

# City wants West Cape to help pay floodplain manager

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — City Council tabled a resolution authorizing continuation of a shared services agreement to provide construction office services to the Borough of West Cape May.

At issue is whether Cape

May Deputy Manager Lou Belasco, who serves as Cape May's floodplain manager, would be compensated by West Cape May for providing that service to the borough as part of the agreement.

During a meeting July 5, Councilwoman Lorraine Baldwin said the city keeps

all construction permit fees for West Cape May for providing construction office services.

Solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said Cape May has been handling flood plain management for West Cape May but the borough was looking for it to be clarified in the agreement.

Belasco said West Cape May's code designates the construction official as the flood plain manager.

"When we took on the UCC (Uniform Construction Code) duties, we took on the other duties that were within the code," he said.

Cape May's construction official does not have floodplain management credentials, so Belasco is handling the position.

Deputy Mayor Stacy

Sheehan said West Cape May should pay half the stipend Cape May affords Belasco for floodplain management. She said the current stipend covers floodplain management only for Cape May.

Gillin-Schwartz said the agreement with West Cape May expires July 24 and council could address the stipend with a proposal to West Cape May. Belasco said the stipend totals \$5,000.

"There's nothing in the fee schedule to cover this floodplain manager," Councilman Mike Yeager said.

The agreement contemplates Cape May collecting all the fees for construction permits in West Cape May, Gillin-Schwartz said. He said the two municipalities have the same construction

permit fees.

Sheehan said Cape May has other shared positions with West Cape May in which the salary is divided by the two towns. Baldwin said stipends are given specifically for West Cape May in Cape May's stipend schedule.

A free flood development permit is issued for all development within West Cape May and Cape May. Belasco suggested attaching a fee to West Cape May's flood development permits to cover the cost of flood plain management.

Mayor Zack Mullock said it would not be fair to charge West Cape May 50 percent of the stipend since most of the flood plain manager's work is in Cape May. He suggested West Cape May

pay 20 percent of the \$5,000 stipend, which would total \$1,000.

The agreement would allow Cape May to change the fee schedule at any time, which must always mirror Cape May's construction permit fees.

Sheehan asked if handling West Cape May's construction permits was taking time away from the construction office handling Cape May's permitting.

"How much are we actually getting in fees per year?" she asked.

Councilman Shaine Meier suggested a 50/50 split of the stipend for flood plain management. Council concurred and tabled the motion and planned a closed session on the matter prior to its next meeting.

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## Educator

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slaves until emancipation. He was raised in West Chester, Pa., and graduated from Howard University, accepting a teaching position in West Cape May.

When he began teaching in 1895, he was assigned to one room in the West

Cape May School where he taught eight grades of Black children. According to his biography on the foundation's website, he was determined that Blacks learn more than the three R's.

Moore instilled in them a sense of pride — not only in their Black heritage but in themselves as individuals and as citizens of the United States. He used outlines of Black history that today would be called Black Studies, learning about important achievements of Blacks throughout history.

Moore's 100th birthday was legendary. He attended the festivities on a stretcher, not because of any age-related illness but because the week prior, he had jumped over a tennis net while posing for a photo. He fell, suffering a broken hip, but insisted on attending his birthday

party.

Francis, a board member of the foundation, said the nonprofit organization, started by former students, has awarded scholarships since 1973.

Francis said Moore taught both Black and white children in West Cape May until the start of segregation. At that time, Black children were moved to an adjacent school building known as "the annex."

At recess, all the children played together, Francis said.

Initially, the foundation's scholarship fund was for African-America students but was broadened to include any financially challenged student in Cape May County.

"We've given over 70 scholarships, and they are usually about \$1,000 each and they can be renewed," he said.

The birthday celebration

will include a one-man play written by Kenny Bingham with music by Jeffrey Hebron. Food will be provided by Matt's Family Taste the Love food truck.

"We're looking to keep William J. Moore's name alive," Francis said.

He said his younger brother took tennis lessons from Moore.

Francis said Moore had a reputation of being a kind person who cared about his students.

"They in kind cared about him; that's why we're here today, doing what we're doing," he said.

The event is scheduled for 4 to 6 p.m. Tickets are \$55. Tax-deductible donations can be sent to PO Box 64, Cape May, NJ 08204. Visit wjmoore.org or call (215) 880-7899 for more information.

The website also includes information on applying for a scholarship.

## Empty

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DEP does not approve the proposed location, the city would have to take a step back and restart the process. He said the library would not support the city's police operations.

Fashaw said the property is located in a congested area downtown near several bed and breakfast inns and homes that would be greatly affected by a police station. He noted the limited parking available on the site.

"Further, the building is somewhat dated and not sufficiently sized to accommodate the city's police force," Fashaw said.

Anita DeSatnick, Cape May's famous children's "story lady" at the library and a longtime member of the library committee, suggested using it as a permanent location for Pelican Place, the city-operated nursery school that was to be located in the Methodist church. It never reopened after the COVID-19 pandemic. The program was very successful and is missed by parents who are familiar with it, she said.

Another alternative would be turning the building into a shared retail space for local artists and crafters, a space similar to the West End Garage, DeSatnick said.

If the city were to sell the building, commercial buildings of equivalent size are listed for sale priced from \$1.2 million to \$2.4 million.

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