

City of Lewes
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE
Tuesday, April 28, 2026
MINUTES

The Police Accountability Committee met on **Tuesday, April 28, 2026 in Council Chambers at Lewes City Hall**, in accordance with proper notification, with the following members present: **Representing City of Lewes:** Chair Dan Zachem, Andrew Glassman, Chief Tom Spell (Ex-officio), Lieutenant Jamie Locklear, Dan DeSimone. **Representing Rehoboth Beach:** Vice-Chair Mary Good, Rev. Eddie Jusino, Kim Leisey, Chris White, Chief Keith Banks (Ex-officio), Lieutenant Mark Sweet (Ex-officio). **Representing Delaware River Bay Authority:** Lieutenant Jason LeMora

A. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL:

Chair Dan Zachem called the quarterly meeting of the Police Accountability Committee (PAC) for Lewes, Rehoboth Beach, and the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) to order at 10:00 AM.

B. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

No formal announcements were recorded.

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda was made by Vice-Chair Mary Good and Chair Dan Zachem seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Police Accountability Committee Minutes – Jan 27, 2026

Motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2026 meeting minutes was made by Vice-Chair Good and seconded by Chair Zachem. The motion carried unanimously.

E. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Continued discussion and possible action regarding new PAC member application.

Kathleen Berault-Chmielewski, a retired Prince George's County Police Major with 22 years of law enforcement experience who recently relocated to Lewes, addressed the committee for the second time in support of her pending membership application. She expressed her belief in the importance of police accountability for community trust, transparency, and officer protection, and noted that a female and minority perspective would add meaningful diversity to the committee.

Chair Zachem opened the discussion by raising several considerations relevant to the application. He noted that the bylaws cap membership at nine, the committee currently stands at seven, and that the PAC is statutorily encouraged to include at least one member with direct experience as an arrestee or with close ties to the criminal justice system from that perspective. He also raised the concern that adding another member with a law enforcement background—given that he and others on the committee already carry such experience—could create a public perception that the committee is overly sympathetic to law enforcement, which could undermine the committee's credibility in the community, particularly given the PAC's early stage of existence.

Members discussed additional considerations, including the need for representation from the DRBA's direct constituency. Lieutenant LaMora noted that two individuals with local business ties to Rehoboth or Lewes had previously expressed interest in joining specifically in connection with the DRBA, but had been asked to hold off pending committee direction. A member raised the practical concern about reaching an even

number (eight) should Ms. Berault-Chmielewski be added, which could produce tie votes, and suggested that a ninth member with direct DRBA ties would be needed to reach an odd number. The committee also discussed the value of a succession planning framework, as founding members are approaching the end of their three-year terms.

Vice Chair Good proposed volunteering to prepare a diversity assessment of the current membership—examining representation across race, ethnicity, career background, and lived experience—to identify gaps before taking action on any application. The committee broadly agreed that this analysis, combined with a renewed public notice inviting community members to apply, would allow for a more informed and holistic decision at the next meeting. Members agreed that Ms. Berault-Chmielewski's application would be formally revisited at that time.

Chair Zachem thanked Ms. Berault-Chmielewski for her patience and expressed regret at the continued delay, acknowledging the committee's genuine struggle to balance competing considerations.

No vote was taken on the application. The matter was tabled pending a membership diversity assessment and renewed public outreach.

2. Continued discussion regarding PAC Training - Required training hours, upcoming opportunities, training experiences.

The committee received an updated training hours spreadsheet distributed by the chiefs. Members were reminded that the annual deadline for completing the required 20 training hours falls in the third week of June. Most members were reported to be on pace or already at the 20-hour mark. Members were asked to notify staff of any training hours not yet captured, including recent community events.

Committee Member Chris White shared reflections on his attendance at a TASER training session held at the Ocean View Police Department. He described the collaborative nature of the training, which involved technology shared among multiple local departments, as well as Ocean View's virtual reality simulation system. Committee Member White recounted participating in several scenarios—including one in which he was placed in the perspective of a police officer responding to an escalating confrontation with an armed individual—and expressed that the experience gave him a substantially greater appreciation for the split-second decisions law enforcement officers must make. He noted that one of the scenarios particularly illustrated how rapidly a seemingly manageable situation can become life-threatening.

Committee Member Kim Leisey encouraged members to also consider observing the DRBA dispatch center in Cape May, noting the high volume and complexity of calls she observed during a prior visit. Lieutenant LaMora offered to coordinate group visits to DRBA facilities, noting that the dispatch center would require a ferry trip. Committee Member White added that he had previously spent several hours touring DRBA facilities, including a ferry crossing and time on the bridge, and found the experience highly informative.

Committee Member Dan DeSimone raised the possibility of arranging a group training visit to DRBA facilities for multiple committee members, which Lieutenant LaMora agreed to coordinate upon receipt of contact information.

3. Update and continued discussion on current status of ICE activity in respective jurisdictions.

Chief Tom Spell (Lewes) and Chief Keith Banks (Rehoboth Beach) each reported that their departments have had no contact or interaction with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Both chiefs confirmed that their departments maintain written policies guiding officer conduct in this area, that they are not entering into any agreements with ICE, and that they would provide assistance only as necessary to ensure public and officer safety. Lieutenant LaMora reported the same for the DRBA—no ICE presence or contact on DRBA facilities.

Chief Spell referenced a *Shared Principles of Agreement* document included in the meeting packet, developed through the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), of which both he and Chief Banks are members. He noted the document was intended to establish order and guiding principles amid what had appeared to many as a period of disorder nationally regarding federal-local law enforcement relations. Members were encouraged to review the document independently.

In response to a member question, Chief Banks acknowledged that there had been some ICE activity reported in other Delaware jurisdictions, including areas served by Delaware State Police, Georgetown Police, Seaford, and Laurel, but confirmed no known activity in Lewes or Rehoboth Beach.

F. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion on departments policies and procedures on the handling of juveniles.

Lieutenant Sweet (Rehoboth Beach) and Lieutenant Locklear (Lewes) provided a detailed overview of their respective departments' juvenile handling policies and procedures. Both departments use Lexapol as the basis for their policies, resulting in nearly identical frameworks, the substance of which is largely dictated by federal, state, and accreditation mandates.

Diversion as the Priority

Juvenile Civil Citation Program

Custody Procedures and Protections

Fingerprinting

Curfew in Rehoboth Beach

Drug activity

DRBA Perspective

Members asked questions regarding the geographic origin of juvenile offenders (largely from surrounding Delaware communities, with out-of-state offenders more prevalent in serious crimes), neighborhood watch integration, and the process of locating and engaging parents. Both lieutenants noted that locating parents is rarely a problem, and that parental reactions range widely.

2. Presentation by Chairperson Dan Zachem on recent fatal shootings in Minneapolis.

Chair Zachem presented a legal analysis of the fatal shooting of Renee Good by a federal immigration enforcement officer in Minneapolis, framed from his perspective as a

former homicide prosecutor and 30-year veteran of the Department of Justice. He noted at the outset that he does not purport to be an expert in law enforcement tactics, and that he was deliberately avoiding discussion of immigration policy itself. His focus was on what investigative steps the Department of Justice should have taken and the applicable legal framework. Areas of focus included:

DOJ's Failure to Investigate

Qualified Immunity and State Prosecution

Authorized Act Analysis

Self-Defense and Shoot Sequence Analysis

In closing, Chair Zachem acknowledged that Minneapolis itself bore some responsibility for the breakdown, having chosen to stand down rather than engage with ICE, but maintained that both the federal and local failures contributed to the tragic outcome.

G. AGENCY REPORTS

Open discussion from Rehoboth Beach, Lewes, & Delaware River & Bay Police Departments related to their individual jurisdictions.

Rehoboth Beach Police Department

Chief Banks provided a summary of department activities since the last PAC meeting. Highlights included: receipt of state accreditation in April 2026; the department's annual awards banquet recognizing officers and 9-1-1 communication specialists; the commencement of a four-week training academy for 17 newly hired seasonal police officers; recognition of National Telecommunicators Week; a Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) course conducted by Lieutenant Sweet and Corporal Cisco for local church members; and Chief Banks' attendance at a community friendship dinner organized by Speak Out Against Hate on April 23.

Chief Banks also noted that he and Chief Spell will participate in a question-and-answer session hosted by the Delaware Anti-Violence Project with Sussex Pride on May 12 at 2:00 PM via Zoom, and offered to share the link with committee members. Ongoing engagement with local organizations including Camp Rehoboth, the Rehoboth Beach–Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce, Rehoboth Beach Main Street, and the Rehoboth Beach Museum was also noted.

Lewes Police Department

Chief Spell reported on several community policing activities and training highlights. Community events included: providing security for a "State of the Community" forum at Lewes Elementary School on February 17; a community basketball game between Fred Thomas Middle School and the Lewes Police All-Star team, noted as a near-loss by two points "under protest"; security support for a "No Kings" protest of approximately 400 attendees on March 28, which proceeded without incident; support for the Lewes Little League parade and community bonfire on April 11; and a criminal investigations class for fourth-grade students at Lewes Elementary School on April 15 conducted by the school resource officer, involving fingerprinting, shoe print analysis, and simulated evidence collection.

Training highlights included: anti-harassment training for all department employees; transition to a new handgun (Staccato) with full department training and issuance; completion of the POST leadership supervision course by one officer; drone training; evidence collection and

storage training; field training officer training; mental health interaction training; and an upcoming bicycle patrol training course in May, courtesy of Bethany Beach, for three officers. Chief Spell also reported one use-of-force incident that was deemed minor and justified, with no training deficiencies identified, and zero citizen complaints. The Lewes Police Foundation provided shirts for both teams in the community basketball event.

Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA)

Lieutenant Lamora reported that DRBA's colonel recently graduated from the FBI National Academy. Upcoming events include the British car show on the Saturday following the meeting. Recent in-service training included range qualifications completed in April. A tabletop exercise for active shooter scenarios on the ferry was conducted with participation from multiple agencies including Del-Rec and Delaware State Police; a full live exercise on DRBA property is planned for 2027. K-9 Joker was introduced as the newest addition to the DRBA K-9 program, bringing the total to approximately five or six K-9 units between the Cape May and Lewes sides.

H. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment was offered.

Several committee members submitted requests for future agenda topics, including: gang activity in the beach communities; mental health crisis response; hurdles facing departments that, if overcome, could enable more effective policing; and elder fraud and scam awareness, particularly as it relates to an ongoing University of Delaware OLLI program course being developed by committee member White. Members noted resources such as AARP, the NC3, and the Better Business Bureau as potential collaborators for the elder fraud topic.

I. ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chair Good made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Chair Zachem seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Jeffery Coover, Administrative Support Specialist

Minutes generated by HeyGov.ai

Transcripts available upon request