

Fees

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of Virginia Avenue, said on average people would go to these classes for 9 months out of the year, which would amount to an annual fee of \$540 with the new price increase.

"A major bank and a major phone company just backed down from raising prices because people objected," she said. "In this economy, the way it is now, it doesn't make sense to raise taxes or our fees. It makes sense to keep things so we can exercise and stay healthy."

City Manager Bruce MacLeod said at some point the city must analyze the programs and classes being offered and determine whether they generate the fees to satisfy the instructors or those who oversee the classes. He said in reference to the punch cards, the city wanted to eliminate the concern of whether the card was being punched by the instructor or the member at each class. He said he believed members of the class were notified about the punch cards prior to their

elimination.

"It was announced, I think two or three months ahead of time, that punch cards would not be available after the first of the year," he said. "Also, I think there was an indication of the price increase that would be \$5 in the future based on discussions, I think, with the administration of the rec program as well as the instructor."

He said the pricing system now gives a monthly discount of \$10 if a member signs up for all 12 classes in a month, meaning they would pay \$50 in a lump sum as opposed to \$60.

"The \$50 fee would actually provide some level of relief in the number of times someone participated," MacLeod said.

If the member goes twice a week, which Sosson said many of them do, that individual would pay \$40 a month with each class costing \$5. Sosson said elderly members normally go twice a week because there are two different instructors for the class. She sympathized with those who felt they could not afford the class, because

some attended the class for 10 years or more.

"I felt so bad for these people. You're not 70 or 80 years old, so you don't understand what happens when you're on a limited income and someone tells you that you have to spend \$50 a month," Sosson said to council.

Mayor Ed Mahaney said the rec programs offered have to be self-sustaining. He suggested MacLeod, Department Heads Terrance Brown and Mike Chait and the Recreation Program Director Jean Whalen visit the class and see if some resolution could be reached to provide assistance to the particular members who may have to leave the class due to the price.

Class instructor Claudia Van Savage said Whalen and Chait attended the class on Friday, but were unable to reach a final conclusion at that time as to how the matter could be resolved. Mahaney said the issue would be worked out and council would have a report at the Feb. 7 regular meeting.

Sign

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the new convention hall starting in July. The five musicals include: -July 11 - Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day; July 18 - The Three Bears; July 25 - Red Riding Hood's Woods; Aug. 1 - Charlotte's Web; and Aug. 8 - The Fabulous Fable Factory.

Mike Hartman, Artistic Director for the Greater Ocean City Theater Company said the children's theater shows should be enjoyable for people of all ages. The musicals will feature both local and non-local talent, and should bring a great deal of entertainment to the new facility.

"We'll be creating a lot of good memories in that new space," Hartman said.

As for the economic impact, Mahaney said a number of individuals who have called in for tickets and more information about Convention Hall said they would be spending the night or weekend, staying in local accommodations and dining in Cape May restaurants.

He said the city has partnered with several higher education institutions over the last four years. Mahaney said by partnering with colleges and universities, like the city has with Temple University and Stockton, Cape May is able to work alongside students who apply what they have learned in the classroom. The city also receives "cutting edge technology" through the institu-



Above, Richard Stockton College Vice-President Dr. Harvey Kesselman addresses council and the public at a meeting Jan. 26, to announce an agreement between Cape May and the college.

Lane

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improvements on only the 500 block of Carpenters Lane in 2012, and plans to improve the 300 and 400 blocks in subsequent years.

Roberts said the plan was to remove the existing curb and sidewalks on each side of Carpenters Lane and replace them with wider sidewalks. He said the goal was to provide at least five feet of sidewalk, which is the minimum required by ADA guidelines. The actual width of the sidewalk in the 500 block will range from about 6.5 feet to 7.5 feet depending on the location.

Previously existing trees in the 500 block have already been removed to make way for new maple shade trees to be planted. MacLeod said a consultant was brought in to evaluate the health and life expectancy of the previously existing trees, which were mainly black pine. The city also invited the Shade Tree Commission on a walk-through in October 2011. He

said while not all the members were enamored with the idea of removing mature trees, he said they understood that most of the trees could be rated as in poor quality or health.

Roberts said as a tree ages its health risk increases, while the benefits it provides decline. Asked about the flowering cherry trees on Carpenters Lane, Roberts did not say whether the trees would be saved or removed at a later date.

"No one knows how long they will live. Those are decisions we will look at. We're not just going to come in and cut everything down," Roberts said.

All of the trees in the 500 block have been removed. The contractor will begin tearing up sidewalks on the north side of Carpenters Lane, and once the curbs and sidewalks have been replaced, they will work on the south side. Parking will be blocked off on the side of the street where they are working until the work is completed.

Roberts said the traffic lane would remain open, and the project does not include tearing up the roadway. However, after the sidewalks and curbs are completed, three-quarters of an inch of asphalt would be put down, and new stripes for parking spaces would be painted. MacLeod said the city's goal in designing the project was not to lose any parking spaces.

Roberts said every effort would be made to minimize the disruption to businesses during the construction, but that would vary.

"Your store might have a minor impact, it might have a major impact depending on the construction," he said.

Phase 1 of the Carpenters Lane project should be completed by May 12, depending on the weather. Property owners who have questions or concerns about the construction during the project should contact the project manager, Ryan McGowen, at 609-522-5150 or ryan_mcgowen@rvc.com.

Full

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fect compromise candidate," Beck said. "I fought with him in the past, but over all he is someone I can support."

Craig said he would be inclined to support Sheftz at a later date, but now wanted to go with Frisoli.

Conrad said he didn't expect to vote on the LTMUA appointment.

"I thought we agreed to put this off. Now it's let's have a vote," he said.

Conrad, Craig and Lare voted against Sheftz's appointment and Conrad nominated Frisoli.

Douglass said he was informed after a Jan. 18 Lower Township Republican Committee meeting, that Frisoli had spoken against Douglass's family.

"I was informed by several committee members that Tom Frisoli rose and publicly maligned my family for over five minutes," he said.

Douglass said he didn't think Frisoli could be a good representative of the taxpayers or ratepayers of Lower Township. Douglass said prior to the Jan. 4 meeting, when Frisoli's appointment ended in a 2-2 vote, he said he was contacted by Frisoli.

"He told me if I didn't vote for him he'd remember me," Douglass said, indicating he took that as a threat.

Frisoli did not respond to Douglass's comments at the Jan. 25 meeting.

Lare followed by citing Frisoli's qualifications for the LTMUA board position. Among other things, he said Frisoli is the facilities manager for the Lower Cape May Regional School District, has several licenses, including one from the NJDEP, government experience, and is an Air Force veteran.

Lare, Conrad and Craig voted for Frisoli, resulting in his appointment to the LTMUA board.

Douglass and Beck voted against his appointment. In other business, Lare said preliminary figures suggest

tions.

Michael Cool, Executive Director of the Stockton PAC said the Beach concert program began years ago as an anchor for this area of the state, bringing entertainment that fit in with the local culture. He referred to Stockton as one of the state's major culture centers and believes the concert series will be well suited with the community and its visitors.

Cool said the city will have an online ticketing system up and running shortly and people have already been calling for tickets to the summer

shows. Kesselman said every show has a "nice hometown feeling" and the partnership between Stockton College and Cape May should help their mutual distinctiveness flourish.

"Together, we are a perfect match," Kesselman said.

According to Cool, tickets will go on sale mid-February. All concert tickets will cost \$30 and shows will start at 8 p.m. Children's theater tickets will be set at \$8. Tickets can be ordered online at www.stockton.edu/pac or through the box office by calling 609-652-9000.

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BEAUTY AND THE BEAST 3D G 2:40, 4:50



Councilman Glenn Douglass

that Lower Township taxpayers would see a four-tenths of a cent increase in the tax rate.

"I believe this shows the township is in excellent financial shape," Lare said, adding that the increase translated into the budget increasing by only \$130,000.



Deputy Mayor Kevin Lare

Lare said this was a testament to the work done by council in the years leading up to the 2012 budget, and went on to say he thought council could reduce the budget enough to eliminate the .4-cent increase.

Beck said it was not only the work by council, but also the efforts of Gov. Chris Christie to reduce the tax burden. Beck also agreed there could be a way to end up with no tax increase, saying, "I can't foresee not getting to zero."

The Lower Township Police Department is planning a public, informational meeting on Feb. 7 at 7 p.m. at Lower Cape May Regional High School. The topic of the meeting is how to report crime and

suspicious activity and how to cooperate with the police. Lower Township Police Chief Brian Markers urges the public to attend.

During public comment, resident Joe Winters asked Conrad why he was absent from the Jan. 18 meeting, which was cancelled because there was no quorum. Conrad said he took the opportunity to get away with his wife for the first time in 22 years.

Winters then addressed Craig saying, "I thought you would have been considered to come here after being chosen to be sworn in. I'd like you to withdraw your appointment."

At a Lower Township Republican Committee meeting held at 7 p.m. at the Lower Township Senior Center, Craig was appointed to fill the vacant seat.

"It's unreasonable to expect me to walk up to a meeting unprepared," Craig told Winters. "I wasn't aware the (council) meeting was going to take place."

Craig said he had no obligation to attend the council meeting, but once appointed he had an obligation to be prepared. Winters said Craig didn't have to vote at the meeting, but could have abstained.

Resident Colleen Hughes said she was upset by the process that resulted in Frisoli's appointment. She also said Frisoli's response to Beck, saying he took a public job at the high school after leaving the township council, was disingenuous. Frisoli spoke from the audience saying he took a \$35,000 per year job. Hughes said it was at the time, but Frisoli was now earning \$90,000 per year.

"People are beginning to awaken to what is going on here," Hughes told council. "You're here to serve the people - not your friends or family or to get a county job."

Last week, Lare started what is considered a part-time job in the county's purchasing office.

Ban

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were opposed to the ordinance, saying it would hurt the local economy and drive people away from visiting in the summer. John Cooke, President of the Greater Cape May Chamber of Commerce said it would certainly drive

away Canadian visitors, who statistically smoke more than Americans. Wichterman said at the Jan. 17 meeting that his research showed different results.

"The percentage of Canadians who smoke is now less than it is in the states," he said. "17 percent smoke in

Canada and 21 percent smoke in the states."

When Wichterman brought the discussion to the table during the Jan. 17 work session, Councilwoman Terri Swain asked if he changed his mind about making some beaches smoking and others non-smoking.

"Nothing has changed for me," he said.

Wichterman said when he initially proposed the idea in September 2011, he didn't receive any negative comment from council and was surprised when it was voted down.

Fiocca said council should discuss the ban another time and suggested the matter be set aside and put on the agenda for the Feb. 7 meeting.

"I just want to finish what I started," Wichterman said.

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Cape May Star & Wave

(ISSN 519-020), Volume 158 Number 5. Published weekly by Sample Media, Inc., 112 E. 8th St., Ocean City, N.J. 08226. Subscription price in Cape May County \$22; East of the Mississippi \$25; West of the Mississippi \$29. Periodicals Postage at Pleasantville, N.J. and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to the Cape May Star and Wave, 600 Park Ave., #28, West Cape May, N.J. 08204.
157 Years Old
1854-2011