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## Point Marion officials work on water-quality issues

By Melissa Glisan, Herald-Standard  
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**P**POINT MARION - Local government officials are continuing efforts to address water-quality issues in the borough.

At a recent meeting, borough council members asked Steve Buchanan of the Alpha Associates engineering firm to work with Councilman O. Roger Kennedy in developing a schedule for water-line replacements in the borough, in the hope of getting grants for the work.

Since last fall, sediment in the 100-year-old water lines has been breaking free and appearing in residents' homes. Council has worked with the state Department of Environmental Protection to assure residents that the water, while unsightly, is still safe for consumption while the cause of the problem was found.

Now that the problem has been discovered, council needs an outline of where lines need to be replaced, beginning with the most urgent areas, in order to get grants. Because of the size of the anticipated line replacement project Council President Jim Hackett said state and federal funding is essential for the work, as the borough lacks the money for a project of this magnitude.

Buchanan estimates that the three-phase project would cost more than \$1 million. Hackett also pointed out that with the rural nature of the borough and the fact that it's bordered on two sides by rivers and on the third by the West Virginia state line, officials have little hope of working with neighboring municipalities to lessen the cost.

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"We want to show you that we are taking this water problem seriously," Hackett said. "This problem isn't going to fix itself in a day due to the nature of the problem, but we do try to follow up on each case."

Moving to other business, resident Jack Stewart asked council to consider meeting with PennDOT and discussing the preservation of the Albert Gallatin Route 88 Bridge.

Due to the bridge's declining condition, the state plans to replace the historic steel span linking Fayette and Greene counties. The first public meeting on the subject was held earlier this year.

Referring to a book published by the Pennsylvania Museum Commission, Stewart said the state listed the bridge as one of 180 out of the 25,000 bridges statewide that should be marked for preservation due to historical significance.

"The state said this bridge is worthy of preservation, the same one they are proposing to tear down," Stewart said.

The book he cited, "Historic Highway Bridges in Pennsylvania," lists the bridge as significant not only in its history but also in its design. Council noted they were unsure what could be done, but solicitor Gene Grimm advised Stewart to see if the structure was listed with the National Historic Register for preservation purposes.

Council also conducted the following business:

- Received a report from Buchanan that bids were received at the Fayette County Redevelopment Authority for the Water Street renovation project. The entire road and the utilities located beneath are being replaced, from Fourth Avenue to Broadway.
- Announced that the borough has been awarded a \$20,000 state grant to help offset costs to replace two sewage pumps under Fourth Avenue that failed last fall.
- Applauded Mayor Robert Wolfe for working to tackle problem properties in the borough. Wolfe instituted an aggressive cleanup program for vacant and junk-littered properties earlier this year.
- Announced that June 22 is the Fayette County hard-to-recycle event. Concerning recycling, Shaffer noted that for the second straight year, recycling receipts have continued to drop, indicating that residents aren't participating as required by law.
- Reminded residents that the annual Albert Gallatin Regatta and Memorial Day celebrations will be held in the borough park the weekend of May 25 and 26. The annual veteran's parade will follow the same route as in the past.

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