



**CITY OF REHOBOTH BEACH, CITY OF LEWES POLICE DEPARTMENTS, AND
DELAWARE RIVER & BAY AUTHORITY
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
January 27, 2026**

The Police Accountability Committee (“PAC”) of the City of Rehoboth Beach, the City of Lewes, and the Delaware River & Bay Authority was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Dan Zachem on Tuesday, January 27, 2026. The meeting was held in the Commissioners Room on the second floor of City Hall, 229 Rehoboth Avenue, Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, and was also conducted virtually via Teams.

A moment of silence was observed in honor of Corporal Matthew "Ty" Snook of the Delaware State Police, in recognition of his life and service following his passing in the line of duty.

The following members of the PAC were present:

Mr. Dan Zachem	Chair
Ms. Mary Good	Vice-Chair (via Teams)
Mr. Dan DeSimone	Committee Member
Rev. Eddie Jusino	Committee Member
Dr. Kimberly Leisey	Committee Member
Mr. Chris White	Committee Member
Chief Keith Banks	City of Rehoboth Beach
Lieutenant Mark Sweet	City of Rehoboth Beach
Chief Thomas Spell	City of Lewes
Lieutenant James Locklear	City of Lewes
Lieutenant Colonel Chris Field	Delaware River and Bay Authority
Lieutenant Jason LaMora	Delaware River and Bay Authority

ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Zachem made a motion, seconded by Mr. White, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Zachem clarified that the PAC would not be required to expand its membership in connection with the Delaware River and Bay Authority, as previously discussed, and noted that this was confirmed with the Police Officer Standards and Training Commission.

Chair Zachem made a motion, seconded by Rev. Jusino, to approve the minutes of the December 04, 2025, Meeting, including an amendment to capitalize “CAMP” under Reports of Committees. The motion carried unanimously.

Chief Banks noted that the PAC would need at least two representatives for the Delaware River and Bay Authority. Chair Zachem confirmed that this had already been resolved, with Mr. White and Mr. DeSimone designated to serve as representatives for the Delaware River and Bay Authority.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion and possible action regarding new PAC member

Chair Zachem noted that an application for membership had been received. The applicant was unable to attend and will appear at the April Meeting, at which time the application will be considered.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation/training by DRBA to include overview on personnel, protocols, duties, and responsibilities at all DRBA facilities with a specific focus on Sussex County and the Lewes Ferry Terminal.

Lieutenant Colonel Field and Lieutenant LaMora provided an overview of Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) police operations, presenting an annual enforcement activity summary for 2025 reflecting department-wide activity across all troops. A focused overview of Troop 3 in Sussex County and the Lewes Ferry Terminal highlighted a shift from traditional traffic enforcement to security and homeland security functions. Core duties included MARSEC security checks, facility and vessel security, foot passenger screening using weapons detection systems, and K-9 operations for explosives detection and interagency support. Coordination with vessel crews and adherence to Coast Guard requirements were emphasized to ensure passenger safety and operational readiness.

Personnel structure was outlined, noting approximately 52 sworn officers across all operations, with a smaller contingent assigned to Troop 3. Staffing levels were structured to maintain patrol coverage and supervision, supported by non-sworn personnel including security and administrative staff. Protocols at ferry facilities emphasized a security-first approach balanced with customer service. Screening procedures required compliance, with officer discretion applied in handling refusals or suspicious circumstances. De-escalation was emphasized, and non-compliant individuals could be denied boarding, with coordination between police and customer service staff to manage outcomes.

Committee members inquired about concealed carry procedures, security screening protocols, and the role of K-9 units. Firearms are generally required to be secured prior to boarding depending on jurisdiction, and K-9 units are primarily trained for explosives detection and utilized for routine screening and interagency assistance. Committee members also asked about staffing levels, deployment, and coordination across facilities, as well as how non-compliant individuals are handled, including refusal to comply with screening procedures, with responses emphasizing officer discretion, de-escalation, and the ability to deny boarding when necessary. Additional questions addressed potential escalation to arrests, which was noted as rare, as well as homeland security coordination, with no direct involvement in immigration enforcement. Committee members further inquired about professional standards processes, including complaint classifications and internal investigations, with responses outlining categories of sustained, not sustained, exonerated, and unfounded, and noting the role of body-worn cameras in supporting accountability.

The presentation concluded with an overview of the distinct responsibilities across troops, including highway safety, ferry and homeland security, and airport operations, with continued emphasis on safety, coordination, and regulatory compliance.

Discussion and possible action to amend and adopt the Police Accountability Committee updated (PAC) Bylaws.

The Committee reviewed proposed amendments to the Police Accountability Committee (PAC) bylaws, with revisions presented in tracked format identifying additions and deletions. Updates included reducing the minimum number of representatives per jurisdiction from three to two to, incorporating the Delaware River and Bay Authority as a represented entity, and revising language in Article 4, Section 2 to reflect representation by jurisdiction rather than residency. Additional changes to Article 7, Section 1 provided for equal support staff contributions among the participating agencies. The Committee discussed the proposed revisions, confirmed no further additions, and noted no objections to the changes as presented, with direction to finalize the amendments and update the bylaws accordingly.

A motion was made by Chair Zachem, seconded by Dr. Leisey, that the proposed additions, deletions, and changes to the bylaws, incorporating the Committee's discussion, be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Open discussion from Rehoboth Beach Police, Lewes Police, & Delaware River Bay Authority related to issues in their jurisdictions

Chief Banks and Lt. Mark Sweet reported that Rehoboth Beach Police Department operations were proceeding smoothly, with a primary focus on preparing for the upcoming summer season, including recruitment of seasonal officers and ongoing training initiatives. Conditional offers had been extended, with applications continuing to be received, though housing remained a recurring challenge for out-of-state candidates. Continued success in hiring full-time officers from the seasonal program was noted, and the department reported being fully staffed. Accreditation efforts were also highlighted, with a recent on-site review completed and formal accreditation anticipated. Training opportunities, including taser certification and scenario-based exercises, were discussed, with invitations extended for Committee participation.

Chief Spell and Lt. Locklear reported that Lewes Police Department staffing was at 17 of 18 authorized positions, with ongoing efforts to fill the remaining vacancy while maintaining selective hiring standards. Recent large-scale community events, including a holiday parade, were conducted without incident. Upcoming events requiring police presence included a rescheduled State of the City address anticipated to draw significant attendance, as well as a community-oriented charity basketball event.

Both Rehoboth Beach and Lewes departments addressed questions regarding immigration-related enforcement, noting no active coordination with federal immigration authorities, no participation in related agreements, and no recent requests for assistance, while affirming a continued focus on public safety and adherence to established policies. Additional discussion confirmed the use of body-worn cameras by both departments and clarified that immigration status is not a factor in routine patrol operations, except in limited circumstances such as post-arrest processing through standard systems.

Lieutenant Colonel Field and Lieutenant LaMora provided an update on Delaware River and Bay Authority emergency preparedness efforts, including participation in coordinated training exercises. A recent full-scale active threat exercise had been conducted on the Cape May side, with a similar tabletop exercise planned for the Lewes Ferry Terminal. The Committee was advised that additional information would be provided as details are finalized, with potential opportunities for observation or participation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Zachem made a motion, seconded by Rev. Jusino, to adjourn the meeting.
The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marco O. Avila
Compliance & Grants Administrator
City of Rehoboth Beach