

## Hires

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ation. Last year there were 590 operating school districts in New Jersey and 13 non-operating school districts. Sandman said Crowley would present the facts. "We are trying to be objective here," Sandman said. He said he would like Cape May to know that if they are successful, they are essentially attacking the school system that trains many of their employees, including police and firemen, and is the place where many of them make their homes. He said

the people of Cape May would not support their council's actions if they knew the truth. Told that the Cape May Taxpayers Association has issued a statement in support of the efforts of Cape May City Council, Sandman said they were not fully educated on the issue. "They are going by what they were told," he said. Deputy Mayor Norris Clark said as a result of some of the public statements made by Cape May representatives, many community leaders were coming to him and saying they don't think the same

way. He said he found that to be a positive aspect of the discussion on school funding. "Second, this has started a discussion of how to better fund out school systems," he said. Clark said Lower Township had previously approached Cape May to discuss setting up a regional K-12 district, and he said the funding issue might result in that topic being discussed. Resident Janet Pitts said a lot of disturbing issues are coming out of these school funding fights. She said they are normally more affluent

barrier island towns, which are losing populations, and the mainland communities to which their residents go. "Seashore towns are losing families, and children, yet they are wealthy. This is the game they are playing," she said. "They are creating a climate in New Jersey that they don't like children." Pitts said there is a big group of people in Cape May who don't want economic development, because they don't want families and the impact they have on taxes in towns. "We're dealing with Cape

May now, but this is a bigger issue in New Jersey," Pitts said. Resident Steve Sheftz said for the past 10 years Cape May City Council has acted as if it has had a vendetta against the residents of Lower Township. He said since 1980, Cape May lost 25 percent of its permanent population. He said from 2000 to 2010, Cape May lost another 10 percent of year-round residents. "They have overlooked how to keep families or bring in new families," he said. He said Cape May's school funding plan would hurt the

residents of Lower Township and its schools. He quoted from a letter written by Rev. Jo Tolly of Cape May, who wrote, "How dare Cape May shortchange students," and "We all know the best way out of poverty is an excellent education." Sandman said he encouraged everyone to attend the Sept. 4 Lower Township Council meeting, including anyone from Cape May.

## Grace

Continued from page A1

a huge jump, but to a homeowner, it's not a big deal," Wallace said. She said anyone who doesn't renew their mercantile license receives a notice in the mail and must pay the full fee. Sabo said one of the individuals who came in late to renew a license said a grace period should be put in place for "extenuating circumstances." Borough Solicitor Frank Corrado said the board should leave the process as is, because it would be a waste of time and money deciding whether there are or aren't extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis. "Who's going to decide that? (The clerk) does not have the ability to determine extenuating circumstances. It would have to come before the commission and the commission would have to evaluate the situation and decide whether they're extenuating cir-

cumstances," Corrado said. "It will just snowball into an extensive administrative nightmare. Leave it the way it is - there has to be a cutoff." Corrado said West Cape May's process is generous compared to other municipalities because of its discount period and charging everyone in each category the same rates. "If they come in late, you could do what Cape May does, which is fine them for operating without a mercantile license for the period they didn't have it renewed," he said. Commissioners agreed that there shouldn't be a grace period for late mercantile licenses and business owners are responsible for renewing their licenses each year just as they are for renewing their insurance policies.

## WCM considers hook-up installment plan

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY - The West Cape May Board of Commissioners are considering revising a draft ordinance regarding sewer connection fees to also include water system connection fees, as well. At the Aug. 14 meeting, Borough Solicitor Frank Corrado said the ordinance would allow residents to pay their sewer connection fees under an installment plan that comes with a 1.5 percent interest rate until the full amount is paid. He said the borough would reserve the right to waive the interest fee if the homeowner can prove

he or she is "at or below 150 percent of the poverty level." "What this ordinance does is essentially allows property owners to elect to pay for sewer connection fees, which are \$1,200, in quarterly installments with a simple interest rate of 1.5 percent," Corrado said. Corrado said if the borough wants to allow its residents to pay the connection fee in quarterly payments, there must be an interest rate. He said commissioners must also decide whether the waiver of that interest is included in the ordinance. "If you decide you want the waiver, there has to be some sort of reasonable, tangible,

demonstrative need before you have the authority to waive the interest fees," he said. According to Mayor Pam Kaithern, there are only two properties being reconnected to the sewer system following the ongoing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sewer and water improvement project. Deputy Mayor Peter Burke said the ordinance would be applicable to all connections and not just the USDA project, so it should also include water connections as well. Connection to the borough water system comes with a fee of \$1,000, which commissioners agreed could also be paid for in quar-

terly installments plus interest. Corrado said the could also amend an existing borough ordinance which says there is a late fee of 8 percent per year on the billed amount not paid within a year. He said the ordinance being drafted should state a specific quarterly payment rate for the connection fees. Corrado said he would go back to the drawing board and make corrections and add information discussed to the ordinance. A specific time frame for the introduction of the ordinance has not yet been determined.

## WCM applying for road improvement funds

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY - The West Cape May Board of Commissioners has authorized Remington, Vernick

Engineers to seek funding through the 2014 Municipal Aid Program for two potential projects - repaving a portion of State Street and creating a bike path on Leaming Avenue.

At the Aug. 14 commissioners meeting, Borough Engineer Ray Roberts said the two projects, if approved, include repaving State Street between Fourth and Sixth Avenues and creating another bike path on Leaming Avenue from Park Boulevard to the Cape May city line. He said applications for

the projects will cost roughly \$2,500 collectively. Roberts said the Municipal Aid Program grants cover both bike paths and roadwork separately and there is no limit on the number of applications a municipality can submit. According to Roberts, Cape May city line. Please see Road, page A5

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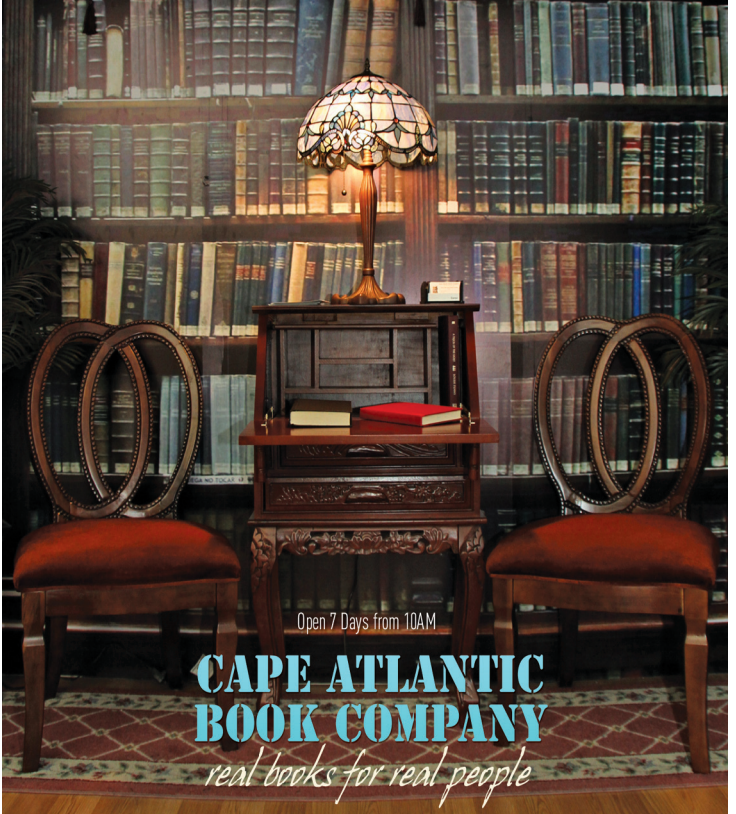
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