

Lewes Board of Public Works
Joint Meeting Minutes
July 29, 2024

1. Welcome, Call the meeting to order

2. Roll Call

Board Members

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

City Council

Mayor Andrew Williams
Tim Ritzer
Khalil Saliba
Amy Marasco
Joe Elder

Ex-Officio Members

Austin Calaman, BPW General Mgr. Ellen Lorraine, City Mgr.
Robin Davis, BPW Assistant General Mgr. Janet McCabe, Assistant City Mgr.

3. Update/Discussion of Pilottown Village Road project to include Ocean View Boulevard and adjoining cul-de-sacs.

Ben Hearn, GMB reviewed the Pilottown Village Road Project.

- 90% of the design is complete.
- Expecting a mid-August bid date.
- Estimated start date of October 1, 2024.
- The road was found to be in a worse shape than initially thought. Approach now includes taper mill the edge of the road, 7 feet from the curb line.
- Use pavement fabric. Used in previous projects around the city. Fabric will be on a tack coat and then the road will be paved on top of the fabric.
- Steepness will change slightly at the crown of the road and will promote better drainage.
- Proposing to modify the drainage box to extend the longevity of the life of the box but not changing the elevations.
- BPW has camera-ed lines and GMB is recommending lining the storm drainpipes. Pipe is RCP (reinforced concrete pipe).
- Includes epoxy catch basins.
- Cost estimates including engineering:
 - For the City: \$299,000 for phase one and does not include seahorse lane.
 - Ms. Marasco questioned what GMB includes for contingencies. GMB included \$7,000-\$10,000. Ms. Marasco feels that this is a low number and would like to see a policy to standardize the contingencies. BPW asses each project. Ms. Marasco suggests a floor.

- Ms. Marasco would like a consistent evaluation process and would like to see it in bidding documents.
- Mr. Calaman stated that adding a conduit is more challenging for this project than a full rebuild.
- \$135,000: BPW phase one estimate.
- The BPW phase 1-3 has a larger linear impact.
- Mr. Ritzert is concerned about colder weather and pushing the repaving part of the project to spring. Asphalt plants are temperature dependent. Last year one stayed open almost the entire year. 40 degrees or higher is required.
- Mr. Ritzert is concerned that the residents of Pilottown Village will be disrupted for an extended period of time. BPW work will not disturb the road.
- The entire project is broken into three phases and is budget dependent. Phase 2- Seahorse and to and includes Bluebird Street. City cost- \$232,000.
- Ms. Marasco questioned whether the contractor has the option to bid for all phases. Mr. Hearn stated that phase two and three can be an add-alternate.
- Mr. Elder questioned if the prevailing wages would be used. Mr. Hearn stated it would depend on the type of funds used. If prevailing wages can be avoided, it would save 20%-30%. Federal funds are not being used for this project.
- Ms. Marasco and Mr. Calaman would like to see the entire project bid out and separated into phases.
- The estimate includes GMB's program management and inspection.
- Phase three of the city portion is \$238,000.

Mr. Calaman stated that Phase two will be more complicated because the utilities are like a spider web.

If bid as one project, total project time would be 2-3 months. Ms. Marasco stated that the city and the BPW should consider the benefits and cost of mobilization.

Ms. Marasco recommends changing the contingency money to \$115,000, 15% of the total estimate.

President Panetta state that the city will need to determine funding availability to decide on the phasing.

Ms. Marasco would like a master plan for all street and sidewalk projects to align funding to possibly save costs.

GMB will gather bids for the whole project and the project as three phases with costs for each phase.

Ms. Marasco recommends both the city and the BPW review projects and determine if some projects could align. Mr. Elder would like to have a pre-meeting before receiving a report or recommendation like this.

Jerry Rathmanner, 300 Seagull Drive, asked for clarification on the name of the street Canary Court. Should be Canary Drive.

Stuart Griffin, 8 Duchess Court, asked for clarification of phase one location. Mayor Williams stated that the first phase would include 2 cul-de-sacs. Each phase will pick up cul-de-sacs and will include all cul-de-sacs by the end of all phases. The city project will have three phases while the BPW will complete their project all at once because the majority of work can be done underground.

Mr. Griffin stated that there are many drainage issues with many catch basins in the development. Different elevations and standing water major problem and Mr. Griffin encourages the city and the BPW to look carefully at drainage.

Mr. Griffin questioned whether it was realistic to expect shovels in ground in October. Mr. Calaman stated that in his experience (BPW) mobilization is seen in about 60 days. Ms. Marasco stated Mr. Griffin should inform community residents that this timeframe is very ambitious but the city will work begin the project quickly once bids are accepted. Mayor Williams questioned if anything could be done to expedite the bids. Ms. Marasco stated that 30 days to submit bids are not needed and can be shortened, but this may deter bidders.

2. Continued discussion of electric vehicle charging stations.

President Panetta stated that the BPW has four charging stations that were part of a promotional program. Current discussions seem to be concerned with parking and location. President Panetta stated that this topic is more in the city's purview.

Mr. Calaman recommends that when the city selects a vendor, select one that owns and operates the stations. BPW has run into problems finding someone to perform maintenance when needed.

Mayor Williams stated that the current four stations are free to users. If new stations are installed, the council will need to discuss charging users and at what rates. President Panetta clarified that it is free to the user, but there is a cost to the BPW, ultimately the BPW customers. President Panetta stated that there are third party vendors that can handle the billing, relieving the city of this responsibility. Some even offer free installation, because they would receive a portion of the payments.

Mayor Williams agrees that the city needs to discuss the locations and suggested moving this to a city staff discussion. Mr. Lee assumes that the city would be paying for the power going forward. Mayor Williams stated that someone must pay, and he does not think it will be the city. Most EV users charge at home, and charging in public is a luxury. Mr. Heffernan recommends the city evaluates usage and to charge for the service. Ms. Marasco stated the usage is also a city ordinance issue.

Mr. Lee stated a level three fast charger is more challenging and more power will be needed. The BPW would need to discuss varying rates based on charger levels. Mr. Ritzert

questioned if the BPW could support a level three charger. Mr. Calaman stated that use of a level three charger would depend on location.

Mr. Ritzert questioned if the BPW is encouraging off-peak charging at home. Mr. Calaman stated that this would happen when the BPW moves to time of use. The BPW is considering technology like AMI for time of use and public education would be needed.

Mr. Elder questioned if specifications could be developed to include appropriate amperage in homes. Mr. Ritzert stated that the State of Delaware now has a requirement that the garage must be equipped to allow for ample charging. Ms. Marasco would like to at what the city's code is.

Mr. Saliba questioned if the four stations currently installed were designed for residents, visitors, etc. Mr. Calaman stated that it was his understanding for residents and visitors.

Mayor Williams stated that the next step is to have city staff bring recommendations.

4. Discussion of city streetlights.

Mayor Willimas stated that the intention is to have a discussion on dark sky.

Mr. Calaman reviewed types of streetlights. When considering moving to dark sky, the amount of light and safety need to be considered. In terms of maintenance, when lights need to be replaced, the older hydrogen sodium lights can replace just the ballast and insert the LED. The new LEDs are the actual light and the whole head needs to be replaced. BPW has researched shades that can help but does not necessarily meet dark sky standards. Cobra head style lights are bright, and the question is can these lights be replaced with a more dark sky compliant light.

President Panetta stated that the BPW installs and maintains the lights and the city pays for the pole, light, and electricity. The BPW will install what the lumens the city requests.

Ms. Curtis stated that the standard specification is 4000 Kelvin but would like to move to 2700 Kelvin. This measurement refers to the color. Mr. Ritzert stated that it seems that equal illumination throughout the city and does not feel that it is not responsible and or needed.

Ms. Marasco stated that the Environmental Subcommittee has taken on this issue to discuss and develop recommendations.

Mr. Elder is concern with parking lots in residential neighborhood, like at the library. Ms. Curtis stated that the Environmental Committee reviewing timing and the intensity of lights. The Environmental Committee would like to introduce a pilot project for post lights and cobra head lights. This may include filters and sensors. The Environmental Committee would like an inventory of lights to help create a budget.

Ms. Marasco suggested moving in phases, starting with shields and moving towards, timers, and replacements. This would show a commitment to the project.

Mr. Saliba suggests that the Lewes Police Department weighs in on the topic due to safety concern. President Panetta stated that previously the public safety concerns outweighed the advancement of dark sky. Ms. Curtis stated that there are studies that show the white and blue lights create glare and many police departments are moving towards the more yellow lights to increase visibility.

Mr. Heffernan agrees that an inventory is needed and that a pilot program will be beneficial. Mr. Ritzert stated that a street with multiple factors (residential, commercial, light types, trees, etc.) would be ideal.

BPW staff will work on the inventory.

Thierry Poirey, 19 Harborview Road, stated that aesthetics are important. Mr. Poirey feels the cobra head lights are fierce. If the area is nice then the appearance is that the area is well maintained. Mr. Poirey suggests considering placing some CCTV strategically.

Ed Tessein, 35 Sussex Drive, suggests starting with Highland Acres because when lights are changed it is obscenely bright and blinds need to be closed to sleep.

Mr. Ritzert stated that there may be an opportunity to introduce EV charging and bicycle charging at light poles and could be considered by the committees. Ms. Marasco also suggests phone chargers.

5. Discussion of creating an ad-hoc committee to discuss the municipal complex at the Army Reserve Center, Schley Avenue master plan, and City Hall.

Mayor Williams stated that there is nothing new regarding the handover. The city is open to demolition. A tour still needs to be arranged for those council and board members that would like one. Mayor Williams introduced the idea of forming a planning committee in which each entity would put forth two members. Those four could enlist others to join. Possibly seven to nine members. Mr. Saliba thinks seven to nine members seem large and is not sure if citizen members are needed at this stage. Mr. Saliba suggested a separate citizen committee to bring recommendations to the council and board. Mr. Lee and Ms. Curtis does not feel that seven is too large. Ms. Marasco agrees that the committee would create a framework or masterplan, and seven to nine members will work. Ms. Curtis stated that the masterplan should include more than the Army reserve, like the Schley Avenue campus.

Mr. Heffernan would like to see the exploration of alternatives for the Army Reserve building. Mayor Williams stated the way the Bill was written was not flexible. The language states “municipal campus to encompass, BPW, city, and police department”.

President Panetta stated that there are items like ownership and space that should be hashed out between the city and the BPW before bringing in citizens. Mr. Saliba agrees. Mr.

Lee stated that with two city council members, two BPW Board members, the BPW General Manager and the City Manager, that would bring the committee to six.

Mr. Calaman suggested considering a 90/10 design grant through the University of Delaware, as this would act as a command center. Mr. Saliba suggested GMB be a part of the committee.

Mr. Saliba stated that there are 5.25 acres and could potentially look at additional uses along with the municipal campus. President Panetta stated that only 4 acres are useable. The community behind the property has suggested adding a path to access the bike path.

Ms. Curtis questioned if this steering committee would be open to the public. Mr. Hoffman stated that the committee will be publicly noticed. President Panetta is uncomfortable with more than two members from each body. Ms. Curtis disagrees.

Ms. Marasco would like the two members from each organization to be determined in the next few weeks and begin discussing the committee charge, so that the steering committee can be established at the next meeting.

6. Future topics

The next joint quarterly meeting will be held on October 28, 2024, at 1:00pm.

The council and BPW Board members will revisit lighting.

Mr. Ritzert suggested that each member of both bodies will have the opportunity to submit suggestions for agenda topics 30 days prior to the meeting rather than establishing all items today.

Ms. Marasco recommended a standing topic of grants.

Schedule a tour of the Army Reserve property before the next meeting.

7. Public Comment

Ed Tessin, 35 Sussex Drive stated that Lewes Elementary put a new fence and bushhogged the property. A sinkhole was found, and water may now be undermining Sussex Drive. Mr. Calaman will go out to look at it.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Ritzert motioned to adjourn. Mr. Elder seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Nichols motioned to adjourn. Mr. Lee seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.

Respectfully submitted
Sharon Sexton
Special Projects Coordinator

D. Preston Lee, P.E., Secretary

Date