

The City of Lewes



City Manager's Report

April 2019

Construction Progress

There are a number of significant construction projects underway in Lewes. City staff have participated in progress meetings on these projects.

- Mariners Retreat/Highland Acres Tax Ditch Improvements – Progress meetings were held on both the tax ditch and Mariners Retreat projects. The installation of the pipe is ongoing. Construction on the infrastructure for Mariners Retreat has continued, and the first building permit was issued for home construction.
- Savannah Place Sanitary Sewer Extension – Teal Construction has continued to work on the sewer installation for Savannah Place.
- Beach 2 Restroom – Work on Beach 2 Restroom was mostly complete, but upon plumbing inspection we found out we could not open until temperate water was available. We are working with a contractor on installing hot water heaters. Porta potties were brought in until the restrooms can be open.
- Front Street Sewer/Savannah Road Water Main Project – The Front Street portion of the project was mostly complete by early April, but the Savannah Road water main replacement was underway. This work was completed by the first week in May. Paver crosswalks at the Savannah Road/Gills Neck Road/Front Street intersection will be installed next winter.
- Phase 23 Streets/Beach 1 Parking Lot – Paving work on Beach 1 parking lot was completed, and the lot was able to open on May 2. There are still punch list items remaining to be addressed. Beebe Avenue and Dewey Avenue will be paved in early May.
- City Hall Renovations – City Hall renovations have been underway, with framing and drywall work. Carpet will be installed in May, and renovations should be completed by the end of May.

Parking Meters

Parking meters were installed, and staff were trained on the new technology for meter operation and enforcement in preparation for the May 1st beginning of our meter season. Additionally, mailings were sent in March to vehicle owners with delinquent citations giving them until April 30th to pay or have the citations turned over to collections. All delinquent citations were turned over to collections on May 1st.

New Website and Meeting Management Platforms

The City has engaged Civic Plus as our new web provider. Staff who will be working with the website were in training on April 1st and 2nd all day to learn how to manage the website. Staff also worked to develop a task list of what needs to be done to launch the new site. We are working to time the launch of the new website and meeting management system to coincide so as to be seamless for users. We are anticipating a June 1st launch, but we need to ensure that the details of the online payment are securely in place so that we do not have disruptions for property owners paying tax bills.

Our staff have continued to have regular coaching sessions and to build agendas in iCompass, our meeting management platform, so that when this service is made public in June our staff is proficient in its use.

New Road Master Plan

Jim Klein, the consultant for the New Road Master Plan, worked during April to develop the draft plan document. This document was released on April 30th, and a meeting was held with stakeholders on May 7th. Comments are due by May 14th, and a public meeting will be scheduled in June for the updated draft. After this meeting, we will see endorsement from the City of Lewes, Sussex County, and DelDOT.

Five Points Working Group – Phase Two

The second phase of the Five Points Working Group met on April 29th. At the meeting, the project team provided an overview of the implementation plan developed based on the recommendations made during the first phase of the Working Group. They provided an update of recommendations that had been implemented or were underway. Secretary Jennifer Cohan announced at the meeting that DelDOT has a contract to purchase the Best property. The Five Points Working Group is expected to meet two or three times per year. Some members of the public requested that it meet more regularly.

Land Development/Annexation Activities

Staff continued to work on reviewing development projects and comprehensive plan implementation during March.

- The Annexation Regulation Ad-Hoc Committee has continued to meet weekly to review potential changes to the Annexation zones.
- The new Historic Preservation Architectural Review Commission (HPARC) met during April to organize, in anticipation of beginning to hear applications after May 1st.
- Mayor and City Council held a public hearing on April 22nd regarding the site development plan for Assisted Living Facility Lewes Medical Development, located on the parcel of the Beebe property that fronts Kings Highway.
- At their meeting on April 17th, the Planning Commission primarily discussed status updates of the various pending development applications. They also reviewed updates to the residential zones.
- On April 30th, the City received two site development plan applications: Shields Elementary School (at the Lewes School site) and the workforce housing proposal on the Savannah Road side of the Beebe property. These will be scheduled for presentation to the Planning Commission in coming months.

Personnel Changes

With the budget passage, there were several personnel-related changes. In the new budget, there was an addition of two new positions, an Entry-Level Planner and an Administrative Assistant to the City Manager. Additionally, the City will be sharing a Local Government Management Fellow with the City of Milford. The Local Government Management Fellow program is a nationally-competitive

program through the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) for students graduating from masters degree programs in public administration and public policy.

Effective April 1st, Sue Ann Hennessy transferred from the Receptionist/Finance Clerk position to the Administrative Assistant to the City Manager position. Until a replacement Receptionist/Finance Clerk is hired, Sue Ann has been managing duties of both positions. We hope to have a new Receptionist/Finance Clerk in June.

During April, the City reviewed and interviewed candidates for the Local Government Management Fellow position. A candidate, Christine Hoh, has been selected and will begin in July. She is currently an MPA student at the University of Delaware and is serving as a Legislative Fellow in the Delaware General Assembly. She will work on a variety of management projects, including development of a multi-year capital improvement plan and completion of several human resource management related projects.

The new Entry-Level Planner position was posted during April, and interviews are being held in early May. We hope to have a candidate on board by the beginning of June. The City has been utilizing the services of AECOM's Savannah Edwards to assist with the workload in the Planning Division. This new position will replace this contractual role.

Changes to Trash Schedule

Beginning June 1st, there will be changes to the City's trash and recycling schedule. The trash schedule for May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020 was mailed to property owners with the trash bill. The major change is that beginning June 1st, the City will offer weekly recycling year-round. This results in a change in the days of service for trash and recycling service. Residents who have trash pick-up on Mondays will have recycling pick-up on Tuesdays. Residents who have recycling pick-up on Mondays will have trash pick-up on Tuesday. The City is working on outreach to ensure residents are aware of the changes, including a "Trash Talk: Garbage Rules" workshop on May 23rd at 6:30 p.m. We also want to use this outreach as an opportunity to remind people of what items are accepted for single-stream recycling.

Departmental Operations

- *Use of Margaret H. Rollins Community Center Meeting Room* – Eight (8) organizations held a total of thirty (30) meetings and events in the City's meeting room during the month of April. This increase in the number of meetings largely relates renovations taking place in City Hall.
- *Use of Net House* – Four (4) organizations held a total of four (4) meetings and events in the Net House during the month of April.
- *Refuse Collection Totals for April*
 - Recycling – 37.87 tons
 - Regular Trash – 143.50 tons
 - Yard Waste – 45.04 tons
 - Beach Rake/Street Sweeping – 10.93 tons
 - Vegetation Cleared by City – 5.75 tons
- *New Business Licenses Issued* – 21
- *Building Permits Issued*
 - Residential Renovation – 43
 - Accessory Structure – 6
 - Solar Panels – 1
 - Commercial Renovation – 3
 - Sign Permit - 2
 - New Home – 2
 - Institutional Renovation – 1
 - Demolition – 3

Other Meetings and Activities

On April 5th, Alison Kirk hosted a workshop to discuss whether people of Lewes would consider concessions on the beach to be beneficial not. There was also an online survey available for residents, businesses, and others to provide feedback on this idea.

Mayor Becker, Preston Lee, Darrin Gordon, and I had a monthly conference call with Chesapeake Utilities to continue working with them on natural gas expansion in Lewes.

On April 13th, Mayor Becker, Ellen Lorraine McCabe, and I attended the SCAT Legislative Breakfast. At this breakfast, municipalities gave a presentation on legislative priorities of municipalities in Sussex County.

I met with Jim Baker, volunteer with the Lewes Little League, about the Little League's lighting upgrade. Senator Lopez has agreed to provide CTF funding for a portion of the upgrade.

Ellen Lorraine McCabe and I met with GMB staff to begin planning for an overlook at the terminus of the new trail along the rail line on the east side of the canal. We have authorized GMB to proceed with design of the overlook, which is partially funded with a State grant.

On April 16th, the City held a dune workshop to assess interest in growing a dune between the Beach 1 parking lot and the Delaware Bay. Based on the discussion, this does not appear to be advantageous at this time.

Mayor Becker, Councilperson Osler, Charlie O'Donnell, and I have had discussions with M&T Bank regarding possible designs for sharing reconfiguration and sharing of the M&T Bank parking lot at Third and Market Streets.

I have been working with Fran Fletcher of the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration to plan a team building workshop for City staff in mid-May.

On April 16th, the City held a volunteer luncheon to show appreciation for the many volunteers who serve on boards, commissions, and committees for the City. The strong ethic of volunteerism in Lewes is one of the traits that makes Lewes unique and special.

Darrin Gordon, Austin Calaman, and I attended the Resilient Communities Partnership meeting.

Staff have worked to plan for an orientation session for seasonal employees. This year will be the first time that we will be holding such an orientation session, but it will provide important training regarding policies and procedures.

On April 25th, Mayor Becker, Councilperson Reardon, and I attended the Lewes Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting, where the speaker provided information about single-stream recycling. The talk was very informational.

On April 30th, Mayor Becker and I attended an event to kick off Governor Carney's anti-litter campaign at the Rehoboth Band Stand.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann Marie Townsend

Ann Marie Townsend, AICP
City Manager