

Lewes Board of Public works
BPW/City Council Joint Workshop Minutes
January 22, 2024, 3:00pm
Rollins Community Center

1. Welcome, Call the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

BPW Board Members

Thomas Panetta, President
Earl Webb, Vice President
D. Preston Lee, P.E., Secretary
Richard Nichols, Treasurer
Barbara Curtis, Asst. Treasurer

City Council Members

Mayor Andrew Williams
Khalil Saliba
Timothy Ritzer
Carolyn Jones
Joseph Elder

BPW Ex-Officio Members

Austin Calaman, General Manager
Robin Davis, Asst. General Manager
Michael Hoffman, Legal Counsel

City Ex-Officio Members

Ellen Lorraine McCabe, City Manager
Janet reeves, ACM/Parks and Rec
Alexander Burns, Legal Counsel

Others

Charlie O'Donnell, GMB

3. Discussion of joint capital projects planning.

Mr. Calaman stated that the BPW Board has invested time and money into the watermain study recently presented by GMB. 50% of the water system is iron pipe. This was taken into consideration when creating the 5-year capital budget. BPW would like to work jointly with the city to capitalize on open roads. BPW staff provided a synopsis of watermain assessment study and joint capital planning.

Charlie O'Donnell, GMB, presented the watermain assessment. Charlie provided a map that illustrated all the iron pipes: bright purple indicates cast iron and orange indicates ductal iron. GMB removed all cast and ductal iron streets from the street inventory modeling analysis so that the city would not repave a road that could be potentially opened for a watermain project. Mr. O'Donnell presented the city's 5-year street maintenance plan based on a \$150,000 per year budget. 90% of the city road maintenance will be mill and overlay.

Mr. Ritzert questioned the difference between ductile and cast iron and if there is a health/safety factor. Mr. O'Donnell stated that cast iron is generally older and put in the ground between 1900 and 1960. Cast iron is still functional but is nearing the end of its useful life. No health issues but can be some tuberculation on the inside of the pipe that creates discoloration. This is not an everyday occurrence, usually seen with hydrant

flushing or change in flow patterns. Mr. Calaman stated that the BPW does bi-annual flushing to help clear out the tuberculation. BPW also performs monthly testing on the water per state requirements. Ductile Iron was a newer version and was around 10-15 years before PVC became prevalent. Ductile iron is still used in places with less cover or where a stronger pipe is needed. Ductile iron can be lined. Cast iron is the priority to get out of the ground because of the age factor.

Mr. Calaman stated that BPW must be mindful of DelDot projects like Kings Highway Roundabout projects. BPW does not want to complete a project just to open the road again for DelDOT. Fourth Street is a top project and pipe can be replaced from Savannah to Burton. There is a PVC pipe once the pipe gets to Burton. Then side streets off fourth could be prioritized. Mr. Elder questioned if gas lines could be installed at the same time. Mr. Calaman stated that there just needs to be coordination. Mr. O'Donnell stated that all the iron pipes shown on the map could take 20 to 30 years to address all of them. Ms. Curtis would like the city and BPW to consider when a road is torn up to gain budget numbers of burying utilities. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the most difficult part will be getting a hold of cable and telephone companies.

Mr. O'Donnell confirmed that GMB is using computer modelling and physical inspection to determine the street's needs. GMB considers three factors: budget, maintaining pavement condition index of 65 or above, and limiting the number of streets whose pavement condition index falls below 40. Current porous streets are in the analysis but not potential porous asphalt streets. President Panetta questioned the condition of Fourth Street. Mr. O'Donnell stated that Fourth Street runs in the 40s to low 50s. The streets listed on the City's 5-year maintenance plan are just mill and overlay with no iron pipes underneath. Mr. Calaman questioned Schley Avenue and Chestnut Street. Mr. O'Donnell will double-check those streets.

Mr. Ritzert questioned if there are alternative plans if the city council decides not to do a particular project in the year designated by GMB. Mr. O'Donnell stated that if the council would like to remove a project, GMB can filter out the project and run the analysis. The decision was made by GMB and the city not to allow the streets to become too far outside the Pavement Condition Index, PCI, range, before a complete rebuild is needed. There are a lot of streets in the range of high 30's to the mid-50s. Mayor Williams stated that to complete all roads up to standard would be 15 million dollars. The city receives Municipal Aid Street funding which is about \$115,000 per year. Fourth Street is a priority. Mr. Calaman stated that Fourth Street was considered, with the city, to be timed in coordination with the DelDot project. Mr. Calaman stated that Fourth Street is a massive project and BPW will utilize SRF funding and could potentially include the city side of the project with a finance agreement.

Mayor Williams questions the length of time of the mill and overlay projects and if temperature is a factor. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the best time of year for this type of project is the summer, but it can be done at 40 degrees or higher. Most projects could take

between a week and a month. Mr. Ritzert questioned how long ago second street was paved. Mr. O'Donnell stated that it was completed in 2006 and an overlay would give the street another 20 years of life.

Mr. O'Donnell stated that some street projects have different PCI ratings based on the sections of the road. However, GMB included the better sections so that the entire street will be done at one time.

Mr. Ritzert questioned if GMB considered existing storm management in the rights-of-way for the projects in the city's five-year plan. Mr. O'Donnell stated that stormwater was not considered and is not aware of any ongoing stormwater problems in the streets included in the plan. Mr. Ritzert referenced Pilottown Village tax ditch and puddling in the street and is looking for assurances that the projects will improve conditions instead of "treading water". Mr. O'Donnell stated that GMB could review during the design phase but would affect the cost estimates.

Mr. O'Donnell reviewed the joint street and utility improvement projects, not listed in any particular order. Prioritization and budgeting to be determined by city council and BPW.

Mayor Williams questioned Alaska Avenue completion should extend into FY26 (Fiscal Year) and include DelDot commitment to stormwater issue. Mr. O'Donnell stated that DelDot has not finalized plans yet for ponding issue. Mr. Quill, developer of Alaska Avenue property, stated that in his meeting with DelDot in the spring, DelDot said that they would coordinate the project with BPW and the city but does not believe it is on the drawing board at this point. Mr. Calaman will reach out to Eric Wall at DelDot. Mayor Williams questioned if it is realistic for the buildout to be complete by 2026. Mr. Quill stated that things on his end are now moving quickly and anticipates starting in spring 2025. MR. O'Donnell stated that if DelDot could tell GMB the invert elevation of the pipe coming into Alaska Avenue, then GMB could design a swale for a relatively low cost to the city and it would be ready for when DelDot completes their project.

Monroe Avenue project is only from Kings Highway to Railroad Avenue. The Railroad Avenue project is from Monroe Avenue to Adams Avenue. For both projects combined the total estimate is \$2,755,000. The city's portion is \$1,455,000 and BPW would be responsible for \$1,300,000. All estimates are in current dollars. Monroe projects are staggered, starting in different fiscal years. Mr. Calaman stated that the BPW staff has submitted for funds on Monroe project, from a flood mitigation standpoint. Mr. O'Donnell stated that during the design phase it will be decided to replace the pipe or line the current pipe. Ms. Curtis would like a price to underground the Monroe Avenue electric during this project. Mr. O'Donnell stated that undergrounding the electricity will more than double the cost of the project. Mr. Calaman stated that it is more difficult to get funding for the electric utility. Ms. Curtis stated that the 50 states were ranked according to risk level and Delaware was ranked five.

Fourth Street Project runs from Savannah Road to Burton Avenue and is a huge project. The project includes water main replacement, side street connections, replacing/relining sewer, new water/sewer services, replacing storm water catch basins and piping, asphalt street, curb and guttering, and ADA ramp improvements. Total project cost is \$4.96 million. Mr. Ritzert questioned if there was any grant money available for this project. Mr. Calaman has been seeking state funding. A planning grant would pay for 50% of the design of the project. BPW could apply for a low interest loan through the state as well. The city could approach legislators since the street is a main road that provides access to the hospital. Mr. Ritzert questioned if the BPW could take the entire cost of the project and use funding mechanisms, with the city repaying their portion to the BPW. Mr. O'Donnell confirmed the majority of the project would be approved but is unsure about the sidewalks. Mr. Ritzert questioned the Canary Creek Bridge project and New Road closure. Mr. Calaman stated that the road would be closed for at least nine months, but nothing is concrete. Mr. Ritzert stated that the road closure will affect the traffic and the Fourth Street project.

Manila Avenue project runs from Savannah Road to Kings Highway. There is no existing sidewalk on this street. Coordination with Lloyd's market and the doctor's office will be needed. Total project Cost is \$1,575,000 (\$644,000 City and \$931,000 BPW).

Third Street project is similar to Fourth Street. Project runs from Savannah Road to Pilottown Road (including Queen Anne Avenue). Total project cost \$5,357,000 (\$2,137,000 City and \$3,222,000 BPW).

Rodney Avenue and Carey Lane projects are both dead end streets. Rodney Avenue project will cost a total of \$755,000 (\$277,000 City and \$478,000 BPW). Carey Lane project total cost is \$382,000 (\$203,000 City and \$179,000 BPW).

Mr. Ritzert questioned if GMB could provide a PCI scoring for each joint project. Mr. O'Donnell stated there would be some subjectivity, but the projects were ranked based on the water assessment study. GMB will review and provide priority feedback.

Mr. Nichols questioned how many projects can be realistically worked on in one year if the money is available. Mr. Calaman stated that construction fatigue must be considered. There are no seasonal restrictions within the city but based on discretion. Mr. O'Donnell stated that GMB will revisit this project list on a yearly basis and reevaluate. Mr. Calaman provided potential projects that may occur 5-10 years from now. Mr. Calaman stated that this is a budgeted process along with coordination between all entities. Projects shift timeframes often.

Mr. Ritzert questioned when the funding mechanisms that GMB applied for would be available. Mr. Calaman stated that BPW applied for the pump station hazard mitigation grant from FEMA in April and received word that the program is paused hurricane and wildfires happened. The grant reopened November/December and is still in the evaluation process. Mr. O'Donnell stated that the DEMA funding should make a decision this spring

and is for the design portion of the West Cedar project. There is no stipulation regarding the start of construction. West Cedar is not on the project list for the fiscal year 2025.

4. Discussion of the municipal complex.

Mayor Williams stated that the future municipal complex there is not much change. The change of hands is not expected until the end of 2024/beginning of 2025. The new Milford Police Department was recently unveiled and was a \$16 million project and is a similar size to what Lewes would need. Mr. Lee and Mayor Andrews discussed possible competition for the design of the facility. The city will formulate an advisory committee with citizens and other members of the community and could also develop a back up plan in case the federal government takes the Army Reserve property back. Mr. Ritzert supports creating the committee and suggests asking someone from the planning commission. Mayor Williams stated that this is a large project, and a larger group (more voices) will be needed. Mr. Saliba stated that the cleaning up of the site is going to be a lengthy process as it is unknown the impact of tanks and other equipment had on the site. The site will not be turned over until “cleaned”. Mayor Williams suggested that if the site is used as an emergency management site, there may be some funding. Mr. Saliba stated that the site is 5.25 acres and there is potential for an additional building for nonprofits but could be a discussion for the committee. Another focus the committee to consider is what is happening to the current building. President Panetta stated that he does not think the new building will be move in ready for 5-10 years. Mayor Williams stated that the leadership from city and BPW meet monthly and can begin discussions of forming committee.

Mayor Williams stated remote work is also something to be considered but not always an option in certain roles for city and BPW employees.

5. Selection of the date and topics for the next BPW/City joint meeting.

The municipal complex and joint capital projects will remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

The next joint meeting will be held April 22, 2024, at 3:00pm.

Mr. Ritzert suggested inviting Sussex County Conservation District to present to have a better understating of roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Calaman gave an update on Donovan Smith. The project is on track to be completed in November 2024.

6. Adjournment.

ACTION: Ms. Jones motioned to adjourn. Mr. Ritzert seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The city adjourned.

ACTION: Mr. Lee motioned to adjourn. Ms. Curtis seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The BPW adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Sharon Sexton

Executive Assistant