

SPRING-BENNER-WALKER JOINT AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

October 14, 2024

ATTENDANCE:

AUTHORITY MEMBERS:

Spring	Joseph Galbraith Rodney Maney Douglas McKee Christie McMurtrie
Benner	Brian Book
Walker	Dennis Brown Dennis McDowell

GUESTS: Aria Eichhof, Aedan Shevlia, Dave Capperella

CONSULTING SOLICITOR: Robert Mix, Esq.

CONSULTING ENGINEER: Steven Gibson, P.E.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: N. Warren Miller

EMPLOYEES: Kelly Gill

CALL TO ORDER:

The October 14, 2024, Regular Meeting of the Spring-Benner-Walker Joint Authority was called to order at 4:00 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:

Rodney Maney, Assistant Secretary, took Roll Call, recording six members present. Mr. Book entered the meeting at 4:01 p.m. Mr. Houser and Mr. Hughes 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.

PLEGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

THANK YOU – Mr. McDowell took a moment to thank the board members who attended the Town Hall meeting with the property owners affected by the Shiloh Road Sewer Extension project. Mr. McDowell indicated it showed support by the Authority Board as a whole and he also commended Mr. Miller for a job well done.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

Mr. McDowell asked the Board if there were any questions and/or changes to the September 23, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. **Mr. Galbraith moved, seconded by Mr. Brown to approve the Minutes of the September 23, 2024 Regular Meeting as presented.** 6 ayes, 0 nays, 3 absent. **The motion carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE:

PA DEP - We received notification from Thomas Randis of PA DEP indicating our Water Quality Management (WQM) permit for the Shiloh Road Sewer Extension project was issued on October 3, 2024.

Mr. Book entered the meeting at 4:01 p.m.

ELA Group – We received an email from Matthew Harlow requesting a letter of intent to provide sewer service for the proposed Autumn Ridge Residential Development located along Zion Road in Spring Township. ***Mr. Harlow was provided with a letter of intent in the amount of 148 EDUs for the proposed subdivision in Spring Township on October 7, 2024.*** Mr. Miller indicated there is potential for two (2) pump stations for this project.

Edward and Kristine Ranio/140 Railroad Street - We received a letter from Edward and Kristine Ranio of 136 Railroad Street regarding their vacant lot located at 140 Railroad Street. The Ranio's have been paying a Reduced User Fee for 140 Railroad Street since they purchased the property in November of 2021 and have indicated they want to discontinue future service to this property. Mr. Miller indicated this property previously had a home, which has been demolished. The Ranio's have indicated they no longer require sewer service to this property.

Meagan Olson/222 Fishburn Hill Road – We received an email from Meagan Olson who recently purchased the property located at 222 Fishburn Hill Road indicating our Authority's demand for connecting the home to the public sewer system is not supported by law and she is requesting confirmation that our Authority will no longer be pursuing/demanding the connection of their home to the public sewer.

Mr. Miller indicated earlier this year the Benner Township Supervisors determined the property at 222 Fishburn Hill Road, as well as a commercial property on Benner Pike, must connect to the public sewer. As a result, a 60-day connection notice was issued by certified mail to both property owners. Due to the property at 222 Fishburn Hill Road being listed for sale, the buyer was informed of the connection requirements which were to be completed within 60 days of the property closing.

Mr. Miller informed the Board that throughout the email exchange he tried explaining Benner Township's mandatory connection ordinance to Ms. Olson; however, she still believes the 150 feet requirement by state law stands. Mr. Miller suggested that Ms. Olson contact her attorney to obtain his/her opinion on the matter.

APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS:

Approval of Requisitions:

Revenue Fund Requisition 2020-106– Mr. McMurtrie presented the Board with Revenue Requisition #2020-106 in the amount of \$107,657.12. Mr. McDowell asked if there were any questions regarding the presentation of Revenue Fund Requisition 2020-106. **Mr. Brown moved, seconded by Mr. Book to approve Revenue Requisition 2020-106 payable to SBWJA in the amount of \$107,657.12.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

GUESTS:

David Capperella (2987 & 2989 Benner Pike) – Mr. Capperella owns a commercial property located at 2987 & 2989 Benner Pike which is being required to connect to the public sewer system. The building is currently occupied by Truck Stuff & More and Sharer Auto. Mr. Capperella indicated each of those businesses have two (2) employees and there are two (2) bathrooms located in the building. Based on our Authority's current rules and regulations, Mr. Capperella's property would be assessed at 2.00 EDUs. Through recent discussions with Mr. Miller, Mr. Capperella indicated he understands the Authority is currently looking into the possibility of restructuring the EDU assessments for these types of non-residential (retail/commercial) properties to account for employees and metered water usage. Mr. Capperella is requesting the Authority Board consider modifying its rules and regulations to accommodate small business owners with multiple businesses located within one commercial building.

Mr. Mix indicated he would need to look into this further because our fee structure has to be reasonable and uniform across the board for all businesses.

Mr. Miller indicated that our Authority is starting to see more commercial properties in this type of setting and wants to ensure that we are not overselling our capacity. Mr. Book stated that our Authority's rules and regulations pertaining to sewer rentals or charges are consistent with the neighboring Authorities (UAJA & Mid-Centre County).

Mr. Miller added that we are also starting to see businesses opening within other businesses such as the Starbucks that is about to open within the Weis Markets in Bellefonte. The Board indicated that based on our current rules and regulations, Starbucks would be treated as a separate business.

Mr. Mix stated that he will provide the Board with his written opinion on this matter so it could be discussed further at the November 12, 2024 board meeting. Mr. Capperella thanked the Board for their consideration.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

SCADA Updates – Mr. Miller informed the Board that last week work was completed to convert our SCADA system to be able to communicate with a newer version SCADAPack, Schneider M221. These updates were necessary due to the discontinuance of the 334 SCADAPacks that our Authority currently uses for communication purposes. The updates also involved reprogramming the language at each site to include our meter pits and pump stations. During this process, the meters at each meter pit have also been recalibrated for accuracy. As each 334 SCADAPack currently in use fails, it will be replaced with the newer version, M221. Mr. Miller reminded the Board that the cost of the M221 SCADAPack is much less than that of the 334 SCADAPack, which is due to the extra features offered by the 334 that our Authority doesn't require for operational purposes.

Shiloh Road Sewer Extension Project:

Fair Compensation Estimates for Easements – Last week we received the Fair Compensation Estimates from Mr. Ceglar for each property associated with the Shiloh Road Sewer Extension project that we'll need to obtain an easement from. Mr. Miller indicated that he hasn't had the opportunity to review the package of information yet, but will begin that process soon. This will require printing the documents and verifying the accuracy of the information before providing everything to Mr. Mix for his submission of the right-of-way agreement to each affected property owner.

Full Appraisal for Pump Station Properties – Mr. Miller suggested the Board may want to consider having a full appraisal completed for each property, privately owned, where a sewer pump station will be installed for this project. This will aid in determining proper compensation to those property owners, where acquisition may be more difficult. Mr. Miller also indicated we may want to consider owning/purchasing the property where the pump station will be located. Discussion was held about the pros/cons of owning the land where the pump station is located versus only having an easement for the permanent structure. Township zoning requirements may also have an impact on this decision. This topic will be added to the October 28, 2024 meeting agenda for further discussion and/or approval.

Town Hall Meeting – Mr. Miller stated that overall, he believes the Town Hall meeting with the property owners affected by the Shiloh Road Sewer Extension project went well. Mr. Miller thanked the board members for their support during the meeting. There were many property owners that have met with Mr. Miller and Mr. Gibson to discuss the location of their sewer tap and proposed sewer lateral. As a result, some alignment changes have been made.

Maintenance Laborer – Mr. Miller informed the Board that an interview was completed last week and the candidate was offered a position contingent upon passing the required physical and drug/alcohol testing. Authority staff also has an interview scheduled for this week. Mr. Miller stressed the importance of obtaining additional staff with the growth this Authority is experiencing.

Candlewood Hotel/Car Wash – Mr. Miller discussed an issue that has recently come to light with the new hotel and car wash being proposed at the intersection of Amberleigh Lane and Benner Pike in Benner Township. A pressurized sewer line with a grinder pump is being proposed by the engineer for each site and/or a duplex pump station that could serve both lots with dedication to the Authority. Mr. Miller expressed concern with issues that could arise with what hotel occupants flush to the sewer system and flow into a grinder pump station; therefore, he is working with the engineer to determine a way to provide gravity service to both properties. Mr. Miller indicated gravity service could've been available for the hotel through a manhole along Amberleigh Lane; however, floor elevation has already been established for the hotel so it is no longer feasible at that location.

Mr. Miller recently met with the engineer on site to review/discuss connection via gravity service to a manhole across Benner Pike along what was previously known as Waite's Hill Lane (Landscaping by Meyer) that drains to Fishburn Hill Road. Mr. Miller indicated it would be approximately 360 feet from the existing manhole to the corner of the property where the car wash is being proposed; however, it would involve crossing the Benner Pike which will be very expensive. The engineer is currently working on providing estimates for each of the three scenarios:

- #1 – individual grinder pump for the hotel and car wash;
- #2 - duplex pump station to serve both the hotel and car wash
- #3 – gravity service across Benner Pike to an existing manhole

Mr. Miller offered assistance with obtaining the easement and highway occupancy permit for the Benner Pike crossing. Mr. Book asked if it was our right to deny their request for the installation of a grinder pump and/or duplex pump station and require them to install gravity service. Mr. Mix indicated he would have to look into that further. The Board indicated they agree with Mr. Miller and the developer should be required to install gravity service to the property.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

Rules & Regulations (Section 2- Sewer Rentals or Charges) – Mr. Mix stated that he will provide the Board with his written opinion on the sewer rentals or charges prior to the November 12, 2024 board meeting.

Benner Township Mandatory Connection Ordinance – Mr. Book asked Mr. Mix to look into the Pennsylvania statute that discusses sanitary sewer connections as well as ordinances for Second Class Townships to ensure that we are properly enforcing the mandatory connection notice. Mr. Mix will provide the Board with a written response after he completes his review.

ENGINEER' S REPORT:

Shiloh Road Sewer Extension Project – Mr. Gibson reiterated that we have received the Water Quality Management permit for the Shiloh Road Sewer Extension project.

OLD BUSINESS:

Revision to Rules & Regulations – Section 2 – Sewer Rentals or Charges –
Discussion of this topic was held earlier in the meeting under Guests.

NEW BUSINESS:

Agreement of Dedication - Elizabeth Dale Townhomes (16.00 EDUs) – Mr. Miller indicated Elizabeth Dale Townhomes has met all of our requirements and is ready for approval. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. Brown to approve the Agreement of Dedication for the Elizabeth Dale Townhomes in the amount of 16.00 EDUs.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

Mrs. Gill stated that an 18-month certificate of deposit will also need opened at Kish Bank for the maintenance bond in the amount of \$12,435.23. **Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to open an 18-month certificate of deposit at Kish Bank for Elizabeth Dale Townhomes' maintenance bond in the amount of \$12,435.23.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

Health Insurance Renewal – Mrs. Gill informed the Board that the Authority's renewal rates from Highmark Blue Shield increased by approximately 9%; therefore, quotes were also obtained from Geisinger Health Plan and Capital Blue Cross. Mrs. Gill stated that due to the Authority's size and our location, our Authority is limited to these options for healthcare plans. Out of the quotes received, Highmark Blue Shield remains to be the best option for the Authority; therefore, Mrs. Gill recommended the Authority renew with Highmark Blue Shield effective 12/01/2024. **Mr. Brown moved, seconded by Mr. Book to approve the renewal with Highmark Blue Shield PPO Platinum \$0 plan for the December 1, 2024 to November 30, 2025 contract cycle.** 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. **The motion carried.**

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Personnel & Community Relations Committee: Mr. Galbraith had nothing to report.

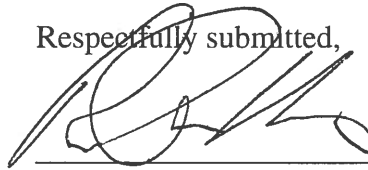
Facilities Committee: Mr. Houser was absent from the meeting.

Financial Committee: Mr. McMurtrie had nothing to report.

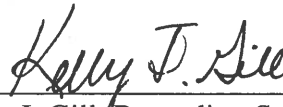
ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Book moved, seconded by Mr. McMurtrie to adjourn the meeting at 5:12 p.m. 7 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Rodney Maney, Assistant Secretary



Kelly J. Gill, Recording Secretary

CC: Benner Township _____
Spring Township _____
Walker Township _____