

Lear challenging Mahaney

Continued from Page A1

message about the city and its future.

Lear said continuing in public service is a natural progression of his career. He said his emphasis is on common-sense administration and teamwork.

"Common-sense administration rests on the beliefs that we will conduct Cape May's business in the most mature, respectful and accountable way," Lear said.

Lear said injuries occurring in the surf zone of the city's beaches must be addressed. As a lifelong resident, he said he does not recall such injuries happening here in his youth.

He said he is not only concerned about neck injuries but lesser injuries being suffered by bathers.

Lear contacted U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo, Sen. Cory Booker and Sen. Robert Menendez asking for their support and guidance to make Cape May a demonstration beach not only to solve the city's beach injury problem but also to aid other towns with surf zone injuries.

"We all realize we need the beach fill to protect the city," he said.

Lear said he believes it is time for the city to address its insufficient supply of

parking spaces. He said he would listen to what the community sees as a solution. He said several locations have been discussed as locations for a parking garage, including Perry and Bank streets.

"It would help the business community and we want to make sure the cost is not placed on the taxpayer," Lear said.

The city will need a new fire station in the future and Lear is suggesting a parking garage could be built on city-owned property at that location adjacent to the Franklin Street School, with the fire station moved to a new location. He said the location would be close to the mall and beachfront and reduce traffic circulating around the mall searching for a parking space. Lear said a garage at that location could also help parking on nearby side streets.

Another issue concerning Lear is whether the city is following procedure for its council-manager form of government. He said he believed the city has gone in the wrong direction with the city manager not fulfilling his role and the mayor acting as city manager.

"We want to get the City



LEAR

Council back to what the voters installed here and let the city manager do his job," Lear said.

This form of government calls for five equal council members with the mayor having a few more responsibilities such as signing documents, he said.

Lear said he is concerned how much Cape May is spending on legal fees to address a number of lawsuits. He notes the city continues to spend money on a lawsuit from former police chief Robert Sheehan. Lear said he believes Sheehan will win his case and be reinstated as chief of police.

As mayor, Lear said he would look at the financial records of Convention Hall to determine if the facility was profitable or operating at a loss.

"We also want to make it more accessible to the public," he said.

Lear said community groups have expressed interest in using Convention Hall.

Residents have suggested the Franklin Street School, which needs at least \$2 million in renovations to open, be used as a community center. Lear

said the city may need to assist the Center for Community Arts in finishing the project.

"We can't just let in language there," he said.

On the issue of residents requesting a ramp to offer accessibility to the Cape May Post Office, Lear noted it is not only difficult for seniors or those with disabilities to enter the post office but also those pushing strollers. He said his research has found other post offices from the same era and design that have ramps. Lear questioned why the mayor and City Council did not support a ramp for the post office with the exception of Shaine Meier.

Lear said he would convene quarterly town hall meetings in Convention Hall to listen to the public.

"Many citizens have expressed to me their desire to have a greater voice in the decision-making process in the city," Lear said.

He said in the current format of regular council meetings, many citizens feel that they are not given ample opportunity to voice their concerns or to ask follow-up questions of council. Lear said he wanted that to change and have the city avail itself of the valued input of the many talented residents.

Congressional meet, greet

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — The Cape May County League of Women Voters is hosting a meet and greet of candidates for the 2nd Congressional District seat from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 29, at Sand Barrens Golf Club, 1765 U.S. Route 9 in Cape May Court House.

All seven candidates have been invited to attend. Incumbent Frank LoBiondo, David Cole, John Ordille, Gabriel Brian Franco and

Dr. Steven Fenichel all plan to attend.

Each candidate will have an opportunity to address the audience and discuss their platform and pertinent concerns regarding the 2nd Congressional District.

A light continental breakfast will be available. The event is open to the public and there is no cost to attend. For more details or to contact the League of Women Voters, visit capemay.nj.lwvnet.org.

Freeholder debate Oct. 26

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — The Cape May County League of Women Voters and 98.7FM, WCZT The Coast (Coastal Broadcasting System) radio station are co-sponsoring the 2016 Cape May County Freeholder Debate from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 26, at the Old Historic Court House Building on Main Street in Cape May Court House.

Republicans Gerald

Thornton and Marie Hayes and Democrats Daniel Kurkowski and John Amehauser have all agreed to attend.

Questions for the candidates can be submitted in advance for consideration and may be emailed to the League of Women Voters at capemay.nj.lwvnet.org under the tab "Contact Us" and addressed to Corinne Robinson, Voter Services director.

Mahaney facing Lear

Continued from Page A1

before Hurricane Sandy," he said.

Mahaney said it gave the city priority for state and federal funding that the city didn't have when he came back into office.

On a question of what the mayor would like to achieve if re-elected, he said the city needed to continue its emphasis on keeping the town secure from storms and two feasibility studies are ongoing. The city is looking at whether it needs more pump stations.

"We will continue our program to make the town affordable," Mahaney said.

He said over the past eight years, the city has emphasized economic growth, extending the tourist season to 10 and a half months and giving businesses a chance to be solvent and to provide more full- and part-time jobs for residents.

"We have an emphasis on identifying buildings and sites where we can build more affordable housing or modify housing for young families," Mahaney said.

He noted the tax increases in the past five years have averaged less than 1 percent and this year's tax increase was zero, which he called very rare. Mahaney said \$14.8 million in grant and rebate money was brought in, with major capital improvements accomplished without putting it on the taxpayers. He said any tax increases in the next five years could be wiped out.

Residents and tourists are concerned about the slope of the beaches and a number of injuries to bathers in the surf zone. A recent Philadelphia Magazine story was critical of how the city is handling the problem. Mahaney said the story was politically oriented, not accurate and not balanced.

He said Cape May's beaches are not unsafe.

A presentation the city made Aug. 25 — available on the city's website — showed that Stockton University and the Army Corps of Engineers noted there is no correlation between the beach slope and head and neck injuries and a study of Delaware beaches has shown that since 2010, Mahaney said.

He said in the past when someone was injured, they were put on a body board and a collar was placed on them. They were transported to the hospital and it was recorded as a C-spine injury, "but now we don't know what the injury is because of HIPPA," Mahaney said.

"We have set up an agreement with Cape Regional Medical Center to keep data on the injuries without revealing a person's name because we want to reduce the number of all types of injuries," he said.

On a question of how he would deal with former police chief Robert Sheehan's lawsuit against the city, Mahaney said Sheehan was given a one-year contract as chief of police and when the contract was over, the vote by City Council was not to appoint him permanently.

"Sheehan sued the city; we'd like to resolve the lawsuit and these cases are usually settled," Mahaney said. "We have asked his attorney to give us an offer and I don't believe it will go to trial."

Stockton University is no longer interested in providing funding to restore the Franklin Street School. Mahaney said Stockton bought a former casino in Atlantic City and ran into major problems. He said the university still has an interest in the school but not the \$2 million needed to bring the building up to code. Ma-



MAHANEY

haney said his first priority was to get a partner to invest the money and that he has reached out to other potential partners. He said a second priority was to get a grant to make the former school a community center.

The need for more parking spaces has been an ongoing problem in Cape May. Mahaney said the city was identifying publicly owned sites and private sites and whether there is a willing seller, not imminent domain, where parking can be added. He said over the past eight years he had talked to a number of parking companies but they all begged off because Cape May was a seasonal town, but now with a longer season, they see validity in it and they have more interest.

He said the city needed five or six solutions to take the load off congestion. One solution is the use of the elementary school parking lot during non-school hours. Mahaney said the use of the shuttle has quadrupled in the last four years and use of bicycles needs to be increased.

On whether reducing the

scope of Convention Hall to decrease construction costs caused it to be below flood elevation standards, Mahaney said what the city found when it applied for flood insurance was the lowest horizontal member of the infrastructure was too low: the fire suppression and mechanical room. He said the contractor was following the architect and the engineers and they were looking at the finished floor level on the first floor and that is what they were measuring. That was only one of the criteria, he said. There were also criteria for the lowest member — that would be the support beams — and they were put too low, Mahaney said.

"The outcome is the building is structurally safe and it survived Sandy and all the other storms," he said. "We had no damage, but when we acquire flood insurance, it costs us more money so we have taken legal action."

He said he expected the case to be settled out of court.

"What we are looking for is renovation of any aspects that can be changed plus a financial settlement for the increase in the cost of the flood insurance and attorneys fees," Mahaney said.

OYSTER BAY
RESTAURANT & BAR

GREAT STEAKS and SEAFOOD

OPEN Wed. – Mon.

Bar Open at 4pm
Dinner from 5pm

615 Lafayette Street • Cape May, NJ • 609-884-2111

FISH MARKET

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21ST
thru SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23RD

LITTLE NECK CLAMS
steaming clams
\$2.95/DOZEN
\$12 FOR 50
\$24 FOR 100

NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER
cold only
\$7.25/QUART

TAKE OUT SPECIALS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 21ST
thru SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22ND

FRIED OYSTER PLATTER
served with baked mac & cheese and stewed tomatoes
\$12.25

BROILED OR FRIED CRABCAKE PLATTER
served with baked potato or french fries & coleslaw
\$11.95

APPETIZER SPECIAL

CLAMS CASINO
\$7.95

Phone Ahead to Order
609-884-3064
The Lobster House
FISHERMAN'S WHARF in CAPE MAY
www.the lobsterhouse.com

FIBER ARTS YARN SHOP
We'll get you excited about YARN!
"Progressive" ALPACA Sale
Your Discount is the Day's Date
Classes begin Sat. 9/24 - SIGN UP NOW!
Follow us on FACEBOOK
315 Ocean Street • Cape May
609-898-8080

FRANK THEATRES
OCT 21ST THRU OCT 27TH

RIO STADIUM 12
3801 Rt. 9 South #1 • Rio Grande, NJ 08242
Additional Pricing for 3D Features
24 Hour Movie Hotline 609-889-4799

** Kevin Hart: What Now? R 11:20, 2:00, 4:20, (6:50, 9:30)

** Inferno PG-13 (7:00, 9:40)

** Jack Reacher PG-13 11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50

Girl on the Train R 11:00, 1:40, 4:10, 7:00, 9:35

Deepwater Horizon PG-13 11:40, 2:20, 4:50, 7:30, 9:55

** The Accountant R 12:10, 3:40, 6:40, 9:40

** Boo! Madea Halloween PG-13 11:30, 2:10, 4:40, 7:20, 9:45

** Oujia PG-13 11:50, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40, 10:00

2D Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children PG-13 12:00, 3:30, 6:30, 9:20

** No Passes • () Fri • Wed • () Thursday

STURDY SAVINGS BANK

Your Business Lending Team

Call Us Today And Apply!

609.463.5240

Member FDIC www.sturdyonline.com