

Cape May Star and Wave



159TH YEAR NO. 28 CAPE MAY, N.J. SERVING AMERICA'S NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK CITY WEDNESDAY, July 10, 2013 50¢



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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Cape May Council petitions for school funding change

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Cape May City Council voted unanimously to petition the county executive school superintendent to investigate the possibility of allowing Cape May to withdraw from the Lower Cape May Regional School District, or to dissolve the regional district.

Council made it clear in the resolution they preferred Cape May students not be sent to another school district but hope to reconfigure the regional funding formula in order to lower the cost of sending students to the regional district. According to the feasibility study, conducted by attorney Vito Gagliardi and a group of experts, Cape May is currently spending almost \$80,000 per pupil sent to the district, nearly double what was spent six years ago. Lower Township taxpayers, who have the majority of the students attending the district, pay less than \$8,000 per student.

Lower Township Mayor Mike Beck, at the July 1 township council meeting, said the

total cost isn't increasing, but as the number of students decreases the per student cost increases.

However, as a result of the resolution being approved by council at the July 2 regular meeting, the feasibility study developed by Gagliardi and his team will be sent to the county superintendent for review.

The school funding formula was altered in the 1970s to be based primarily on property value, leading to a much higher cost per pupil in Cape May and West Cape May. Councilman Jack Wichterman, who has been spearheading the effort to change the funding formula said petitioning the superintendent in just one of the steps the city must take to try changing the formula before it could be taken before the courts.

During public comment, John Fleming of Washington Street asked if there were any other way to resolve the matter instead of taking it to court. Wichterman said the regional school board of edu-

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Have a happy Farrrrrrrr-th of July

Above, Captain Kidd rides in the annual Independence Day Parade held in Cape May on July 6. Captain Kidd will return on Sunday, July 21, for the annual Captain Kidd Treasure Hunt on the beach. See more holiday pictures on page A12.

Municipal water in the east side of Villas a reality

By BETTY WUND
For the Cape May Star and Wave

LOWER TOWNSHIP – Matt Ecker, executive director of the MUA (Municipal Utilities Authority) reported to the board July 3 that funds are available to complete the installation of water mains to the area east of Bayshore Road in the Villas.

"Are there funds available?" said Joseph Mento, vice chairman for the board.

"There is even a possibility that they may take action in August to make those funds available immediately as opposed to having to wait until October for an appropriation," Ecker said.

"Is it anything having to do with us getting further along with this project?" Nils Johnson, chairman of the board, said.

"It would be an independent project. It comes down to the fact that a lot of people apply for the funds and don't do the projects. There are funds available," Ecker said.

"How many homes are involved," said Johnson.

"This involves 1,760 homes," said Ecker.

The board approved

additional work on the Town Bank III water main improvements.

"We are calling it water main improvements but we are actually putting in water mains in from Arizona Avenue to Carolina Avenue under the current contract. It is an expansion under the Town Bank project. We still have about \$700,000 worth of work with the finances we have in place," Ecker said.

"Have you talked to any township officials on the paving schedule of roads in the project? Specifically Clubhouse Road?" asked Johnson.

"I have talked to the township engineer. The township engineer still has to make the design and get the approval of the DOT. It will probably not be done until fall and maybe not until spring. We are also talking about working with the township to pave further north on Bay Drive," said Ecker.

"I am very pleased to see that Oakdale and McKinley have been done. I want to commend our people," said Steve Sheftz, board member.

The matter of the expansion

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Cape May ranks high in commercial fishing

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY/WILDWOODS – Commercial fishing – it's been referred to by many as the lifeblood coursing through the veins of Cape May County as it is a vocation and tradition that has resided in the area for centuries.

According to the Garden State Seafood Association, Cape May/Wildwood was the second highest commercial fishing port on the East Coast and seventh nationally in terms of dollars landed in 2010, bringing in 43 million pounds of fish and shellfish worth \$81 million. Statewide, New Jersey's commercial fishing was responsible for 162 million pounds of fish and shellfish worth \$178 million and was estimated to generate a billion dollars of economic activity.

Gregory DiDomenico, executive director of the Garden State Seafood Association, said the New Jersey commercial fishing industry were able to produce these numbers without overfishing species. He said the Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) monitors these species, which is one of the national leaders in sustainably managed seafood. The MAFMC is one of eight councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the primary



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Above, fishing boats wait at docks near the Lobster House.

positive future in the industry," he said.

Kaelin said because of biological issues, access to Atlantic menhaden and scallops will be limited in the near future. He said menhaden fishing will be cut nearly in half, while scalloping will be cut back 35 percent this year. He said there will be another assessment of the species regeneration in 2014, but the scallop harvest will likely be reduced until 2015 based on several surveys.

"Scallops are a very valuable fishery in Cape May, so it's important to manage the species carefully," he said. "Overall, fishermen are doing a great job adhering to the management regulations, which are changing practically every day."

According to data from the MAFMC, the two species with the highest fishing mortality in 2011 were bluefish and summer flounder, however, both were well below the overfishing threshold.

Kaelin said because of the concern surrounding the sustainability of Mid-Atlantic region fisheries, the commercial industry is working closely with congress to put these fears to rest.

"We're hoping the federal government will give us the authority to stamp our packages and certify that these products are sustainable so

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