

**BENNER TOWNSHIP WATER AUTHORITY**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**May 20, 2025**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**AUTHORITY MEMBERS PRESENT:** Thomas Eby  
Timothy Edkin  
Jerrold May  
Andrew Swales

**OTHER ATTENDEES:** Kelly Gill – SBWJA  
Michael Levandoski, Esq. – MKC Law  
See Attached Guest List

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The May 20, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Benner Township Water Authority was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Jerrold May, Chairman.

**ROLL CALL:**

Timothy Edkin, Secretary, took Roll Call, recording four members present. Mr. Lanning was absent from the meeting. Mr. May, Chairman, noted that with a quorum present, the Benner Township Water Authority was permitted to conduct business under the laws of Pennsylvania.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

The Minutes of the April 15, 2025 regular meeting were presented for review. **Mr. Swales moved, seconded by Mr. Eby to approve the Minutes of the April 15, 2025 Regular Meeting as presented. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.**

**TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Mr. Edkin reviewed the Treasurer's Report as presented. Mr. May asked the Board if there were any questions or comments regarding the Paid Checks or Bills by Vendor submitted for approval. **Mr. Eby moved, seconded by Mr. Swales to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented, the Paid Checks in the amount of \$6,468.03 and Bills by Vendor in the amount of \$14,467.59. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.**

**SBWJA REPORT:**

**April System Overview** – An overview of the work completed for the Benner Township Water Authority (BTWA) for the month of April was included in the board packets.

**System Maintenance** – The chemical day tank at Grove Park was cleaned due to calcium deposits causing pump issues. The calibration curve on the colorimeters were verified as required by the PA DEP. SBWJA staff continues to work with Keystone Engineering Group to address SCADA issues.

**Analytical Testing** – In April samples were obtained from both water systems for bacteria testing. PFAS sampling was completed for the Hampton/Opequon system and nitrate/nitrite sampling was completed for the Grove Park system.

**PA One Calls** – There were six (6) PA One Calls located in the month of April.

**SOLICITOR'S REPORT:** Mr. Levandoski had nothing to report.

**ENGINEER'S REPORT:** Mr. Shura was excused from the meeting; however, Mrs. Gill provided an overview of some correspondence received from Stiffler McGraw over the past month which pertains to the LSA grant monies that were awarded to the Authority several years ago.

**Public Water Supply Permit – Certificate of Construction** – On behalf of the Authority, Mr. Shura submitted a completed Certificate of Construction form for the Grove Park Water System upgrade project and requested the PA DEP complete a post-construction inspection in advance of issuing an operation permit for the facility.

**Grove Park Water System Improvements Project** – Mr. Shura provided a letter to the PA DCED to confirm that the Grove Park Water System Improvements project was successfully completed in accordance with the grant agreement for the PA Local Share contract. The project consisted of replacement of two high service pumps used to pressurize the water distribution system and installation of a radio telemetry system to provide monitoring and alarming capabilities for the Grove Park water system.

**Hampton/Opequon Water System Improvements Project** - Mr. Shura provided a letter to the PA DCED to confirm that the Hampton/Opequon Water System Improvements project was successfully completed in accordance with the grant agreement for the PA Local Share contract. The project consisted of the installation of a new variable frequency drive (VFD) to operate the well pump and a radio telemetry system to provide monitoring and alarming capabilities for the Hampton/Opequon water system.

**GUESTS:**

**John Elnitski** – Mr. Elnitski referenced the agreement between the BTWA and the State College Borough Water Authority (SCBWA) and asked if anyone recalled if the agreement could be transferred to another entity with the possibility of the BTWA being dissolved. Mr. Elnitski stressed the importance of ensuring the transfer of the agreement.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

**PA DEP** – The Authority received a letter from Nathan White, Sanitarian, on 05/09/2025 indicating that a recent article published on StateCollege.com on 05/01/2025 made reference to the Benner Township Water Authority operating and maintaining three water systems. The PA DEP currently regulates Hampton Hills-Opequon (PWSID #4140131) and Grove Park (PWSID #4140133). Further research found that the Authority is maintaining the distribution system in the Village of Peru, which receives water from SCI Rockview (PWSID #4140098). The Authority was provided with a Public Water System Status Determination form which required completion within seven (7) business days. The form is designed to evaluate whether the water system at the Village of Peru meets the definition of a public water system.

Mrs. Gill informed the Board that a meeting was held with Mr. White and SBWJA staff last week to discuss the form, which was completed by the Operator-In-Charge and returned to the PA DEP electronically on 05/16/2025. During the meeting, discussion was held about permitting and additional requirements staff would need to complete if the Village of Peru were determined to be a consecutive water system.

**PA DEP** – The Authority received the Public Water Supply permit amendment for the operation of the Grove Park Water System. The permit amendment authorizes operation of the duplex booster pumps, the associated VFDs and the radio telemetry system which is incorporated within the existing SBWJA SCADA alarm system.

**PA DEP** – As a result of the meeting with Nathan White, Sanitarian, on 05/15/2025, the Authority was provided with a water supply inspection report outlining the discussions that occurred in relation to the BTWA's lead and copper sampling requirements (as a result of the service line inventory that was completed in 2024) and the PWS determination form for the Village of Peru.

**Response to Water Service Request for the Tomco Property** – The Authority Board was provided with a copy of the letter that was prepared by Mr. Swales and issued to ELA Group pertaining to the request for water service for the Tomco Property in Benner Township.

**Letter to Benner Township Supervisors – Last Resort** – Mr. May indicated that a letter was prepared and issued to the Benner Township Supervisors for their 05/05/2025 meeting indicating that the BTWA has been unsuccessful with obtaining any interested parties to provide services similar to those being provided by SBWJA. As a result, the BTWA's last resort is to invite the Pennsylvania American Water Company, a for-profit company, to determine if they are willing to purchase the BTWA's system.

Since the last BTWA meeting, Mr. Edkin reached out to Pennsylvania American Water Company to determine if they would be interested in acquiring the BTWA's system; however, due to the system size, they are not interested.

**List of Requirements Submitted to the Benner Township Supervisors** – Mr. May indicated the list of requirements that the BTWA would need from the Benner Township Supervisors before they (BTWA) could consider any water projects in the township such as defining BTWA's service area, enactment of a must-tap ordinance and providing resources to address the outdated service agreement with SCBWA was issued to the Supervisors for their 05/05/2025 meeting. Mr. May stated there has been no response from the Benner Township Supervisors.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Grove Park Nitrate Removal System** – Mr. May stated that the BTWA Board was under the assumption that SBWJA would continue with the installation of the nitrate removal system at the Grove Park water system. Recently the BTWA Board received an email from Mr. Miller stating that he doesn't recall making any statements that would lead the BTWA Board to believe the SBWJA would continue with the installation of the nitrate removal system. Mr. May stated that after the BTWA received the termination of contract letter in January from SBWJA, he and Mr. Edkin attended the next SBWJA board meeting, where both he and Mr. Edkin left the meeting assured that SBWJA would continue with the installation of the nitrate removal system.

Mr. Swales indicated Mr. Miller's email also referenced a concern with the monitoring of the nitrate removal system once it was installed. Mrs. Gill stated that currently Mr. Miller is the only operator with the proper subclass to operate the system once the nitrate removal system is installed. She continued by stating that several of the operators at SBWJA have passed the exam for the subclass; however, one year of experience is needed before the subclass will be granted by the State Board for Certification of Water and Wastewater Systems Operators. Mrs. Gill informed the Board that Mr. Miller did reach out to Mr. Shura to determine if Stiffler McGraw may have any properly licensed operators to assist with the operation of the nitrate removal system if it were installed; however, no one was available to provide such a service.

Further discussion was held about the tapping fees for connection to the sanitary sewer and the quarterly sewer rental for the nitrate removal system.

**Walnut Grove Estates (WGE)** – Mr. Swales indicated that he reached out to PSU to follow up from last month's meeting; however, he has not received a response. Mr. Elnitski stated he also reached out to PSU and was told they wouldn't speak with him since he wasn't a member of the BTWA board.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Resignation** – Mr. May stated that he came to tonight's meeting with the intention of resigning from the BTWA Board. Mr. May stated that he doesn't feel as though the BTWA Board has received the help they needed from the Benner Township Supervisors and the last four months have been really stressful attempting to find a replacement contractor for the SBWJA. Mr. May indicated that he is unsure how the work session between the Benner Township Supervisors and SBWJA went last evening and that is part of the problem, there has been no communication.

Mr. Edkin stated he agrees with Mr. May. Once SBWJA provided the notice of termination of the contract, the BTWA Board exhausted every avenue with trying to find a solution. Over 40 entities were contacted, eleven (11) RFPs were sent out with no positive response and even a for-profit company isn't interested. Mr. Edkin feels the BTWA Board has done all that they can to resolve the issue. Mr. Edkin stated that he understands Mr. Miller has been speaking with the Benner Township Supervisors since

last summer regarding some concerns with the operation of the BTWA Board; however, Mr. Edkin wishes that they would've been afforded the opportunity to correct the issue, which they thought was done with the restructuring of the Board in January 2025. Mr. Edkin stated that in his mind this is now a problem for the Benner Township Supervisors to figure out, especially since he's been hearing for several months now that the Benner Township Supervisors were going to dissolve the BTWA and transfer all assets to the SBWJA. Mr. Edkin stated SBWJA does a wonderful job for the BTWA's customers and that is the best solution for the BTWA's customers. Mr. Edkin stated that he doesn't see himself continuing on the BTWA Board.

Mr. Swales stated that would leave three (3) resignations because he is ready to submit his as well. Mr. Swales also expressed concern with the lack of help from the Benner Township Supervisors to address the situation at hand. Mr. Eby agreed and stated that he also doesn't feel as though the Benner Township Supervisors support the BTWA. Mr. Eby continued by stating the workers at SBWJA have been outstanding and the BTWA has been spoiled by the work that has been completed, both operational and administratively. Mr. May concurred with Mr. Eby's statement.

Mr. Swales indicated he is willing to give it another month to see if any progress is made as long as Mr. May and Mr. Edkin agree to withhold submitting their letter of resignations. Mr. Edkin stated he would be willing to stay on the Board for another month to help with the transition and sign any paperwork that may be needed as long as the customers are taken care of. Mr. McDowell assured the BTWA Board that there would be no interruption in the services provided by the SBWJA. Mr. May stated after the last meeting SBWJA provided notice that they will withdraw meeting services (agenda, minutes, publication, web updates) after tonight's meeting and asked if SBWJA would be willing to continue to provide that service for June's meeting. Mr. McDowell stated that would be up to Mrs. Gill and Mr. Barton because he doesn't want them to have to sit through the nonsense that occurs at most of the BTWA's meetings. Mr. McDowell stated especially since Mrs. Gill doesn't get paid to attend the BTWA meetings. Mr. Eby stated Mrs. Gill should be paid and he thought that was part of the contracted services. Mrs. Gill stated she doesn't get paid because she is a salaried employee at SBWJA. Mrs. Gill agreed to attend the next BTWA meeting in June to perform the services that she's been providing to the BTWA. The Board indicated that it isn't necessary for Mr. Barton to attend the meeting unless there would be something to report.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

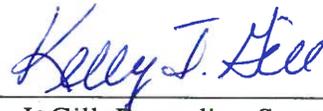
1. Mr. May to contact the Benner Township Supervisors to inform them that three (3) BTWA Board members are going to resign; however, they are willing to continue their service until the 06/17/2025 BTWA Board meeting to finalize the 2024 audit and anything else that may be needed of them through that time.

**Next regular scheduled meeting is June 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Mr. Edkin moved, seconded by Mr. Swales to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. 4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent. The motion carried.**

Respectfully submitted,



---

Kelly J. Gill, Recording Secretary

CC: Benner Township\_\_\_\_\_

BENNER TOWNSHIP WATER AUTHORITY  
170 IRISH HOLLOW ROAD  
BELLEFONTE, PA 16823  
(814) 355-4778

REGULAR MEETING  
May 20, 2025

GUEST LIST

**\*Please be sure to print your name on the lines below.**

1. John Elnitski
2. Dennis McDowell
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_