

**CITY OF LEWES
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2020**

The Wednesday, February 26, 2020 regular meeting of the Lewes Board of Public Works was held at 4:00 P.M. in Lewes City Hall, 114 E. Third Street, Lewes, Delaware.

1. WELCOME, CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

In the absence of President Lee, Vice President Owen conducted the meeting.

Vice President Owen called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. A moment of silence was observed.

2. ROLL CALL

Board Members Present:

Jack Leshner
A. Thomas Owen
Robert J. Kennedy, III
Thomas Panetta

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Theodore Becker, Mayor
Darrin Gordon, General Manager
Michael Hoffman, Legal Counsel

Others Present:

Austin Calaman, Assistant General Manager
Kristina Keller, BPW
Deputy Mayor Fred Beaufait
City Manager Ann Marie Townshend
City Councilwoman Bonnie Osler
City Councilman Dennis Reardon
Jackie Doherty, Recording Secretary

3. REVISIONS AND/OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- a) Receive Vice President Report**
- b) Receive Secretary Report, approval of minutes January 22, 2020 meeting**
- c) Receive Treasurer Report**
- d) Receive Assistant Treasurer Report**

ACTION: *Mr. Panetta made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented; Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

5. Receive the White Marsh Environmental Systems, Inc. Report

Mr. Gordon stated reports for December and January were received. White Marsh Vice President Bruce Patrick and Area Supervisor Paul Peris are present tonight, and an operator from the plant will be attending the monthly Board meetings to provide reports and answer questions.

Mayor Becker questioned if approval was given by BPW for the filter cleaning prior to peak season as was mentioned in the February White Marsh report. Mr. Gordon stated permission was given for the filter cleaning in addition to permission for cleaning the EQ tank.

Mr. Panetta stated White Marsh will provide additional information for the reports within one month and questioned why the nitrogen level is reported as higher in the January 1st to 31st chemistry report.

Mr. Patrick stated he will check the report regarding the elevated nitrogen levels to provide an answer to Mr. Panetta's question.

Mr. Kennedy questioned if the grates have been secured after a worker slipped and fell on a loose grate.

Mr. Peris stated the grates have been secured with all safety measures in place.

ACTION: *Mr. Panetta made a motion to receive the White Marsh Report; Mr. Leshar seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

6. Receive the President's Report

President Lee is not present today to report.

7. Receive the General Manager's Report—Financial Review—3rd Quarter, Year to Date

Mr. Gordon reviewed the following for Year to Date January:

- Electric revenues down 4.6%; water increased 5.7%; stormwater down .29%; sewer down 4.9%.
- Purchase power is 5.31% below budget; past four months residential rates are lowest in the State; wages and benefits are lower in sewer with plans to hire a full-time employee.
- Costs for electric repairs and maintenance were higher due to installing new stainless-steel transformers at the beach area; increase in costs for sewer repairs and maintenance and professional contractual due to the cleaning of accumulated sludge in the oxidation ditch and replacing bubblers during the month of December.
- Increase in impact fees from the four developments.

Mr. Gordon stated the power outage on February 22nd at the beach was due to a connector line being loosened. Power went off at 10:00 P.M. and returned at 2:00 A.M. after it was repaired.

ACTION: *Mr. Leshner made a motion to accept the General Manager's Report; Mr. Panetta seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

OLD BUSINESS

8. Open forum/general discussion reviewing current projects. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (D. Gordon)

Mr. Gordon reported:

- Front Street has been completed with the paving work at Front Street, Gills Neck and Savannah Road.
- Sewer project has been installed in Savannah Place with a new paved road; new regional lift station installed in Huling Cove which will also serve Dutchman's Harvest and other surrounding areas; the cost for each resident in Savannah Place is about \$25,000 for a 2%, 30-year loan.
- Pilottown Road project to remove lead pipes in the road to replace with PVC line; the DeIDOT permit needed for January 15th was denied due to the road being considered too curved; a meeting is scheduled with DeIDOT on March 6th which was their first available date; a letter will be sent to the residents of Pilottown Road; the sewer project on Pilottown includes lining the sewer pipes if DeIDOT will issue the permit.
- Agreement with First Presbyterian Church to build a 14-space parking lot on the property by Spring. GMB will be taking bids. BPW will use for parking during weekdays and the Church will use nights and weekends.
- Filter trains: two are new, one was cleaned, one is empty, two more new trains have been ordered; goal is to have two new trains added for a total of four new trains by May 1st; all hardware will also be replaced; Suez will have two technicians present during the process and the timeline has been planned to complete by the goal date.
- Discussions continue with the City regarding a resolution and zoning amendments for placement of the 5G system on BPW poles.
- Abbott Park has decided not to move forward with the water and wastewater improvements and will be doing their own electric upgrades.
- Sargent & Lundy Report needs to be completed with the addition of the number of ground transformers.

Mr. Calaman reported the new billing system will be ready on March 9th for customers to register to begin paying bills in the new system. Letters and emails will be sent to customers on March 9th with instructions for the system and credit card automatic payments. The new bills will start in April.

NEW BUSINESS

9. Open forum/general discussion to receive the proposed 2020-2021 Operations and Maintenance Budget INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (D. Gordon)

Mr. Gordon stated the budget being provided for review was discussed at the January workshop meeting. The budget will be approved at the March Board meeting to begin on April 1st.

Mr. Gordon reviewed the revenue estimate process for electric, water, and sewer; 5-year average for purchase power; DEMEC renewables portfolio; salary and wages increases due to full-time employee to be hired for water/wastewater and to hire a lineman for electric; full-time employees will be hired for the front office and an administrative assistant for the back office; repairs and maintenance increase; operating expense increase; operating income; no rate increase; use of the revenue from County effluent; loans for residents from the State are through BPW; conservative estimates for the impact fees.

Mayor Becker requested that the low estimates for the impact fees be reviewed.

**10. Open forum/general discussion to receive the root cause report for the WWTP bypass and set a date for the public meeting to discuss the root cause report.
INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (D. Gordon)**

Vice President Owen stated a public meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 13th at 6:00 P.M. but the planned location of the Rollins Center needs to be changed. The alternative location information will follow with the date and time to remain the same.

Mr. Gordon stated Mr. Panetta has written a 21-page report that will be provided to Mr. Patrick, Mr. Peris, DNREC, and then be posted on the website for public review tomorrow.

Mr. Panetta stated the intent of this report is not to place blame but to see what technically went wrong, the root cause of the event, corrective actions for prevention, and examine the secondary issues needed to improve performance. Attachments to the report available online will include reports from: Suez, White Marsh, DNREC, and the PowerPoint Presentation from the public meeting on January 29th.

ACTION: *Mr. Kennedy made a motion to receive Mr. Panetta's report; Mr. Leshar seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

11. MEETINGS ATTENDED BY BOARD MEMBERS OR STAFF

Mr. Panetta reported he attended meetings for Mayor and City Council, City Mitigation, Lewes Planning Commission, met with Sargent and Lundy regarding the electric study, White Marsh, budget workshop.

Mr. Kennedy reported he attended the SCAT meeting.

Vice President Owen reported he attended the SCAT meeting and the Lewes Planning Commission.

12. BOARD OR STAFF REQUESTS FOR AGENDA ITEM(S)

None

13. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

None

14. CALL TO THE PRESS

Nick Roth of the Cape Gazette was present.

15. EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

16. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

17. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION: *Mr. Kennedy made a motion to adjourn to executive session; Mr. Lesher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Doherty, Recording Secretary
Lewes Board of Public Works