

BERN TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting of Bern Township Municipal Authority

October 26th, 2022

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

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

AGENDA AMENDMENTS:

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board went into Executive Session at 11:17am to discuss personnel matters. Returned at 12:05pm.

A decision was made to increase both Office Administrators' rate \$2.00 per hour effective November 1, 2022. Their rates will not be increased again at the end of the year. 2023 holiday/personal days is still being discussed. An employee handbook needs to be completed.

Ms. Reed made a motion to increase Office Administrators' pay by \$2.00/hr. on November 1st, 2022. Seconded by Ms. Pappas. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Steve Bensinger of Stackhouse Bensinger asked if BTMA would be willing to grant Penske the ability to tie the sewer line right into the Hospital's collection system instead of running 30 to 40 ft. of sewer lines to connect. Mr. Conrad agreed that he thought it best for Penske to tie directly into the Hospital.

Easements would be needed since the property belongs to the Hospital but the collection system would become the property of BTMA. The Board agreed that they were all in favor of the placement of the sewer tie in and the easement.

There was discussion that there is only one meter at the pump station with 2 customers using it initially. For billing purposes one customer's water usage would be deducted from the total meter read to arrive of the flow of the other customer. When and if Costco would be built the same billing procedure would occur.

Atty. Becker said that Penske would need a deed of dedication from the Hospital to do the tie in directly to the Hospital's system. Mr. Bensinger said he would work on getting that. Eric Burkey of Burkey Construction was also present to hear the decision.

Atty. Becker commented that in addition to the easement, a Municipal Improvement Agreement and a Billing Agreement would be needed.

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 28TH, 2022 MEETING MINUTES: Ms. Reed made a motion to approve the monthly minutes of the September 28th, 2022 Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Field. Motion Carried.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: None.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mr. Field presented the revised water bill list for September in the amount of \$48,028.99 due to an incorrect calculation in Excel.

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

Mr. Field presented the revised sewer bill list for September in the amount of \$26,631.02 due to an incorrect calculation in Excel.

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

Mr. Field presented the water bill list for October in the amount of \$49,818.87 consisting of \$1,558.15 to Empire Services for paving the area of water main break; \$1,594.86 to Exeter Supply for piping to move hydrant; \$8,095.19 to RAWA; and \$32,697.73 to WBWA.

Mr. Field made a motion to pay the October 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 water bill list for October in the amount of \$140,097.18 consisting of \$3,262.70 to SSM; \$3,745.45 to Kozloff Stoudt; \$26,650.00 to Envirep for a control panel upgrade to PS2; \$2,049.21 to GenServe for a belt and heater cord at Stonehedge; \$39,835.99 to the City of Reading for the quarterly T&T payment; and \$6,521.00 to LBA for the 2021 underpayment of T&T.

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

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Mr. Field updated the board about the 2 brokerage CD's that will be purchased at \$240,000.00 each. The interest rates received were 4.4% for 1 year which means we will receive \$4,600.00 of interest on each CD. There was also a \$5.00 charge for commission on each CD.

There was a mileage rate increase from the IRS starting July 1st, 2022 increasing the rate 4 cents to 62.5 cents.

Mr. Koch made a motion to approve the mileage rate increase as presented. Seconded by Ms. Reed. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

PROJECT COMMITTEE: None.

PERSONNEL: The employee handbook and benefits are to be researched by the committee and will be discussed at a further meeting.

ENGINEER: Emergency Application with Penndot has been completed.

Pump Stations - Easements are still needed for the pump stations but we are waiting on the FAA. The FAA is waiting on whether BTMA will be leasing the airport land for 50 years. The lease agreement is the option the Board wanted.

Hartman South – Discussed during Public Comment.

Manhole Inspection on County Property – A letter was drafted to both Easy Does It and Berks County concerning the manholes that run to Easy Does It. They are in need of repair, mainly the lids are not secured to the frames. There is still no proof that BTMA ever took over dedication.

Burkey subdivision – No update.

Rate Study – Mr. Conrad presented the board with the rate study regarding the overall operating expenses for them to review.

A discussion as to whether the current rate for commercial sewer customers will be charged to the Hospital once they become a BTMA customer. The study showed there will be a profit using the current rates, some months there would be a loss and others a profit, this is due to the wide range of usage the Hospital has during the year.

The Board will review the rate findings and it will be discussed at a later meeting.

Stonehedge Flows – Flow numbers were high during a recent rain event. The Board discussed sending letters to Stonehedge customers reminding them that sump pump directed to the sewer lines is against Bern Township Codes and that there could be a possible fine if a sump pump is found to be draining into the sewer system.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT: LBA Aeration Project –Mr. Becker spoke with Atty: Paul Essig and Atty. Essig said the LBA grant of approximately \$400,000.00 received by LBA will not be deducted towards the amount that BTMA owes for the project.

The financial impact for BTMA to sell was discussed further and it was decided that BTMA does not want to sell at this time. Mr. Becker asked how BTMA would like to proceed, either with litigation or Mr. Becker asking LBA to consider giving a refund to BTMA once the full bill is paid and the grant money is received. Atty. Becker said he would speak with Atty. Essig.

Mr. Conrad was asked to inquire about the current capacity at LBA's plant so BTMA can look at renegotiating the agreement with LBA in the future.

Miller Agreement – the agreement is still being worked on and will be completed by the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: Insurance – the board decided against having Mr. Rivington come and present his insurance rates at this time, but maybe at a future time.

Review of meter pit locations for industrial customers – There is nothing in writing that says that a commercial customer needs to move the meter outside. BTMA is looking to obtain estimates on costs of moving the meter pits outside before sending letters to those customers. BTMA may decide to split the costs with the customers. A decision will be made after estimates are received.

NEW BUSINESS – Customer requests – Acct 29026803 adjustment of penalty was made due to an office error when the house was sold.

Mr. Koch made a motion to reverse penalty of Acct. 29026803! Seconded by Mr. Field. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Field, Mr. Koch, Mr. Gurman, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

Acct. 29078402 is requesting a reversal of late fee due to the customer passing away and the bank closing their account before all the checks written from it were cleared. This resulted in a NSF from the bank including our \$10 fee and a late fee penalty.

Mr. Koch made a motion to reverse the penalty and \$10 BTMA NSF fee. Seconded by Mr. Gurman. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

Acct. 61 is requesting a reversal of \$12.82 in penalties as her quarterly bill went to her spam folder and she didn't realize it since she only receives her bill every 3 months. Customer always pays on time and the office helped the customer to try and fix the issue so it doesn't happen again.

Ms. Reed made a motion to waive the penalties this one time. Seconded by Mr. Koch. **VOTE:** Yes -- Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

State grant for PA small water and sewer programs – If BTMA receives the CFA grant on November 15th, 2022, this one will not be needed. The Board agreed to start the grant paperwork for the pump station project just in case it will be needed since the deadline is the end of 2022. Mr. Conrad said it would cost approximately \$2,500.00 for him to work up the paperwork for this grant and a Resolution will need to be made.

Mr. Koch made a motion for Mr. Conrad to start the paperwork for this grant for approximately \$2,500.00. Seconded by Ms. Reed. **VOTE:** Yes – Mr. Gurman, Mr. Koch, Ms. Reed, Ms. Pappas. Motion Carried.

Mr. Reed made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:50 PM. Seconded by Mr. Koch. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Irene Reed
Secretary