

# Voll addresses misinformation with LTMUA workers

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Lower Township Manager Mike Voll met with all Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority (LTMUA) employees two weeks ago in the township's Recreation Center to address rumors and misinformation being distributed in a document at the LTMUA office.

Also attending the meeting was the township's labor attorney Bill Blaney, Grants and Benefits Coordinator Colleen Crippen and township Public Works Director Gary Douglass.

Voll said he responded to all rumors employees had heard concerning the results of dissolving the LTMUA and creating a township water/

sewer department.

"They knew their jobs, benefits, titles, pay, etc., were all addressed," he said. "They were all assured that they would be offered jobs with the township."

He said the meeting lasted about one hour and everyone shook hands at the conclusion. "We put all their concerns to rest," Voll said.

He said he took time to write a response to a "propaganda paper" made available to LTMUA customers and employees. Voll said an LTMUA employee told him Jeff Barnes, solicitor for LTMUA, and the LTMUA office manager met with employees and used "these scare tactics."

The LTMUA paper stated an estimated 19 employees would lose their jobs. Voll said 14

full-time employees and one part-time employee would be hired as township employees, which is the same number as the current operating and clerical staff at the LTMUA.

The LTMUA paper referred to an estimated savings of \$1 million per year by dissolving the authority and creating a township water/sewer department as "phantom money." Voll said \$389,000 would be saved by not hiring an executive director, office manager and not filling one clerical position.

He said \$292,000 would be saved by not filling vacancies created by retiring employees. A total of \$96,723 would be saved in benefits reductions by not filling administrative positions or replacing retirees.

Voll said outsourcing of billing and collection, accounting and payroll would be absorbed by the township Finance Office and Tax Collector for a savings of \$213,673. Savings would also come from reduced auditing and legal fees since they would be performed for one entity instead of two, he said.

The LTMUA paper stated \$465,000 of proposed savings are from retiring employees or "phantom employees," positions not currently filled, therefore not a savings. Voll said it was called "attrition," and the amount is taken from the LTMUA sewer and water budget and is what the rates are based upon.

He asked if the LTMUA included "phantom amounts" in order to transfer other lines,

i.e., legal and engineering.

The LTMUA paper stated LTMUA employees hired by the township could expect a \$10,000 pay reduction. Voll replied an analysis of current LTMUA employee salaries showed they were on par with township rates.

He said the township may merge the employees, but they would suffer no loss of time or pay.

"So Long Government Funding" claimed the LTMUA paper.

Voll said the township received grants for water line installation and for the building of a water tower. He said the township is eligible for grant funds the LTMUA cannot obtain.

The LTMUA paper claimed that following a dissolution,

\$3.5 million currently in the LTMUA's savings fund could be used "for anything" by the township.

Voll said the ordinance for dissolution specifically states any funds raised by the utility would stay with the utility. He said it would be illegal for the township to absorb into its general account any surplus utility funds.

Voll addressed a statement in the LTMUA paper that claimed rate hikes were in order for water/sewer customers if the LTMUA were dissolved and sold to a private for-profit company. He said there was no intention of selling the LTMUA.

"If it is self-liquidating, therefore self sufficient, what would be the purpose to sell it?" he asked.

# Cape May Point getting set to host Lifeguard Challenge

By BETTY WUND  
Special to the Star and Wave

Cape May Point is gearing up for its 7th annual Women's Lifeguard Challenge at 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 28, on St. Peter's beach.

"It's always a lot of fun," Borough Commissioner Robert Moffatt said at a July 10 meeting.

The commissioners are concerned with the health of the beaches following the discovery of debris on the strand. Residents and lifeguards expressed concerns about the safety of the beach, especially with the challenge coming up. Moffatt presented the board

and audience with samples of the type of debris that are a concern. Everything from cigarette butts to boards with nails has been found on the beaches. Raking the beaches is one process that is used to clean the beaches. Raking is done with a machine that digs below the surface of the sand. Picking is another process. It involves removing debris by hand.

"We are committed to picking the beaches rather than raking the beaches," he said.

During a recent cleanup, enough debris was recovered that it filled the back of the borough's new 5-ton truck, Moffatt said. The cleanup will

be done again before the challenge, he said. It may give an indication whether the debris is from winter storms or was recently deposited.

Audience member Emelia Oleson said big clumps need to be dug out. They are dug out with a backhoe, according to Moffatt.

"Will the whole beach be cleaned or just St. Peter's beach?" Oleson asked. "I have a problem with raking. It is an environmental issue. The dunes are vital to the health of the beach. Large sand clumps keep the lighter sand from blowing away. I think it (the

See Challenge, Page A3



Police Chief William Mastriana holds the Bible as Township Clerk Julie Picard (not pictured) administers the oath of office to Mike Nuscis, who was sworn in as a Lower Township police officer July 10 after graduating from the 44th class of the Gloucester County Police Academy.

# New officer joins the ranks of Lower Township police

Mike Nuscis was sworn in as a Lower Township police officer July 10 after graduating from the 44th class of the Gloucester County Police

Academy. Nuscis was one of 26 recruits who completed the 17 weeks of training to represent Lower Township among seven

counties, as well as the state park police and Delaware River Port Authority.

For Nuscis, who is expecting his first child with his wife this fall, the late nights, the hours of travel, the classes of criminal justice theory and the physical exhaustion from time spent running and doing pull-ups finally paid off when he got his orders to report for patrol duty.

"I'm looking forward to getting to work," he said.

Township Manager Mike Voll, who attended the graduation ceremony along with Police Chief William Mastriana, Capt. Thomas Beeby and Lt. Patrick Greene, congratulated Nuscis on a job well done in the academy and wished him well in his work with the Police Department.

The ceremony at Rowan College of Gloucester County honored the graduates, who are about to serve law-enforcement agencies in areas including Burlington, Cape May, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Monmouth and Salem counties.

Academy director Fred Madden — a retired State Police lieutenant colonel and current state senator — served as the event's emcee. Paulsboro Police Chief Chris Wachter was the keynote speaker. Nuscis, who was class president, also received physical training awards at the graduation ceremony July 9.

Nuscis will take part in a formal swearing in and badge-pinning ceremony at 6 p.m. July 21 at Township Hall, located at 2600 Bayshore Road.

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