

Lewes Board of Public Works City/BPW
Joint Meeting minutes
August 22,2023
4:00pm

1. Welcome, call the meeting to order.

President Panetta called meeting to order at 4:09pm.

2. Roll Call:

Board Members

Thomas Panetta
Earl Webb
D. Preston Lee, P.E.
Richard Nichols
Barbara Curtis

City Council Members

Andrew Williams, mayor
Khalil Saliba
Tim Ritzert
Carolyn Jones
Joe Elder

Ex-Officio

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

Ann Marie Townshend, City Manager
Ellen Loraine McCabe, Assistant City manager
Glen Mandalas, Legal Counsel

3. Discussion regarding coordination between City of Lewes and Lewes BPW capital projects and the water/sewer needs over the next five years.

Mr. O'Donnell, GMB, presented slide show:

Mr. O'Donnell stated that many of the BPW capital projects and city street projects are impacted by the results of the watermain assessment study. The costs are preliminary estimates and are in 2023 dollars. Costs will be revised to reflect future costs depending on when projects schedule assessment. The assessment is strictly the water, no sewer. Mr. Ritzert questioned if the sewer system needed to be assessed. Mr. Calaman stated that the sewer projects are coupled with water for the BPW. Costs for water, sewer, and stormwater are included.

Alaska Avenue Street and Utility Improvements:

Total City Portion Project Estimate- \$153,500
Total BPW Portion project cost estimate- \$218,940
Total City/BPW Combined Project Cost Estimate: \$372,440

Ms. Townshend stated that the city and BPW have received a proposal for the Alaska Avenue project but have yet signed the proposal because it is not in either budget at this time. Mr. Quill, property developer of 203 East Savannah Road is interested because DelDot is tying his entrance to the Alaska Avenue project and will not allow Mr. Quill to proceed until the city proceeds. Mr.

Ritzert questioned if Mr. Quill needed engineering from the city to obtain the permit from DelDot. Ms. Townshend stated that DelDot will not approve 203 East Savannah Road access until the Alaska Avenue project is in process. DelDot would allow Mr. Quill to proceed with construction until the city proceeds with construction. City will add to the next agenda. Mr. Nichols questioned why the cost does not fall to the developer, if this is not a project needed at this time from the city and BPW perspective. Ms. Townshend stated that the sewer portion of the project is related to the needs of Cape Henlopen State Park. Mr. Calaman stated that upsizing capacity could be done now or when the State Park comes online. BPW does not need the project now but would move forward if the city does to reduce future costs for BPW. The upsizing of the pipe is not required for 203 East Savannah Road. Mr. Nichols feels that the developer should be responsible. Ms. Townshend stated that Alaska is a city street and serves more than one property. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the project would be designed with a 10" water main to accommodate future growth but is not necessary for the Quill property.

Mr. Ritzert questioned if there is overhead electric distribution on Alaska Avenue and recommends undergrounding electric. Mr. O'Donnell stated that electric service is not included in the estimate. Mr. Calaman stated that any new service will be underground. Mr. Ritzert would like it considered.

Monroe Avenue- Freeman to Railroad Water Main Lining

Total City Portion Project Estimate- \$79,221

Total BPW Portion project cost estimate- \$328,803

Total City/BPW Combined Project Cost Estimate: \$408,024

This water main is a good candidate to line the pipe because there are only two-house services off the water main. A temporary service should be put in place to serve those two houses. Mr. Elder questioned if lining a pipe has the same longevity as installing a new pipe. Mr. O'Donnell confirmed that lining a pipe is like a brand-new pipe. Lining takes away a small portion of diameter but not significant.

Mr. Lee questioned since the area is primarily a new development, would the BPW and the city be able to recoup some money, such as impact fees. Mr. O'Donnell stated that would not be possible because it should have previously been addressed.

Mr. Ritzert questioned if curb and guttering was proposed. Mr. O'Donnell stated that curb and guttering were not included. Mr. Ritzert suggested making sure that storm management is addressed on this street. Mr. Calaman stated that there are two storm drains on Jeffersons Court side. Mr. Ritzert questioned if there is adequate stormwater infrastructure in the block from Monroe to Freeman. Mr. O'Donnell confirmed that there is adequate stormwater infrastructure and only minor corrections to grades would be needed. Mr. Ritzert is concerned with draining into White's Pond and the capacity. Mr. O'Donnell stated there would be no drainage from this project.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that the roads would be as is, no widening.

Mr. Elder questioned if the plastics crosswalks could be painted over if needed. Mr. O'Donnell stated that painting over the thermoplastic crosswalks is not ideal as it begins to peel. Ms. Townshend stated that thermoplastic has a longer life than paint. Thermoplastic work is contracted out.

Railroad-Monroe Avenue to Adams Avenue

Total City Portion Project Estimate- \$745,000

Complete Rebuild- aggregate base, base asphalt, surface asphalt with curb and gutter.
Permeable parking area (Approximately 10 spaces)

BPW utility work will include house service tie-overs to existing 16" main, abandon 6" main, and possible relining of 8" sewer main.

Possible Alternate: Monroe Avenue- Kings Highway to Railroad Avenue

Total City Portion Project Estimate- \$710,000

Complete Rebuild- aggregate base, base asphalt, surface asphalt with curb and gutter, and sidewalk both sides. Also includes permeable paver parallel parking spaces (approximately 8).

Includes BPW water, sewer, and storm water upgrades and Chesapeake Utilities coordination.
BPW Project Cost Estimate: \$1,300,000 for both projects (Approximately \$550,000 for Railroad)

Discussed going out for bid Railroad and adding Monroe as an alternate.

Mayor Williams questioned that prioritization and if all projects are included in the five-year plan. Ms. Townshend stated that conditions need to be assessed but all projects would be more than five years. Prioritization to be developed.

Mr. Lee questioned if GMB will coordinate with Chesapeake with every project. Mr. O'Donnell stated that Chesapeake will be involved. The city meets with Chesapeake sporadically.

Mr. Ritzert questioned the recommendation for an 8" curb in some areas and 6" curb in other areas. Mr. O'Donnell stated that it is a balancing act deciding what to do with the street, sidewalk, curb, gutter, and existing elevations on resident properties. Curb size is chosen based on the ability to minimize the transition.

Fourth Street- Savannah to Burton Street Rehabilitation and Utility Improvements.

Total City Portion Project Estimate- \$1,881,195 (Less \$500,000 if only Savannah to Park)
Total BPW Portion project cost estimate- \$3,082,500

Total City/BPW Combined Project Cost Estimate: \$4,963,220

Forestry is a concern with this project and will be difficult to maneuver around. Crepe Myrtle were chosen in many areas because they do not grow too high into the electrical power system. Mr. Ritzert reiterated the importance of converting overhead lines to underground lines. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the higher KV loading is harder to maintain underground. Mr. Elder suggested that the projects should consider pedestrian and bike path issues. Mr. O'Donnell stated that GMB is developing specifications for reflectivity in crosswalk thermoplastics.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that a prioritization schedule needs to be developed. Mr. Calaman stated that the Fourth Street project is at the top of the list for the BPW. Fourth Street is a huge project and the old section of town.

Mr. Elder questioned a no-cut regulation. Is there a policy for the length of time that a road can be cut after a new road is installed? Ms. Townshend stated that there is a 5-year moratorium, but there may be emergency circumstances where it will be necessary to cut.

Mr. Webb stated that recently Mark Schaeffer is looking to reduce the number of hours construction and may have an impact on costs. Ms. Townshend stated that the city and BPW have an exemption for municipal and infrastructure projects.

4. Discussion of Lewes Beach Stormwater Assessment

Mr. O'Donnell stated that the Lewes Beach Stormwater Assessment will be finished next month. Identified four or five areas that are bad. California Avenue and in front of yacht club are two of the problematic areas.

Mr. Elder stated that during rain events he notices water free flowing out into the streets from gutters. Mr. O'Donnell stated that there will be a section in the assessment of homeowner recommendations. Ms. Townshend stated a challenge is that the building requires that runoff be directed away from the building.

5. Discussion of municipal campus planning.

Mayor Williams stated that the space study was conducted but handover of the property is still over a year away. GMB will present the space study to the Board and city. Mr. O'Donnell stated that there are nuances to army reserve site and factors involved with Schley Avenue campus. Mr. Lee questioned if there is a timeline on the project. Mayor Williams stated that the city would take ownership in 2024 and must show progress within five years of the ownership date. Army Reserve has stated that they would like to hand over a clean site. Soil testing is being conducted. Ms. Townshend stated that the building is not conducive to the city and Board needs and there is no value in the building. Ms. Curtis does not agree because there is a historic value. President Panetta stated that there is not enough square footage to meet needs.

Mr. Ritzert asked for an update on the West Cedar Flood Study. The city adopted the study as part of an emergency plan. In the process of submitting resolution to DEMA who is facilitating the FEMA grant request. Realistic to expect that if the grant is approved then the study would occur in the fall.

6. Discussion on the WWTF long-range planning.

President Panetta stated that there are no changes since last meeting, two weeks ago. Monthly workshops have been held. BPW staff meets routinely with city leadership to coordinate. BPW staff and leadership are in negotiations with Sussex County. Tomorrow regular Board meeting. If an agreement is reached, the BPW will move forward with Sussex County option. If an agreement is not reached, then the Contingency Committee will work on alternative options. Ms. Curtis is the chair and Mr. Ritzert participates from the city.

7. Call to the Public.

Richard Bryan, 25 Devries Circle, stated that the pathway that stormwater runs through is not being maintained. Mr. Bryan gave three easements for the Bike Trail and was told the ditch would be piped and covered. This did not happen. Resident paid \$1500 to maintain the ditch out of pocket recently. BPW had lined with rocks in the past. Mr. Bryan argued that he pays for the stormwater ready to serve fee and has not seen anyone maintaining the ditch. The ditch is on private property. BPW cannot maintain because DeIDot owns the ditch. DeIDot does not touch the ditch. Mr. Bryan does not care who owns the ditch. BPW Board members and previous members have been out there. Mr. Bryan stated that this should not be the resident's job. Mr. Bryan is frustrated and requested to be reimbursed with landscaping bill or remove stormwater ready to serve fee.

Chris Tims, 122 School Lane, would like to address stormwater that falls off the street. Mr. Tims reached out to BPW and the city when the problem was first noticed. There was no response in three months. Mr. Tims hired an attorney and threatened litigation. At this time, the response was that an engineer would be authorized to look at the issue. Previous emails had stated that an engineer was already consulted. Concerned that the council and BPW will not engage in a conversation. .25 gallons per every one inch every square foot. Mr. Tims obtained permits for the pool and pool house like he is required to and is upset that the city will not engage in a solution to the stormwater issue. Engaged own engineer to look at the property. Neighbors have been complaining for 30 years. Mayor Williams stated that today was the first he had heard of his concern. Mr. Tims stated that the city attorney was served 2 months ago, and the city received a letter. This is bad governance. Mr. Tims paid \$3000 to get stormwater off the property. Mr. Tims stated that the city/BPW has 14 days to meet and discuss the issue or he will proceed forward with litigation.

President Panetta stated that the BPW was aware of the concern on School Lane but not aware of other residents having issues. School Lane was last resurfaced in 2004 and nothing has changed since then to create the stormwater issue. Mr. Tims feels that the grade of the road is improper. President Panetta stated that it will be important to a study to know the neighboring

issues as well. Mr. Elder assured Mr. Tims that the council and the Board have heard the complaint and that there will be follow up.

ACTION: *Mr. Ritzert motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lee seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

Respectfully Submitted
Sharon Sexton
Executive Assistant