Regional Collaboration Among Three Municipal Authorities

What is “Collaboration”?

This simple definition includes three parts:

Two or more people - (team)
Working together - (processes)
Towards shared goals - (purpose)
So:
We had two or more people,
Working together,
Towards a common goal.

“*We (NPWA/NWWA) wanted to SELL water and BCWSA wanted to BUY water*”

So..... all we had to do is to negotiate a contract for the sale and purchase of 10 million gallons per day of water capacity, prepare a design and construction estimate, obtain financing, bid the project, obtain about 30 easements, then collectively build over 10 miles of transmission line, multiple interconnections, a meter pit and transfer station, pass through several municipalities, deal with dozens of permits and regulatory agencies, all upon roads with average daily traffic counts exceeding 100,000 vehicles per day
“Piece of Cake”
When *Should* Collaboration Actually Begin?

“*Buying the Dirt Before It is For Sale*”

*(The tale of a crazy old man)*
Communicate

Cooperate

Be open and candid as to your goals and objectives

*Earn* mutual trust and respect

Sweat the details

Then, write it all down!
Determine who is really going to be involved in the process

Consider ALL potential outside influences

(It wasn’t just the three of us…)
This Route doesn’t look too bad...

How many people could possibly be involved?
Who Was Actually Involved?

Three Executive Directors  
Three Authority Boards  
Three Solicitors  
Three Engineering Firms  
The Local Press  
Chalfont Borough Manager and Officials  
New Britain Township Manager and Officials  
Warrington Township Manager and Officials  
Horsham Township Manager and Officials  
PennDOT  
Bucks County Conservation District  
Montgomery County Conservation District  
Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection  
Army Corps of Engineers  
SEPTA – Buses and Railroad  
Three School Districts – Busing Routes  
Emergency Management – Two Counties  
9-1-1 Operations – Two Counties
Also:

Three Fire Companies
Five Police Departments
Two EMS Organizations
Two Prime Contractors
Aqua Water Company
Warrington Twp Water Authority
Horsham Twp Water Authority
Two Local Sewer Authorities
Two State Representatives
One State Senator

And over 30 Local Elected Officials!

(Our second piece of cake)
Communication Was Absolutely Essential

How did we handle the situation?

WE SELECTED ONE SPOKESPERSON FOR OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS AND THE DISTRIBUTION OF MOST PUBLIC INFORMATION!

Held pre-design discussions with all local agencies and municipalities.

WE ASKED for information about upcoming projects, paving, developments, community activities.

WE ASKED about influences: Political, Physical, Operational
PROVIDED CONSTANT ACCURATE AND TIMELY INFORMATION

- Preemption of problems -

Call the municipal managers to advise them of any issues before they receive citizen calls!
What Did We Install?

Pumping Upgrades at the Plant
Followed by:

“Lots of ductile iron pipe”

21,216 LF of 42” Pipe

2,318 LF of 36” Pipe

29,158 LF of 30” Pipe
• Approximately 110 Water Main fittings and 3,500 Joints
• Installed 20 new Fire Hydrants
• Added 12 new interconnects to existing system
• Required a 60” boring under Route 152
• A 60” Casing Pipe under existing 30” main supply line
• A 60” boring under Walnut Street and SEPTA Railroad
• A 42” boring under the new US 202 Parkway
• A 24” Wet tap into existing NWWA main supply line
• +/- 1,000 Utility crossing in local and state roadways
Needed to plan for material storage easements throughout entire route. This required many communications and numerous meetings with landowners.
Needed areas to assemble fittings prior to installation – also winter weather slowed the process – had to communicate with land owners and municipalities
Old culvert pipe had to be upgraded to box culvert. Needed to coordinate with two municipalities, PennDOT, PaDEP, Army Corps. Road closure – Police, Fire, EMS, SEPTA, School Buses.
Needed many temporary off site easements for grading and equipment movement.
Needed municipal approval and permission of landowners for material storage along installation route.
Another example of pipe size requiring easement locations on private property to store materials. Started negotiating easements about 6-8 months before awarding bids.
What We Did Right:

*Communicate .. Communicate
And then Communicate some more…*

- Single person responsible for communications
- Single method of distributing communications
  - Public access to all pertinent information
  - Regular updates to public officials
  - Weekly updates to website and mapping
- Interactive website with direct links provided on all Authorities and Township web pages
  - Daily communications with contractors
- Immediate and personal visits to resolve problems

*And we followed up on all calls and details*

*(notice the theme? ? ?)*
We created a website that was updated *daily* - then insisted that all municipal agencies use this site for info – reduced confusion and multiple calls!
This map was available on the website – allowing any interested party to click on the section of interest, opening another more detailed map.
MAP AREA 1 - CHALFONT BOROUGH
Off Road Easements (Forest Park Treatment Plant to Main Street)

Next level map

PIPE INSTALLATION COMPLETE TESTING & RESTORATION IN PROGRESS

LEGEND
- Map 1 Construction Area
- Transmission Main Route

FOREST PARK TREATMENT PLANT
NO DETOUR ROUTE ANTICIPATED FOR CONSTRUCTION IN THIS AREA

MAP LAST UPDATED: AUGUST 6, 2014
Also had **DETOUR MAPS ONLINE**

**DETOUR ROUTE TO BE ACTIVE DURING ASPHALT REPAIRS THRU AUGUST 15, 2014**

**LEGEND**
- Detour Route
- Map 2 Construction Area
- Transmission Main Route

**PIPE INSTALLATION COMPLETE TESTING & PAVING RESTORATION IN PROGRESS**
MAP AREA 6 - NEW BRITAIN TOWNSHIP
Schoolhouse Road (Walnut Street to W Butler Ave)

Forest Park
TRANSMISSION MAIN EXTENSION
Delivering the Finest

LEGEND
- Green: Detour Route
- Orange: Map 6 Construction Area
- Blue: Transmission Main Route

DETOUR ROUTE TO BE RE-ACTIVATED WHEN FINAL ASPHALT RESTORATION COMMENCES, AUGUST, 2014 (LOCAL ACCESS ONLY)

PIPE INSTALLATION COMPLETE TESTING & PAVING RESTORATION IN PROGRESS

MAP LAST UPDATED: AUGUST 6, 2014
County Line Road Night Work
Anticipated Work Zone Area
4-13 to 4-18

County Line Road
One or Two Nights
During week of
4-13 to 4-18

Bradford Green Community
What we could have done better:

• Better focus on traffic signage and maintaining traffic controls – possibly require a separate vendor

• Better focus on roadway repairs during construction (Waiting for the punch list was unacceptable)

• Better focus on lawn and property restoration during construction (Again, the punch list was 12+ months away)

Additional Areas for Material Storage
Additional Areas for Equipment Parking – off street!
Wider Temporary Easements
What We Learned and Recommendations:

Buy the dirt before it is for sale.

Don’t proceed unless you have a true partnership built upon respect and trust.

Make sure there is a clear consensus as to the desired outcome

“Sweat the details”

Then Document Everything

And Be Prepared for the Unexpected
Record Rainfall in June of 2013

Plan for delays in your project schedule.
We lost 13 days due to heavy rainfall.
And then - when you least expect it.....
about 10 days after completion and full flow!!
A connecting valve to the new line broke loose, washed out a roadway, knocked down a PECO pole, damaged a township and drained a 4 MG water storage tank in about 45 minutes!
Two days to repair main break
A GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIP AMONG ALL OF THE AUTHORITIES INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT IS NOT THE TIME TO FIND OUT IF YOU ALL GET ALONG
AND WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS...

USE A DEGREE
OF CREATIVITY
IN SOLVING
ANY REMAINING
PROBLEMS!
I found it!
Temperature is just right!