



ANNUAL REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCIL

TO: Residents of Ben Avon Heights

This is the 59th consecutive year that your Borough has prepared an annual report.

2022 BEN AVON HEIGHTS BOROUGH OFFICIALS

Name	Position	Term
Scott Dismukes	Mayor	12/31/25
Jason Brown	President of Council	12/31/25
Steve Stiller	Vice President of Council	12/31/23
Jacquelyn Neunder	Councilwoman	12/31/23
Greg Mihalko	Councilman	12/31/23
John Radcliffe	Councilman	12/31/23
Pat Lope	Councilman	12/31/23
Joseph Dawley	Councilman	12/31/25
Michelle Dawley	Judge of Elections	12/31/25
Kim Gourley	Real Estate Tax Collector	12/31/25
Jessica DiNuzzo	Secretary	Appointed
Keystone Collections	Wage Tax Collector	Appointed
John T. Vogel	Solicitor	Appointed

2022 COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

Finance	Brown, Stiller, Dismukes
Emergency Services	Dismukes
Municipal Infrastructure	Dawley, Mihalko, Stiller
Health & Sanitation	Stiller, Dismukes
Green Space	Radcliffe, Neunder
Insurance	Neunder, Lope
Digital Communications	Brown, Stiller
Allegheny North Tax Collection Committee	Brown, Stiller

In 2022, most Council Committees featured more than one council member to encourage collaboration and provide coverage to the areas. Council adjourns for a monthly meeting 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.)

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.

2022 BOROUGH COMMITTEES

Borough Council wishes to recognize and thank the following residents and individuals who volunteered their time in 2022 to work for the Borough in the following capacities:

Planning Commission	Al Cuteri - Chair	2020-2023
	Michael Weir	2022-2025
	Justin Griffith	2022-2025
Avonworth Community Park Board Authority	Damian Liska	
Avonworth Community Park Board	MaryBeth Bolam	
	Terrie Brightman	
	Jennifer Fink	
	Hobie Webster	
Zoning Officer	Tom Price	
Zoning Hearing Board	David Raves, Chair	2021-2024
	Michael Rovitto	2021-2023
	Clayton Morris	2021-2022
Borough Website Administrator	Jason Brown	
BAH Community Club Chairperson	Michelle Dawley	
Community Club Treasurer	Jen Dickson	
Coordinator Emergency Management	Sgt. Adam Beck	
Deputy Coordinator Emergency Management	Scott Dismukes	
Ben Avon Heights Sustainability Committee	Kim Gourley	

Special Thanks

- Lea Ann and Patrick Lope - Community Picnic and Sleepover in the Park
- Janel and Travis Everly - Halloween Parade at the Park
- Susan Dismukes - Borough's Holiday Pole Decoration Chair and the elves who decorate the poles
- Bill and Jen Dickson - Borough Park Tree Decoration
- Bert and Jen Fary - Easter Egg Hunt in the Park
- Rick and Heather O'Brien - Fall Happy Hour
- Adam and Katie Miller - Christmas Tea

This message certainly intends to include all the others who made this past year's events possible. We are sorry if we missed anyone.

Community Affairs

We welcomed the following new neighbors to the Ben Avon Heights Community in 2022:

Gesue Stalari and Mallory Milchak
Taylor Goss and William Hassen
Christian and Colby Vagley

2022 FINANCIAL REPORT

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 2022 the Borough had a balance of \$1,013,153 in all of these accounts.

General Funds	\$71,657
Liquid Fuels	\$2
Budgetary Reserve (RAD)	\$56,165
Planning Commission	\$23,857
Sinking Fund	\$22
Borough Reserve Fund	\$498,410
Borough Sewage Fund	\$363,040
	\$1,013,153

The **General Funds** account is used for paying all Borough expenditures. Money is transferred into this account during the year from the other accounts to pay for covered expenses for those account purposes.

The **Liquid Fuels** account is used to construct and repair roads and bridges and pay for related expenses. This funding comes from the state Department of Transportation (PennDOT) via the state's oil franchise tax. This money is transferred into the General Account to pay for road maintenance at the end of each year.

The **Budgetary Reserve (RAD)** account is used for investing in libraries, parks and trails, arts and cultural organizations, regional attractions, sports and civic facilities, and public transit. This funding comes from The Allegheny Regional Asset District (RAD).

The **Planning Commission** account was set up in prior years by the Council to fund the Joint Municipality Planning Program and its associated costs such as legal fees, consultant fees, and other related costs.

The **Sinking Fund** is required by the state of Pennsylvania for any municipality that has outstanding bonds or notes.

The **Borough Sewage Fund** is used to pay for the Borough's Sewage Costs including any construction costs required by the state related to the Consent Decree associated with The Clean Water Act. This fund is populated by sewage fees collected by Borough Residents.

The **Borough Reserve Fund** is a fund set up to pay for unexpected costs incurred by the Borough. These costs include, but are not limited to, infrastructure costs, legal costs, and emergency management costs.

Revenues

The principal sources of revenue for the operation of the Borough are the real estate tax, at the rate of 7.95 mills, and the 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, and grants. We also make transfers into and out of the General Fund from the other financial accounts to pay for their specified expenses.

Real Estate Taxes	\$325,339
Earned Income Taxes	\$148,501
Liquid Fuels	\$17,280
Interest	\$56
Other Income	\$47,064
Transfers From Other Accounts	\$195,084
Total Revenues	\$733,324

Ben Avon Heights Assessed Real Estate 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
2022	\$42,990,200

<https://apps.alleghenycounty.us/website/MuniProfile.asp?muni=9>

Expenditures

Principal sources of expenses are for general government, emergency services, health and sanitation, infrastructure, and green space.

General Government	\$152,761
Emergency Protection	\$73,090
Health & Sanitation	\$77,088
Municipal Infrastructure	\$168,262
Greenspace	\$41,051
Loan Payments	\$40,024
Transfers To Other Accounts	\$155,000
Total Expenses	\$707,276

General Government expenses include insurance, salaries of employees (Borough Secretary and Crossing Guards), administrative services (e.g., engineering, legal, auditing, planning, tax collection, etc.), advertising and printing, office supplies and other general expenses.

Emergency Protection expenses include payments for Police and Fire Protection.

Health and Sanitation expenses include payments for sewer connections to Ben Avon Borough and Avalon Borough, weekly garbage and rubbish collection, sewer maintenance, as well as compliance with the Consent Order concerning the Clean Water Act.

Municipal Infrastructure expenses include resurfacing, repair and maintenance of streets, street lighting, snow removal, signs, salt, supplies and equipment costs.

Greenspace 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 the Borough's pro-rata share of Avonworth Community Park.

Debt Service

The Borough currently has 1 loan which will end in 2026. As of December 31, 2022 the principal amount outstanding was \$73,865.

2022 Revenues	\$733,324
2022 Expenses	\$707,276
Net Profit (Loss)	\$26,048

Other notable accomplishments for the borough this year have been the transition to online banking made in January 2021, having prior month's financials available for current month's Council Meeting to make more informed decisions, improving accuracy of ledger reconciliations and enhancing the 5-year budget plan..

Contracts

The Borough has contracts with the following services:

Police:	Ohio Township Police Department
Fire:	Avalon Volunteer Fire Company
Legal:	Tucker Arensberg P.C.
Engineering:	Lennon, Smith, Souleret Engineering, Inc.
Real Estate Tax Collection:	Jordan Tax Services
Sewage Collection:	Jordan Tax Services
Wage Tax Collection:	Keystone Collections Group
Park Maintenance:	A&N Landscaping Inc.
Leaf Removal:	A&N Landscaping Inc.
Snow Removal:	Avalon Borough
Road Maintenance:	Avalon Borough
PA One Call:	Avalon Borough
Refuse & Recycling:	Valley Waste Services
Building Inspector:	Building Inspection Underwriters of PA Inc.
Auditors:	Hosack, Specht, Muetzel, & Wood LLP
Legal Advertising:	Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
Banking:	Northwest Savings Bank

EMERGENCY SERVICES

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, 2023 through December 31, 2025.

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.

All residents 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 through a joint municipal agreement with Avalon Borough. 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.

Crossing Guards

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. Substitute guard is Ohio Township Police. The Borough is still

seeking a substitute crossing guard. Avonworth School District subsidizes a portion of our crossing guard costs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Insurance

The Borough maintains proper coverage through McGowan Governmental Underwriters to protect the borough, staff, park and council members. We have Property, Crime, General Liability, Auto and Public Official / Employment Practice coverage through Argonaut Insurance Company. The policy began on January 18, 2022 and is effective until January 18, 2023. We also maintain a Workers Compensation & Employers Liability policy through Summit Point Insurance Company. The policy began on October 17, 2022 and is effective until October 17, 2023.

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

The Roadway Improvement committee ensures the maintenance and safety of our streets, curbs, and intersections. Work completed in the borough in 2022 includes:

- As a result of feedback from the community, an emphasis was placed in improving safety at several intersections:
 - Wilson Drive - New stop bars were painted at all four points of the intersection, double yellow lines were repainted, visibility to oncoming traffic/pedestrians was improved.
 - Perrysville / New Brighton / Oxford - signage was increased and crosswalks repainted
- All signs and posts that did not meet criteria for condition/visibility/safety were replaced.
- A final punch list was completed in April for the Stratford/Biddeford Road Improvement Project.
- Ben Avon Heights Borough partnered with PennDot to have state roads proceeding through the borough resurfaced in July (New Brighton/Perrysville/Ben Avon Heights Road) and guardrails replaced (Ben Avon Heights Road).
- A Pavement Inspection and Restoration schedule will be implemented starting in 2023 that plans the maintenance of all Ben Avon Heights roads through 2039.
- A grant was applied for Canterbury Road curbs and ADA access which is next on the roadmap for reconstruction

Health & Sanitation

The Health and Sanitation committee is responsible for the sanitary sewer lines and stormwater systems, as well as garbage pickup and recycling in the borough. Items of note in 2022 include:

- In April of 2023, Ben Avon Heights was one of the first municipalities to complete Phase II of the Allegheny County Health Department's Consent Decree. The purpose of the 2004 Consent Decree judicial order is to minimize the amount of sanitary sewer overflow into our local streams and rivers that occurs during wet weather events. All boroughs must comply with each Phase by lowering overrun or demonstrating improvement by 2025 or be subject to fines and penalty.
 - Ben Avon Heights borough was categorized as "light blue" or "low infiltration" in relation to other boroughs due to an ongoing maintenance program that measures the water infiltration of our sewer lines and remediates them on a rotating street-by-street basis.
 - The borough met Phase II requirements by passing a new ordinance that requires lateral connecting sewer lines be inspected via CCTV camera at the time of a property sale/closing.
 - The committee applied for grants to position the borough for future Consent Decree phases.

- In 2022, ALCOSAN passed another 7% increase per thousand gallons of water treated per household (based on water meter consumption) to pay for Consent Decree related capital improvements. The borough, however, has managed its sewer fund and expenses effectively and therefore did not increase the Borough Rate, holding flat at \$3.00 per tGal.
- An annual plan to clean our Storm Water System was implemented in September 2022. Tri-State Pipe won the bid to complete this work going forward. A clean, well-functioning storm water system will help preserve our infrastructure and lower the effects of heavy rainfall on properties in the borough.
- A new three-year contract was awarded to Valley Waste to continue waste removal and recycling services through 2025 (with a two year option). Though the rate did increase by over 35%, we were able to secure the following in negotiations:
 - Glass can now be recycled bi-weekly (curbside) in the same resident container as aluminum, plastic and paper.
 - A penalty schedule was added to chargeback for late/missed pickups and other service related issues to help ensure the level of service we expect as a borough
 - Residents can continue to place unlimited amounts of garbage at their curbside. Other boroughs have been moving to contracts that only allow a set number of garbage cans/bags then bill each resident for the remainder. This IS NOT part of our renewal and residents can continue to place unlimited trash at their curbs within requirements stated in the terms of service (valleywasteservice.com).

Recreation and Greenspace

Our neighborhood park is an important gathering place for all of our residents and their friends. The “Dickson Little Red Library” offers a wide variety of books shared by many walking by the park. There is rarely a day that goes by where there aren’t neighbors and friends playing on the playgrounds, basketball court, baseball field or tennis/pickleball court.

Events held at the park were the Easter parade and egg hunt, September Community picnic and sleepover, the Halloween parade and activities. Thanks to the Avalon Volunteer Fire Department, our young ones are greeted annually by Santa who arrives via the Fire Truck.

In 2022, Ben Avon Heights Borough Council continued to invest in the park by

- Adding 12” of mulch to the children’s playground area to ensure and enhance the safety of the children using the swings and climbing equipment
- Passing updated Green Space Rules Ordinance to protect the park as well as our residents that use it
- Implemented an Online Reservation system for the tennis/pickleball court
- Removed and trimmed trees in the park
- Removed Tree of Heaven and treated the Green Space Area between Briar Cliff and Cambridge Roads to remove a key breeding area for the invasive Spotted Lanternfly species

In 2022, Council also contracted with A&N Lawn Service to provide park maintenance including grass cutting and hedge trimming in the park as well as leaf removal in the park and throughout the Borough roads. We appreciate all of your positive comments on the Borough’s Park and green spaces.

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 is your one-stop-shop for all things in the Borough

- Email: The Borough Secretary distributes relevant news and information to Residents via email.
- Twitter @BAHBorough - email distributions are tweeted as well as community news; this feed is also presented on the Borough Website
- Facebook (@BAHBorough) - typically related to Borough Happenings / Community events
- Instagram @BAHBorough - - typically related to Community events

In 2022, we posted Ordinances from the past 10+ years. The titles of the ordinances are searchable. In 2023, we are no longer constrained on disk usage on the website and as such we will be posting all past Ordinances and making the titles searchable. We are looking into posting Resolutions as well and making them searchable.

Generally speaking, the digital communications for the Borough is performing as desired. Residents are using all the channels of communication to receive Borough Information.