



## Kiwanis Club to celebrate 100th anniversary

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## House of the Week

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170th YEAR NO. 4 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024 \$1.00

# Firm to study Cape Island traffic, create action plan

## Work to put area in better position to secure federal funds; report due in fall

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council awarded a contract in December to Greenman-Pedersen Inc. (GPI) to begin a traffic study and safe streets action plan for Cape Island to be paid for by a \$200,000 grant.

"After our first meeting, we'll be able to give them our wish list and things we've been thinking of, so that will be our opportunity to say 'Hey, this is where we see some issues ...'" City Manager Paul Dietrich said during a Jan. 10 meeting of the city's Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

He said the study would take some time and that a fully vetted report would not be available until fall, so any new initiatives would not begin during the upcoming tourist season.

"This sets us up to develop projects that we can then receive federal funding for because not a lot of communities go through this process, so the pool of grant money that we're going to eligible for has

less people in New Jersey trying to grab those dollars," Dietrich said.

GPI has experience in southern New Jersey and is familiar with the needs of a shore community. It has worked with the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization on a roadway safety program for the county, which gives the company access to traffic data, he said.

Dietrich said GPI would be evaluating all of Cape Island. The first meeting with GPI will be held with city supervisors followed by some

public presentations.

Councilman Mike Yeager said a topic of conversation in town is the stop signs at the intersection of Lafayette and Jackson streets in front of Collier's Liquors. Dietrich said he met with the county engineer and the intersection would be adjusted.

He said the county does not see the traffic island in the intersection as an "area of pedestrian refuge." Instead the island is to separate vehicular traffic.

"We will have the consultant

look at all of our hotspots in town and that will be part of what they evaluate," Dietrich said.

Mayor Zack Mullock said the county came up with multiple scenarios for the Lafayette and Jackson streets intersection. He said the stop sign on Jackson Street in front of Collier's Liquors is too far back and is due to be moved 12 to 15 feet forward.

The change would cause drivers to make a 90-degree left turn onto

See **Traffic study**, Page A8

# MTRAC reviews successes, plans more initiatives

## Continues to study special tax to fund transportation system

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city's Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee (MTRAC) discussed its recommendations to City Council and how many of its suggestions have been put into place while it plans its direction for 2024.

MTRAC has been researching the pros and cons of adding a 1 percent special tax to develop a better jitney/shuttle service. Washington Street Mall merchants have gone on record opposing it.

During a meeting Jan. 11, MTRAC Chairman Dennis Crowley said as a fourth-class city, Cape May has the right to add a 1 percent sales tax to various commodities — such as drinks sold in bars and restaurants, accommodations, beach chairs and admission to theaters and public performances — and use the money to fund a comprehensive shuttle service.

City solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said a Supreme Court case upheld the constitutionality of levying such a tax. He said he did not find any coastal towns that added to the sales tax for local use. It differs from a room tax

since it requires an enforcement agent, he said.

"That may be an explanation of why you don't see it down the coast," Gillin-Schwartz said.

Crowley said use of an additional local sales tax is limited to tourist-related services and convention facilities. Crowley said the revenue would not be placed in the city's general fund but dedicated to elements that strengthen and provide tourist services.

MTRAC member Martin Van Walsum said Atlantic City has a 9 percent luxury tax imposed on certain rentals, sales and services with the exception of alcoholic beverages sold by the drink, which are subject to a 3 percent tax. Businesses in Wildwood, North Wildwood and Wildwood Crest are required to collect a tourism sales tax, he said.

Crowley said Wildwood was awarded special funding to operate the Wildwoods Convention Center.

In other discussion, MTRAC is examining the city's shared services. Van Walsum said an in-depth meeting was held with City Manager Paul Dietrich,

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Provided

## Horsing around in the snow

Oh what fun it is to ride on a one-horse open sled. Brooklyn Howell (on horse) and Nicole Simpkins enjoy the snow at Muddy Boots Horse Riding School in Lower Township.

# Sippel highlights 2023, previews year to come

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township Mayor Frank Sippel presented his annual State of the Township address, highlighting projects completed, revenue gained and capital improvement plans for 2024.

At a Jan. 17 meeting, Sippel said early in 2023, Township Council heard complaints from residents about juveniles causing a nuisance situation at the Mulligan Sports Complex. A juvenile curfew ordinance was passed to remedy the situation, he said.

The ordinance applies to anyone under the age of 18. It states it is unlawful for juveniles to be on any public street or public place within the township 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. between the dates

of Sept. 15 and May 14 and between midnight to 6 a.m. from May 15 to Sept. 14.

Last year council endorsed a proposed state property tax credit for volunteer firefighters that would allow the municipality to offer tax relief from 10% to 100%, Sippel said.

In December, council approved a shared services agreement to provide municipal court services to Wildwood Crest at no cost to township taxpayers.

For the past few years, the township has been instituting traffic calming measures on Schellenger's Landing with flashing beacons to be installed this year to aid pedestrians, he said.

Last year, council approved a \$32.2 million

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John Cooke/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

This dog dubbed Jacob Marley was seen around Cape May until it ultimately was captured and placed with animal control.

# Stray dog captures hearts on Cape May social media

By JOHN COOKE  
Special to the Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — What if dogs could talk? Any reporter would want to interview the dog that captured the hearts and minds of Cape Mayans on social media.

What would we ask him? Now that we can question him, everyone wants to know his story. It's all about the dog. But we need

to know. From inside his cold metal container, a trap set on a Cape May porch, Jacob Marley flashed the warmest under-bite smile at his captors. Relieved.

Jacob Marley was relieved from having to roam freely on the quiet winter streets of Cape May. Ghost, Oreo or Jacob Marley (the names we gave him), the

See **Stray dog**, Page A3



## INTRODUCING THE CAFÉ MENU

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