

**CITY OF LEWES
BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2025**

The Wednesday, August 27, 2025 regular meeting of the Lewes Board of Public Works was held at 4:00 P.M. in Lewes City Hall and via Zoom.

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Panetta called the meeting to order at 4:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

President Panetta stated there would be a change in the order of the agenda.

2. ROLL CALL

Board Members:

Thomas Panetta
Barbara Curtis
D. Preston Lee, P.E.
Richard Nichols
Bob Heffernan

Ex-Officio Members:

Deputy Mayor Khalil Saliba
Robin Davis, General Manager
Sharon Sexton, Assistant General Manager
Michael Hoffman, Legal Counsel

Others Present:

Kimberly Bellere, BPW Finance Director
Kris Keller, BPW Office Manager
Jeffrey Kerin, Inframark
Nathan Laucks, Inframark Regional Manager
Ben Hearn, GMB
Joshua Gritton, IT Manager
Jackie Doherty, Recording Secretary

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- **Receive Vice President Report**
- **Receive Secretary Report**
- **Approval of Minutes from May 13, 2025 Finance Committee Meeting, July 23, 2025 Regular Meeting, July 28, 2025 Joint Meeting.**
- **Receive Assistant Treasurer Report**

ACTION: *Mr. Lee made a motion to accept the consent agenda; Mr. Heffernan seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

4. Call to the Public

- **Members of the public wishing to address the Board on any BPW related matter, whether on tonight's agenda or not, should make their request at this time.**
- **Please note that there will be no opportunity for additional public comment on matters listed on the agenda until the end of the meeting.**
- **Each speaker will be given three (3) minutes.**
- **No action or Board discussion, including to answer questions, will occur during the public comment period; however, the Board President may ask Staff to review a matter, and individual members of the Board may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda.**

No public comment at this time.

5. Receive the Inframark Report

- **Discharge Monitoring Report**
- **Gantt Report**
- **InSight Report**
- **Work Orders Completed**
- **Pump Station**

Mr. Kerin's report included:

- The chemical coating has been scheduled for the week of October 6th to the 10th in unison with the chemical tank replacement; tanks were ordered; old tanks to run while coating is in progress with the new tanks installed when complete.
- Prepared if the Neo Water trial method causes a false/positive reading.
- Replaced the seal for Train #4, but found the gate was bowed, and the slide with rod for the motor will need to be replaced; waiting for a quote.
- New bypass pumps are to be installed, and the vendor will be here to retrofit the slide rails in order to use the same slide rails that are present in the pump station.
- One vacant position has been filled by a previous operator who will be working part-time and be available on-call.
- Pump stations highlighted under 'Critical Issues' will be addressed in the Resiliency Study; this will include Pump Station #17 that will be discussed tonight; 16 of the 30 pump stations are included in the Resiliency Study.
- Reviewed the 3 pump stations that do not currently have backup bypass pumps available.
- Pump stations #12, #13, and #18 need upgraded electrical.

Mr. Kerin continued:

- Pump Station #8 needed transducer and internal check valves replaced.
- Pump Station #19 motor on numeration blower failed and has been sent for assessment.
- Pump Stations #4 and #8 oil changed for pumps; replaced air relief valve on Pump Station #4; Pump Station #11 compactor to be reviewed; completed membrane inspections.

Mr. Kerin stated Inframark is merging with the Azuria Company.

President Panetta spoke about the inspection he, Ms. Curtis, Mr. Davis, and GMB conducted of the plant last week and how it is in the best shape he has seen in the eight years since becoming a member of the Board.

6. Receive the President's Report

President Panetta reported the Wastewater Treatment Workshop dates will be available soon. He and Ms. Curtis attended a meeting with Sussex County regarding negotiations. Other meetings attended included a joint meeting with the City, and monthly Mayor and City Council. He and Mayor Marasco met with the Burton Avenue representatives held by Mr. Davis, Ms. Sexton, and GMB.

7. Receive the General Manager's Report

Mr. Davis reported:

- Attended the monthly Mayor and City Council meeting; progress meeting for Mitchell's Corner waterline project; site inspection at White's Pond Meadows.
- Negotiations continue with the County regarding the wastewater plant.
- Sent request to the State for funding concerning the Lead Copper Rule service line replacements.
- Met with City Councilman Tim Ritzert to review the Hoornkill Annexation Project for the report to be submitted to Mayor and City Council within 90 days.
- Staff have been meeting with vendors to discuss possible AMI implementation.
- Foundation work is complete and structural work on the water tower to begin in September; all work is estimated to be completed in Fall 2026.
- Header Project and Canal Crossing are complete and operating; GMB continues design surveying for the Fourth Street/Park Avenue Project; Staff is reviewing the GMB plan to identify existing infrastructure; schedule contractor to do the camera inspection of the sewer and stormwater pipes; design for the new pump station to be located at Hoornkill.
- Bids for the Capes Cove Project were higher than expected and requests were submitted to the State for additional funding, which should be approved.
- Friday, October 3rd will be Community Service Day in the City, and information is available on the City website.

President Panetta stated the City and BPW are doing a stormwater study with the University of Delaware for the area within the Lewes boundaries. The first public meeting is September 5th, and they are requesting that 50 people attend to complete surveys and questionnaires. There will be no cost to BPW, and the study will continue for 18 months. At the conclusion, BPW will be provided with a model of stormwater flows throughout the community.

New Business

11. Open forum/general discussion on GMB's letter of options and recommendations for Pump Station #17 renovations. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (GMB and Robin Davis)

Mr. Hearn stated the pump station was constructed in 1985 and serves the Huling Cove community. Inframark has reported issues with ragging and aging pumps (1984). GMB, BPW, and Inframark recently met with Teal Construction to discuss three options for fixing the problems and pricing.

Mr. Kerin spoke about the problems with costs of maintaining this small station, pumping 5,000 gallons a day and spending \$30,000 in the last two years on pump repairs.

Discussion and review included:

- Options: to replace existing pumps with new and rehabilitation for the station; construct a new station to relocate the equipment and convert the wet well to a manhole; gravity system to take existing station out of service and run a new gravity line back to Pump Station #34, which was installed in 2016.
- Review options to address ragging problems in Pump Station #34, as used in #19, if decided on Option #3; the electrical equipment may need to be raised for Pump Station #34 to address floodplain.
- Cost estimates are \$750,000 for Option #1; \$481,000 for Option #2; \$462,000 for Option #3.
- GMB recommends Option #3; review O & M costs to include the use of the basket if installed.
- Property Manager will give the educational materials provided by BPW to residents regarding the problems caused by wipes.
- Clean Water SRF Loan applications begin in January.

After discussion, it was decided that Mr. Hearn will return with a detailed design and cost.

**16. Open forum/general discussion on request for support to address stormwater improvements at 25 and 27 DeVries Circle. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION
(Robin Davis and Michael Hoffman)**

Mr. Davis stated Sussex Conservation inspected the stormwater ditch on the properties for a plan to correct the conditions. The quotes from Sussex Conservation, along with a hand-delivered letter from the property owners requesting support from the City and BPW, have been provided for review.

Mr. Hoffman noted that because this is a request from the property owners, they are free to explain their request beyond the letter.

Lauren McNulty, 27 DeVries Circle, was present stating when the house was purchased last July, it was discovered that there was a drainage ditch on the property. Before closing, they searched to find who was responsible for maintaining the ditch but could not find any additional information. There is now overgrowth and the pipes are collapsing. Sussex Conservation has agreed to help with the costs, and their request is for help from BPW and the City.

Mr. Hoffman stated research shows there is no record of an agreement, easement, or acceptance by BPW over the infrastructure. Unless the Board accepts the infrastructure, it would not be considered BPW infrastructure but would be considered infrastructure through private property. The ask today is for BPW and the City to contribute toward the costs for repairs.

Richard Bryan, Lewes, was present stating this is not infrastructure, it is an open ditch located behind their home with part on the railroad right-of-way lot, which became larger when the trail was built. He

explained that he was told the ditch would be covered when he provided an easement for stormwater. It has been suggested that Mr. Bryan could fill the ditch with dirt.

Mr. Bryan stated he hand delivered the request letter to the City on August 13th but has not received a response.

Mr. Hoffman spoke about the importance of Mr. Bryan consulting his attorney regarding filling the ditch. The ditch is not the responsibility of BPW. If the Board decides to move forward with the request, he advises there be an agreement that this would be one time, and BPW will not be responsible for ongoing maintenance. An agreement will be needed for an easement should the Board decide to approve ongoing maintenance responsibilities. He is not aware of another Board agreement to maintain infrastructure that does not belong to the BPW system.

Mr. Bryan continued stating there is also a deteriorated sewer line and manhole in the area and is concerned about flooding if the pipe collapses with the large amounts of water coming through from increased development in Lewes. The proposal by Sussex Conservation is only good for 90 days.

8. Receive Finance Manager's Report

- **Revenue and Expense Report**
- **Year to Date**
- **Cash Graphs**

Ms. Bellere reviewed the reports provided stating Cape Henlopen High School repaired the leak causing their high amounts for water usage. There was a \$208,000 payment from DEMEC; the \$25,000 escrow payment should have been posted to Unearned Revenue, not Revenue; \$85,000 was paid for the County hauling bill; loss in market value was \$15,000.

Old Business

9. Open forum/general discussion on Pump Station Resiliency Study. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (Robin Davis and GMB)

Mr. Davis reported discussions continued about designs for lift stations in the floodplain. Revisions to the Study sent to the State included budget amendment, scope-of-work changes, and increase in the performance time period due to extra standards for raising the stations and additional upgrades to Pump Station #3.

Mr. Hearn stated GMB is working with an architect to design 3D models based on requests from the Board for more aesthetic options. The Hoornkill station should be ready for bids shortly. This is a smaller station that will replicate Pump Station #5. There was a brief review of design plans for the Hoornkill station to be continued at the September meeting.

10. Open forum/general discussion on the WWTP long-range plan update. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (Thomas Panetta)

President Panetta stated the public workshop meeting is planned for the first week of October to obtain

feedback.

New Business

12. Open forum/general discussion on the final acceptance of Mariner's Retreat. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (Robin Davis and Michael Hoffman)

Mr. Davis requested this agenda item be removed because there have not been any updates.

13. Open forum/general discussion on the Fourth Street Memorandum of Understanding. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (Robin Davis and Michael Hoffman)

Mr. Davis stated this agreement is to detail reimbursement from the City for their portion of funding for the Fourth Street/Park Avenue Project. The agreement was reviewed by Mr. Hoffman and the City Solicitor.

ACTION: *Mr. Lee made a motion to approve the agreement contingent upon approval by the City; Mr. Nichols seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

14. Open forum/general discussion on the approval of the 24/25 FY Audit. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (Kimberly Bellere and Richard Nichols)

Ms. Bellere reported that it is a government requirement for the Single Audit Report to be attached to the Financial Statement Audit because \$750,000 was awarded to BPW. This may be approved at the September meeting. The audit company presented the reports to the Finance Committee on August 4th. There were requests for changes and additions, which included reporting on the two retirement plans.

Ms. Bellere gave a review of the two pension plans and the number of employees enrolled. The audit company will be providing changes for the reporting next year to help when reviewing the two audits and the addition of red lines.

ACTION: *Mr. Heffernan made a motion to approve the 24/25 FY Audit Financial Statements included in today's packet; Mr. Lee seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

President Panetta stated the Single Audit Report approval will be an agenda item for the September meeting.

15. Open forum/general discussion on the proposal for electric relays for substation transformers. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION/ACTION (Thomas Panetta)

Mr. Davis stated the present relays are over 27 years old, and this was the problem when we had the power outage. These relays are no longer available, and one refurbished model was installed with the recommendation for all to be replaced. After discussion of the options, it was decided to purchase two new relays for installation at a cost of \$64,240. Purchase of a third relay as a spare will be at a later time.

ACTION: *Mr. Nichols made a motion to approve purchase of two new relays and wait until a later*

time for the third as a spare; Ms. Curtis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

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

None

18. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

- Members of the public wishing to address the Board on matters listed on the agenda should make their request known at this time.
- Each speaker will be given three (3) minutes.
- No action or Board discussion, including to answer questions, will occur during the public comment period; however, the Board President may ask Staff to review a matter, and individual members of the Board may ask that a matter be put on a future agenda.

No additional public comments.

19. CALL TO THE PRESS

None

20. Executive Session

ACTION: *Ms. Curtis made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session; Mr. Nichols seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.*

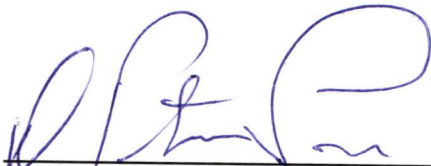
The meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 5:45 P.M.

21. Return to Open Session

22. Discussion and action on items from Executive Session, if applicable.

23. ADJOURNMENT

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



D. Preston Lee, P.E.

9/24/25

Date