OCEAN PINES SERVICE AREA
WATER AND WASTEWATER
Advisory Board Meeting
Minutes
Tuesday, January 13, 2026

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, Steve Doutt
Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors
John Latham
Worcester County Commissioners
Chip Bertino

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

Minutes

Jack had a question about the December 9th meeting minutes. On Page 2, under the "Bay Restoration Fee" it was suggested that we investigate Federal and State grants available. Jack asked if there was going to be an update today. Dallas explained the process of applying for grants. Discussion was held. Commissioner Bertino suggested that before we further investigate and work on this issue that we are sure the Commissioners are on board. Commissioner Bertino shared that he doesn't want staff to work on an issue the Commissioners haven't decided is the direction they want to go. With no further additions or corrections, Will made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Jim seconded.

OPAB Meetings

Dallas shared that he wanted to talk about the possibility of streamlining our meetings and suggested that going forward we change the "Agenda" to an "Operational Update". There will be financial updates, but the "agenda" will be "what are your questions"? Most of the discussion is on questions from the Board and not what is on the "agenda". Dallas suggested we begin the meetings with questions from the Board and revise the format of the meeting. Fred shared that he wanted to continue with monthly meetings. It was agreed to continue with the monthly meetings for the time being. Dallas shared that the meeting "agenda" is formed by providing information on questions and insight from the Board on what they would like to discuss at future meetings.

Plant Updates

Dallas shared that he did have two project updates. The Aluminum Chloride Tank Replacement has an estimated delivery of February 16th.. The Storage Lagoon project had a pre-bid meeting on January 23rd and bids are due February 20th.

Bay Restoration Criteria

We did hit our phosphorus numbers. Nitrogen was still slightly above limit. The letter to the State requesting an exemption from the Bay Restoration fee is due January 31st. Dallas feels we should probably get a response by February. The fee is based on the calendar year so we would pay half in 2026 and half in the 2027 budgets. Discussion was held.

Capital Projects

Fred inquired about overhead pipe corrosion protection and its status of bid documents. Staff updated the Board on the number of projects ongoing and how we must prioritize as needed when decisions and/or action is required, occasionally delaying action on other projects.

Water Meters

Dallas stated that there are three things going on with water meters. There are 41 water meters being installed without a check valve. The check valve will prevent backflow if there is negative pressure in our system and curb contamination of our water system. We have told the contractor they must put in the check valves, but they are claiming they don't. Supposedly there was an email from a previous employee stating they do not . Dallas has asked to see this email, but the contractor can't find it. Additionally, there were five meters set too low. The contractor set them at grade and then the developer added more soil so now the meters are too low. They also owe us $113,000 for their escrow fee. We have told them they will not get their water meters until these issues are addressed. Commissioner Bunting and Dallas are going to set up a meeting with the developer and contractor to discuss these issues.

Financial Updates

Quinn stated that Manklin commercial properties relinquished 40 of their 81 EDUs.
He also shared several current financial figures for the Board's perusal. Discussion ensued.

Our next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.**

With no further business Jim made the motion to adjourn. Fred seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Etzler
Administrative Assistant