



Cape May, WCM extend their outdoor dining

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House of the week

Real Estate Resource



166th YEAR NO. 52 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2020 \$1.00



Benita Battaglia/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

A horse-drawn carriage ride through city's historic streets

A Cape May Carriage Co. carriage is given the appearance of a sleigh for the Christmas season as seen at the Washington Street Mall.

Legislators oppose marijuana bill

Say high tax will fuel black market, want educational component

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — State Sen. Michael Testa and his Assembly District 1 colleagues all voted against the legislation regulating New Jersey's marijuana industry after voters approved making recreational marijuana legal in the November election.

Testa and Assemblymen Antwan McClellan and Erik Simonsen were among those casting no votes Dec. 17.

In the Assembly, the vote for the bill — "New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement Assistance, and Marketplace Modernization Act" — was 49 to 24 with 10 not voting. All 24 legislators voting no were Republicans.

In District 2, covering most of Atlantic County, Democrats John

Armata and Vince Mazzeo voted for the bill, which "legalizes personal use cannabis for certain adults, subject to state regulation; decriminalizes small amount marijuana and hashish possession; removes marijuana as Schedule I drug."

In the Senate, the vote was 23-17. Testa and District 2 Sen. Chris Brown were among the no votes.

The law

The bill decriminalizes possession of as much as 6 ounces of marijuana, but does not allow individuals to grow it themselves. It also does not allow for arrests for selling up to 1 ounce of marijuana.

Sales will be taxed at the state sales tax rate of 6.625 percent, but there is an excise fee of \$10 per ounce if the price is at least \$350

per ounce, \$30 per ounce if the fee is between \$250 and \$349 and \$40 if the price is below \$250 per ounce. The fee goes up to \$60 per ounce if the price falls below \$200.

According to the Tax Foundation, a national independent tax policy non-profit, localities can add an optional 2 percent tax at different stages — cultivation, manufacture, wholesaling and retailing. Those can "pyramid," according to the foundation, all being added on at different stages with the total end cost foisted onto the consumer.

The legislation also sends 70 percent of the tax revenues raised by the sale to communities that have been disproportionately targeted with marijuana possession arrests to be used for community programs.

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Coronavirus case numbers decline but still above 500

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

COVID-19 cases in Cape May County communities have declined, but the numbers still top 500 active cases when combined with long-term care facilities and non-residents.

There were seven COVID-19 fatalities reported over the past week, including four from Ocean City.

As of Sunday, there were 458 active cases in the communities, led by Middle Township with 100 and Lower Township with 91, Upper Township with 61

and Ocean City with 54.

Cape May had all of the non-resident cases with 29, including four new cases reported Monday, when the Cape May County Department of Health announced the death of two Ocean City men, one 66 years old and the other 86 years old.

Of the 39 active cases in long-term care, they were split among Dennis Township with 18, Woodbine with 15, Ocean City with three, Middle Township with two and Wildwood

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Diamond Beach rescue call times average 13.5 minutes

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Resident James Sanford continues to question why Lower Township will not come to an agreement with the Wildwood Crest EMS to provide service to Diamond Beach when it would have a response time of 3 minutes as opposed to Lower Township Rescue Squad taking 13.5 minutes to arrive at the beach community from the mainland.

During a Lower Town-

ship Council meeting Dec. 21, Sanford said he submitted an Open Public Records Act request to the county Office of Emergency Management for records documenting Lower Township Rescue Squad response times to Diamond Beach from June to Sept. 15. He said he received 27 documents showing the response times.

"Out of those 27 calls, two were for brush fires, two were canceled en-

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'I think it's a major mistake and a major problem for us.'

Mayor-elect
Zack Mullock

'I think it's an insult to me, to this administration and Mr. Fashaw for your comments.'

City Manager Jerry
Inderwies

Cape May taps Fashaw as next chief of police

Mayor-elect voices complaint; manager says it's his decision

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Manager Jerry Inderwies appointed Lt. Dekon Fashaw as the city's next police chief upon the retirement of Chief Tony Marino effective Feb. 1.

During a virtual council meeting Dec. 15, Councilman and mayor-elect Zack Mullock immediately protested the appointment, noting it was made at the last meeting of the current City Council and was unfair to new council members being seated Jan. 1.

"I think it's a major mistake and a major problem for us," Mullock said.

Inderwies said he made the decision as part of his duties

as chief executive officer of Cape May and it was not a selection allowed to be made by council.

"I think it's an insult to me, to this administration and Mr. Fashaw for your comments, out of line, unprofessional and unwarranted," Inderwies said. "It makes me highly upset that you feel that way, that you would diminish Mr. Fashaw's career."

"That's not what I did at all and you know that," Mullock retorted. "To say that right now is outrageous."

Mullock complained Inderwies did not make him aware interviews for the chief's position were being

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City elementary goes all virtual until Jan. 11

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Due to the current community spread of COVID-19, along with a shortage of staff and substitutes that would make it not possible to maintain the safety guidelines of social distancing within classrooms, Cape May City Elementary School began all-virtual instruction Dec. 18 with a plan to return to Jan. 11.

During a virtual Board of

Education meeting Dec. 17, Principal Zachary Palombo said the school had been operating at 100 percent capacity five days per week with an early dismissal.

Beginning Dec. 1, the third grade was quarantined and stayed out of the school building until Dec. 8, he said. The building closed Dec. 7-9 due to a number of presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 and to sanitize classrooms, Palombo said.

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Recount confirms victory for vanHeeswyk in Point

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY POINT — Whoever said one vote doesn't count doesn't live here, where a single vote determined the winner of a Borough Commission race.

Incumbent Deputy Mayor Anita vanHeeswyk received 89 votes, while challenger Mary Kelly received 88 votes, in the Nov. 3 election. A recount requested by Kelly tallied the same number of votes last week.

Three Board of Commissioners seats were open in Cape May Point. Incumbent Mayor Robert Moffatt was re-elected with 127 votes. Catherine Busch, who has

served as chair of the borough's Environmental Commission, as a member of the Planning/Zoning Board and Green Team, was elected with 95 votes. The elections were nonpartisan.

Commissioner Robert Mullock did not seek reelection. During his final Borough Commission meeting Dec. 10, he thanked the community, Moffatt and vanHeeswyk for their support during his years on commission.

"I think we have such a special place here that sometimes the best thing we can do is take a deep breath, look around and say, 'thank God we're all here,'" Mullock said.



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— Lisa Lysinger, RN, BSN

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