



Boys lacrosse team advances in state playoffs

Page A8



House of the week

A12



169th YEAR NO. 22 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, MAY 31, 2023 \$1.00

County vows to fight offshore wind project

'We cannot sit quietly by as hundreds of windmills are installed off our beaches'

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — The Cape May County Board of County Commissioners is formally opposing the Ocean Wind 1 offshore wind farm and the Danish company's adjacent proposed wind farm, Ocean Wind 2, and threatening legal action "on all fronts."

The board unanimously passed a resolution to that effect Tuesday, May 23, arguing

the wind farms will harm the marine environment, tourism and, potentially, real estate values.

The resolution, No. 314-23, goes on for pages with reasons why the county is taking this action.

"At first, the County of Cape May was interested in trying to work with Ørsted to find a way forward, perhaps with some modifications to the project to reduce visual, environmental and economic impacts," Com-

mission Director Len Desiderio said in a release issued by the county. "We would like to see land-based offshore wind facilities and supply-chain infrastructure built here in New Jersey, since that would create good opportunities for trade workers and others. But we cannot sit quietly by as hundreds of windmills are installed off our beaches as state and federal government agencies ignore our legitimate and serious concerns.

"As time went by, it became clear that Ørsted was not interested in finding any compromise," Desiderio said. "It is clear to us now that the approach among this foreign corporation and their partners in the state and federal governments is to build these things as fast as they can despite the potential for devastating environmental and economic impacts. On behalf of the people of Cape May County, we will not let that happen without a fight."

The resolution said county and municipal officials first tried to work with Ørsted at a meeting two years ago on May 24, 2021, but the company did not show any willingness to change the visibility of the project, which would make the massive wind turbines visible from every beach in the county. The same thing occurred in meetings in January 2022, according to the resolution.

See County, Page A3



Craig Massey/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

Everything old is new again

Decorative arches have been installed on Cape May's Promenade from Convention Hall to the Cove, recreating those that were on the city's boardwalk 100 years ago.

West Cape May nixes sewer expansion plan

Borough Commission: Most owners don't want it, say septic working fine

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — Borough Commission has decided not to expand sanitary sewer service to homes on Second Avenue and parts of Sunset Boulevard and Third Avenue. The project would have comprised about 68 properties with an estimated cost of \$1.6 million.

During a meeting May 24, Borough Commissioner George Dick said he read letters from residents concerning the proposed expansion "four or five times."

"At the end of the day, what I think we see is most of the people have working septic as a whole and everybody has access to septic," he said.

Dick said the borough is not prepared to fund the expansion on its own

and it was clear from the letters that homeowners are not willing to share the cost.

During a Borough Commission meeting Jan. 26, auditor Leon Costello said an estimate for the sewer expansion totaled about \$1.6 million. He said the borough could pass a local improvement ordinance, which would be different from a general capital ordinance, allowing it to assess the effected properties for a portion or all of the costs.

Costello said the borough could take a bond anticipation note for the construction, pay it off over eight to 10 years and use the money that was assessed to each of the homeowners to help pay for the note.

Depending on how

See Sewer, Page A4

City signs 25-year lease with ELTC for church

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council finalized a 25-year lease with East Lynne Theatre Company (ELTC) for use of the Allen AME Church.

At a May 15 council meeting, Susan Tischler, president of ELTC's board of trustees, said moving from its present home at Cape May Presbyterian Church eliminates the need to remove the stage set every Saturday night to allow Sunday worship services and allows the theater company more programs in the shoulder season and more freedom in set design and play selection.

She said ELTC would not go into the AME Church "willy-nilly looking to arbitrarily to make changes."

"Every step, every change, every lightbulb will be in place only because it has been part of an ongoing conversation

with our new partner, the city of Cape May," she said. "To that end, East Lynne has hired Robbie Conley as our architect on the project."

Conley is the architect for Cape May's new fire station.

Tischler said Conley has a relationship with the city and is sensitive to the issues of restoring and altering the use of an historic building. She said ELTC is seeking a grant to restore the AME Church organ.

"This new space in the AME Church also allows us though the joy and privilege of honoring the legacy of a Black church, a Black community and a special historical segment of Cape May's community," Tischler said.

ELTC's New Artistic Director, Craig Fols said it was made clear the theater company would be working in partnership with the city and sharing

See Lease, Page A2

Should city use surplus or save for a rainy day?

Chairman: Account tripled to \$12.4 million since 2016

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — With \$12.4 million in surplus and \$3.4 million used in this year's budget, is Cape May saving too much that could be used for other purposes?

That topic was discussed May 11 during a meeting of the Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee.

MTRAC Chairman Dennis Crowley said the local property tax rate has not changed in three years. A total of 45 percent of the city's revenue comes from property taxes with 17 percent from the surplus fund and 27 percent from local revenue such as mercantile license fees and room tax.

"That's really what we as a committee have been looking at for the last three years," he said. "Why is it that so few dollars, relatively speaking, are generated in local revenue?"

Crowley said most of the city's fees have not changed in 25 years.

MTRAC members said the city's budget was very conservative.

Crowley said the city budgeted \$23 million last year but collected \$27 million.

Councilwoman Maureen McDade said the city is counting on 55 percent of revenue to be collected from sources other than property tax.

"There is no predicting what could happen during the summer season," she said, noting rental projections this summer are lower than the two previous years.

MTRAC member Martin Van Walsum said of the 55 percent of city revenue from fees and licenses, only \$ 6.3 million is "elastic," such as parking meter revenue and room tax. He said about \$3.2 million of revenue is from businesses.

Crowley said since 2016, surplus has grown from \$4 million to \$12.2 million. He asked if a \$12 million surplus is "good thing or a bad thing?"

In 2016, the city budget

See MTRAC, Page A3



Provided

County marks Memorial Day

The Cape May County Board of Commissioners held a Memorial Day ceremony on Monday. Speakers included County Commissioner Director Leonard Desiderio, Ralph Lonergan USMC (veteran), NJARNG (ret), and Warren D. Judge, captain, Commanding Officer, USCG TRACEN, Cape May. County Commissioner Jeffrey L. Pierson, BG USA (Ret), above, was the emcee.

CLASSIC AMERICAN FARE

MADE USING FARM-FRESH INGREDIENTS

..... homespun breakfast, lunch & dinner favorites

THE BLUE PIG TAVERN

LOCATED AT CONGRESS HALL IN CAPE MAY

TheBluePigTavern.com
(609) 884-6422