

EAST BERLIN AREA JOINT AUTHORITY
103 LOCUST STREET, PO BOX 37
EAST BERLIN, PA 17316
November 3, 2016

The monthly meeting of the East Berlin Area Joint Authority was held November 3, 2016 at 103 Locust Street, East Berlin, PA 17316, and was conducted by Chairman Gerald L. Mummert. The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7 PM.

Members Present: Gerald L. Mummert; Charles Krall; Harold Lau; Ron Weidner; and Rick Saxon.

Also Present: Solicitor Matthew Battersby; Hannelore Furst, Secretary; Deepthi Kalyanam of Buchart-Horn; John Scrivens; Roberta Teal; Tanner and Stephanie Widdowson; Jennifer Smith; Barbara Smith; and Andrew Dehoff of SRBC.

Minutes: *A motion was made by Rick Saxon to accept the minutes of October 6, 2016 as written; with a second by Ron Weidner. Motion carried to accept the minutes as written.*

Payment of Bills: All members received a copy of the bills and receipts for October 2016, for a total of \$38,045.10 from the operational funds. Chairman Mummert mention a bill we received from Gingrich Excavating & Landscaping, LLC for \$9,660.50 that is not in the bill list. This bill was for the emergency work for the leak at the Community Center. While the ditch was open, they repaired the valve and 1 1/2" tap. *A motion was made by Charles Krall to approve the paying of the bills for October and to include the \$9,660.50 for the Gingerich bill; with a second by Harold Lau . Motion carried.*

Public/Guest Comment: Attorney Jennifer Smith introduced herself as representation for Mr. & Mrs. Widdowson concerning their water and sewer bill. Solicitor Smith questioned if the meter was read when the house was bought by the Widdowson's. She was presented with the customer account summary, that shows when the account was zeroed out and the copy of the meter cards were also presented. She asked various questions concerning the policies for reading meters and how settlements are handled. Meters are read for different reasons. When the manual meters are read by the homeowner; it's an honor system and when the reading is entered into the computer program; it will only be flagged if there is excessive usage or very minimal usage, by the previous readings. It was mentioned the bill does not state if it is an estimated bill; the billing form is the same form other companies use; the Authority did not design this billing form. An estimated bill is calculated by using the prior four quarters for the reading. For an accurate reading you use the reading on the actual meter. The Widdowson's were not being charged for the reading on the meter but by the reading box on the outside of the house. The Widdowson's actually used 8380 gallons of water more than what they were charged for. Solicitor Battersby stated he is authorized to settle the matter now, the Authority's offer is to waive the penalties and late fees. The secretary reported that since the new meter has been installed, the guys have been reading their meter and the usage of 2040 gallons have been recorded for 28 days. A revised bill will be sent to Solicitor Battersby to present to Solicitor Smith.

Andrew Dehoff of SRBC reported the Authority has met their obligations for the metering plan and a letter has been sent. He mentioned the violation letter dated September 16, 2016; which was for the Annual Compliance & Monitoring Fee, and the SRBC is considering assessing a civil penalty against the Authority as a result of the violation. Solicitor Battersby explained that our state representatives would like to be involved in resolving this matter. It was mentioned it probably would not happen before the election; but by the beginning of the year. Mr. Dehoff mentioned the upcoming workshop on November 9, 2016 that Nathan Boyer, JT Garrett, Gerald Mummert, and Charles Krall will be attending.

Engineer's Report: Deepthi reported she has updated the proposal that was presented last month for \$6200.00; the proposal has been reduced and is now \$3,900; for the groundwater metering plan. (B-H Project # 90011-12 #23; Inv 97385) Ron Weidner questioned if this testing is complete, and was told this will not have to be done again for 15 years, per SRBC. *A motion was made by Ron Weidner to pay the Buchart-Horn bill for \$3900 with a second by Charles Krall. Motion carried.* Deepthi reported Bruce Hulshizer of Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, has contacted Buchart-Horn on behalf of Weis Markets concerning extending the sewer service to the Weis Market (Nell's) on Route 194. Buchart-Horn will be working with HRG.

Solicitor's Report: Solicitor Battersby stated the late fees will be eliminated from the water bill, but the DRM fees will stay on the account. Solicitor Battersby stated he would expect a lump sum payment since we are dropping the late fees.

Treasurer's Report: Harold Lau reported there are 95 delinquent accounts for a total of \$37,550.55; this amount is after the water and sewer bills went out. Mr. Lau presented a draft 2017 budget; and if anyone has any questions they can be

discussed next month. He proposed a possible increase of 5% for the sewer rates, the sewer rate scale would be similar to the water rate scale. The capital expense list is extensive; with 2 fire hydrants that need replaced. Solicitor Battersby questioned if the fire company is aware of the non functioning hydrants; he was told yes. A letter will be sent to make sure the fire company is aware of the non functioning hydrants and the Authority will have verification they were informed. Other items for sewer capital expense would be the shut off valve/stop valve replacement, for the hydrants. A new computer at the sewer plant is needed, the building at Well 1 needs to be re-pointed, and the water tank inspections are part of the capital expense budget. The office hours will be reduced when the secretary semi retires and the insurance costs will be reduced.

Secretary's Report: Hanna Furst mentioned she contacted Mumford-Bjorkman Associates, Inc. (MBA) concerning their quote of \$3,500 for the water tower inspection and the quote will remain the same for the work to be done in the spring of 2017. The Board voted at October's meeting to hire MBA if the quoted price is the same. Noted- it is the consensus of the Board to hire MBA. A thank you note was sent to Kinsley Construction for their help in fixing the leak on East King Street.

Unfinished Business: Solicitor Battersby asked Chairman Mummert if he has a cost estimate for Reading Township to connect to our sewer facility. Deepthi will be checking the files for the Reading Township information. There was a cost estimate in 2012 and Solicitor Battersby requested if a projection of the increase could be done from 2012-2016. A work session is to be held with DEP, Reading Twp, Reading Municipal Authority, and the East Berlin Area Joint Authority on November 21, 2016 at the Authority office @10 AM.

Ron Weidner questioned if there was any more correspondence from Jim Dougherty of McNeese, Wallace, and Nurick, and whether they accepted the payment as a final payment. Solicitor Battersby stated that was the final payment and nothing more is expected.

New Business: Hans Koch's apartment at 239 Third Street had a major leak in the basement of 615,170 gallons; the fire company pumped out the water on 10/9/16. The majority of the water did not go to the sewer plant to be processed. Ms. Furst was contacted by Mr. Koch's insurance company and they are asking relief from paying the sewer charges of that water. The tenant has paid the estimated normal usage for that quarter. The total bill would have been \$12,372.35 of which \$6,770.49 was the water charge and \$5,601.86 was the sewer charge. The consensus of the Board is to waive the sewer fees.

There was a brief discussion of Weis Market and surrounding businesses connecting to our sewer facility on Route 194.

Rick Saxon suggested checking our billing reports for meter cards that are not turn in for 2 quarters, those residents would have their meters read by the guys and/or change the meter to an automatic read meter. It was also suggested a welcome letter be sent to new residents informing them about the meter reading cards and billing information.

Operator's Report:

Nathan Boyer –Absent

John Scrivens – John stated everything is fine.

Correspondence:

- Letter from C & S Wholesale Grocers-informing us of the sale of Nell's Markets and thanking us for our business over the years.
- Thank you note from the Community Center for Nathan & JT for their helpfulness
- Received an email from Bruce Hulshizer of HRG concerning sewer information for the Weis Mkt.

There being no further business, *Ron Weidner made a motion to adjourn the meeting; with a second by Charles Krall. **Motion carried.***

Meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM. Next meeting will be held December 1, 2016 at 103 Locust Street at 7 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Hannelore B. Furst, Secretary EBAJA