OCEAN PINES SERVICE AREA
WATER AND WASTEWATER
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday May 21, 2026

Present **Water and Wastewater Advisory Board**
Fred Stiehl, Jim Spicknall, Will Gabeler, Bob Kane, Jack Collins
Worcester County Public Works
Dallas Baker
Worcester County Public Works - Water and Wastewater Division
Lee Beauchamp, Meg Etzler
Worcester County Treasurer
Quinn Dittrich, Ondrea Starzhevskiy

Fred Stiehl called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Fred asked if there were any additions and/or corrections to the March 10, 2026, meeting minutes. Fred stated there were two things he would address as we went on with the meeting. Jack motioned to approve the minutes, Jim seconded. The minutes were accepted as written.

Water Production

In referencing the Capacity Management Plan/Well Resiliency study, Fred stated the well resiliency evaluation was almost completed several months ago and asked if this was two separate projects. Dallas explained that the Well Resiliency study was looking at what improvements we may need to make to the wells. The Capacity Management plan is, if we are currently using 80% of our water, what are our plans going forward. Fred asked if the Well Resiliency study went well and Dallas shared that it was suggested to add soft starts on the variable frequency drives, add HVAC to the breaker rooms, etc. This would factor in our 2027 budget. Dallas stated that not all have the same improvements with some being more expensive to upgrade.

Water Distribution

Leak repairs: Fred asked if the repairs were done in house or with an outside contractor. Lee stated it depends on the work involved and the severity of the leak. A meter pit issue can be done in house; pulling a new service line we usually contract out. Lee offered that we have installed variable frequency drives that ramp up slowly, increasing water pressure slowly and smoothing the transition of the pressures. Hopefully this will diminish the amount of water leaks.

Jack referenced the Radio Read Meters – 5020 of 5054 meters have been replaced. Dallas stated that the 5054 meters are residential meters. Over the next 10 years the Pines will be paying back the 1.4 million loan to the General Fund for these meters.

Wastewater Collections

Fred asked about the status of what can be done to help the bugs in cold weather. Dallas shared the budgeted $18,500 is for the study looking into this issue and it was awarded to George, Miles and Buhr.

We should have the recommendation back in late July or early August. Fred inquired as to the twelve-degree centigrade permit revision. Dallas explained there are multiple permits around the State that recognize 12 degrees centigrade as the lower limit and if it is lower than that it is considered an upset. On the suggestion of several municipal and county public works groups we are asking to have that included in our permit.

Fred referenced the Busch pumps and the fiberglass vacuum tanks. Lee shared that we have used the monies available this year. He shared there are approximately 25 back-ordered vacuum tanks for the FY27 year.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

We are looking at potentially having to pay a Bay Restoration Fee, so do we expand the Plant, or do we wait until we need to expand. We are taking a hard look at what we can possibly cut out of this year's budget to offset this.

Construction Projects

Triple Crown Phase II – reviewing as-builts
Gum Point Rd – no changes since our January meeting
St Martins by the Bay – plans submitted for stormwater management permit waiver and sediment and erosion control permit. Submittal for MDE approval pending
Windmill Creek – waiting on turnover documents

Financial Update

Quinn shared the Ocean Pines Service Area Net Position excluding Capital Assets, the Budget Worksheet Report for Budget Year 2027, Budget Performance Report, and the Balance Sheet through 3/31/26. Quinn answered questions and offered explanations. Discussion was held.

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 14, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

With no further business Fred made the motion to adjourn. Jack seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Etzler
Administrative Assistant