



BEN AVON HEIGHTS BOROUGH OFFICIALS

2021 Officials and Members of Council, Term Expiration Dates

Scott Dismukes	Mayor	12/31/21
Alan Cuteri	President of Council	12/31/21
John Radcliffe	Vice President	12/31/24
Jason Brown	Councilman	12/31/21
Joseph Dawley	Councilman	12/31/21
Jacquelyn Neunder	Councilwoman	12/31/24
Steven Stiller	Councilman	12/31/24
Jennifer Knuth	Judge of Elections	12/31/21
Jessica DiNuzzo	Secretary	Appointed
Kim Gourley	Real Estate Tax Collector	12/31/21
Keystone Collections	Wage Tax Collector	Appointed
John T. Vogel	Solicitor	Appointed

2021 COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

- Finance – Cuteri, Dismukes, Radcliffe
- Police/Fire – Dismukes
- Emergency Management – Beck, Dismukes, Cuteri
- Recreation & Green Space – Radcliffe
- Streets/Lights/Water – Dawley
- Sewers/Consent Decree – Stiller
- Planning Commission – Cuteri
- Insurance - Neunder
- Allegheny North Tax Collection Committee – Cuteri, Brown
- Digital Communications – Brown, Stiller

Borough Council wishes to recognize and thank the following residents and individuals who volunteered their time in 2021 to work for the Borough in the following capacities:

Damian Liska		Avonworth Community Park Board Authority
MaryBeth Bolam		Avonworth Community Park Board
Terrie Brightman		
Jennifer Fink		
Hobie Webster		
Tom Price		Zoning Officer
David Raves, Chair	2021-2024	Zoning Hearing Board
Michael Rovitto	2021-2023	
Clayton Morris	2021-2022	
Al Cuteri, Chair	2018-2022	Planning Commission
Jason Brown		Borough Website Administrator
Michelle Dawley		BAH Community Club Chairperson
Jen Dickson		Community Club Treasurer
SGT. Beck,		Coordinator Emergency Management
Scott Dismukes		Deputy Coordinator Emergency Management

Special Thanks to:

- Lea Ann and Patrick Lope for overseeing the Community picnic and sleepover in the park
- Janel and Travis Everly for the Halloween parade at the park.
- Susan Dismukes for chairing the Borough's Holiday pole decorations and all the elves who decorate the poles.
- Bill and Jen Dickson for decorating the tree in the park again this year.
- Emily Cain and Dan Burgun for this year's Easter Egg Hunt with special care creating bundles for each home, delivering the packages and allowing our youngest residents to have an egg hunt in the comfort of their own yard.
- This message certainly intends to include all the others who made this past year's events possible. We are sorry if we missed anyone.



ANNUAL REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCIL

TO: Residents of Ben Avon Heights

This is the 58th consecutive year that your Borough has prepared an annual report for the previous year.

The Borough has entered into contracts for the following services:

Police: Ohio Township Police Department
Fire: Avalon Volunteer Fire Company
Real Estate Tax Collection: Jordan Tax Services
Wage Tax Collection: Keystone Collections Group
Sewage Collection: Jordan Tax Services
Leaf Removal: Walt's Landscaping Inc.
Snow Removal: Avalon Borough
Road Maintenance: Avalon Borough
PA One Call: Avalon Borough
Refuse Pick-Up: Valley Waste Services
Building Inspector: Building Inspection Underwriters of PA Inc.
Engineering: Lennon, Smith, Souleret Engineering, Inc.
Auditors: Hosack, Specht, Muetzel, & Wood LLP
Legal Advertising: The Citizen
Banking: Northwest Savings Bank

Our Borough maintains a web site that contains links to borough information, a list of Borough officials, meeting agendas/minutes, and community events. The website address is www.benavonheightsborough.com.

Council meetings are open to all residents, and we encourage your attendance. Council meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. at either Shannopin Country Club (in the months of April, May, June, July, August, September and October) or the Avalon Volunteer Fire Department (in the months of January, February, March, November, and December.) Please check the borough website for additional information.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2021

Ben Avon Heights Borough is in very good financial health. We utilize a variety of different mandated funds and accounts for: General Business, Reserve Fund, Sewage Fund, Planning Commission, Sinking Fund, RAD, and Liquid Fuels. All total, at the end of 2021 the Borough had a balance of \$1,008,989 in all of these accounts.

General Funds	\$77,324
Liquid Fuels	\$15,816
Budgetary Reserve	\$40,347
Planning Commission	\$34,256
Sinking Fund	\$22
Borough Reserve Fund	\$497,998
Borough Sewage Fund	\$343,226
	\$1,008,989

Revenues

The principal sources of revenue for the operation of the Borough were the real estate tax, at the rate of 7.95 mills, and the wage or earned income tax of ½ of 1 percent. Other revenues may be derived from the real estate deed transfer tax and from miscellaneous sources such as fines, interest, permits, highway aid and Budgetary Reserve.

Real Estate Taxes	\$321,196
Deed Transfers	\$ 0
Earned Income Tax	\$ 98,745
Highway Aid Fund (Liquid Fuels)	\$ 0
Interest	\$ 172
Budgetary Reserve	\$ 0
Other Revenues	\$ 76,828
Transfer from Reserve Fund	\$ 37,000
Prior Years Revenue	\$ 0
TOTAL REVENUES	\$533,941

Ben Avon Heights Assessed Valuation

2014	\$38,373,400
2015	\$38,889,300
2016	\$38,889,300
2017	\$39,092,700
2018	\$39,375,500
2019	\$40,065,900
2020	\$40,685,100
2021	\$40,875,000

Expenditures

<u>General Government</u>	\$36,480
General Government expenses include insurance, salaries of the Secretary, Crossing Guards and Auditor, advertising and printing, tax collection fees and expenses, office supplies and other general expenses.	
<u>Police Protection</u>	\$ 53,375
The Borough purchases our police protection from Ohio Township.	
<u>Fire Protection</u>	\$ 17,122
Fire Protection expenses include the cost of fire protection contracted with Avalon Volunteer Fire Company as well as the cost of fire hydrant rentals.	
<u>Health and Sanitation</u>	\$ 64,024
These expenses include payment of trunk sewer rental to Ben Avon Borough, weekly garbage and rubbish collection, sewer maintenance, as well as compliance with the ACHD and PA EPA Consent Order concerning the Clean Water Act.	
<u>Municipal Infrastructure</u>	\$197,948
Expenditures include resurfacing, repair and maintenance of streets, street lighting, snow removal, signs, salt, supplies and equipment costs.	
<u>Community Greenspace</u>	\$ 43,082
Expenses for Greenspace/Borough Park include maintenance of the tennis court and playground equipment, shrubs, trees, and park grounds. Also includes leaf collection. Expenses for Avonworth Community Park is the Borough's pro-rata share of that part of the park's expenses not covered by park revenues plus our pro-rata share of the annual debt service.	
<u>Transfer to Sewage Account</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 682,852
2021 REVENUES	\$ 533,941
2021 EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 682,852</u>
DIFFERENCE	(\$148,910)

*Note that transfers from the Reserve Account for 2021 road work and sewer work were executed in Jan 2022 which offset this difference

Debt Service

The Borough currently has 3 loans. 2 of which will be paid of in 2022. The third loan will end in 2026.

2012 General Loan (2022)	1/1/2021	\$166,453	12/31/2021	\$1,209
2016 AIM Loan (2022)	1/1/2021	\$142,683	12/31/2021	\$900
2016 General Loan (2026)	1/1/2021	\$148,367	12/31/2021	\$93,426
Total	1/1/2021	\$457,503	12/31/2021	\$95,535

PUBLIC SAFETY

PHONE NUMBERS – 24 HOUR SERVICE

EMERGENCY: 911

NON - EMERGENCY: 412-259-8304

Police

We operate under a joint municipal agreement for Ohio Township police services which was signed with the Township and covers the period January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2020. Council voted to extend the contract through 2022.

The Ohio Township Police Secretary is our main contact during the day at (412) 259-8304 for routine information. Emergencies, of course, should be reported directly to 911 now operated by Allegheny County at 400 North Lexington located in North Point Breeze. We work with the Ohio Township Police Department, Sgt Adam Beck as our Borough's Emergency Management Coordinator. Scott Dismukes is deputy coordinator.

Our school crossing guards are Jennie-Lynn Knox at Oxford and New Brighton intersection on Monday and Jim Hamm on Tuesdays and Nadine Dupechain Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Jim Hamm and Jennie-Lynn share the responsibilities at the park bus stop. Jim Buckley Sr decided early in the 2021-2022 school year that he would like to retire from being a crossing guard. He did say he would come out of retirement to help the Borough in a pinch. Substitute guard is Ohio Township Police.

When in residence, you are urged to keep house doors and cars locked. Please continue to list your homes with the police when you are going to be out of town or away on vacation for several days or longer. House numbers need to be prominently displayed and lighting is helpful.

Fire

Our Borough Fire protection is provided by the Avalon Borough Volunteer Fire Department. Remember to call 911 to reach police and fire dispatchers as well as ambulance service. The Avalon Volunteer Fire Department contract is up in 2026.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Community Affairs

We welcomed the following new neighbors to the Ben Avon Heights Community in 2021:

Brian and Merritt Miller
PHIRI3MIK LLC
Dustin and Alyssa Stiver

The Borough was happy to see the Community picnic and sleepover in the park return this year with some updates with food and beverage. The Halloween parade and activities returned this fall and Santa on the Fire Truck also returned thanks to the Avalon Volunteer Fire Department.

Insurance

Proper coverage to protect the borough, staff, parks, council members. In 2021 the Borough left Higbee insurance and began working with McGowan.

Streets, Lights and Water

Avalon Borough's Public Works Crew patched potholes in the Heights throughout the year. Please notify the Borough if a street light by your property is out or blinking. This will aid in getting that unit changed in a timely manner. Note, Duquesne Light charges us for each light whether it is lit or not.

Roadway Improvement Project

2021 was a busy year for road work in the Borough. The Borough completed its 2019 goals to repave all streets by repaving Biddeford, Stratford, and Kent Roads and Devon Lane. As part of the repaving project, curbs were replaced or repaired on these roads. These projects were originally planned to occur over a two-year period (2021 and 2022) but they were all completed in 2021 because the bids came in lower than expected and Council determined that it would be fiscally prudent to take advantage of the opportunity to complete the remaining paving projects in 2021.

Additionally, to improve handicap access to school buses, the sidewalk staging area at the Oxford Road school bus stop was removed and replaced with a one level staging area that is protected by flexible posts. The total cost of these projects was \$267,637. A partial payment of \$133,970 was made in 2021 with the rest being paid in 2022 upon completion of road work punch list by the contractor. The committee also initiated a sign project to replace old and faded signs and add signs for traffic calming purposes. Signs were replaced across the borough to promote safety and reflector strips were added to several sign posts.

Sewers / Wet Weather

DEP/ACHD Consent Decree

The PA Dept of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Allegheny Health Dept (ACHD) mandated sewer improvements to over 75 municipalities (including Ben Avon Heights) under a Consent Order in 2004. During wet weather, municipalities along the Allegheny and Ohio river contribute rainwater into sanitary lines that flow downstream to ALCOSAN treatment plant on Neville Island. Due to the rush of volume, ALCOSAN cannot absorb all of the water and sewage overflows into the riverways. The idea of the Consent Decree is for municipalities to limit and improve their outflows over several phases. This has been an ongoing project for Ben Avon Heights since the original Consent Decree Phase was issued in 2004. BAH has since satisfied the Phase I requirement and Phase II was issued in July of 2021.

For Phase II, Ben Avon Heights falls in the most desirable "light blue" category and is above the gold line standard for source flow reduction (below the target line by greater than 10% and without any downstream tributaries). Because of this favorable distinction, Ben Avon Heights elected to not challenge any outflow metrics. Next step in 2022 will be to plan Phase II requirements.

For Residents, ALCOSAN is increasing sewage rates over the next 5 years to accommodate plant and processing upgrades (ALCOSAN is passing along increases of 7% each year thru 2026). Ben Avon Heights Council is working with local and federal governments to escalate this issue and its significant effects on our residents. Because Ben Avon Heights has built up a substantial reserve against future Wet Weather projects (and considering the effects the ALCOSAN rate increases will have on residents) Ben Avon Heights has no plans to increase the Borough rate for sewer treatment to residents in 2022.

Other Projects

ALCOSAN Regionalization - Ben Avon Heights is being asked to join in transferring ownership over to ALCOSAN for a portion of a multi-municipal sanitary sewer line that combines with Ben Avon. After the transfer is complete, ALCOSAN will maintain this sewer line which will be advantageous to the borough. There will be a cost to upgrade the line that will be split with Ben Avon prior to transfer (TBD)

SSORP (Sanitary Sewer Overflow Response Plan) - This plan details how sewage overflows will be handled within the borough in the case of a breach. This satisfies requirements by the ACHD and DEP and helps to ensure Ben Avon Heights continues to do our part to protect public health and the environment. This plan is set to be approved by council in 2022.

Stormwater through Road Improvement Project - Through the 2021 Road Improvement Project, several grates, basins, and inlets were upgraded to assist in the flow of water down Stratford and Biddeford Roads. This should help maintain road improvements by moderating downhill rainwater flow.

Recreation and Greenspace

The purpose of the Greenspace Committee is to maintain our community assets which are incorporated within the park and the green spaces owned by Ben Avon Heights. Our efforts are geared toward making the park accessible to all and providing recreational opportunities for you and your families to enjoy. We encourage all residents to provide feedback and suggestions on how we can improve upon our efforts for the community. Please note below the key improvements that were made to maintain and improve our park and green space areas in 2021.

Typical updates and maintenance of the park took place in 2021 such as: asphalt resurfacing, the tennis court was cleaned and patched, benches, tables, and garage cans were cleaned and painted. New wood chips were added to the playground area and swings. A new ADA-compliant swing was added as well. Two Ginkgo trees were planted as well as private hedges along Lynton Lane. A new heavy gauge vinyl fence replaced the existing fence along New Brighton.

The basketball court received an update this year with new painted lines, a new backboard and the other pole was removed making it a true half court.

Digital Communications

The Digital Communication Committee is responsible for creating the infrastructure and tools to effectively communicate with the Borough Residents digitally or electronically.

As Residents like to consume the information via different channels, the Borough maintains a multi-channel communications infrastructure comprising email, a website, and social media. The Borough Website (www.benavonheightsborough.com) contains general Borough, Council, and the Community information, history, news, and events. It also maintains social media accounts on Facebook (@BAHBorough, Twitter @BAHBorough, and Instagram @BAHBorough). The Borough Secretary performs Email Distribution to all residents for important Borough information.

Generally speaking, the digital communications for the Borough is performing as desired. Residents are using all the channels of communication to receive Borough Information. That said, there has been an issue with our website provider on the amount of disk space so we are not able to get support nor post all of our ordinances and we would like to address this in 2022.