



**Economic, Environment and Resiliency
Commission (EERC)
Wednesday, July 8, 2026, 3:00 PM
Council Chambers, City Hall
Regular Meeting
AGENDA**

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A. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL & ANNOUNCEMENTS:	
B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:	
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C. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING/NOMINATION OF OFFICERS	
D. UPDATE FROM THE FOURTH STREET PRESERVE MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE	
E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:	
1. Discussion and possible action to recommend extension of the Savannah and Johnnie Walker Beach Sand Movement Pilot Program (Dr. Robin Mattheus of the Delaware Geological Survey).	7 - 16
PROGRESS REPORT TO THE CITY OF LEWES ON DGS - Presented	
F. NEW BUSINESS:	
1. Presentation from Jen Reitz of the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration and Vanessa Cullen of Delaware Housing Authority regarding a disaster housing pilot project.	
G. PUBLIC COMMENT:	
H. ADJOURNMENT:	
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84865124707?pwd=YXEUaHurOAKWu0d3OaQqsNiNOKbORW.1	
Join via audio:	
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Webinar ID: 848 6512 4707	
Passcode: 667131	

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Posted: 07/01/2026 Posted By: BJ

City of Lewes
Economic, Environment and Resiliency Commission (EERC)
Wednesday, June 10, 2026
MINUTES

The Economic, Environment and Resiliency Commission (EERC) met on **Wednesday, June 10, 2026 in Council Chambers at Lewes City Hall**, in accordance with proper notification, with the following members present: Chairperson (Ex-officio) Khalil Saliba, Tracy Hancock, Frank Young, Marylou Wellbrock-Reeves, Leemay Nassery, Kathleen Berault, and James Baker (online). Also in attendance were Ex-officio (BPW) Preston Lee, Ex-officio (GMB) Brent Jett, and Deputy City Manager Janet Reeves.

A. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The regular monthly meeting of the Economic, Environment and Resiliency Commission (EERC) was called to order on Wednesday, June 10, 2026 at 3:00 PM in Council Chambers, City Hall, Lewes, DE.

Announcements:

Chair Saliba reported that the City submitted its public beach access plan to DNREC ahead of the original July 1st deadline, in response to DNREC's requirement that Atlantic Oceanfront communities demonstrate adequate public access as a condition for beach replenishment funding. The July 1st deadline has since been extended to year-end, which staff attributed to DNREC needing additional time to consolidate submissions from all communities, rather than any concern specific to Lewes. Commissioner Brent Jett confirmed the submission is well above any threshold DNREC required.

Commissioner Preston Lee announced that the Board of Public Works is reactivating its mitigation committee to update infrastructure resilience plans using current 2025 data, replacing analysis previously conducted in 2015. The committee is expected to operate through the end of the year.

Chair Saliba provided an update on a call he, Deputy City Manager Reeves, and Mayor Amy Marasco participated in with the University of Delaware regarding a state AI task force. Nvidia has been presenting its "digital twin" 3D imaging technology to various states and expressed interest in Lewes as a pilot program, specifically for applications in infrastructure assessment, water table mapping, and historic district vulnerability analysis. Chair Saliba noted that a connection with the City of Jacksonville, which partnered with the University of Florida on a similar effort, is anticipated as a next step.

Commissioner Tracy Hancock noted that Delaware is set to receive a medical school, led by a consortium including Jefferson Medical School, the University of Delaware, and Beebe Healthcare, and suggested the Commission may wish to explore opportunities related to hazard and disaster medicine as that initiative develops.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

2026 05 13 EERC Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the May 2026 EERC meeting minutes was made by Commissioner Hancock and seconded by Commissioner Wellbrock-Reeves. The motion carried unanimously.

C. UPDATE FROM THE MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Chair Saliba reported that no Fourth Street Preserve subcommittee meeting was held prior to this meeting, as there is no substantive update at this time. Activity on the preserve has been limited due to the presence of nesting bald eagles. A subcommittee meeting and update are

anticipated for the July meeting. Chair Saliba noted that a public call for eagle naming submissions is underway, and suggested the Commission may wish to submit a nominee.

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

There was no unfinished business.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Presentation by Delaware Sea Grant's Danielle Swallow and Lewes Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Betsy Reamer on resiliency training seminar for Lewes's businesses on Monday, September 14 at the UD's Sharp campus.

Danielle Swallow, Coastal Hazard Specialist with Delaware Sea Grant, and Betsy Reamer, Executive Director of the Lewes Chamber of Commerce, presented plans for a two-hour business resiliency training seminar to be held on September 14, 2026 at the University of Delaware's Sharp Campus in Lewes. The event is being co-organized with Sussex County's Division of Emergency Management, with Deputy Emergency Manager Tim Cooper serving as a co-trainer.

Ms. Swallow emphasized the documented risk to small businesses in the wake of disasters, citing FEMA data indicating that 40 percent of small businesses fail to reopen immediately following a disaster and 75 percent of those without a continuity plan fail within three years. The training will cover basic risk assessment, identification of critical business functions, and practical preparedness actions, with the goal of being accessible and low-burden for busy business owners and managers. Formal registration is expected to open in late July or early August.

Ms. Reamer noted that Lewes and the Chamber participated in a similar FEMA-sponsored initiative in 1997 and underscored the enduring relevance of the effort. Discussion touched on strategies to maximize attendance, including tiering outreach by business type and reducing friction to participation. Commissioner Wellbrock-Reeves recommended ensuring businesses are aware of the importance of having insurance contact information accessible and stored off-site. Commissioner Hancock suggested that the training model could eventually be extended to residential neighborhoods through homeowner's associations. Ms. Swallow confirmed this aligns with the planned Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) effort, which Tim Cooper's office is leading and which Chair Saliba noted may be targeted for a Lewes training event in October.

Commissioner Lee raised the possibility of an insurance incentive angle, and Ms. Swallow noted the training could potentially contribute to the City's Community Rating System credits, thereby reducing flood insurance premiums for city policyholders.

2. Presentation by Brent Jett, GMB, on coastal resiliency, presented at the 50th Association of State Floodplain Managers Conference.

Commissioner Brent Jett summarized the presentation he delivered at the 50th Annual Association of State Floodplain Managers Conference in Milwaukee. The presentation chronicled Lewes's approach to building community resiliency, beginning with the 2021 Executive Committee on Resilience, which identified 14 action items—all of which have since been addressed. Key themes included: identifying a community champion to drive the effort; grounding all decisions in factual data and university-sourced research; adopting an incremental approach ("eat the elephant one bite at a time"); pursuing cost-free code changes as an accessible starting point; and building on each success to maintain momentum.

Commissioner Jett highlighted the Cedar Street project as a notable example, noting its benefit-cost analysis (BCA) exceeded 4.0—meaning an estimated \$16 million in avoided losses against approximately \$3.5 million in construction costs—which drew a notable reaction from conference attendees accustomed to projects barely clearing a 1.0 BCA

threshold.

He also reported on a side presentation at the conference documenting that insurance payouts following billion-dollar disasters cover only approximately 40 percent of total losses, reinforcing the fiscal argument for proactive investment in mitigation. Regarding the future of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), Commissioner Jett reported that NFIP coordinators he spoke with did not anticipate the program being pushed down to state administration, though he acknowledged FEMA remains in a period of transition. Commissioner Wellbrock-Reeves suggested that a slide from the presentation illustrating the integrated, cross-domain nature of Lewes's resiliency efforts would be worth distributing to Mayor and City Council as a reminder of the holistic approach the city has taken. She also requested a meeting with Commissioner Jett prior to the July 21st Lewes Finance Committee meeting to discuss potential gaps in the City's insurance coverage in the context of resiliency planning and bond ratings.

Commissioner Jett indicated he intends to bring a new list of potential resiliency action items for the Commission to consider, anticipated for the August meeting.

3. Discussion regarding organizational changes of the Economic, Environment, and Resiliency Commission.

Chair Saliba noted that per the Commission's bylaws, a citizen is intended to serve as chair. He indicated his intent to transition to an ex officio role and stated that discussions regarding a successor chair are ongoing. Members were encouraged to expect further communication from Chair Saliba ahead of the next meeting, anticipated for July 8th.

F. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public comment was received.

G. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Wellbrock-Reeves and seconded by Commissioner Berault. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 4:03 PM.

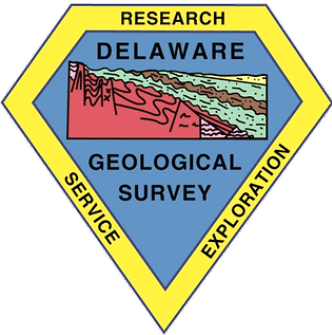
Minutes submitted by: Jeffery Coover, Administrative Support Specialist

Minutes generated by HeyGov.ai

Transcripts available upon request

PROGRESS REPORT TO THE CITY OF LEWES ON DGS-DNREC BEACH-CAMERA DEPLOYMENTS: JUNE 25th, 2026

C.R. Mattheus
Delaware Geological Survey
257 Academy St.
Newark, DE 19716-7501



FRONT COVER: *Photograph from the parking lot at Savannah Beach, Lewes, DE, showing the mounted trail camera and signage informing beachgoers of the shoreline-monitoring project.*

Overview

Since December of 2025 the Delaware Geological Survey has deployed 17 trail cameras along Kent and Sussex County coastlines, in partnership with communities and private citizens. Cameras, which are programmed to collect timelapse photography at a 30-minute frequency and have their motion triggering capabilities turned off, are mounted on infrastructure near the shoreline and directed offshore and/or alongshore to capture beach morphologic change and the marine weather processes responsible. With regional camera deployments, the research team hopes to learn about regional shoreline response to storm activity, sand-transport patterns, and the roles of infrastructure and sand-management practices on beach morphologic development. Scripts are being developed to handle the massive and ever-growing image database to facilitate queries by date, time, location, tide level, and wave activity, drawing from a regional network of wave buoys, weather stations, and water-level gauges. Regional image-based analyses, using time-synchronized cameras that provide timestamped photos, paves the way for a variety of potential analyses aimed at discerning local variances in beach response to storm events. The group, which is collaborating with Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) on this initiative and has sought guidance from sand managers on camera placements, hopes to build a dataset and engage in analytics useful for coastal resiliency decision making. A partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System (MARACOOS) is, through NOAA funding, helping to facilitate camera upgrades with higher-end units, solar panels, and data-streaming capability for inclusion in the national WebCOOS network.

Project Goals

The main goal is to (1) provide documentation of processes impacting the Delaware coastline, and (2) build a high-resolution regional coastal imagery dataset for integrated study of coastal dynamics and morphologic change, making use of beach profiling data, information from airborne LiDAR deployments, and other state or federal geospatial datasets. Many efforts are underway to monitor marine hydrodynamics, weather conditions (e.g., wind speeds and directions), and coastal water levels (through tide gauges), through various National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), United States Geological Survey (USGS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and other data-collection and monitoring initiatives. Camera footage can help provide context to other surveying efforts and provide coastal managers with valuable information on patterns of sand transport and beach morphologic change. While the State of Delaware engages in bi-annual beach profiling, at <100 locations along ~100 km of coastline, this work does not capture the impacts of individual storm events.

Camera Deployment Locations

As of late June 2026 the Delaware Geological Survey (DGS) has deployed 17 cameras, including 3 at Kitts Hummock, 2 at Bowers Beach, 4 at Prime Hook Beach, 5 in the Lewes area, including 2 at the Cape Henlopen Fishing Pier, and 3 at the Indian River Inlet. A camera will soon be mounted at Bethany Beach, where two pre-existing beach cameras will also be connected to the research-camera network, by subsampling of the data stream and a file-sharing arrangement with the town. The DGS is also communicating with a handful of Lewes residents along Bay Avenue and hopes to deploy two additional cameras here, for enhanced coverage of the littoral cell extending from the Roosevelt Inlet to the Lewes-Cape May harbor complex. **Figure 1** shows the present distribution of cameras, on 06/25/2026. Camera units have been affixed to elevated porch railings, roof gables, light fixtures, and other infrastructure. The general approach has been to use hose clamps and padding to affix camera-housing boxes to the structures. Cameras can easily be taken out of these for servicing, which has occurred on a monthly basis, for data extraction. The camera locations and their respective viewsheds are largely determined by the availability of infrastructure and willingness of coastal communities and citizens to engage the DGS on this endeavor. With many different types of deployment, with respect to viewshed character, the DGS also stands to learn about the utility of different camera orientations. **Figure 2** shows regional weather stations, water-level (tide) gauges, and wave buoys, from which information on environmental conditions can be extracted for image-based analysis of shoreline dynamics.

Image-based Data Analytics

The DGS has thus far developed scripts for renaming image files, which are merely sequences of numbers assigned with each new camera deployment or redeployment (following servicing). The growing image database is arranged by camera location, with individual file names reflecting (1) Camera Name (reflective of the community and sequentially numbered), and (2) Timestamp Information (i.e., date and time). All cameras, which are of the same make and model, are programmed alike and time-synchronized to within a minute. **Figure 3** shows images from Lewes area camera deployments on a calm marine weather day, while **Figure 4** shows images taken during a minor wave event. No major storm has impacted the area since camera deployment. The full utility of the regional camera deployment for understanding process dynamics will be showcased when this occurs. Referencing NOAA/DEOS weather station information, buoy records, and/or tide-gauge information can help to inform queries of the coastal image database. Image data-derivative products created thus far include TIMEX images, which are based on time-averaging of pixel intensities and color. Example TIME images are shown in **Figure 5**. Efforts are underway to evaluate different methods of creating TIMEX images for capturing impacts of wave events on the shoreline and revealing wave-breaking/whitewash patterns that might reflect shoaling and/or shifting sandbar locations.

Over time, repeat coastal imagery can inform on shoreline position and beach-sand volumetric changes. The DGS hopes to explore different analytical avenues for making use of repeat coastal imagery from many different locations along the coast. In the least, the dataset will help to inform beach profiling and other topographic and/or bathymetric monitoring efforts underway by state, federal, and/or academic entities.

Future Work

The DGS hopes to expand upon and refine the camera network. A relationship with MARACOOS is paving the way for targeted upgrades for long-term monitoring. The many different camera deployments are helping to provide information on analytical utility of different types of camera deployment, ranging in height above the beach surface and in orientation with respect to the shoreline. Offshore-oriented cameras are likely to help with understanding marine weather conditions and their impacts on the beach, while shoreline-oblique or down-shore camera viewsheds should help to inform on the morphologic evolution of the beach face. The DGS is also looking to establish a beach profiling campaign to (1) supplement existing biannual DNREC beach profiling activities, and (2) augment camera utility by occupying viewsheds for constraints of topographic changes. A pilot study is underway at Prime Hook Beach, allowing the DGS to refine an approach and develop a manual to serve as guide for other bay-margin communities interested in engaging in a larger effort. The DGS will reach out to community leaders for letters of support in an effort to seek Delaware Sea Grant funds to implement volunteer beach-profiling regionally, as has been successfully done in Maine and New Hampshire, where coastal management programs make use of this monitoring data for their decision making (<https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mgs/collect/smbpp/>, <https://seagrant.unh.edu/volunteer/coastal-research-volunteers/current-projects/beach-profiling>). Funds are needed to (1) acquire the equipment (survey rods, tape measures, levels, rope), (2) develop training materials (e.g., manuals) and host training sessions (individualized to each participating bay-margin community), and (3) build the digital data sharing and visualization platform.

Acknowledgements

To date, this project has been internally funded by the Delaware Geological Survey. Help with site prioritization was provided by Karen Taylor, with the DNREC Shoreline and Waterways Management group. The DGS coastal research team wishes to thank the many camera hosts and those that helped with permissions. Thank you to Khalil Saliba and Lewes' Economic, Environment, and Resiliency Commission for their engagement on this pilot study, helping with logistics and permissions in Lewes, and aiding our quest for citizen camera hosts.

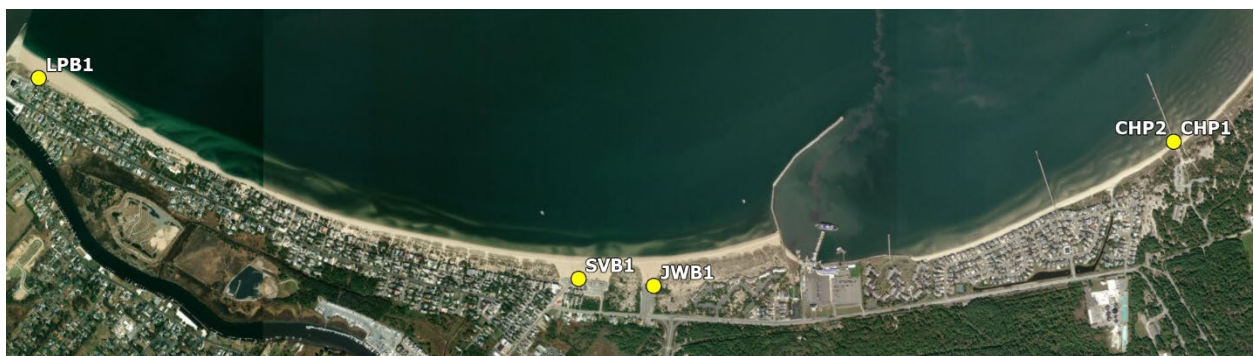
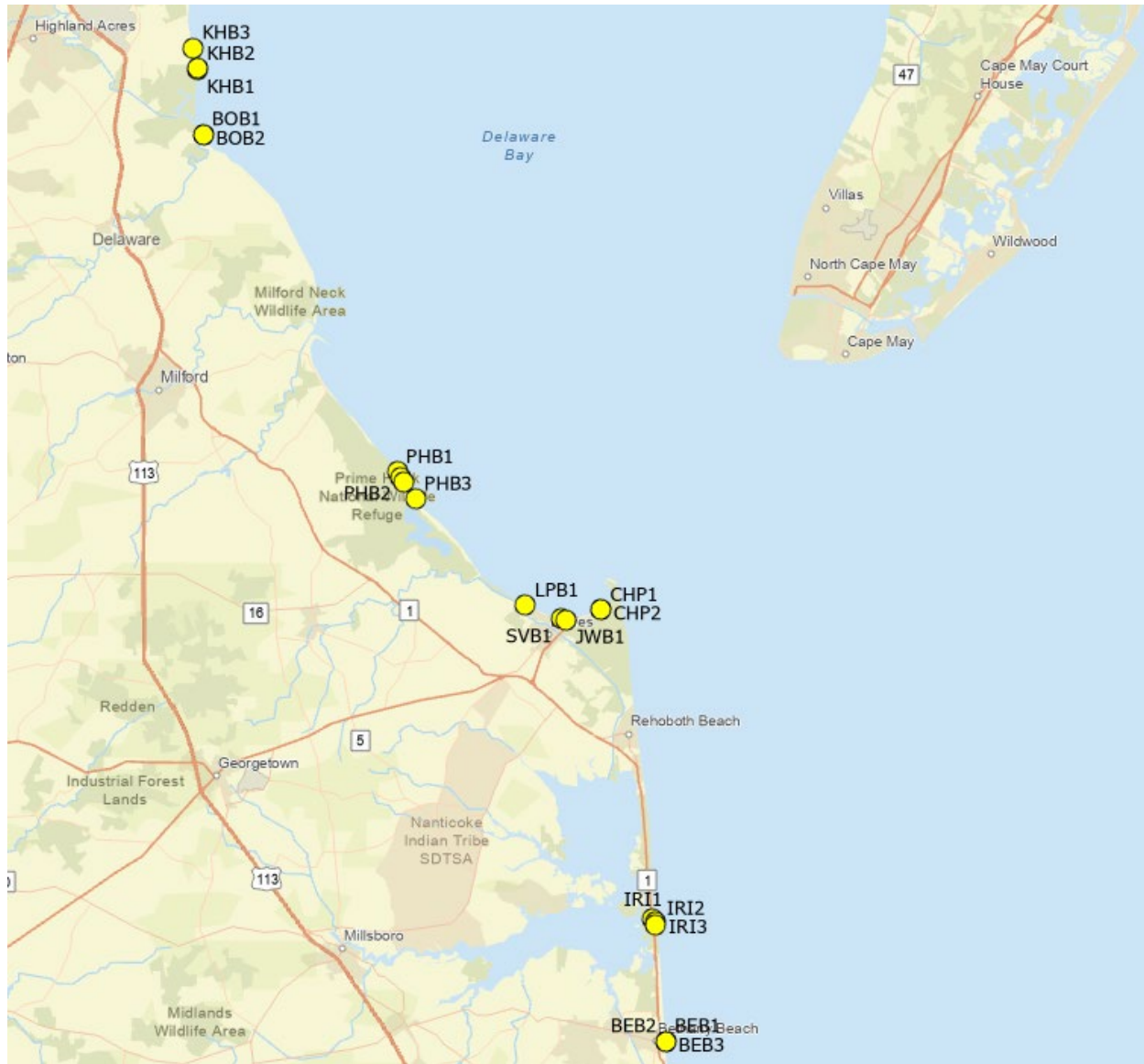


Figure 1 – Map of DGS beach-camera deployment locations (above) with an aerial photo showing camera locations in the Lewes area, including CHP1 and CP2, located on the Cape Henlopen fishing pier. LPB1 is located at the Lewes Yacht Club. Cameras are also mounted to light poles at Savannah Beach (SVB1) and Johnnie Walker Beach (JWB1).

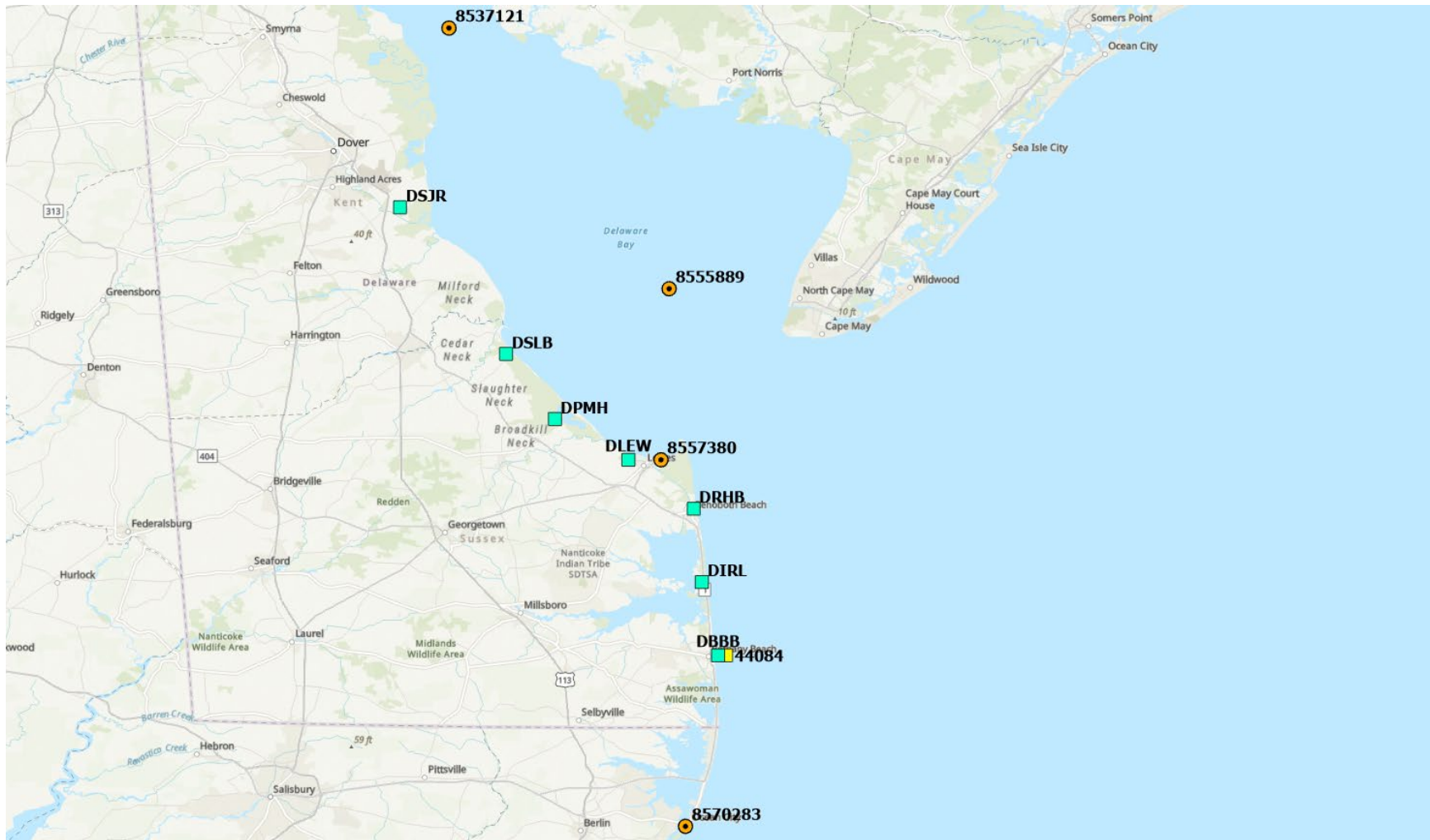


Figure 2 – The DGS has identified the following coastal monitoring stations for inclusion in study of shoreline dynamics. These stations are operated by NOAA and/or DEOS and include an offshore wave buoy (off Bethany Beach), four tide-gauging stations (orange data points), and 7 shoreline-proximal weather stations collecting data on wind speeds and directions. The regional camera imagery will provide a valuable addition that will hopefully enhance our understanding of shoreline dynamics and its drivers.

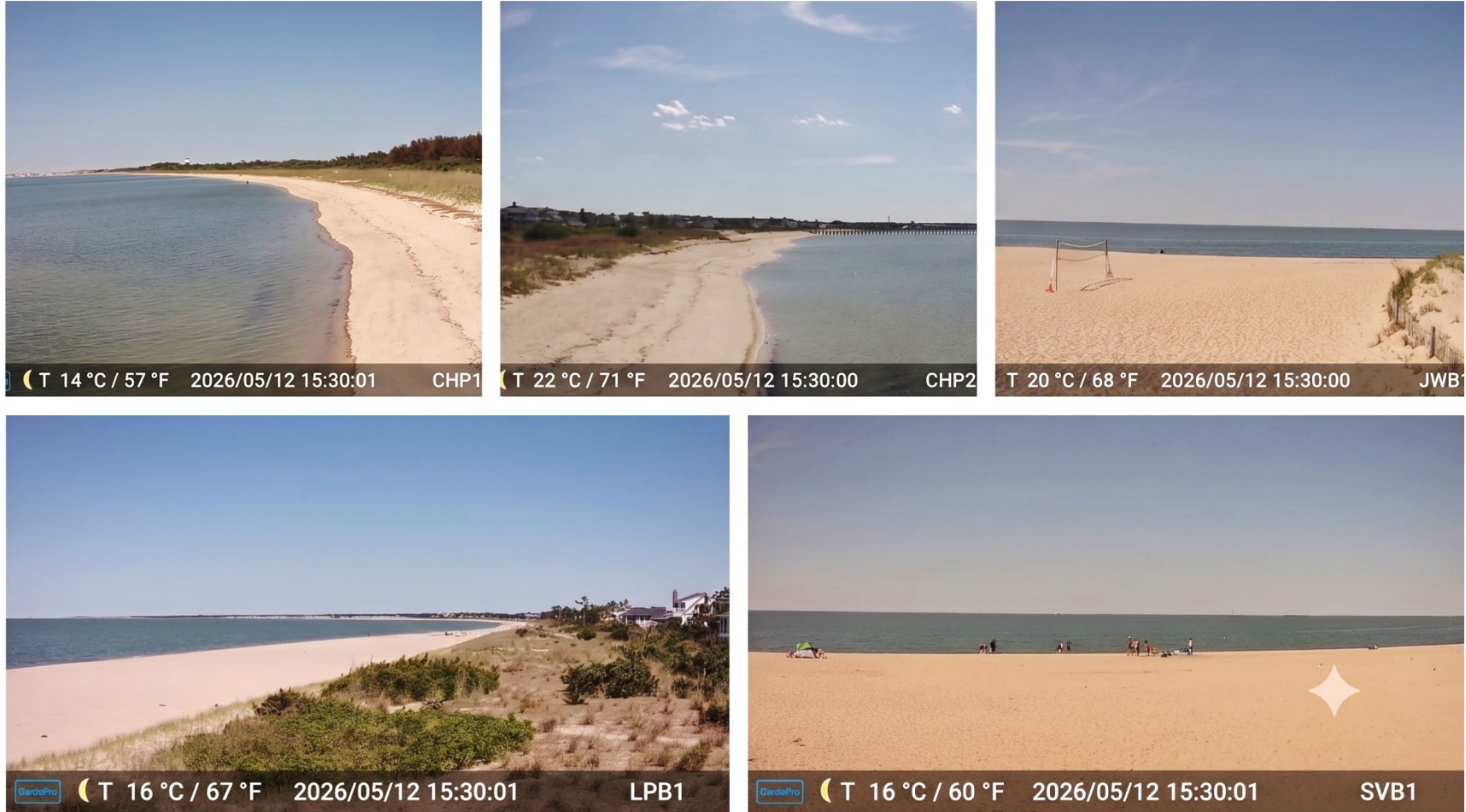


Figure 3 – Select photos from Lewes beaches on 5/12/2026, a calm day. On calm days, tidal inundation and exposure patterns are well captured at CHP1 and CHP2, providing insights into intertidal elevations. These cameras are near the Lewes tide gauge. The distal LPB1 viewshed provides similar. Comparing images of similar tide level over time should best reflect morphologic differences. Photo collage assembled using Google Gemini.



Figure 4 – *Select photos from Lewes beaches on 6/15/2026, a wavy day. With no network of offshore buoys within Delaware Bay to provide insights into wave climate, repeat imagery and wind records can help with our understanding of event dynamics. Photo collage assembled using Google Gemini.*

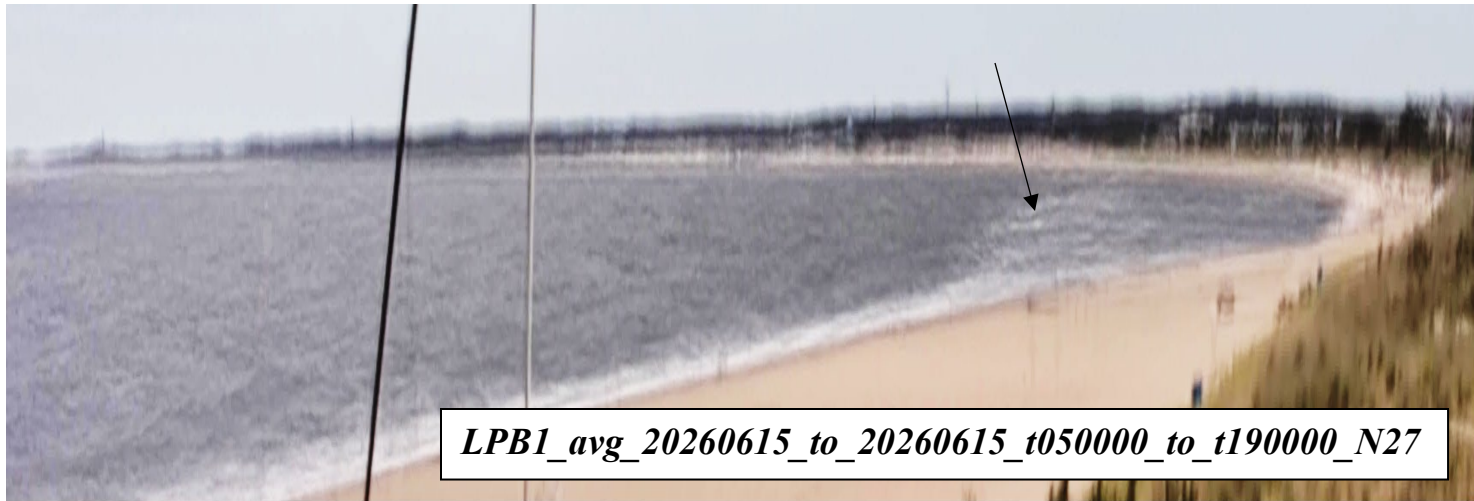


Figure 5 – Select TIMEX image extractions (stretched), from SVB1 and LPB1 camera deployments, showing, from two different vantage points, wave-breaking patterns for June 15th, 2026, which likely delineate sandbar placements that could change over time. Continued image-based monitoring should be able to detect morphologic changes along the shoreline.