

April 3, 2008

JOINT BOROUGH COUNCIL –
BOROUGH AUTHORITY MEETING
APRIL 3, 2008, 7:00 P.M.
POTTSTOWN BOROUGH HALL

The Joint Pottstown Borough Council and Pottstown Borough Authority meeting was called to order on Thursday, April 3, 2008, 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers Room Pottstown Borough Hall, 100 East High Street, Pottstown, Pennsylvania, with Vice-President Berry in the Chair for Council and Chairman Ronald Downie for the Authority.

ROLL CALL

Councilors present were Mark Gibson, Maureen Allen, Stephen Toroney, Greg Berry, Jody Rhoads and David Garner. Also present were Solicitor Charles Garner, Borough Manager Raymond Lopez, Mayor Sharon Thomas and Borough Secretary Virginia Takach. Councilor Wenzel was absent. Borough Authority members present were Ronald Downie, Doug Dilliplane, Don Read, Tom Carroll, Aram Ecker, Solicitor David Garner and Authority Engineer Tom Weld.

Staff members present were, Jason Bobst, Assistant Borough Manager, Public Works Director Doug Yerger, Utilities Director Robert Maul, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Brent Wagner, Finance Director Robert Armelin, Water Treatment Plant Superintendent Jim Hennessy, Wastewater Collection Supervisor Terry Jones and Water Distribution Supervisor Scott Winter.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMENTS

Chairman Downie thanked all members and staff for attending. He provided a brief background of the responsibilities of the Authority. Mr. Downie advised that in May 2007, he appointed a committee to study the existing agreements between the Authority and the Borough. He explained that the Authority owns the Sewer Plant and the Water Plant and leases them to the Borough to operate adding that the Authority has no employees. It appoints the Solicitor, the Engineer and the Manager.

WATER

Tom Weld, Authority Engineer, provided a brief explanation of the water system. He noted that since 1993, the Authority has used a five-year plan as guidance for its projects. Mr. Weld explained the water main replacement system and provided a handout depicting the areas presently in progress. Mr. Weld also explained the sale of bulk water at the water plant and the security system being implemented. He also advised that the Stowe reservoir is being abandoned and the Washington Hill reservoir is being replaced. Mr. Weld also explained the ongoing study of the meter system.

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SEWER

Brent Wagner, Superintendent Wastewater Treatment Plant, provided background information on the operations of the Sewer Plant. He explained the dryer operation, with the goal of reducing the volume of sludge. He also noted that the product is now a useful, saleable project, which can be used for fertilizer, composting or bio-energy fuel. Mr. Wagner also explained the Fat, Oil and Grease (FOG) program.

Mr. Wagner invited all to the Open House at the Wastewater Treatment Plant scheduled for April 19th, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for a tour of the plant. He also noted that the plant is 17 years old, but with preventive maintenance it is in efficient working order.

STRUCTURE

Don Read, Authority Secretary, advised that the Authority is actually a business venture of the Borough. He added that since the Energy Committee has been formed, innovative and cost saving initiatives have been implemented for the plants. Mr. Read also stated that the main goal of the Authority is to provide clean, safe water, 100% of the time to the ratepayers. Mr. Read also explained that two agreements, the Management Agreement and the Lease Agreement, designate the operations of the water and sewer plants, which are both owned by the Authority.

Mr. Read requested that Borough Council review the Agreements to amend, if necessary, to clarify each body's duties and responsibilities and requested Council's approval and authorization to move forward on this project.

DEP REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Tom Carroll thanked the Manager Lopez, the Staff and employees for their efforts in the operation and maintenance of the plants. Mr. Carroll also reviewed each of the recommendations of the September 21, 2007 Evaluation report made by the Department of Environment Protection. He noted the requirement of the operators to be fully trained on the SCADA system and better communication among the separate departments. Mr. Carroll also suggested that the Authority hire an Authority manager and requested Council's authorization to move forward with this recommendation.

Solicitor Charles Garner stated that with the Authority's approval, the Borough could legally create a position of Authority Manager. He added that the Authority is willing to do the investigation and make the recommendation and provide reports to Council.

Solicitor David Garner advised that the 1941 Pennsylvania Municipal Authorities Act, creating a municipal authority, was to allow for the borrowing infrastructure and preferential interest rates. At the time, it was a practicality for Authorities to not have their own employees. He added that it is the Authority's request to Council to move forward with the understanding that the recommendations of DEP would be incorporated and with the understanding that there may need to be amendments to the Management and Lease Agreements.

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Vice President Berry suggested that no decisions be made this evening and that this topic be added to the April 9th Committee of the Whole agenda for Council's discussion.

QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD

Councilor Rhoads referred to a request made to the Borough Manager to determine the cost of President Bill Clinton's March 27th visit to the Borough.

Vice President Berry determined that this is not a topic of discussion for a Joint meeting and suggested it be addressed at the next Council meeting.

SHADE TREE ORDINANCE

Solicitor Charles Garner advised that at the last Council meeting, he was directed by Council to review and possibly amend the Shade Tree Ordinance. He requested any suggestions or input from the Authority members as well as Council members.

Mr. Downie advised that the Authority discussed this at its last meeting and designated Mr. Yerger to provide comments to the Board at the April meeting.

CODE RED

Solicitor David Garner reviewed the concept of the Code Red notification system. He advised that it was an outcome of DEP recommendations from a December 2006 incident in West Pottsgrove Township.

Mr. Lopez also provided additional information regarding changes in the DEP regulations, which led the Authority to put off any implementation of the Code Red system. He added that he has been involved with the development of a Montgomery County Public Safety and the Southeastern District of Terrorism Task Force notification system. The product is known as ReadyNotifyPA, wherein the public can log in to receive text messages from the Emergency Management Coordinator for any weather emergencies or disaster events. Mr. Lopez advised that this system would be announced in Philadelphia tomorrow, April 4th and that the system is free to the Borough and the public at this point. The Code Red system was estimated at \$10,000.

Councilor Toroney requested that this information be eventually added to the newsletter and the Borough's website.

Chairman Downie thanked all of the members and Staff for attending and participating in the meeting.

Vice President Berry suggested that the next meeting be scheduled after the Authority's draft report is available.

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Utilities Director Bob Maul introduced Superintendent Jim Hennessy, who recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq. He also introduced Water Supervisor Scott Winter, and Wastewater Collection Supervisor Terry Jones.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Attested,

Raymond W. Lopez
Borough Manager/Authority Manager