# City Council seats two new members, moves meeting time



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

In addition, Mullock

thanked the citizens of Cape

May for electing him to coun-

voters of Cape May for elect-

ing her to council. She said

she was eager and ready to serve and looked forward to

working with the other mem-

"I think together this coun-

cil can face any challenge and

find the best solution to those challenges," Sheehan said. Councilwoman Patricia

council to serve a deputy

mayor. A moment of silence

was held for former mayor

Gaffney, who passed away

bers of council.

Dec. 28.

Sheehan also thanked the

Deputy Mayor Shaine Meier receives his oath of office from Councilwoman Stacy Sheehan receives the oath of office from City Clerk Patricia Harbora on Jan. I at City Hall.

cil.

### **By JACK FICHTER** Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — Two new members of City Council received their oaths of office Jan. 1 along with a re-elected councilman beginning his second four-year term.

Newcomers Zack Mullock and Stacy Sheehan took their seats on council on New Year's Day in a packed City Hall auditorium. Shaine Meier received his oath to begin his second term.

Mullock thanked his wife, Hendricks was elected by Justine, "for picking up the slack" while he serves the

"If I listen to my wife's and councilman William G. advice, I will serve the city very well," he said.



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

state Superior Court Judge Louis Belasco.

under Gaffney's leadership

to choose an architect for

the project. He said he felt

honored to follow in the

footsteps of Gaffney and former mayor Jerry Inder-

wies Sr., who passed away

Gaffney were present at the meeting to celebrate the new

council. She described Gaff-

ney as principled, energetic

and a steward of the com-

Council reappointed Frank

Corrado as solicitor. Erin Burke was reappointed as

deputy city clerk. Hendricks

was appointed as a Class

Hendricks said she wished

in October.

munity.

Meier said the Public III member of the Planning Safety Building Advisory Committee moved forward Board.

Mullock was appointed to the Washington Street Mall Business Improvement District Management Company Board of Directors. In addition, he was appointed a council liaison to the Historic Preservation Commission. Meier was appointed as liaison to the Shade Tree Commission.

Hendricks was appointed as council liaison to the Environmental Commission. Michael Sorenson was appointed as municipal public defender. Sheehan was appointed as a regular member and council liaison to the Municipal Buildings and Properties Advisory Commit-



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE Councilman Zack Mullock receives the oath of office from his father, Robert Mullock.

tee and as council liaison to of the month. Work sessions the Pet Advisory Committee.

formerly began at 6 p.m. The Council approved starting second meeting of the month, its work session meetings at on the third Tuesday, will



## Hank's Sauce founders visit West Cape school

### **By JACK FICHTER** Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY -Two local entrepreneurs who turned a hot sauce recipe into a business and a restaurant in Sea Isle City told their story to students Monday at West Cape Elementary School.

Hank's Sauce principals Brian "Hank" Ruxton and Matt Pittaluga are partnering with the school on its new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) lab to teach plant science, food chemistry and the art of entrepreneurship to students in kindergarten through the sixth grade.

While both have worked in restaurants, surfed together and attended Flagler College in St. Augustine, Fla., where the original Hank's Sauce recipe was perfected, Ruxton has cooking expertise while Pittaluga is a graphics and marketing whiz.

The sauce is sold in more than 100 ShopRite and Acme markets along with They developed a second "We went right to farmsmaller outlets and online. Pittaluga said Ruxton would make the sauce for his own use but as he shared it with friends, its popularity began to grow. At the same time, Pittaluga as a graphics major needed a product for his portfolio. Ruxton describes Hank's Sauce as a hot sauce that is not overly hot. "I hated hot sauce," Pit-taluga said. "I was very bland. I didn't really like spicy, but there was something about the sauce I really thought was different, it was just packed with flavor.<sup>2</sup>



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

Hank's Sauce principals Brian 'Hank' Ruxton, left, and Matt Pittaluga share their knowledge of entrepreneurship and food chemistry with students at West Cape May Elementary.

cally sourced, Ruxton said. so they started a restaurant

After graduating from college, Ruxton and Pittaluga decided to move back rant had mostly end-ofhome to Sea Isle City and began making the sauce. the kitchen was needed to

from scratch, also called Hank's Sauce. The restauweek hours initially since

their own building and be-gan cooking in 200-gallon kettles, he said.

When starting a business, you must work hard and then work even harder, ac-cording to Pittaluga.

"And then when you are working harder, you have to work even harder," Ruxton said.

He said they are now able to make as many as 1,000 cases of sauce per day. While they have pondered applying to television's Shark Tank for greater expansion, Pittaluga said they would not want to give up a portion of their company to do so.

In addition to learning the business of specialty sauces, West Cape May Elementary students are experimenting with food chemistry, sustainable gardening and plant sci-ence in their enrichment and STEM classes. Older students, working with enrichment teacher Paige Calabro, are making their own West Cape May secret sauce.

The STEM lab is growing

The ingredients are lo-

flavor with cilantro and a hotter version with habanero peppers.

Developing a sauce called "Camouflage" was a trial-and-error method, Ruxton said.

"You're not always going to hit a homerun," he said. "You are going to mess up, and every time you mess up, you're going to learn from it."

Even with a great product, you must find a way to make people want to buy it, Ruxton said.

Necessity is said to be the mother of invention. The entrepreneurs needed a commercial kitchen in which to produce the sauce,

ers markets, festivals and things that were real cheap to get our product in front of people's faces," Pittaluga said.

He said a ShopRite executive purchased a bottle of Hank's Sauce at a farmers market, leading to the supermarkets selling the product.

Having contacts in commercial fishing, restaurants and bakery businesses locally also helped get their product in stores, Pittaluga said.

After a few years of producing everything by hand in 20-gallon pots and not finding a co-packer they liked, they constructed

Datil peppers from St. Augustine for Hank's founders and continuing to focus on the science of sustainable food, including how to remove heat from peppers.

The entire school grows in its own greenhouse and gardens. This year, with a focus on the Datil peppers, they will be growing tomatillos and other peppers, cilantro, arugula, lettuces, carrots, nasturtiums, different types of parsley and other produce.

Teacher Cindy Baldacchini said Ruxton and Pittaluga have demonstrated a start-up company does not have to be a tech industry.

### THE HARRIET TUBMAN MUSEUM OF CAPE MAY $\sim$ OPENING IN 2020 $\sim$

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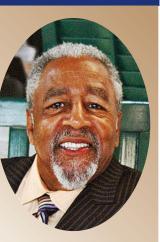
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