

# Meth-trafficking investigation leads to three arrests in Lower Sheehan

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Three persons were arrested in Villas and charged with the distribution of methamphetamine following a six-month investigation.

Arrested were Laura L. Abide, 50, and Robert S. Bellemare, 47, both of Villas, and Terrance Mitchell, 28 of Philadelphia.

On March 29, the county Regional SWAT Team and State Police TEAMS Unit executed search warrants on a homes in the 100 block

of Tennessee Avenue in Villas, the 100 block of Bentz Avenue in Villas and the 700 block of Academy Road in Cold Spring.

Additionally, an arrest operation was conducted in the area of the 700 block of Academy Road for Mitchell. During this operation, he attempted to elude arresting officers and fled in his vehicle.

Lower Township police engaged in a brief vehicle pursuit with Mitchell, however it was shortly termi-

nated. A brief time later, Mitchell was involved in a single-vehicle accident by crashing the car he was driving into a wooded area near Matthews Avenue and Route 9 in Whitesboro.

Witnesses alerted officers to the area of the crash and the direction the driver fled on foot. The driver, later identified as Mitchell, was located a short distance away and placed under arrest.

As a result of the investigation, more than 1

pound of suspected methamphetamine was seized, along with about \$14,000 in currency and one vehicle. The street value of the suspected methamphetamine seized is about \$30,000, according to the county Prosecutor's Office.

Bellemare was charged with possession of methamphetamine, conspiracy to possess methamphetamine, conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and money laundering, as well as possession of mari-

juana. He was released with a summons pending court proceedings.

Abadie was charged with possession with the intent to distribute methamphetamine, conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine, possession of methamphetamine, conspiracy to possess methamphetamine, possession of methamphetamine and money laundering. Abadie was lodged in the Cape May County Jail pending court proceedings.

Mitchell, who had a fugitive warrant from Pennsylvania, was charged with possession/distribution of methamphetamine, possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, eluding in a motor vehicle, hindering apprehension, obstruction of justice and fugitive of justice.

He was lodged in the Cape May County Jail pending court proceedings.

## Sheehan

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figure, which is much more than what we're raising taxes, and how are we able to do that?" Young asked. "You increase your anticipated surplus number as well to be able to offset that and save the taxpayers some money by using your own dollars."

He said once the city starts squeezing the appropriations side of the budget, at some point funds have to be taken away from anticipated surplus number. Young said the only way to make the anticipated surplus figure is with excess from miscellaneous revenues that were not anticipated and then "lapsing appropriations."

"Typically, we lapse about \$1 million from last year's appropriations to help you reach that anticipated surplus," he said. "Once you start shrinking this side, the appro-

priations that you have on hand, you're never going to make that anticipated surplus figure."

Young said once the budget side begins to get squeezed, the surplus is affected. He said new revenue sources and a "squeeze" would be a good idea.

Various city departments were ordering new vehicles, Sheehan said. She said the police department and beach tag office are seeking new SUVs.

Sheehan suggested the police department share the vehicle with the beach tag department since it would be needed only a few months of the year. She noted the budget contained a \$25,000 line item for Cape May Beach Patrol uniforms, an expense that exceeded police and fire department uniform costs.

Young said that figure reflected turnover on the CMBP. He said the police

and fire departments had the same employees year to year but 50 new lifeguards could be hired in one year. Lifeguards receive shorts, bathing suits and shirts, Young said.

Councilman Zack Mullock asked what was the biggest part of the city's \$300,000 debt service in the budget. Young said it reflected balances from a group of old ordinances the city never funded.

"It's a way to write those off without incurring debt, without paying interest, so you put them in your budget document as a line item so you don't have to go out for bonds," he said.

Deputy Mayor Patricia Hendricks said she had no further discussion on the budget.

"I've been working hard to get it to where it is," she said. Young said at one point, the local purpose tax rate was increasing by 1.36 cents but was decreased to 1.25 cents.

A public hearing for the budget is scheduled for council's April 16 meeting.

## Authorities charge Villas man with assaulting police officer

VILLAS — Lower Township police arrested a Villas man on multiple charges after he allegedly attempted to attack an officer with a knife.

Police received a report of a suspicious person throwing items at a home on Oregon Avenue at about 9:44 p.m. March 31.

Upon arrival, Officer William Kocis was advised by the complainant that a man was throwing items at her home.

Kocis investigated the damage to the residence and radioed the description of the individual to Cape May County Dispatch. Shortly after leaving the Oregon Avenue residence, Kocis located an individual matching the description walking in the area of States and Tennessee avenues, a short distance from the original complaint.

Kocis exited his marked patrol vehicle and attempted to investigate further by

speaking to the individual. The unidentified male refused to speak with the officer and attempted to walk away. The officer continued to question the suspect about the initial complaint.

The subject, later identified as Zachary T. Piccioni, 21, of Villas, lunged at Kocis and slashed at the officer's abdomen area with a large knife. Kocis was able to avoid being cut as he stepped back and drew his gun.

Piccioni then walked away from the officer, continuing to hold the knife. Kocis continuously ordered Piccioni to show his hands and stop and drop the weapon. Piccioni finally dropped the knife but fled on foot.

Additional responding officers assisted in attempting to locate the suspect, who had jumped a fence heading north and then east toward a wooded area. Details of the sus-

pect's clothing description and direction of travel were updated over police radio. Officers searching parallel streets to the north were able to locate the suspect on Greenwood Avenue within minutes.

Piccioni continued to be uncooperative, refusing to take his hand out of his pocket. Officers were able to distract the suspect and successfully apprehend him without any injuries.

Piccioni was transported to Lower Township police headquarters, where he was evaluated by Lower Township Rescue. He was processed and subsequently charged with aggravated assault, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, unlawful possession of a weapon, resisting arrest by physical force, resisting arrest and criminal mischief. Piccioni was placed on a warrant and lodged in the Cape May County Jail awaiting further adjudication.

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT**  
CAPE MAY

**Holy Week and Easter Service Schedule**

*Palm Sunday, April 14th*  
Holy Eucharist - 8:00 & 10:30 AM

*Tuesday, April 16th*  
Stations of the Cross - 6 PM

*Maundy Thursday, April 18th*  
Holy Eucharist - 6 PM • Garden Vigil - 7 PM to 8 A

*Good Friday, April 19th*  
The Solemn Liturgy - Noon to 1:30 PM

*Easter Day, Sunday, April 21st*  
Holy Eucharist - 8:00 & 10:30 AM

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## Council spars

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people that have kind of been shunned that are very, very good people," Mullock said. "It doesn't escape me that two weeks ago he was here and said something that seemed to be contrary to what we're trying to do here as a council."

At that time, Dougherty suggested the city authorize only the concept por-

tion of an architectural contract with USA Architects to design a public safety building until it is determined if the structure would fit in the current location of the firehouse.

Mullock said council should not reprimand Dougherty for giving his opinion on the project. He said Gaffney had concurred with Dougherty.

"Barney has done so much for this city," Mullock said. "He deserves to stay on as chairman."

Councilman Shaine Meier, who serves as council liaison to the Public Safety Building Advisory Committee, said

Wyatt has "done most of the heavy-lifting for the committee as secretary."

"It's appropriate that this person takes this leadership role," he said.

Mullock said he and Sheehan were once again not consulted on an advisory committee member selection. He said the first time he saw the appointment was when he received the council meeting's agenda.

Meier said he also saw the appointment of chair for the first time when he received the agenda.

"We had a whole weekend to work on it and I

agree with this decision," he said.

Sheehan questioned Meier not being consulted about the appointment.

"So, you're the liaison and you weren't consulted?" Sheehan asked.

Mayor Chuck Lear said he spoke with Sheehan about the chairmanship last week at a dinner they attended. Sheehan said Lear told her it was on the agenda to appoint Wyatt as chair of the committee.

Meier suggested Mullock offer a motion to appoint Dougherty as chairman of the committee.

"I just think we're trying to find dirty laundry under this table and bring it up and show discourse in front of the public," Meier said.

Consensus building should occur before an item is placed on council's agenda, Mullock said.

"We have said the advisory committees are supposed to be a decision of the entire council," he said. "This has been an ongoing issue and I thought we discussed that and had a correction but clearly we don't."

Mullock said he would be happy to nominate Dougherty for the chairmanship but he was aware his motion would be outvoted by council.

## WEST CAPE MAY RESIDENTS 2019/2020

### Pre-K & Kindergarten Registration

**Monday, April 15th.**

#### REQUIREMENTS:

- Original birth certificate
- Immunization records
- Pre-K students must be 4 on or before 10/01/2019
- Kindergarten students must be 5 on or before 10/01/2019
- Proof of residency - 2 forms
- Custody or other legal papers



Appointments and registration packets may be obtained at West Cape May Elementary, 301 Moore Street or by calling 609-884-4614. Students must be registered prior to the first day of school.

## Cape Island Baptist Church

115 Gurney Street, Cape May  
609-884-3917 • www.cibcnj.org

*Maundy Thursday, also known as Holy Thursday, is a Christian observance that takes place during Holy Week, the day before Good Friday. It commemorates Jesus Christ's last supper and the initiation of Holy Communion.*

**Holy Thursday Service**  
April 18 at 6:30 PM

**Easter Sunday Service**  
April 21 at 11:00 AM  
Breakfast at 9:30 AM



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## NOTICE TO CAPE MAY CITY RESIDENTS and BUSINESSES

Effective Monday, April 8, 2019 the City of Cape May will begin the curbside collection of recyclable materials for residential and commercial properties. Our current contractor's last day will be Friday April 5, 2019. The recycle collection process will not change during this transition. PLEASE NOTE: If you currently have a contract with a private hauler this will not affect you. The City provides one curbside collection per week for residential and commercial properties. Recycle containers shall have a capacity of no more than 32 gallons and not exceed 50 pounds in weight when filled. All recycling containers must be clearly marked and have a "RECYCLE" or "SINGLE STREAM RECYCLE" label clearly marked on the container. Recyclable materials in plastic bags WILL NOT be collected. Recyclables that are placed in private contractor containers will not be collected. Recyclable material can be placed at the curb after 6:00 pm on the day prior to collection and no later than 7:00 am on the day of collection. The City will not pick up recycle containers on any private property. Please call for holiday schedule.

Questions regarding Recycling should be directed to the City of Cape May Public Works Department at 609-884-9570.