

RETURN TO SESSION BADEN BOROUGH COUNCIL JANUARY 9, 2024

Council President Dave Trzcianka called the Regular Meeting of Council to order at 10:00 AM in Council Chambers of the Baden Municipal Building, 149 State Street, to conduct business of general purposes.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Mrs. Gallagher, Mr. Shelkons, Mr. Stuban and Mr. Trzcianka

NOT PRESENT: Mr. Bosh, Mr. Miller, Mrs. Singleton

ALSO PRESENT: Fire Chief and CEO Dennis Baker, Foreman Rodney Keenan, Public Works Employees Tom Cordell, Jordan Faust, Joel Chalupiak and Municipal Administrator Kevin Mutschler

RETURN TO SESSION:

MOTION by Mr. Stuban, second by Mrs. Gallagher, carried unanimously to return to session from the January 2nd, 2024 meeting.

This meeting is being electronically recorded by the Borough Manager.

MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

Administrator Kevin Mutschler read a prepared report that was presented to Council.

Borough of Conway Sewage System Interconnection

The Authority signed an Intermunicipal Sewage Service Agreement with the Borough of Conway on June 19, 2019. The Agreement requires the Borough of Conway to expand the Authority treatment plant by 500,000 gallons per day as well as construct a new pump station and force main from Conway to Tevebaugh Run Road. Although the plant expansion will be completed by the Authority, all costs shall be paid by Conway.

At the execution of the Agreement, Conway paid \$100,000 to compensate Baden, Harmony, and Economy for existing equipment. The \$100,000 was split \$50,000 to Baden, \$16,667 to Harmony, and \$33,333 to Economy. Upon connection to the Baden treatment plant expansion, Conway is required to pay for 25% of the principal from the PennVEST loan and Bond issue for the sewage treatment plant upgrade completed in 2014. As of December 31, 2023, the total principal paid was \$4,385,689.44. Based on the Agreement, Conway would owe \$1,096,422 which would be split \$548,211 to Baden, \$361,819 to Economy, and \$186,392 to Harmony. The amount of principal increases by \$510,000 in 2024 and \$520,000 in 2025. At the end of 2025 (earliest date for work to be completed), Conway will owe Baden \$676,961.

Conway has provided the Authority with the design fee and the plant expansion project design is nearly complete. The Authority has no information on the status of the Conway design. The estimated cost of the treatment plant expansion as of late 2023 was \$5,796,017.

Upon connection of Conway to the system, Baden's cost for plant debt service will be reduced from 50% to 37.5% or approximately \$77,500/year through 2033. Plant operational costs will also be reduced; however, the reduction will be based on actual

flows treated at the plant. It is estimated that Baden will see a 10% reduction in operational costs or another \$75,000/year.

Schiller Street Rehabilitation Project

The Authority received approximately \$385,000 from Beaver County in 2022 for the rehabilitation of the sanitary line in Schiller Street. The project was primarily completed by June 2023 with nearly 3,000 of pipe lined, 300 lf of pipe bursting, 300 lf of pipe replacement, several new manholes, and rehabilitation of 11 existing manholes. The Authority utilized the remaining money to perform repairs on North Street (prior to Borough paving), pipe bursting on another street, manhole abandonment, additional lining off Virginia, and CCTV of State Street Sewers.

USDA Grant

The Authority is in the midst of an application to the USDA for sewer system repairs estimated at \$1,600,000. Projects included within the application include lining of the sewer along the railroad tracks from Harmony Township (behind Speedway) to the treatment plant, completing sewer system spot repairs identified during previous CCTV efforts, and lining all sewers under SR 65. The Authority hopes to hear back from USDA during first half of 2024.

Grant Applications

The Authority submitted two grant applications to the Commonwealth Financing Authority in November 2023. The projects were for the lining of all sewers on State Street and for the installation of a bar screen at the treatment plant. An announcement on the grants is expected in July 2024.

Treatment Plant Operation

During the period between October 2022 and September 2023, the treatment plant treated over 320,000,000 gallons of sewage. The split of flow was 129,500,000 from Baden, 134,300,000 from Economy, and 56,800,000 from Harmony. Total costs for plant operations were \$726,486.60 with the cost split \$293,445 from Baden, \$304,828 from Economy, and \$129,057 from Harmony. Debt service costs are added to these operating costs. Total operating costs for 2024 are budgeted at \$739,520.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Mr. Stuban asked for an update on the Schiller Street property. Mr. Baker stated that a detailed letter was sent to the property owner and he has not received a response, however he did go to the property and it looks like they are cleaning up the property. Mr. Baker stated that Schiller Street is narrow and difficult to drive through and recommended that council look into having no parking on the road. Foreman, Rodney Keenan stated that it is very difficult to get a plow truck through parts of Schiller Street too.

Anthony Wayne Terrace (AWT) inspection of specific units. Mr. Baker stated that he went to inspect 161 AWT for condemnation however the board is still working on getting the documentation to authorize the inspection. Mr. Baker stated that letters for inspection went to both AWT and the resident who lives in the building.

Mr. Stuban asked for an update on the Theater on State Street. Mr. Baker stated that he has received a letter regarding the inspection of commercial properties so all of the issues with the property will be addressed at that time.

Mr. Trzcianka asked about the Campbell property. Mr. Baker stated that he did a final inspection on the property to lift the condemnation and they were fined \$900 (\$50/month for 8 months) for non-compliance and the fine was paid.

Mr. Trzcianka asked Mr. Baker to look at 700 Schiller Street because there is siding coming off the building and he is not sure if anyone lives there. He also asked that he contact and notify the property owner along Route 65 by Punk's who tosses the garbage down onto the sidewalk not properly bagged.

Mr. Shelkons addressed Harvey's property not being kept presentable. He was to put webbing through the fence and that never happened. Mr. Baker stated that Harvey said he had webbing ordered and Harvey did clean up the junk from outside the fence area. Mr. Baker said it is a salvage yard and it is a continuous cycle of junk to clean up. As for the fruit market property that he now owns, Mr. Baker stated that it needs to be cleaned up. Mr. Baker asked if there is anything in writing regarding Harvey maintaining the leased property. Discussion also included Bob's Import and Economy Welding needing to clean up their property.

Mr. Baker stated that he sent out 88 letters regarding inspection of their commercial properties. He has already schedule 6 or 7 inspections.

Mrs. Gallagher asked Mr. Baker about her neighboring vacant property. There is lawn furniture and mattresses and other debris tossed over the hillside. Mr. Baker thought it was cleaned up. He will contact the property management company.

FIRE CHIEF REPORT

Mr. Stuban asked the chief to continue to submit a monthly report for the fire department. He asked Chief Baker to supply a figure for how many fire and ambulance calls are in town versus out of town. He stated that he will supply this information on his monthly report. Mr. Stuban asked about the increase in ambulance calls for the fire department. Chief Baker stated that this an all over issue with EMS. Response time may be 30 minutes and if the call is for a heart attack the fire department can be there quicker and they have the medical equipment to start life saving procedures before the ambulance shows up. They only assist with unconscious, unresponsive, overdose or direct request by the ambulance company. Mr. Baker also stated the increase in police assist is fantastic since we have regionalized. There is no money paid to the fire department for assisting with ambulance calls. They will replace the medical equipment used and because they store an ambulance at the fire department, they pay the fire department \$100/month.

Chief Baker stated that he put a report on clipboard regarding turning the 5th bay into a gym.

Mr. Trzcianka asked who paid for the repairs to the technical rescue truck. Chief Baker stated that the fire department paid for the repairs. Mr. Trzcianka asked why didn't Aliquippa pay for the repairs. Chief Baker stated that this is what the membership decided and borough money was not used.

Chief Baker stated that the fire department will have the community event like they had last year. They started a joint partnership with the American Redcross for a smoke detector program in town.

Chief Baker commented that this area needs to look at fire department consolidation. With the success of the regional police department in such short time span it is worth looking into fire service consolidation. He has reached out to the other departments to try and present something to the municipalities. Mr. Stuban stated that when he does reach out, he should include the fire departments and the municipalities.

PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Stuban stated that he will have questions and set expectations for the public works.

- Sell the Grater
 - Lead line report to be done by September 30 with monthly updates. Rodney Keenan stated that they are working on it but there is only so much you can do. There has to be three points of confirmation of the pipe for every water service line. When meters are exchanged/repaired and finals are done they do document the type of line.

Mr. Trzcianka stated that a letter needs to be mailed out to all the residents telling them we need to get inside the house to check their water line. This could be done while reading meters.

Mr. Stuban told Rodney Keenan to call the engineer, Tony Sadaka, to find out what all is required.

- Rodney Keenan needs to take the water certification test. Had 18 months, now 6 months left. Rodney stated that there are too many projects going on and he has no time to study.
- Fire Hydrant Flushing being done in accordance with DEP regulations.
- Storm sewers need cleaned. Rodney stated that he has replaced 23 sewers so far and he will get at least 10 catch basins per year as promised. Mr. Stuban stated that he is talking about cleaning the debris from the catch basin and stated that cleaning needs to be done. Mr. Stuban also stated that there are too many orange cones in storm sewers and they need to be fixed or replaced.
- Waiting for a list of trees that need to be cut down due to potentially falling and damaging borough property.
- Initiative needs to take place regarding fixing or cleaning things. Mr. Stuban gave the example of fixing the broken fence by the walkway. Rodney stated that there were over 23 water breaks last year. This breaks the old record of 17 when John Peoples was foreman.
- Garbage can need to be put up by the Legion and emptied by the borough.
- Trying to find a plumber to finish the DEP water tank requirement on the Harmony Road tank.
- USDA Project Update – Rodney stated that the contractor has hit gas lines and water lines. Rodney is keeping the engineer informed to track all the borough pipe, equipment and time from the borough to fix the waterlines that the contractor breaks.
- State Street and Bauman Avenue storm sewer inlets. These are complete. Rodney stated that Milton Street culvert needs to be extended to prevent the hill side from being washed out. Rodney is getting some pricing. Mr. Shelkons stated that PennDOT needs to be notified for the storm pipe that comes from their storm sewers on Phillips Street by the trailer court.
- State Street by Punk's and Fourth Street is complete but curb boxes need straightened out with black top and grass will need to be planted.

- Library window not done yet. Rodney stated that between the water line project and water line breaks there is not enough time. Need at least two employees and a full day to get it done.
- For the next 6 months it is mandatory that the foreman for another street employee to attend the council work session. This will keep council informed and the public works on task.
- Public works needs to have a schedule of what needs to be done each week and month. Rodney stated that they try to do this but there is too much other stuff that happens and takes them away from what needs to be done.
- Mr. Stuban stated that the borough manager needs to take a more active interest in the street department and give a list on Monday to the street department telling them what needs to get done. Mrs. Rakovan asked how is she suppose to know what public works is to be doing? She does give work orders to public works but they prioritize what needs to get done. Discussion took place regarding having the waterline contractor giving more information regarding what residents will be affected by water shut off.
- Discussion took place regarding road conditions for snow plowing. Rodney stated that he gets a call from 911. The police notify them. Rodney stated that there are times they are called out when it wasn't necessary and/or they are not called out when the roads are bad. Rodney tries to work directly with the police.
- Rodney is getting pricing for the culvert off of Milton Street that needs an extension to the pipe outfall.

MISCELLANEOUS & LONG/SHORT TERM PLAN

- Mr. Stuban stated that Mr. Amato is working on the MS4 Ordinance.
- Mr. Stuban stated that Mr. Amato has concern over the Pinney Street Bridge condition. Mr. Shelkons stated that the last he heard was Steve Chesney had spoken to the PUC. Mr. Shelkons stated that there was one bridge inspection.
- Mr. Stuban asked what is council wishes regarding the Tot Lot off of Moore Avenue. We tried to sell it twice and had no bids. The lot is swampy and land locked. Mrs. Gallagher and Mr. Shelkons addressed having Penn State suggest what may be planted to assist with the swampy land.
- The Water Ordinance needs to be updated. Mrs. Rakovan stated that the ordinance needs to be simplified and rewritten.
- Nonprofit – Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Mr. Stuban asked council if they wish to move forward with contacting the nonprofits.
- State Street Tree Removal – The property owner is making payments.
- Mr. Amato has pressed charges against the property owner who has not paid his garbage bill. The property does not have water or sewage so we can't shut off the water. Council needs to decide what they want to do since the property owner did not show up for the hearing.
- Shed for upper lot – Mr. Stuban stated that once we have the finances we need to just buy a shed for the upper lot.

- Chairs need to be replaced in the council meeting room.
- Electronic sign for the end of the driveway. Need pricing.
- Sound System for Council Chambers
- Cover for the walkway
- Vacated property
- Update Borough Code Book (Ordinances)
- Unclaimed Property
- Borough property land survey (encroachment)
- Disposal of old records
- CDBG Project
- Garbage Contract
- Vacancy Board – Vacant position
- Grant Opportunities
- Video for a History of Baden (last video was done in 1937)
- Building Inspector & Zoning Officer – separating them out. The building inspector will be a third party. Zoning Officer can be done in house but will require the individual to be paid. Discussion followed regarding third party building inspection companies.
- Possible 2024 Council Committees:
 - Budget, Finance & Grants
 - Building, Grounds & Properties
 - Public Safety & Enforcement
 - Administration, Personnel and Policy
 - Technology, Communication & Legislation
 - Public Works
 - Liaison & Public Relations

MANAGER'S REPORT

- List of Council Member contact information was handed out
- Sample of managers yearly calendar given to council

Old Business Not on the Agenda, New Business or Unfinished Business

Mrs. Gallagher read a letter from a resident asking that cinders not be used on the streets for snow removal and to use salt instead. Discussion followed regarding the cost of the salt as well as the MS4 restrictions that will effect the use of salt on the roads.

No work session is necessary January 10th since the January 2nd meeting was recessed until today and everything has been discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Stuban, second by Mr. Shelkons, carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 11:58 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Borough Manager, Elaine K. Rakovan