he recommends the reduce user fee be approved for each of the properties. **Mr. Galbraith moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to grant the Reduced User Fee to Centre County Government for their properties located at 502 & 512 Valentine Street, Bellefonte. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. The motion carried.**

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report: Mr. McMurtrie reviewed the financial reports for the period ending 12/31/2023. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the Treasurer's Report. The budget vs. actual report for the period January 1 through December 31, 2023 was made available for review on the Authority's televising system and Mr. Miller indicated he would like to make a few comments. In 2023 the Authority's net income amounted to approximately \$1.2M, which represented approximately 31% of the overall budget. Mr. Miller stated the Authority had a great year financially and some of the Authority's cash reserves can be applied towards the proposed Shiloh Road project slated for 2025; however, there is routine video and jetting work that staff is unable to complete due to the lack of available maintenance staff.

Mr. Miller discussed the struggles this Authority and surrounding municipalities are facing due to the lack of employment interest for the openings in the maintenance department as a licensed wastewater/water operator. Mr. Book asked Mr. Miller if he had any ideas/suggestions as to how the Authority can fill those openings in the maintenance department. Mr. Miller stated unfortunately not, the Authority has placed now hiring signs in the yard of the office building, advertised in local newspapers of general circulation and in trade magazines and attended career days/fairs, but receive little to no response. Mr. Miller continued by stating this job is very specialized and with PA DEP regulations ever-changing, more training is required for the licensed operator. Mr. Book then inquired about the status of the wastewater/water operator program that CPI will be offering. Mr. Miller stated the program is still in the works, but he's not aware of any students being enrolled at this time. Mr. Miller ended the conversation by stating that the Authority staff will continue to promote the positions in the maintenance department as they have been until suitable candidates are hired to fill the positions.

Mr. Miller then displayed a comparison of the Authority's bank account balances from 12/31/2022 to 12/31/2023 and provided an overview of how the Authority's accounting process works and the impact that has on the bank account balance report. **Mr. Brown moved, seconded by Mr. Book 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 2020-89– Mr. McMurtrie presented the Board with Revenue Requisition #2020-89 in the amount of \$78,805.99 and asked if there were any questions regarding the presentation of Revenue Fund Requisition 2020-89. Mr. McDowell referenced the payment to PA Rural Water Association (PRWA) in the amount of \$1,500.00 for training and wanted to know if the Benner Township Water Authority was reimbursing the Authority for this training. Mrs. Gill stated no, the training is for both wastewater and water training. Mr. Miller explained that PRWA conducts training for wastewater, drinking water and stormwater in the Commonwealth. The annual conference is a three-day event held each year (typically in March) in State College at the Penn Stater Conference Center.

Mr. Galbraith referenced the payment to Dennis Sales & Service in the amount of \$552.50 for a CL2 heater shut off valve and requested additional information. Mr. Miller explained that the heater shut off valve is located on the 1-ton chlorine gas cylinder at Pump Station #6 (Rockview) and is used to increase the rate of speed that you can withdraw the chlorine gas from the cylinder. Mr. Book informed the Board of the potential for liability if the heater shut off valve is not installed. With no further questions, **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Brown to approve Revenue Requisition 2020-89 payable to SBWJA in the amount of \$78,805.99.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

GUESTS: There were no Guests wishing to address the Board.

RECAP OF SYSTEM OVERVIEW REPORT (2023):

Will Barton, Maintenance Crew Leader, provided a recap of the work completed on the sanitary sewer system for 2023.

PA One Calls – We responded to 1,082 PA One Calls for SBWJA and 39 for the Benner Township Water Authority in 2023.

In-Home Inspections – There were 329 in-home inspections completed in 2023.

Sewer Lateral/Water Service Line Inspections – We completed 138 sewer lateral inspections and one (1) water service line inspection in 2023.

Callouts – The maintenance department responded to 32 callouts for SBWJA and 1 for the Benner Township Water Authority in 2023.

Sewer Permits – A total of 156 sewer permits were purchased in 2023 for a total of 164.48 EDUs.

Developments added in 2023 – Mr. Barton indicated four (4) new developments were added to the sewer system in 2023. These included Logan Greene Phase 1B (partial), Harvest Meadows Phase 1 (Sections 2,3,4), Village of Nittany Glen Phase 7 and Deerhaven Phase 3B. Of those four projects, our Authority invoiced for 1091.00 man-hours of inspection services.

Video Truck/Vactor Truck Footages - The maintenance staff cleaned 64,500 feet of sewer mainline and video inspected 68,369 feet of mainline in 2023. The Authority also completed 6,031 feet of video inspection work for other entities in 2023.

2023 Maintenance Projects – Mr. Barton indicated in 2023 capital improvement projects consisted of:

- Sealcoating the pavement at Pump Station #5 (Mingoville)
- Sealcoating the pavement and drilling a well at Pump Station #7 (Zion Ridgecrest); Disconnection from Walker Township Water Association
- Shelter upgrades and epoxying the wet well at Pump Station #1A (Springfield)
- Epoxying the wet wells at Pump Station #2 (Jacksonville) and Pump Station #3 (Musser Lane)
- Repairs to the administrative building parking area (retaining wall replacement) to include paving

2024 Sewer Extensions – Mr. Barton informed the Board that there are four (4) developments planned for construction in 2024, which consist of the remaining phase of the Village of Nittany (Phase III-A), next phase of Logan Greene, next phase of Harvest Meadows and Shady Lane Estates (Phase 1).

Mr. Barton indicated that he and Mr. Miller have a meeting scheduled for later this week with the developer of Logan Greene (Berks Homes) to discuss the future plans of the development. Mr. Miller explained that a portion of Logan Greene development was planned to discharge to the Authority's Pump Station #17 (Mews) which is located in Burnham Farms development and would need upgraded to suction lift pumps to accommodate the additional flow. It appears as though the developer is wanting to meet to discuss other options due to the cost of upgrading the pump station which will be at their sole expense. The Authority will also be looking into possibly eliminating Pump Station #17 (Mews) in its entirety by extending a gravity sewer main line through private property with connection to our existing main line along Valentine Hill Road. This option was considered when Burnham Farms was developed, but a private property owner would not approve the required sewer easement to the developer. Mr. Miller indicated these are preliminary discussions and more information will follow as things develop.

Tapping Fees – Mr. Book stated that he has a question/comment regarding Mr. Barton’s recap of the amount of sewer permits purchased/tapping fees received in 2023. Based on the 164.48 EDUs added in 2023, approximately \$300K was received in tapping fees, which was included as revenue and attributed to the \$1.2M increase in assets. Mr. Book stated that tapping fees are supposed to be segregated for replacement costs when lines fail, but the Authority has a history of not segregating those monies. Mr. Book continued by stating they are treated as a revenue.

Mr. Miller stated that the Authority does not keep the tapping fee income in a separate account nor does he recommend doing so. Mr. Miller stated if you look back through the history of this Authority and the improvements that have been made, we’ve used those monies for upgrades. Mr. Book stated he would defer to Mr. Miller, relative to the Rockview agreement on how to handle it, but we should remember when we talk about the fact that our assets increased by \$1.2M approximately \$300K of that is encumbered assets -- we can’t just spend them. Mr. Book stated he just wanted to make everyone aware of that.

Contracted Services to Benner Township Water Authority (BTWA) - Mr. Miller indicated he would like to clarify a statement he made earlier in the meeting about needing additional employees for the maintenance department. In the past it has been suggested that if this Authority no longer provided contracted services to the BTWA that would eliminate the need for additional staffing. Mr. Miller would like to add, just so everyone’s on the same page, that the contracted services this Authority provides to the BTWA has little to no impact on the overall manpower. Approximately 1/4 of one (1) maintenance employee’s time for the entire year is spent on providing services to the BTWA. Mr. Miller continued by stating that when the Authority’s video truck/vactor truck is in use it requires at least four (4) employees to operate due to the need for flaggers for any work completed within the roadways. With only having six (6) full-time and one (1) part-time employee this Authority has been limited with completing this routine work as mentioned earlier in the meeting. Mr. Galbraith stated he knows it would cost this Authority money, but we may need to consider substituting that work by hiring outside flaggers. Mr. Miller stated when this was suggested before, we looked into this and it’s very expensive to hire flaggers. The cost would be significant enough that it would require proper budgeting. Mr. Galbraith stated that this job requires a variety of knowledge and work; however, we may want to consider hiring individuals as laborers and not requiring them to obtain their wastewater/water operator license.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

2024 Ford F-350 Service Truck – As mentioned previously during the budgeting process, a 2023 Ford F-350 Service Truck was budgeted for and ordered at the beginning of 2023; however, we were informed in October that we would not be receiving a 2023 model. As a result, a 2024 model was ordered on our behalf. Mr. Miller stated we received a telephone call last week letting us know it was delivered to the dealership. The truck is now at Hostetler Truck Bodies & Trailers waiting for the utility bed to be installed. The truck was budgeted as a capital improvement for 2024.

Pump Station #14 (Litke) – Mr. Miller informed the Board that last week we received some high alarms and phase fault alarms from Pump Station #14 (Litke). This was due to the contactor on the transfer switch being damaged (burned). Mr. Miller explained that when a city power outage occurs, the transfer switch automatically flips to start the generator, which provides power to the pump station during the outage. The contactor on the city power side of the transfer switch burned and needs replaced. Mr. Miller stated the part to make the repair is approximately \$1,000.00 and will take more than 100 working days to receive. During this process we became aware of the transfer switch being discontinued and the cost for a new transfer switch is \$3,410.00. Mr. Galbraith stated that he doesn't want a temporary fix and would rather spend the money to purchase a new transfer switch. **Mr. Galbraith moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to authorize the purchase of a new transfer switch for Pump Station #14 (Litke) in the estimated amount of \$3,410.00.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

Shiloh Road Sewer Extension Project:

PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) -Mr. Miller stated that last fall discussions were held at a meeting about the Authority being required to pay mitigation permitting fees for the Shiloh Road Sewer Extension Project due to construction taking place within the Chapter 105 wetlands. In lieu of permitting fees being paid to the PA DEP, the Authority agreed to assist the PFBC with their Stream Enhancement project.

Mr. Miller indicated that over the past week he has had discussions with the PFBC who are in the process of applying for the grant monies to fund the Stream Enhancement project in conjunction with our Shiloh Road Sewer Extension project. This will be a joint project among the Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy, Susquehanna River Basin Commission and the PFBC to improve the stream habitat and restore the floodplain reconnection to the stream within the Spring Creek Watershed. Mr. Miller indicated that he provided the PFBC with the requested written confirmation of this Authority's commitment to the project that was previously discussed/authorized at an Authority meeting last fall.

OLD BUSINESS:

Overview of Services Provided to Benner Township Water Authority (BTWA) - The Authority Board was provided with a detailed description of the maintenance labor (hours) provided and equipment used/billed to the Benner Township Water Authority for the 4th quarter of 2023. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the information provided.

Mrs. Gill informed the Board that the Authority took in 20% above its cost to complete the contracted work for the BTWA in 2023. Mr. Galbraith asked if the new rates have been established for 2024. Mrs. Gill indicated the total cost per employee (benefit, wages, taxes, etc.) has been calculated for 2024, which is used to determine the hourly rate charged to the BTWA for the Authority's contracted services provided. She and Mr. Miller reviewed the information and have set the new labor rate for 2024 at \$60.00/hr. regular rate and \$90.00/hr. overtime rate. The weekend/holiday rate has been set at \$38.00 per system/per day. Mr. Galbraith asked if call out pay is issued to the Authority employees completing the daily water system check on the weekends and Mr. Miller stated no, the employee is paid the flat weekend/holiday rate. Mrs. Gill indicated that if a call out to the water system occurs, the BTWA is invoiced based on the hourly overtime rate.

Fee Schedule – Mr. Miller informed the Board that the Authority’s fee schedule has not been adjusted since 2022 and he is recommending modifications to reflect cost of living adjustments/ inflation. The fee schedule reflects Authority owned equipment and is referenced when completing work for sources outside of SBWJA that don’t have a contract with our Authority. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Houser to approve the amended Fee Schedule as presented and made a part of these official meeting minutes.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

PMAA Board Member Training – Mrs. Gill reminded the Board that if anyone is interested in attending the PMAA Board Member training on March 21, 2024 in Camp Hill they should contact the Authority office soon so registration can occur during the discount period. Mrs. Gill stated that two (2) board members have already confirmed their attendance.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no New Business presented for discussion.

QUESTIONS FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: There were no further questions asked of the Executive Director.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. McKee to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,



Willis Houser, Jr., Secretary



Kelly J. Gill, Recording Secretary

CC: Benner Township _____
Spring Township _____
Walker Township _____

Fee Schedule for
Spring-Benner-Walker Joint Authority
Effective 01/22/2024

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Regular Hourly Rate</u>	<u>Overtime Hourly Rate</u>
Vactor Truck	\$240.00	\$360.00
Video Truck	\$225.00	\$337.50
Executive Director	\$100.00	\$150.00
Maintenance Laborer	\$ 65.00	\$ 97.50
Office Staff	\$ 62.50	\$ 93.75
Video Camera	\$ 75.00	\$112.50
Backhoe	\$ 70.00	\$105.00
Manhole Vacuum Test (per manhole)	\$ 50.00	\$ 75.00
Tow Behind Sewer Cleaner	\$125.00	\$187.50
Gorman Rupp Pump (4")	\$ 75.00	\$112.50
Utility Truck	\$ 60.00	\$ 90.00
Mack Dump Truck	\$ 75.00	\$112.50
T-Tag Dump Truck	\$ 65.00	\$ 97.50
Pipe Laser (Per Day Rental)	\$125.00	\$187.50
Gas Detector Equipment	\$ 30.00	\$ 45.00
Air Compressor	\$ 45.00	\$ 67.50
Generator	\$ 50.00	\$ 75.00
Pressure Washer	\$ 40.00	\$ 60.00
Jack Hammer	\$ 25.00	\$ 37.50
Tamper	\$ 25.00	\$ 37.50
Lawn Mower	\$ 10.00	\$ 15.00
Asphalt Saw	\$ 25.00	\$ 37.50
Trash Pump	\$ 25.00	\$ 37.50

*All work performed outside of the SBWJA's normal operating hours will be charged a rate of 1.5 times the regular hourly rate. Work performed on weekends or holidays will reflect a four-hour minimum service call. Weekend callouts are in effect from Friday at 3:30 p.m. through Monday at 7:00 a.m. Work performed throughout the week, outside of normal operating hours (7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.), will reflect a two-hour minimum service call.