

Health & Wellness

Page A8



House of the week

B1



168th YEAR NO. 33 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2022 \$1.00

City OKs contract for Franklin Street School

Price tag for restoration, renovation climbs to more than \$9 million

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council voted 4-1 to authorize the county to award a contract for the renovation and restoration of the Franklin Street School for use as a new library.

At an Aug. 16 council meeting, Deputy Mayor Stacy Sheehan, who cast the only vote against the project, said the price tag was \$9.1 million. She said the

original projected cost to renovate the school was about \$6 million.

"That's why each of the three parties were putting in \$2 million, so that would cover the cost of renovation to that building to put the library in," she said.

Sheehan said the city never bonded for its share of the project because the city expected several grants. She said she was concerned what the Franklin Street School project would cost

taxpayers when completed.

Council would need to vote again on the project if the city's share exceeds \$2.3 million, Sheehan said. The county Library Commission paid the cost to construct libraries in other towns, she said.

Cape May paid \$1.2 million in taxes last year to the county Library Commission.

"As nice as this library is, I'm glad we are preserving the Franklin Street School. I think

at this point the price has gotten out of hand and I would have liked to have seen us rebid this project, I think \$9 million is 50 percent over what we thought it was going to be," Sheehan said.

At two previous meetings, council tabled a resolution to authorize the county to award a restoration contract because the county had not finalized who was the low bidder for the project.

City solicitor Chris Gillin Schwartz said the city previ-

ously authorized a mutual agreement with the county and county Library Commission with a \$2 million cap for the city of Cape May with a \$300,000 contingency clause.

He said council bonded \$2 million but the extra \$300,000 would require additional approval from council.

"The city is not committed to anything beyond \$2.3 (million)

See Franklin, Page A3

BOEM reveals plan for 1,370 wind turbines

Multiple projects are proposed off Cape May, Atlantic counties

By DAVID NAHAN
Cape May Star and Wave

OCEAN CITY — The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) runs 1,400 pages. For those who search through it, there is a lot of information, some far beyond the proposal for Ocean Wind 1, the electricity-generating wind farm planned 15 miles off the coast of Cape May and Atlantic counties with as many as 98 towering turbines.

Nestled deep in the DEIS is a little, three-paragraph section, N.3.1.3.5, labeled "Ocean City Music Pier, Ocean City, New Jersey."

It notes that looking out from the Music Pier at 811 Boardwalk — which is a popular Jersey shore spot for gazing at the ocean and south at the island's beach and boardwalk — there may be something else on the horizon.

That something is as many as 612 wind turbines, some as close as 8.8 miles.

The DEIS report is about Ocean Wind 1, but it documents the myriad other pro-

posed projects that would result in 1,370 wind-generating turbines up and down the coast, including the closest, Ocean Wind 2 and an Ocean Wind X.

The section includes other locations of "historic properties" as well as the Music Pier, one in Atlantic City and three in Ventnor City, saying that BOEM "has found the project would have an adverse visual effect" on them.

"The adverse effects on the viewshed of the above-ground historic properties would occupy the space for approximately 35 years, but they are unavoidable," the report said, citing reasons listed in another section of the report.

Ocean Wind 1's projected lifespan is 25 years, with the turbines being decommissioned and the towers removed after that, so the visual impacts listed in the report appear to include projects beginning after Ocean Wind 1 — and outliving it.

Barbara McCall, who owns property in Ocean City and vacations here, made note

See BOEM, Page A11



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Made in the shade

Beach umbrellas were the order of the day last week on the beach in Cape May.

Task force studying citywide transportation service

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — From the ashes of the city's Parking Advisory Committee has risen a Parking Task Force to look at a citywide shuttle and transportation service.

At the task force's first meeting Aug. 5, Deputy Mayor Stacy Sheehan said the budget for such a system would be recommended by the city's Municipal Taxation and Revenue Advisory Committee.

She said City Council

wants the task force to look at transportation systems in other resort towns.

Task force member Bob Elwell said jitney ridership numbers for this summer should be sought for a comparison to last year's figures.

Task force member Jim Testa said it appeared ridership was low this year.

Elwell asked if COVID was a factor. He noted MAC (Museums+Arts+Culture) trolleys seemed to be carrying full loads.

Task Force Chairwoman Bonnie Cassells said

she did not think COVID was a factor in low jitney ridership.

"I think people just don't know where to get it, where to park," she said.

Testa said the city having different parking meter rate in zones of the city were intended to encourage drivers to park at the perimeter of Cape May in less used parking spaces. Cassells said the rate differentials mostly disappeared when meter rates were raised throughout the city.

Elwell said there was insufficient signage for

the jitney service. Cassells said there was a blitz of publicity for the jitney in its first year of operation.

"Atlantic City Jitney was so committed to making this work," she said. "They visited almost every single business along Beach Drive."

The parking committee in the past looked at use of low-speed vehicle for shuttles but the cost factor was much higher than the jitney.

Sheehan said the task force should not dismiss

See Task force, Page A2

First responders honored for saving boy's life in Cape May

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council honored Cape May firefighter/EMTs and AtlanticCare paramedics for saving the life of a local youth who had a gumball lodged in his throat.

At a Aug. 17 City Council meeting, Fire Chief Alex Coulter said 911 dispatch received a call June 28 reporting a boy choking at Dellas 5 & 10 on the Washington Street Mall.

Coulter said Officer Colt Gibson — who was presented with a lifesaving award for his actions — was nearby when the call was dispatched and responded to the scene.

Gibson said he was on the mall to hand out positive citations to persons wearing bike helmets.

"I work with a great group of guys, and we were not going to let that turn into a bad day," he said. "Sebastian is still here."

Sebastian Marra and his parents attended the ceremony.

Fire personnel including Coulter and Deputy Fire Chief Mike Eck responded to the rescue call with two ambulances.

Firefighter/EMTs David Jackson, Joshua Vandermark, Jackson Pyle and Kyle Quirk also received lifesaving awards.

The awards were inscribed with the message:

"The actions taken by you saved the life of an adolescent choking victim, your courage and professionalism at this time of need exemplifies your dedication to duty and your community."

AtlanticCare paramedics Brian Allegretto and Thomas "J" Baldt also received lifesaving awards.

Allegretto said it was the first award he had received an award for "doing my job." He said the award was the highlight of his career.

AtlanticCare paramedics serve multiple counties.

"Of all the EMS and fire departments that I work with throughout all those counties, Cape May is second to none," Allegretto said.



Provided

Members of the Cape May Fire Department and EMTs from AtlanticCare were honored Aug. 17 for helping save the life of a boy who was choking on a gumball in Cape May.

NAILED IT. Rusty Nail

The Rusty Nail is back! Our famed surfer bar and restaurant is back open for the 2022 season. Stop by for breakfast, lunch and dinner—as well as delicious cocktails and the coldest draft beer in Cape May (as verified by Exit Zero Magazine).

205 BEACH AVE, CAPE MAY • RUSTYNAILCAPEMAY.COM • WALK-INS WELCOME

