

BPW/City of Lewes Joint Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2026

The Bonnie Osler Meeting Room located at the Margaret Rollins Center

1:00 P.M.

A. Welcome, call meeting to order

Mayor Marasco and President Panetta called the meeting to order at 1:01 P.M.

Roll Call

City Council Members

Amy Marasco, Mayor
Khalil Saliba, Deputy Mayor
Joe Elder, Councilperson
Timothy Ritzert, Councilperson
Trine Brown-Hicks, Councilperson

City Ex-Officio Members

Ellen Lorraine McCabe, City Manger
Janet Reeves, Deputy Manager
Alex Burns, Legal Council

Lewes BPW Council Members

Thomas Panetta, President
Barbara Curtis, Vice President
D. Preston Lee, P.E., Secretary
Richard Nichols, Treasurer
Bob Heffernan, Assistant Treasurer

Lewes BPW Ex-Officio Members

Robin Davis, General Manager
Sharon Sexton, Assistant General
Manager
Michael Hoffman, Legal Counsel- Zoom

Others

Benjamon Hearn, GMB
Andrew Lyons, GMB
Kevin Keane, Planning Commission

B. Announcements

Mr. Saliba announced that D. Preston Lee, P.E. will be the Lewes BPW Ex-Officio for the Economic Environment Resiliency Committee.

C. Agenda Review

D. Meeting Items

1. Discussion and possible action to establish a working team for Lewes BPW City of Lewes Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

City Council and Board agree to create an MOU working group. City of Lewes participants include Mayor Amy Marasco, Trina Brown-Hicks, Ellen Lorraine McCabe, and Alex Burns. Lewes BPW participants include President Thomas Panetta, Barbara Curtis, Robin Davis, and Michael Hoffman.

Mayor Marasco suggested making a new MOU that is more evergreen and hopes to have first draft by the next joint meeting. President Panetta agreed stating we need to stay focused on current situations. Mayor Marasco suggested adding the new involvement of Sussex County with wastewater treatment.

Ms. Brown-Hicks questioned the timeline of when the MOU is reviewed. Mayor Marasco stated every five years.

2. Update and discussion on the Lewes BPW and Sussex County Agreement for the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

President Panetta stated the Lewes BPW Board approved agreement with Sussex County in the December board meeting. The same agreement was approved at the Sussex County January county council meeting. Sussex County is putting together a design engineering review group to kick off in March and asked Mr. Lee P.E. and President Panetta to participate. There will be a two-year canal study, that started in August 2025, before the design will be authorized.

Mr. Saliba wanted to commend the negotiation agreement that was made between Lewes BPW and Sussex County.

Mayor Marasco questioned if there should be some type of legal record stating that the City of Lewes supports this effort. Mr. Burns stated that a resolution stating the support from the City of Lewes can be considered. President Panetta stated the City of Lewes and Lewes BPW will discuss the future of the property after demolition due to joint ownership later.

Mr. Elder questioned the demolition of the plant. President Panetta stated that demolition is Sussex County's responsibility per the agreement.

Mayor Marasco questioned how the Lewes will be updated on the Sussex County studies. President Panetta stated there can be monthly meetings.

Mayor Marasco suggested that the MOU reflect that the City of Lewes supported this project.

3. Update and discussion regarding the 2027 Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Keane from the Planning commission stated that a final deal for a consultant should be completed within the next couple of days. There will be a Steering Committee created that will include several city entities to help with various processes over the next two years.

Ms. Brown-Hicks questioned the makeup of the Steering Committee. Mr. Keane stated it is an open invitation and hopes it will be a diverse committee involved throughout the city.

4. Update and discussion on the Fourth Street and Park Avenue Utility Project.

Mr. Lyons and **Mr. Hearn** presented a PowerPoint update on the Fourth Street and Park Avenue project.

Mayor Marasco questioned if the WIAC funding meeting was public. Mr. Hearn stated it is public, GMB and the Board will be there to answer questions if WIAC should have any.

Mr. Elder questioned if the supplemental funding request was lowered, and by how much, due to not having to reline all the sewers. Mr. Hearn stated it was lowered by \$1.5-2 million.

Mr. Elder questioned how much the supplemental funding request is for. Mr. Hearn stated the request was for approximately \$7.3-7.35 million.

President Panetta questioned the amount of the first funding that was awarded. Mr. Hearn stated it was \$9.19 million.

Mr. Ritzert questioned if the complete Burton subdivision CCTV scanning was performed. Mr. Hearn stated that is correct.

Mr. Ritzert questioned the life expectancy on the sewer that does not need to be relined. Mr. Hearn stated the pipe is PVC and the projected numbers of PCV piping can last one hundred years.

Mr. Ritzer questioned if the sewer pipes will still be sleeved. Mr. Hearn stated that before CCTV was completed conditions were unknown and sleeving was a possibility. Since the CCTV was performed the material and the condition of the pipes is known, and sleeving is no longer necessary.

Mr. Ritzer questioned if the water pipes will be replaced. Mr. Hearn stated yes.

Mayor Marasco emphasized that by GMB confirming that existing project could be amended, this is saving a significant amount of time and expediting the project.

Mr. Elder questioned the longevity of the good sewer pipe due to the worry of having to unnecessarily open the road again due to a break. Mr. Hearn stated that while he will not guarantee anything, he is comfortable with it lasting fifty years.

Mr. Elder questioned if the sewer pipe could be moved, would it help with the footprint of the road moving into the easement. Mr. Lyons stated the current design is in right of way and not into an easement. Mr. Elder stated there has been concern on Park Avenue that the right of way will be expanded. Mr. Lyons stated the right of way will not grow.

Mr. Elder questioned, based on construction techniques used, does it make a difference in maintaining the current footprint without having to expand. Mr. Hearn stated the design is a supported trench so there won't be a wider or skinnier trench.

Mayor Marasco stressed the importance of not spending money on sewer pipes that are in good shape when there are other areas in the city that need replacement as well.

Ms. Curtis questioned the constraints on the distance between storm water and city water pipes.

Mr. Hearn stated there are no requirements, but they are located so they can be maintained in the future.

Mayor Marasco stated the City of Lewes is available for a presence at the meeting or to write a letter if this would help the WIAC funding process along.

Mayor Marasco questioned how the next generation of the of the plan will become public.

Ms. McCabe stated once the City of Lewes gets feedback from the consultants on the possible adjusted designs a community meeting will be held at the Bonnie Osler Center.

Mr. Elder wanted to clear up when stormwater is the responsibly of the City of Lewes and/or the Lewes BPW. President Panetta stated water that is running down the curbs is considered an issue of the City of Lewes, once in the drain and into the drain box it is the issue of Lewes BPW.

Mayor Marasco stated during the streetscape process of the project it may be a good opportunity to consider adding a bit more neighborhood history to the plans to make streetscape as robust as possible.

Mr. Heffernan questioned the timeframe of the plans and bidding. Mr. Hearn stated anticipated bid timeframe is in June 2026.

Mr. Ritzert stated concern about the bidding timeframe and the City of Lewes not having clear plans for design. Mr. Elder questioned GMB about having enough direction from the City of Lewes to be able to move forward. Mr. Elder stated that this project started as two streets and is now multiple streets and they don't want to hold the timeframe up. President Panetta stated that the reason for applying for supplemental funding is so phase one with Park Avenue and Fourth Street can keep moving forward. Mr. Ritzert questioned if the goal is to keep moving with the roll out of the other phases. President Panetta stated this is correct. Mr. Lyons states that GMB and the City of Lewes have met numerous times and are working to clearly define the design.

Mayor Marasco stated it is very important that the design options are available ahead of the community meeting, so the public has time to react. Mr. Elder suggested the design of a blank slate and have the community use this to give their design input.

5. Update and discussion on funding for the Night Sky Pilot Project.

6. **Ms. Sexton** stated that they have talked with Cooper, the consultant of the project, who has given an estimate of \$7,500 to \$10,000 for the pilot program. Some more details need to be discussed, and more final plans will be presented soon.

President Panetta questioned the size of the pilot program. Ms. Sexton stated there will be three areas throughout town with five to seven lights at each location.

E. Public Comment:

Brenda Afzal, 418 Park Ave: Wanted to thank Lewes BPW and City of Lewes for expediting this project. Ms. Afzal wanted to again state that members of the community have said the priority is not to make everything beautiful, it is to have clean water. Ms. Afzal stated it is very important for the stakeholder meeting on the design of the streetscape and will make it a point to have as many of the public there as possible.

F. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Rowe
Executive Assistant



D. Preston Lee, P.E.

2/25/26

Date