

Board of Public Affairs Meeting Minutes – January 15, 2026

There was a regular meeting of the Blanchester Board of Public Affairs held on Thursday January 15, 2026 in the BPA Conference Room at the Municipal Building.

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Chairman Bowling.

Attending was Chairman James Bowling, Trustee Dennis Blocker, Director Ram Reddy, Mayor John Carman, Council Member Lynn Lewis, and Donna Johnson Business Mgr./Clerk.

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker to Excuse Trustee Haines. All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

There was a motion/second by Trustee Blocker/Chairman Bowling to approve the minutes. All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

A motion/second by Trustee Blocker/Chairman Bowling to approve the bills listed in Appendix-A. All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

Clerk

After numerous discussions on the budget, it was agreed to implement a rate increase on the following, effective January 1, 2026.

Water 10% increase
Electric 10% increase

Wastewater increase was recommended for council approval on the following dates, effective April 1, 2026.

Wastewater 5% - April 1, 2026
5% - April 1, 2027.

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker to increase Water and Electric Rates, and recommended Council to approve the Wastewater as discussed above:

All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker to add an additional \$50.00 increase on deposits for new accounts, effective immediately.

All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

Board discussed on updating the Wage Scale.

Director

Board retained Grossman & Kelly, LLP (legal firm out of NY) to represent as BPA's attorneys and to join in the class action lawsuit and/or in prosecution of any legal claims related to PFAS, microplastics, 1, 4 Dioxane as well as other water contaminants or pollutants in the raw water. The fees will be paid as a percentage from the gross amount recovered and there is no cost or expense charged to BPA. We will be doing raw water samples testing from all the reservoirs and the test results will let us know if we have a claim.

BPA and the Village officials will be attending APPA Legislative Rally in Washington, D.C. in February.

Staff continued to attend IMPA Board and Executive Committee and other meetings.

Staff updated the Board on funding and status of all the projects that are currently in process and future potential projects.

Electric Substation Construction Project:

- Procurement of land for substation construction is complete.
- Continued to work on construction plans, design, and funding for the project.
- We have applied for DOE grant funding for a projected cost of \$9,000,000 for this project and were not successful in getting the funding in first phase.

Planning to apply again in next phase of funding release, and also looking at other financing options.

Board/Staff looking into other Financing Options to fund the substation construction project. Working with AMP Financing Department to explore their (AMP's) Tax Exempt Member Financing Options to fund our project through them.

BPA officials met AMP finance department staff and they have gone through the information they need from us to get the process to start. They need BPA financial information, State Audit Reports, and latest Rate Study/Cost of Service Study. Staff continued to work with AMP on this. Waiting on Auditors to complete the audit for the years 2023 and 2024.

BPA Board has approved a Budgetary Construction Cost Estimate of \$10,373, 244 provide by ISC for the Substation Construction Project, and IMPA/ISC staff started the engineering & design work on initial phase of the project.

The Board approved \$114,000 ISC proposal unanimously for the phase-1 engineering & design work.

The Board approved a change order for ISC not exceed \$17,000

The site had been cleared and a sign had been installed.

Site design is in process for construction of the Substation.

Continued discussions with Duke on an easement for storm water drainage from the substation site.

ISC completed the bid specifications for the Transformer and Breakers, and sent them to the Vendors.

Received and opened the bids on August 14, 2025 for the Transformer and Breakers.

ISC engineers have reviewed the bids from the vendors and made a Recommendation of Award of the Bid to Virginia Transformer Co. to supply two (2) Transformers at a Total Contract Price of \$2,791,692.91 (after the discount of 1.5% for 2 units and the staff is still working on further discount) with the following payment terms:

30% Advance with Purchase Order

30% upon drawing submittal, net 30 days

40% invoiced at the time of shipment or upon moving to storage, net 30 days

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Haines to approve the purchase of Transformers as recommended by ISC for a Total Contract Price of \$2,791,692.91 plus additional amount for a set of spare parts from Virginia Transformer Co., with the above payment terms
All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

Staff has negotiated the transformers delivery time to match the Siemens breakers delivery time so that all the equipment arrives about the same time to the substation site. There was an adjustment in the cost was made to accommodate the extension of delivery time and the parts cost. Board approved previously \$2,791,692.91 and the new total cost is \$2,939,132.00.

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker to amend the VTC proposed cost as discussed above.

All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

Also, the staff previously negotiated a discount on transformers with Virginia Transformer Co. through ISC and accomplished a total discount of \$85,026.18.

ISC engineers have reviewed bids from the vendors and made a Recommendation of Award of the Bid to Siemens (CSI Utilities) to supply three (3) 138KV Circuit Breakers for a Total Contract Price of \$443,604 with the following payment terms:
30% Advance with Purchase Order
70% After the shipment

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Haines to approve the purchase of 138KV Circuit Breakers as recommended by ISC for a Total Contract Price of \$443,604 from Siemens (CSI Utilities) plus additional amount for a set of spare parts with above payment terms
All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.

Staff ordered the 138 KV Circuit Breakers as approved above by the Board plus a set of spare parts by a P.O. for \$448,504 (\$4,900 for set of spare parts) along with a check for 30% advance payment which is \$134,551.20.

Electric Distribution System Upgrade and System Conversion (4.16 KV to 12.47 KV):

- We have applied for DOE grant funding for a projected cost of \$10,000,000 for this project

We were not successful in getting the funding in first phase.
Planning to apply again in next phase of funding release.

Staff continued to work on Distribution System Upgrades with local funds.

Staff continued to work with AMP to get grant funding to help on Cyber Security.

Orchard View /Orchard Circle water main replacement, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and street resurfacing phase– 1 project - The construction on this project is complete except the pavement.

Orchard View/ Orchard Circle water main replacement, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and street resurfacing improvements phase - 2 project: Procured required funding of \$795,400 in grants for this project. Council approved and awarded the contract to Panetta Excavating Inc. Contractor started work on it.

The projected potential local match for this project is to be \$0.00.

The contractor completed the separation of sewer laterals.

The contractor completed installation of water main and currently is working on transferring the water service taps.

Staff continued to meet and discuss with RCAP on GIS Mapping and working on Asset Management and Mapping.

Staff continued to meet every month to discuss with RCAP, Ohio EPA, USACE, ODNR, FEMA, and Jones & Henry Engineers on the **Reservoir #3 project** approvals and funding. Current cost estimation to complete this project has increased from about 3.6 million to about \$4.3 million dollars. So far, we have acquired about 2.2 million dollars through OPWC and USACE for this project.

Working through ODNR to procure rest of the funding from FEMA (HHPD Grants) – Waiting for response from FEMA/ODNR (Funding is on hold due to President Trump’s executive order).

Current Status on the Project (Reservoir #3 Improvements):

Specifications and construction plans have been approved by the ODNR for construction.

- Ohio EPA reviewed and approved construction plans
- Submitted plans to USACE review and approvals – in process
- Entered into PMP agreement with USACE
- Emergency Action Plan has been submitted and approved by the ODNR.
- FEMA has released the NOFA and the ODNR applied for funding on behalf of the Village/BPA for rest of the funding for construction.
- Staff submitted a 2025 project nomination for EPA funding for Reservoir #3.
- Trying to get some funding for the project through Senate Offices from Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) funds – in contact with Senator’s staff, and
- Also trying for the same through Congressman’s office.
- Completed Survey work on Deeds for the land associated with the Reservoir #3 and submitted it to USACE as required.
- Bidding planned for June/September 2025.
- Working on some more information requests from USACE.
- FEMA Grant \$1,467,308 applied for has been put on hold pending the outcome of the President Trump’s executive order, holding all funding until a review has been completed
- Working with USACE to get reimbursement on expenses incurred for the project construction to-date.
- Stone Environmental Co. completed the Delineation study for Reservoir #3 as required by the USACE.
- **Completed and submitted Loan/Grant Renomination Application to Ohio EPA to get the gap funding for the project.**
- **FEMA is moving forward with the funding awards and currently reviewing the documentation.**
- **FEMA is waiting on the Environmental Report which is currently being worked on by the USACE.**
- **Staff discussed the project schedule (potential) update with Board**

Submitted a Draw request #1 for an amount of \$52,538.45 reimbursement, for the Period of Performance 05/12/23-07/12/23 - We have received the reimbursement check for the USACE’s portion.

Submitted a Draw request #2 for an amount of \$249,969.65 for reimbursement. We have received the reimbursement check for the USACE’s portion.

Staff continued to work on potential funding from local, State and Federal funding agencies for the electric, water, street, and sewer projects.

Staff planning to apply for CDBG/OPWC grant funding for S. Wright Street water main replacement and street improvements project. Also, planning to work on some inhouse small projects using our own staff.

Electric System:

Electric Distribution system operation – Continued to be normal.

Working on filling the lineman positions and hoping for no major outage issues in the near future which may take longer time to restore the power.

Hired again 2 (two) new linemen and one left in couple of weeks. We are working on replacement.

Board discussed and gave approval for using an electrical contractor (LineCraft) to support the electric department in storm and emergency related work when needed.

Procured underground utilities locating equipment and got trained to use it. Cost \$7,600.

Received 1st new bucket truck.

Staff working on balancing the loads on distribution feeders to handle the loads efficiently during the cold weather.

Staff continued to work on commercial and residential customer service upgrades – Currently No man power and No activity.

Staff continued to work on non-pay disconnections every month. All or most of the non-paid accounts are disconnected remotely using the AMI system.

Staff continued to work on relocating the primary line on Main Street – Currently not enough man power and No activity.

Staff continued to work on upgrading the primary line on Center Street – Currently not enough man power and No activity.

Staff working on upgrading the primary line on West Fancy Street – Currently not enough man power and No activity.

Staff continued to work on systemwide improvements – Currently not enough man power and No activity.

Water System:

Water Treatment and Distribution systems operation – continued to be normal and meets the Ohio EPA Rules & Regulations.

Reservoir water storage levels: We have about 217 million gallons of storage available to treat and supply for about 17 months at the current flow rate to our residents and neighboring water haulers.

Staff continued to look for procuring grant moneys for an additional emergency generator for water plant.

Staff continued to help sewer department on the plant and other equipment repairs.

Staff continued to work on various field and treatment plant equipment, and pickup trucks maintenance.

Staff continued to help reading water and electric meters as required.

Staff repaired water main breaks on South Mill Street and Orchard Circle (old main)

1752 AMI meters have been installed and are in service to-date. Staff continued to install new heads and radios on majority of the larger meters in town for remote reading purposes.

Staff continued to work on clearing the brush around the reservoirs as weather permits.

Staff continue to work on grounds maintenance and yard restorations as weather permits.

Sewer System:

Sewer Treatment Plant and Collection System operations are continued to be normal and in compliance with the Ohio EPA Rules & Regulations.

Staff continued to work on repair and maintenance of various equipment at the WWTP and on the collection system.

Staff continued to work on plant electric control systems wiring upgrades with the contractor.

Staff worked on several cleanouts for customers.

Both the digester blowers need to be worked on. Staff continued to work on it.

Ordered new blower to replace the Blower number3.

Secondary Clarifier #1 needs rebuild of work gear. Estimated cost \$85,000. Just received a quote for \$57,000 for the unit and we will be able to install it using the inhouse staff. Hat saves us about \$30,000.

A new water pump has been ordered for the backup generator – waiting for the parts.

Fancy Street lift station pump rebuilding is complete and been installed, and is in operation.

Staff continued to work on grounds maintenance.

Staff worked with a customer at 204 E. Fancy Street on an issue with sewer lateral.

Old Semi-Truck and the trailer had been listed on Government Auction Site for sale.

Old fence between BPA and Mr. Wilson property has been removed, and cleaned the brush to replace fence – in process and will be worked on as time and weather permits.

Other Business:

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker at 7:59 PM to enter into executive session per ORC 121.22 G1 for the discussion of BPA employees.

All in favor - All Yeas. Motion Carried

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker to exit the executive session at 8:05 PM
All in favor - All Yeas. Motion Carried

The following Employees were approved unanimously by the Board for the wage increase:

Quinton Jackson from W-3-E to W-3-F

Chasity Cain from A-4-E to A-4-F

There was a motion/second by Chairman Bowling/Trustee Blocker to close the Meeting at 8:14 PM.
All in favor - All Yeas. Motion carried.



James Bowling, Chairman



Donna Johnson, Clerk

Board of Public Affairs Meeting Minutes Appendix A

BILLS FOR JANUARY 2026

| VENDOR | TOTAL | VENDOR | TOTAL |
|-------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| IMPA | \$ 385,146.33 | E.J PRESCOTT | \$ 775.75 |
| VILLAGE OF BLANCHESTER | \$ 17,797.00 | BUCKEYE STATE PIPE & SUPPLY | \$ 477.83 |
| TREASURER STATE OF OHIO | \$ 1,349.00 | CDM SMITH | \$ 640.19 |
| CINTAS | \$ 1,709.52 | MASI LABORATORIES | \$ 3,933.95 |
| DUKE ENERGY | \$ 1,740.24 | THERMODYNE | \$ 10,972.50 |
| SPECTRUM ENTERPRISE | \$ 420.44 | BRENCO INC. | \$ 2,882.37 |
| AMP INC. | \$ 555.00 | MIKE SHAW | \$ 150.00 |
| DUKE ENERGY | \$ 1,371.90 | STANLEY J. BOLKA | \$ 780.00 |
| DUKE ENERGY | \$ 61.38 | LYKINS PROPANE | \$ 856.22 |
| IMPA SERVICE CORP | \$ 3,798.80 | JONES & HENRY | \$ 116.93 |
| VERIZON BUSINESS | \$ 859.00 | INVOICE CLOUD | \$ 1,476.69 |
| FRONTIER | \$ 1,253.66 | VISA BILL | \$ 5,471.14 |
| CLINTON ELECTRICAL & PLUMBING | \$ 917.72 | BDK | \$ 1,108.83 |
| PEREGRINE CORPORATIONS | \$ 2,299.96 | THERMODYNE | \$ 18,503.00 |
| JM SYSTEMS | \$ 2,110.50 | OHIO811 | \$ 281.29 |
| SUNRISE COOPERATIVE | \$ 1,165.59 | OHIO EPA | \$ 3,323.52 |
| UNITED SYSTEMS | \$ 1,647.00 | DONNA JOHNSON | \$ 47.83 |
| OHIO EPA | \$ 2,600.00 | IMPA SERVICE CORP | \$ 20,143.10 |
| USA BLUEBOOK | \$ 798.93 | USIC | \$ 690.37 |
| WATER SOLUTIONS UNLIMITED | \$ 744.14 | SIEMENS ENERGY INC | \$ 134,551.20 |
| ANIXTER INC. | \$ 5,396.06 | TOTAL | \$ 641,841.01 |
| HAWKINS INC. | \$ 916.13 | | |