

# BERN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

## Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting of Bern Township Municipal Authority

December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**ATTENDEES:** Chuck Koch, Chairman; Jay Field, Treasurer; Fred Gurman, Asst. Treasurer; Irene Reed, Secretary; Danielle Pappas, Asst. Secretary; Substitute Solicitor, Colin Macfarlane , Kozloff Stoudt; Kevin Conrad Engineer, SSM Group

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Koch at 11:00 AM.

**AGENDA AMENDMENTS:** None.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board went into an Executive Session at 11:16 AM and the meeting resumed at 11:21.

Ms. Pappas made a motion to give 4% pay increases to the 4 staff members for 2024. Seconded by Mr. Koch.

**VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15TH, 2023:** Ms. Reed made a motion to approve the monthly minutes of the November 15th, 2023 Meeting. Seconded by Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Mr. Field presented the water bill list for December in the amount of \$50,353.22 consisting of \$28,750.00 to WBWA; \$10,368.61 to Empire for paving on 183 and Riverview Ave.; and \$5,597.94 to RAWA.

Mr. Field made a motion to pay the December water bills as presented. Seconded by Ms. Reed. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

Mr. Field presented the sewer bill list for December in the amount of \$30,616.07 consisting of \$8,352.09 to Berks County for the quarterly T&T payment; \$1,812.67 to SSM, of which \$195.00 will be reimbursed by developers; \$3,888.25 to Kozloff Stoudt, of which \$479.00 will be reimbursed by developers; \$7,502.10 to Empire for repairs to Riverview Ave; and \$2,227.82 to Miller Environmental for the contract billing and call outs.

Mr. Field made a motion to pay the December sewer bills as presented. Seconded by Ms. Reed. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Koch, Mr. Gurman, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** RFP – Auditor Proposals. BTMA received 2 proposals in total. Riley & Co. (\$16,500) and Maillie LLP (\$15,000). They were reviewed by the Board over the last two months.

Mr. Koch made a motion to accept Maillie's proposal of \$15,000 for the 2023 Audit. Seconded by Mr. Field.

**VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

The Treasurer commented that there will be 4 sewer and 3 water CD's coming due in 2024.

WBWA Increase – A letter was received from WBWA that as of January 1<sup>st</sup> there will be a 10% increase in water rates. The rate will go from \$3.79 per 1000 gallons to \$4.17 per 1000 gallons. This will increase the County rate to \$5.55 per 1000 gallons. A letter will be sent to the County before the increase takes effect.

Water Rate Increase – Mr. Field brought up a rate increase in previous meetings. Since there has been no increase for over 10 years and the BTMA pipes are aging, it would be prudent to increase the rate a little at this time.

Mr. Field recommends an increase of \$5.05 per qtr. for residential which would bring the base rate for 9000 gallons of water per qtr. to \$66.00. There would be no change for the overage rate. This would amount to a 2.77% increase.

Mr. Field recommends a flat \$10/ month increase to all commercial water customers regardless of the size of the meter. This would affect 12 different rates in the billing system.

The recommended timing of the increases would be: Water District A&B, effective 12/1/23 (3/1/24 billing date); West Shore effective 1/1/24 (4/1/24 billing date); Commercials effective 2/1/24 (3/1/24 billing date).

Mr. Field believes these rates would bring in approx. \$12,500 of additional income per year.

Mr. Koch made a motion to have the Solicitor write the Resolution for the water rate increase. Seconded by Ms. Reed. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Koch, Mr. Gurman, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

**PROJECT COMMITTEE:** RRAA – Tenant Advisory Committee Report – There is nothing to report concerning BTMA. The Airport should be finished signing off on their FBO Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024.

**PERSONNEL:** None.

**ENGINEER:** Hartman South – SSM has reviewed the latest land development plan and sent a letter to Penske with their comments. No response to their review letter has been received yet.

Pump Stations Update – The contracts are ready for signature.

Ms. Reed made a motion to sign the Barrasso's contract pending the Solicitor's review. Seconded by Mr. Koch. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Koch, Mr. Gurman, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

DEP Project for Lead Pipe Analysis – This project has started, but SSM needs to review older plans from BTMA to see who potentially has lead pipes.

Silo – Meter was installed by RAWA. BTMA nor the Engineer knows if/when Riveredge connected to the BTMA system and what they did to the sewer line from the Silo which at the time was already shut down.

Office Admin. will get in touch with the owner to have him research where the sewer line goes.

C&B Development Project – This project is located behind G&T. G&T has a low pressure force main that cannot be shared. C&B would need to put their own force main in.

Legacy at Paper Mill – The letter the City sent regarding this development and regarding capacity at the City sewer plant does not concern BTMA. BTMA has 171,000 capacity from the City for Greenfields, enough for the needs in the Greenfields area.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:** LBA Aeration Upgrade – Atty. Becker and Atty. Hartman are still ironing out the details of the agreement.

Holy Trinity Church – The Bishop is reviewing the plans and hopes to have some things resolved soon.

Interconnect Agreement with RAWA & WBWA – The agreement needs signatures.

Ms. Reed made a motion to sign the Interconnect Amendment to the Agreement with WBWA and RAWA. Seconded by Ms. Pappas. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Koch, Mr. Gurman, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Construction of the Township Bldg. – all meetings will need to find an alternative location due to the police facilitating the Board room for a few months around June of 2024.

The Airport has offered their Board Room as an alternative at no cost.

Ms. Reed made a motion to hold the BTMA monthly Board meetings at the RRAA when needed in 2024. Seconded by Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

Southgate – The meter is not reporting correctly at the Southgate Apartments, Mr. Scholl talked to the manager about them purchasing a new meter. Southgate is budgeted through government agencies and they did not have the money in the budget.

Board recommended to see if Southgate would pay over time if BTMA purchased it now. The quote from Exeter is \$2,360.51.

Ms. Reed made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:17 PM. Seconded by Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Irene Reed  
Asst. Secretary