

**Lear, Hendricks file paperwork for re-election.**

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**House of the week**

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166th YEAR NO. 31 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2020 \$1.00

## Murphy: Districts have 'greater flexibility'

Governor says schools must prepare for those who do not want their children to attend in person

'All students are eligible for full-time remote learning if parents or guardians so choose. This includes students receiving special education or related services.'

—Kevin Dehmer, state Department of Education

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

Local school districts have "greater flexibility" to ensure they can meet the needs of parents who want their children taught remotely. That flexibility, however, doesn't mean the remote learning students will get a break; they'll have the same school days, just at home.

Kevin Dehmer, the state's interim commissioner of the Department of Education, and Dr. Zakiya Smith-Ellis, former secretary of Higher Education, now chief policy adviser to the governor, talked about that

flexibility Friday during Gov. Phil Murphy's COVID-19 press conference.

Dehmer and Smith-Ellis said the Department of Education's policies about students' return to school in September have continued to evolve over the summer as conditions have changed and as they listened to stakeholders throughout the state.

"We heard what parents and school leaders had to say," Dehmer said.

The initial guidance from the state was to open New Jersey's schools "in some capacity" for in-person instruction and the evolving guidance given

to districts are the minimal standards for schools reopening that allows parents to choose where they want their children educated.

"All students are eligible for full-time remote learning if parents or guardians so choose," Dehmer said. "This includes students receiving special education or related services."

He added that districts have to establish procedures for full-time remote learning.

They also have to have procedures for those students to transition back to in-classroom learning "so families can make necessary arrangements

to prepare for the transition and help schools maintain continuity of services."

Schools have to "communicate frequently" to parents about their options.

A key to remote learning is that those students "must receive the same quality of instruction as provided to any other students. Full-time remote learning must adhere to the same policies that in-person and hybrid programs follow when it comes to attendance and length of school day."

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Benita Battaglia/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

### March for equality in Cape May

Cape May resident Sara Werner, in cooperation with the Cape May County NAACP and Indivisible Cape May County, held a march for equality and justice July 25 from Convention Hall to the Cove beach in Cape May.

## Voters to decide whether city gets a safety building

Referendum to be on ballot in this fall's general election

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Voters will have their say on whether to build a combined fire and police station during a referendum on the ballot in the Nov. 3 general election.

During a virtual meeting July 21, City Council had one last opportunity to approve a \$14.2 million bond for construction of a new public safety building on the site of the current fire hall. The bond again failed in a 3-2 vote, with Mayor Chuck Lear, Deputy Mayor Patricia Hendricks and Councilman Shaine Meier casting positive votes and members Stacy Sheehan and Zack Mullock casting negative votes.

A supermajority of council, four votes, was required to pass the bond ordinance. A voter referendum was the result of a citizen's group gathering enough signatures on a petition submitted to hold a voter initiative

on the public safety building question.

A public hearing for the enabling bond ordinance was held with comments received by phone and email. Bob Gorgone, a member of the Citizen's Initiative Committee, said the issue has been before the public since August 2017.

"In 2019 alone, 32 meetings were held, including two special meetings for new council members, 13 steering committee meetings, seven program-design meetings resulting in schematic designs and seven focus group meetings with the HPC (Historic Preservation Committee), fire department, fire union, police department and chamber of commerce," he said.

Two town hall meetings on the proposed building were held in Convention Hall, Gorgone said.

Citizen's Initiative collected nearly twice the re-

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## Villas, West Cape women die in crash

VILLAS — Two women were killed in a head-on motor vehicle collision at about 3:20 p.m. July 22 on Ocean Drive after one vehicle crossed the center line.

Lower Township police said Corinne M. McDevitt, 35, of Villas, and Linda M. Greenfield, 68, of West Cape May, died in the crash.

According to Lower Township police, McDevitt was driving northbound on Ocean Drive when she veered over the double yellow line and slammed head-on into a vehicle being driven by Greenfield, who was pronounced dead at the scene.

McDevitt was uncon-

scious and trapped inside her vehicle. She was extracted by members of the Erma Volunteer Fire Company. Once she was freed from the vehicle, Atlantic-Care paramedics and members of the Lower Township Rescue Squad attempted life-saving measures to no avail.

It was unclear why McDevitt's vehicle veered across the center line and into oncoming traffic, according to police. The investigation is still ongoing by investigators from the Lower Township Police Department and the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office.

## Closed ramp limits boat-launching sites

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

SCHELLENGER'S LAND-ING — The Spicer's Creek boat ramp, which is used by visitors and residents of Cape May and Lower Township to access the local waterways, has been closed since the beginning of the month.

The ramp, located behind Lucky Bones restaurant, has been barricaded with cement blocks to prevent the launching of boats.

Cape May City Council approved a resolution July 21 requesting Gov. Phil Murphy order the barriers to be removed so the public can access the ramp. Councilman Zack Mullock introduced the

resolution.

"It's what most Cape May residents use if they don't have a boat slip," he said.

Mullock said most of the public was unaware the ramp was closed by the state. He said other boat ramps have been closed around the state, some of which are located in a wildlife management area or park where there is staffing.

"Spicer's Creek isn't necessarily a park," Mullock said. "People drive up and drop their boats in."

Deputy Mayor Patricia Hendricks said she contacted Lower Township to determine whether Township Council had passed a

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

The state closed the Spicer's Creek boat ramp in early June and it has remained closed for nearly two months, limiting the places where people can get access to the waterways.

## Kennedy says she will focus on the priorities of district, its residents

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

OCEAN CITY — With fewer than 100 days to go before the Nov. 3 election, Democrat Amy Kennedy said she is not going to dwell on her own personal agenda or where her incumbent Republican opponent is lacking.

Instead, Kennedy said her campaign is going to focus on the priorities facing southern New Jersey in this unpredictable time when people are anxious about jobs and the coronavirus. She said people in the Second Con-

gressional District are feeling the need for real leadership and vision on health and economic concerns along with social justice issues.

She also doesn't plan to get bogged down in the negativity that rules the national political debate.

Kennedy is taking on first-term Congressman Jeff Van Drew, a career Democrat who attracted national attention late in 2019 when he announced he was switching parties and then helped bring President Donald Trump

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