

BPW/ Joint City Meeting 1.31.23
 Rollin Center
 January 31, 2023, at 5:00pm

1. Welcome, Call the meeting to order

2. Roll Call

BPW Board Members

Thomas Panetta, President
 Ear Webb, Vice President
 D. Preston Lee, P.E., Secretary
 Richard Nichols, Treasurer
 A. Thomas Owen, Assistant Treasurer

City Council

Andrew Williams, Mayor
 Tim Ritzert, Councilperson
 Khalil Saliba, Councilperson
 Carolyn Jones, Councilperson
 Candace Vessella, Councilperson

Ex-Officio Members

Austin Calaman, General Manager
 Robin Davis, Assistant General Manager
 Michael Hoffman, Legal Counsel

Ex-Officio Members

Ann Marie Townshend, City Manager

3. Discussion about Army Reserve Center and facilities planning.

Mayor Williams stated that this will not be an in-depth conservation. The city has not received orders from the Army yet but are coming. GMB has done a spatial preliminary study of current inventory and potential needs. Mayor Williams acknowledged the hard work of the city council, BPW board members, and staff of both the city and the BPW. President Panetta agreed and acknowledged congressional members. Mr. Saliba acknowledged local officials.

Ms. Townshend stated that GMB is completing the functional needs assessment. Morgan Helfrich, GMB, stated that GMB was charged to look at the needs for the city, BPW, police department, surrounding areas off Schley Avenue, and growth. The initial site assessment shows that there is good soil, the site is outside of the flood hazard area, and there is one underground storage tank. Unknown what was in the tank. No tax ditches or right ways in proximity. No state or federal wetlands. The groundwater recharge potential is fair.

GMB sent questionnaires to each department asking about current needs and potential wants for the future. The first functional space comparison is usually high in terms of square footage. Ms. Townshend stated that she did not inform departments that the questionnaire was a wish list. Ms. Helfrich stated that some spaces could be shared but this analysis has not been done yet. Some spaces may not need to be housed at this site. A conversation will be needed of how many floors, which departments would be in connection, etc.

	Police department	City Hall	BPW
Current Space	5,000 sq ft	7,750 sq ft	5,400 sq ft
Requested Space	16,700 sq ft	25,000 sq ft	14,400 sq ft
Increase	3.4x	3.2x	2.7x

Mayor Williams questioned if the space was all under one roof. Ms. Helfrich stated that some spaces could potentially be moved outside. Mr. Ritzert questioned if the offices on Schley Avenue would be consolidated to the new site. Ms. Townshend stated that the calculations do include the maintenance department.

Ms. Helfrich stated that the next steps will be to take each department and consolidate reduce the overall number of square footages. The overall square footage now would be 56,000. This does not include the external storage space. GMB would like to reduce the overall square footage to 40,000.

Mr. Calaman stated that the BPW requested a larger conference room and dedicated IT space with an air conditioning unit. There is no office space left and Mr. Calaman incorporate an extra person every 5-10 years. President Panetta stated that the field and office staff submitted separately and assumes that field staff would not move to the new building for efficiency reasons. Ms. Helfrich stated that the interior building space for the field staff was included.

Ms. Helfrich stated that the Army Reserve site is currently zoned as R2 Residential and would not need to be rezoned. The existing army building, under the roof, has a footprint of 20,000. GMB has looked into the possibility of DelDot allowing two entrances in the front. Typical do not allow, but an exception could be made for the police department.

Mayor Williams stated that through the whole process, the City and BPW will continue to take community feedback. Mr. Nichols questioned what would happen to the existing City Hall property. Mayor Williams stated that there are many possibilities, and the discussion is ahead of the current preliminary stages.

Mr. Calaman stated that BPW is currently renting and if there is a share in the capital investment it will need to be included in the 5-year capital budget. Mayor Williams stated that he would like to see an advisory council from the community with real estate expertise. Ms. Townshend stated that the City of Lewes is the current owner of the City Hall building and BPW is a tenant, and it should be considered if this is the arrangement wanted for the future or a co-ownership.

Ms. Helfrich stated that the questionnaires were sent out separately and every department tracked three times the footage. Mayor Williams questioned how Lewes compares to other municipalities that have done this before with GMB. Ms. Helfrich stated that the New Castle process was the same and chose to remove growth beyond ten years.

Mayor Williams questioned if GMB foresees some sort of stormwater management? Most of the site is impervious, but there will be some sort of stormwater management needed.

Mr. Calaman stated that the report does not include covered storage or garage. Ms. Helfrich stated that not all of the outdoor storage will fit on the Army Reserve site. Mr. Saliba stated that the Army is conducting an environmental study and it is expected to have some issues. This is going to be a long process. Mr. Calaman stated that the Army Reserve site is around 5 acres and is not the most efficient. The site is backed up against a residential area and significant landscaping would be needed.

Fred Dillion, Drake Knoll, stated that he has had ongoing discussions with COs about excessive idling, sometimes up to six hours. Mr. Dillion is happy that some parts of the city will be on the property and that there will probably be some environmental cleanup. Two Drake Knoll residents would like to use

part of the land that comes to a point that may be of no use to the city or the BPW. Drake Knoll residents are happy to be of service and part of the planning.

Elizabeth Ann Schulze stated that she has worked inside and outside the property with the Army group. Mr. Schultze stated that she is thrilled that the city is taking over and would like to thank Ted Becker.

Stephanie Tsuantes stated that the existing City Hall structure used a bond referendum to help pay for it. What is the status of bond referendum? Ms. Townshend stated that it will be paid in 2025. Ms. Tsuantes feels that this is a 20–25-year project. Ms. Tsuantes is concerned with Schley Avenue property and the current City Hall property being sold and overdeveloped/commercialized. COVID showed that working remote and having less staffing in buildings works. This could result in smaller building needs. Ms. Tsuantes stated that it would be beneficial to the entire town to invest some years in planning and the global impact on Lewes. City Hall is currently at the center of the town and moving sites may change the culture.

Bill Adelman, 5 Flamingo Court, suggested giving property to give Lewes in Bloom to put up a greenhouse and potting shed. Benefits the community and works together with the parks department.

4. Discussion about electric vehicle fleet charging and public charging.

Mr. Calaman stated the goal of the discussion is to reinstate the target locations of public chargers. Paul Evalds was the original donor with credits on each account and the credits are exhausted. BPW needs to be made whole with electric rates with some fee.

Mr. Ritzert stated that State has offered a program that encourages municipalities to invest in infrastructure to recover a good portion of the material costs. The current program expires at the end of April. The material would have to be purchased by the end of April with documentation filed with the State. The program will be terminated at the end of April. Mr. Calaman stated that the program only pertains to level two chargers. Mr. Ritzert stated that the upcoming program has had no details discussed yet.

Mayor Williams questioned if there are vendors that will install and charge royalties. Mr. Calaman stated that Ocean City and Bethany Beach have chargers and do charge fees. BPW does not enforce parking and makes sense for the city to take the lead and the BPW will sell electricity at a municipal rate.

Mr. Ritzert stated that the program requires a purchase (material). The rate is the issue. Mr. Calaman stated that some municipalities create a dedicated rate or charge a commercial rate. Ms. Townshend stated that the DNREC and DelDot program are working primarily with retailers. Ms. Townshend stated that the material can be purchased, and the city can work with ChargePoint to collect money. The city would pay the electricity bill to BPW and collect charging fee at the site.

Ms. Townshend stated that Milford received a grant through Volkswagen and are installing level three chargers downtown. Mr. Ritzert stated that level three is very powerful for the grid. Level two chargers are 120/240 volt and level three chargers are 480 volts. A good transmission and distribution system is needed for level three charger demand. President Panetta stated that in Lewes downtown atmosphere the quick charge is not needed because Lewes wants people to come and stay and walk around. Ms.

Townshend stated that level three could be a draw to travelers. Mr. Ritzert stated that bringing a level three into the city is closely managed by regulators at a state level.

Mayor Williams feels that it is not realistic to make a move before April. Ms. Townshend stated that the city council could decide how many level two chargers are desired and purchase them now and work the rate out later. President Panetta stated that it would be ideal to install the chargers before the summer.

Mr. Calaman stated that if this is the direction the city council and the Board are going, then locations for chargers need to be identified to estimate capital costs. EV charging stations will take up parking spots for regular combustion engines. Ms. Townshend stated that the council will need to determine whether the patron will pay a parking fee plus the cost of the electricity.

Ms. Vessella suggested the Schley Avenue parking lot. Ms. Townshend stated that when the parking lot was designed that conduit was included so that EVs could be adapted. There are currently chargers at Schley and Otis Smith. Possible that the Third Street Parking lot may be a viable site. Ms. Vessella suggested the trailhead. Mr. Ritzert stated that to manage costs, existing infrastructure needs to be considered. Mr. Calaman stated that Johnny Walker Beach, Block house Pond/Dupont Avenue, Third Street Lot, trailhead, and Canal Front Park were all looked at. Ms. Townshend stated that non-metered areas would be ideal.

Mr. Calaman stated that when the units are sourced, maintenance needs to be considered. BPW has had trouble finding a contractor to do maintenance on the current units.

President Panetta stated that putting four level two chargers on same transformer, will be an issue. The more advanced notice, the BPW can accommodate planning and design in capital budget. Mr. Ritzert is a big proponent for level three chargers but is mindful of the constraint on BPW demand. President Panetta stated that any distributor does not run three phase current throughout system.

Ms. Townshend stated that she is meeting with the city manager in Milford and Newark. Mayor Williams stated that the purchase of EV chargers should be on the city's February agenda. Ms. Jones agrees. Ms. Townshend stated that a rate is not needed to purchase units.

5. Discussion and update on the Lewes BPW Mitigation Committee and City Mitigation Planning Team.

Mayor Williams stated that both the city and have engaged in mitigation planning. The Executive Committee on Resiliency discussed two recommendations: Open space funding process and the potential for a disclosure letter. Mayor Williams was surprised by the controversy of the disclosure letter and will need to be reviewed further. For the phragmites, the plan is to spray with Round Up and cut what dies before the summer. Plan to continue to debate. At the meetings, updates on training are provided and tabletop exercises are completed through DEMA. Danielle Swallow participated and noted that the group could be another source to look into grant money for resiliency projects. President Panetta stated that there have been many hurricane exercises and a possible exercise could be cyber security.

The BPW Mitigation Committee is reviewing BPW assets, risk from all threats and identifying the critical assets. The Mitigation Committee has chosen to use the high level for sea-level rise curve, because all

assets are critical. A 3-foot freeboard will be used in addition. For an elevation of 7 feet, the BPW minimum elevation of assets will be 11.6 feet. For wind loading, 120mph will be used for structures, like the water tower, buildings, etc. Staff has assembled a database of all assets and the criticality. There are some things that are out of the purview of the BPW, like building code items such as low-lying drains. Collaboration will be needed with the city. Mr. Calaman stated that the Mitigation committee also reviews the wastewater treatment Facility (WWTF) and the city emergency operation plans. The committee is looking to encourage green policies and programs to minimize climate change.

President Panetta stated that the BPW held a WWTF public workshop and public comment is open. The Board will hold a meeting to discuss among Board members, public welcome, to determine what the next steps are. All information will be available on the BPW website.

Mr. Lee stated that Mr. Davis put together a map that locates all BPW assets and a spreadsheet that identifies elevation, flood zone, coordinates, etc.

Ms. Townshend referred to the building code items mentioned earlier and that the BPW does the plumbing permits. President Panetta stated that BPW does not have a complete list of fixtures inside homes, especially those built in 1950s. Ms. Townshend stated that the city would not have that information. Mayor Williams questioned 120 Water Agreement for the lead and copper rule. President Panetta stated that the program will help with water side, but not the sewer. For new construction, BPW does do the plumbing inspection, but the requirements would have to be in the city ordinance. 90% exists and the question is how to enforce. Mr. Lee stated that some fixtures may have to be grandfathered in. Going forward new buildings or major modifications should adhere to new requirements.

There are parts of the code that are enforced, no jurisdiction. In mitigation study? Grounding for electric distribution. The next step is trying to determine from an engineering standpoint, above the charge of the mitigation. Hoffman, benefits having a conversation among the group is the next step.

6. Discussion about street lighting at New Road and Park Road.

Mayor Williams stated that the discussion pertains to New Road and Park Road. The light poles that were there previously and deteriorated, owned by University of Delaware and metered by them. Received complaints about the safety at the intersection from residents. Ms. Townshend has reached out DelDot to see if the street lighting is part of their bridge project and it is not. Is this something the city and the Board want to do and should it wait until after the bridge project.

Mr. Calaman stated that these are not typical lights and are not in stock. Ms. Townshend stated that the city and BPW would not be bound to follow what was there.

Mr. Ritzert would like to wait to replace the lights until after DelDot finishes the bridge project.

President Panetta stated that the BPW maintains the streetlights, but city owns them. There is a need for a standard for the lighting and the lumens. The lighting is currently intermixed. Mr. Ritzert stated that the light may be different, but the lumen is the same.

Ms. Jones stated that nothing is to be done right now with the lighting at New Road and Park Road. Mr. Calaman stated that DelDot did not include the lighting in their project because of concern for the

neighbors in the front and back. Mayor Williams questioned how many poles are needed. Mr. Calaman stated that originally poles lined the entire street and two in the center median.

Aaron Mushrush, Cape Gazette, questioned if the city and the BPW feel if the residents of Lewes Beach are properly aware of the predictions for their area and how is that being communicated. Mayor Williams stated that he feels that the whole country is aware of the effects of sea level rise, but it is unknown as to what extent people are ready to embrace changes. Mr. Saliba stated that there were at least 3 or 4 beach residents that served on the city resiliency committee and feels that there was a lot of awareness. President Panetta stated that in general people are aware. Mr. Saliba stated that flooding comes from the marsh. President Panetta stated that back bay flooding is more severe and is not just a beach issue.

Mr. Mushrush questioned if there is consideration of what the disclosure will do to property values and how science correlates. Mayor Williams stated that there are many questions regarding the disclosure: Is it enforceable, what is the call to action, what is the warning, etc.

George Terrell commented on the lighting at New Road and Park Road. Please consider best practice in consideration of wildlife. Low soft light. Mr. Ritzert agrees that wildlife should be kept in consideration.

7. Adjournment

ACTION: *Mr. Owen motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Jones seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

Mayor Williams adjourned the meeting at 6:36pm.

Respectfully Submitted
Sharon Sexton
Executive Assistant