

West Cape May to name street for Vassar, adopts budget

By **BETTY WUND**
Special to the Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — Mayor Pam Kaithern announced at Borough Commission's work session March 23 that the family and friends of John Allen Vassar have accepted the suggestion to name a street in a new subdivision on the east side of Broadway for the late mayor.

At a meeting Nov. 25, 2015, Lynda Anderson-Townes represented the family and friends of Vassar to request Green Street be renamed for him. The commissioners at that time were concerned about the cost of legal changes to property owners as well as the borough and found that although Vassar had lived on Green Street, no family members live on Green Street at this time. Kaithern contacted Anderson-

Townes after commission's work session Jan. 6 and suggested the possibility of naming a street in a new subdivision for Vassar.

Vassar was mayor of West Cape May for 24 years, serving from May 1977 to May 2001. He was honored by the New Jersey State League of Municipalities by induction into its Hall of Fame at its gold level, an honor given for 20 years of mayoral service. In 1999, he was selected as Republican of the Year and he served on the county Municipal Utilities Authority for many years.

He represented the third generation of a black West Cape May family, owners of many pieces of property and members of Allen AME Church in Cape May. Vassar was recognized as one of the larger business owners in Cape May. He owned a trash-collection business

that served West Cape May and the city of Cape May.

In the regular meeting March 23, a public hearing on the 2016 municipal budget brought no comment from the public and was adopted by Borough Commission. The \$2.3 million budget will have a 1.9-cent tax-rate increase. The local purpose tax will increase from 33.1 cents per \$100 of assessed value to 34.9 cents, an increase of 5 percent.

The local purpose tax contributes \$1.6 million toward the budget. The borough has a 97.29 percent collection rate. It is the borough's first tax increase in five years, mainly due to the decrease in the amount of surplus used to fund the budget from 2015.

A proclamation announcing Arbor Day, April 29, was requested by Deputy Mayor Peter Burke.

"The West Cape May Shade Tree Commission has been selected by the state of New Jersey to distribute native evergreen trees. They will be distributed during the first weeks of April," he said.

The work session included an announcement of Federal Emergency Management Agency grants for reimbursing municipalities for expenses incurred during Winter Storm Jonas. Forms were to be submitted by the March 24 deadline.

"The fire department has come up with a list of hours that were put in volunteer-wise during the Jonas storm," Commissioner Carol Sabo said. "There is a grant available to reimburse the borough for expenditures."

Also discussed was a Sustainable Land Use Pledge. A resolution will be one

qualification for certification by Sustainable Jersey. The nonprofit organization provides tools, training and financial incentives to support communities as they pursue sustainability programs. The organization supports community efforts to reduce waste, cut greenhouse gas emissions and improve environmental equity. Certification will qualify the borough for grants.

A request by West Cape May Elementary School District for help with pedestrian and vehicle traffic at the school was addressed. The borough has supported the school district in many ways over the years but police monitoring is not available at present. It is not in the police contract to provide services to the elementary school district, Borough Solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz said.

The commissioners discussed other ways the school can have monitoring. They suggested crossing guards at dismissal times, as this is the heaviest time of pedestrian and vehicle congestion at the school. There is a program for crossing guards in which fifth- and sixth-graders can participate that would enable them to control people entering the street during dismissal. Application to the county for cross walks can be done and would contain pedestrians in a controlled area.

The regular meeting ended in closed session. Litigation pending on affordable housing and Willow Creek Winery were to be included. Negotiations on water allocation were to be addressed as well as discussion about the construction office.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority has agreed to keep 9th Avenue in Lower Township a two-way street instead of making it one-way away from the urgent care center as previously planned.

Urgent care

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Councilman Erik Simonsen said there was a concern that ambulances would not have access to Urgent Care as they do at this time if the road were made one-way.

He said if someone did not make it to the hospital on time it would put the onus on the people doing the project if they demanded one-way traffic on 9th Avenue.

Ridgway said the roads through the Tranquility sub-

division are confusing for drivers seeking to get to Urgent Care.

"It could take you an extra five minutes, and five minutes could make a difference," he said.

As part of the improvements, a U-turn now used to allow motorists from Route 109 south to drive north on the parkway will be eliminated and replaced with jug handle. Work will be completed by Memorial Day.

W. Cape May Environmental Commission schedules open space cleanup for April 23

WEST CAPE MAY — The community is invited to join the West Cape May Environmental Commission in an open space cleanup from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 23.

Participants should meet at the open space lot located on Third Avenue between Bayshore Road and West Avenue. The lot is 200 feet by 160 feet and has been marked for open space. The project entails removing nonnative invasive species and replanting with native plants to provide a natural environment for birds, butterflies and other native wildlife.

"This is a great way for the community to get involved and show their commitment to the natural environment. Come out and meet your neighbors, get some exercise and do something good for the environment," said Chris Isenhardt of the West

Cape May Environmental Commission.

The commission said it is important to have open space in West Cape May because many native species depend on such natural environments. Because West Cape May is in the heart of the Atlantic Flyway, many birds pass through on their yearly migrations. In fall, monarch butterflies pass through West Cape May on their migration to Mexico. Cope's Gray Treefrog, *Hyla chrysoscelis*, is listed as endangered in New Jersey and can be found in West Cape May.

Most of the larger invasives have been removed from the lot. Clearing of vines and other plant debris will be the focus of the cleanup.

Arrive at any time and stay for as long as you like. Any help is appreciated. Call (609) 884-1005 for



Janet Payne/Special to the STAR AND WAVE

The West Cape May Environmental Commission will hold an open space cleanup April 23. The project will provide a natural environment for birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

more information or if you would like to bring a group. Gloves and tools will be supplied. Refreshments will be provided.

Get a charge

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Larry Hirsch, owner of the Montreal Beach Resort in Cape May. "It's a reassuring feeling for people to be able to come down to the shore, whether they dine with us or stay with us and not be in fear" of where they can charge their vehicle.

According to Wanda O'Brien, of The Candlelight Inn, Tesla reached

out last year to Select Registry bed-and-breakfast and hotel owners, adding charging stations to certain properties. Tesla paid to have the chargers installed and also "offered to install a universal charger so anybody with any kind of electric vehicle can come and stay with us."

Congress Hall also offers charging for guests but only for Tesla drivers. Iraisia Ann Reilly, of the marketing department of Cape Resorts, said they also welcome nonguests to leverage their time while

in Cape May by dining with them in the Blue Pig Tavern as their car is charging in the parking lot.

Plug-in electric car drivers typically use PlugShare.com, which connects EV drivers with a map showing many of the available charging stations based on zip code. Not only will they find charging stations but also feedback from other drivers.

For further information on where to charge EVs in and around Cape May County, check out plugshare.com.

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TIDES : March-April 2016				
DATE	HIGH		LOW	
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
30	12:55	1:16	7:14	7:07
31	1:49	2:17	8:12	8:09
1	2:53	3:26	9:14	9:17
2	3:59	4:34	10:15	10:24
3	5:02	5:34	11:11	11:26
4	5:59	6:28		12:04
5	6:53	7:19	12:24	12:53
6	7:44	8:09	1:19	1:42

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