

**OCEAN PINES SERVICE AREA
WATER AND WASTEWATER
Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday, April 10, 2025**

Present **Water and Wastewater Advisory Board**
Fred Stiehl, Jim Spicknall, Will Gabeler, Bob Kane, Jack Collins
Worcester County Public Works
Dallas Baker, Chris Clasing
Worcester County Public Works - Water and Wastewater Division
Tony Fascelli, Gary Serman, Meg Etzler
Worcester County Treasurer
Phil Thompson, Quinn Dittrich
Worcester County Environmental Programs
Bob Mitchell
Worcester County Commissioners
Chip Bertino
Ocean Pines Administration – Board of Directors
Jeff Heavner, John Latham, Elaine Brady

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

Approval of Minutes

Fred asked if there were any additions and/or corrections to the February 11, 2025, meeting minutes. The minutes were accepted as written.

Water Production

- The well resiliency evaluation is almost complete. We are waiting on input from the electrical contractor.

Water Distribution (2/11/25 to present)

- Five new services; three are pending. 35 leak repairs
- North water tower valve repair is complete.
- Capital Projects – replacement meter project is underway. We have replaced 1,499 out of 5,054. This will be a long process.
- Blue tubing replacement is ordered as needed

Wastewater Treatment Plant

- Storage lagoon permit – Purchase order issued 2/3/25 to relocate the gas main. Price: \$33,574. Preconstruction meeting scheduled for week of April 14th-18th. Unused Ocean Downs EDUs (162) are available for sale. Crabs to Go bought some of them.
- Belt Filter Design – 75% complete. Waiting on resubmittal. Project engineer is leaving the firm.
- The volume of sewage hauled from Riddle WWTP to the Pines: 1/4/25 - 3/1/25 was 3,204,000 gallons
- FY 25 Capital projects:
 1. Oxidation treatment tank cleaning (Treatment Unit #4) – out for bids; opening 4/25/25. Replacement mixer installed.
 2. The replacement mixer for the FET #1 was approved by the Commissioner on 12/17/24. Purchase order submitted 2/3/25. Twenty-two (22) week delivery time.

3. Clarifier No 1: bent rake arm – under repair (budget \$18,000) Additional corrosion to the baffle weir wall discovered. Working with contractor to repair. An additional \$18,000 is estimated.

Wastewater Collections System (2/11/25 – present)

- SSO's – 3
 1. 2/28/25 @ 4:00 p.m. 1210 Ocean Parkway, 6" force main with longitudinal crack. 100 gallons released into ditch. No impact to water way.
 2. 2/28/25 @ 7:00 p.m. 1226 Ocean Parkway, 6" force main with longitudinal crack, 400 gallons released into ditch. No impact to water way.
 3. 3/1/25 @ 7:00 a.m. 1126 Ocean parkway, 6" force man with longitudinal crack, 1000 gallons released into ditch. No impact to water way.
- Household tanks replaced: 4 (1 plastic, 1 fiberglass, 2 concrete)
- Smoke testing is nearly complete. One section left, to be completed in spring. Most of the findings were broken cleanouts.
- FY 25 Capital Projects
 1. Busch pumps are ordered as needed. Seeing a price increase.
 2. Fiberglass vacuum tanks are ordered as needed. Looking at other vendors.
 3. Lift station "T" pump replacement – approved by the Commissioners on 10/1/24 - awaiting delivery.
 4. Receiving Tank Station "I" replacement – approved by Commissioners on 10/1/24 - awaiting delivery.

Construction Projects (Total EDUs)

- Triple Crown Phase II (30) – Waiting on bacteria testing for water main.
- Refuge at Windmill Creek (90) Phase 2 sewer under construction.
- Gum Point Road (15 sewer) no change since 6/11/24 meeting.
- St. Martins by the bay (58) water) – 30% design was due 9/12/24. USDA Engineer/Owner agreement received on 12/23/24. Agreement being finalized.
- River Run Townhouses (56) project closed out. Maintenance bond released.
- River Run Single Family Homes (38) Pump station punch list complete. Waiting for punch list items for water & sewer utilities.

Financial Update

Quinn shared the Ocean Pines Service Area Net Position excluding Capital Assets (aka "Reserves"), the Ocean Pines Service Area Rate History, the Income Statement and the Balance Sheet thru 01/31/25. Quinn explained and clarified the figures and discussion was held. Fred asked about the bonds and could we get a list of these bonds and their payoff dates for our next meeting. Quinn will provide.

General Discussion

- Total Flow for 2025 - year to date: 73.929 total for January, February and March. The historical average annual flows for 2024 (Million Gallons per Day – MGD) was 0.822.
- Bay Restoration Fee Criteria YTD is 8.11 Nitrogen, .32 Phosphorus. Prolonged sub-freezing temps affected Nitrogen removal. We started adding cold tolerant bacteria in December.

At the request of the OPA Board at our February 11th meeting, members of the Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors were in attendance today. Discussion was held on the issue of some areas, i.e, Riddle Farm, Mystic Harbor, Landings, Edgewater Acres, Newark and Assteague Point, being in debt because

the user fees charged didn't adequately cover their costs and the County is now asking every customer in every district to help alleviate these debts. Ocean Pines residents and officials are upset at this prospect of paying higher sewer and water rates to reduce the debt in these areas in the County. The Board members in attendance voiced their concern of paying the fair share of Ocean Pines debt and only their service area debt. Commissioner Chip Bertino agreed that residents should only have to pay their fair share of costs that were directly related to the Ocean Pines' facilities. Discussion was held.

There will be several town meetings open to the public to discuss this issue. Dates and times were noted.

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 12, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Etzler
Administrative Assistant