

**OCEAN PINES SERVICE AREA
WATER AND WASTEWATER
Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 9, 2025**

Present

Water and Wastewater Advisory Board

Fred Stiehl, Jim Spicknall, Bob Kane, Jack Collins, Will Gabeler

Worcester County Public Works

Dallas Baker

Worcester County Public Works - Water and Wastewater Division

Tony Fascelli, Lee Beauchamp, Meg Etzler, Shane Odegaard, Gary Serman

Worcester County Treasurer

Quinn Dittrich, Ondrea Starzheskiy

Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors

John Latham

Fred called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

There were no minutes available from the November 12th meeting.

Dallas shared recent Department news. The OPAB members introduced themselves as did some of the new attendees at the meeting.

Water Production (11/12/25 -present)

- FY 25 - the well resiliency evaluation is complete. The review is finished. The report recommended removal of the old pressure valve; add VFD, add pressure transducer; upgrade SCADA, replace electrical cabinet; install new mixer, instrumentation; chemical pumps and abandon old tank. The report suggested starting with Well 2, at a cost of approximately \$300K, adding it to the FY27 budget. Future years will be updating the other wells, at one well per year. Jack asked how it will affect the budget and rates. Dallas explained how this may affect the budget, as opposed to not updating the wells, and that one cannot automatically say it will affect rates until we see what issues lie ahead.
- FY26 – Capital Projects
 - i. Caustic stainless-steel tank- three quotes received - awarded to Ashton Welding. (\$20K budgeted)
 - ii. Well chlorine contact tank inspection (\$35K)
 - iii. Capacity management plan/resiliency study & water model (\$85K). Tony is working on developing the scope of the work so we can bid that out.

Water Distribution (11/12/25 to present)

- New services: 2.
- Leak repairs: 22 – Dallas made note these are the same numbers from last month. He checked with the operators and these figures are correct.
- Capital Projects:
 - FY 25 – Radio Read Meters – replacement underway, 4193 out and 5,054 meters replaced.
 - FY26 – blue tubing replacement (\$30K)

Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Belt Filter Design – DBF has addressed MDE's comments and resubmitted for the construction permit; we are waiting on subcontractor to finish mechanical and electrical plans. These plans are not needed to get the construction permit.
- Volume of sewer hauled from Riddle to Ocean Pines is zero. Riddle WWTP is back online; no hauling since 10/4/25. Ocean Pines is still supplying water to Riddle. Timeline for opening the plant is sometime this spring. The water tower has to be painted first. We have the permit but can't paint it in the cold weather.
- FY 25 Capital projects:
 - i. Oxidation treatment tank cleaning (Treatment Unit #4) – is cleaned and completed.
 - ii. Replacement mixer for the Flow Equalization Tank delivered, still waiting on contractor to install.
- FY 26 Capital projects
 - i. Aluminum Chloride Tank Replacement (\$26K) – still working on
 - ii. Dry Bed Repairs (\$50K) – still working on
 - iii. Overhead Pipe Corrosion Protection (\$50K) Tony is working on the bid documents
 - iv. Storage lagoon (\$350K) – design complete; working on bid documents.

Note: Dallas stated that under the FY 26 projects the \$\$ figures in parentheses () are the amounts in the FY26 budget.

Wastewater Collections System (11/12/25 – present)

- Sanitary Sewer Overflows – 1 on Ocean Parkway, 500 gallons, on 12/5/25-the same N-L force main line that we are going to put in the FY27 budget for design.
- No household tanks replaced – 5 (2 cement, 3 fiberglass)
- FY 26 Capital Projects
 - i. Busch pumps (\$30K) order as needed
 - ii. Fiberglass Vacuum Tanks (\$120K) order as needed
 - iii. Lift Station T pump Replacement (\$70K)- three pumps in there, this is the 2nd of 3 we are replacing-approved at October Commissioner meeting for \$48,795. We saved a little over \$20K on that one. Pump is ordered with a 10–12-week delivery time.
 - iv. Lift Station T Wet Sell Reline (concrete) (\$65K)-working on bid package.

Construction Projects (Total EDUs)

- Triple Crown Phase II (30) – working on as-builts. Waiting on water meters.
- Refuge at Windmill Creek (90) Phase 1 contractor installing pit resitters with dual check valve. We are getting some push-back from them. Phase 2 - reviewing as-builts and waiting on return of our documents. Also waiting on the maintenance bond.
- Gum Point Road (15 sewer). No change.
- St Martins by the Bay (58 water) –We returned comments to engineer at DBF on November 10th.

Bay Restoration Fee

We just got the Bay Restoration numbers in. The Nitrogen was 2.15 and the Phosphorus was .29. Flow numbers for November 20.987 million gallons.

Jack questioned the figures for Nitrogen being high and Dallas explained why certain months had figures above the limit due to freezing temperatures, then temperatures rebounded. We had to drain the tank in October and reactivate treatment causing a disruption in peak efficiency. Dallas shared the thought do we open the plant to apply for Federal and State grants. We then disqualify ourselves from the BRF. The

Board suggested looking into the pros and cons of this and what grants are available. Discussion was held.

Financial Update

Quinn shared the Ocean Pines Service Area Balance Sheet through 11/30/25 and the Budget Performance Report to date 11/30/25. No change in EDU requests. Discussion ensued.

Jack inquired about the 44 mailbox lots and the EDUs associated with them. Discussion was held on whether the lots can be developed, can these EDUs be sold or used elsewhere, etc.

Ondrea shared that the Treasurer's office and Public Works are proposing a Water and Wastewater rate study. A rate study vendor will use historical data combined with needs of the service areas to help project out estimated costs. The study will help determine rate structure options to ensure coverage of costs. The overall result should be an analysis and a report that has recommended water and wastewater rates to cover costs and what rate structure would look like to ensure adequate capital reserves. If this is approved by the Commissioners, it will entail evaluating capital projects over a minimum of five years. Discussion was held.

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.**

With no further business Fred made the motion to adjourn. Will seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Etzler
Administrative Assistant