



HOUSE OF THE WEEK

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VILLAS COUPLE AWARDED \$2M. IN '13 EXPLOSION

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Cape May likely to settle with Prosecutor's Office

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

City sued, seeking removal of police department monitor

CAPE MAY — City Council went into closed session at the end of regular business at a June 1 meeting to receive an update from City Solicitor Tony Monzo on the city's lawsuit against county Prosecutor Robert Taylor. He said most of the closed session would deal with the city's litigation against the Prosecutor's Office but that some discussion of former police chief Capt. Robert Sheehan's lawsuit against the city could surface.

any action would be taken by council following its closed session.

Appearing before Superior Court Judge Christopher Gibson on May 22, Cape May presented its arguments why a monitor appointed by Taylor should be removed from the city's police department.

The city is arguing the Prosecutor's Office is interfering with its ability to communicate with police administration. Cape May currently has no police chief. City Council voted to demote Sheehan on March 3.

Resident Charles Hendricks asked if a settlement agreement was in place between the city and the county Prosecutor's Office "that we've all heard about." Mayor Edward Mahaney said the city has made no announcement of a settlement with the Prosecutor's Office.

Monzo said a "very productive meeting" took place with Taylor.

"The city's working on trying to resolve it," Monzo said. "The meeting was cordial, it's moving in the right direction, but to say there's a settle-

ment is premature at this point."

He said council had not been updated on any of the discussions.

Resident Michael Costello asked whether council ever approved the city's action of filing suit against the prosecutor. Monzo said council approved a resolution authorizing the hiring of special counsel. He said it was an administrative matter.

"The initiation of a lawsuit does not require a resolution from City Council," he said.

Resident Patricia Hendricks asked

if Monzo or a city official asked Gibson not to render a decision while the city negotiated with the prosecutor. Monzo said that request was made at the suggestion of the county prosecutor. He said the request was conveyed to the judge's secretary and no response had been received.

"When an inquiry was made this afternoon as to the status of the case, the judge's chamber issued a statement that it was pending settlement," Hendricks said.

Monzo said a request was made for the judge to withhold a ruling that

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Some object over time of meeting on beach rules

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

VILLAS — Residents and two members of Lower Township Council complained during a June 1 council meeting about scheduling a special council meeting at 4 p.m. Monday, June 8, when many residents are at work and not able to attend.

A public hearing and a vote of council is scheduled on revisions to the township's beach ordinance, which includes a ban on walking dogs on the beach from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the summer season and prohibits alcohol consumption on the beach.

The ordinance was tabled for further consideration at a May 18 council meeting.

Deputy Mayor Norris Clark said he was disappointed a decision was made to hold a special meeting at 4 p.m. after council moved its meetings one hour later to 7 p.m. this year "to give everybody an opportunity to come to the meetings." He said the special meeting was not likely to draw a big crowd.

"At our last special meeting we only had one person show up," Clark said. "I just don't

See **Beach rules**, Page A3



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

School board honors LCMR basketball team

The Board of Education honored the Lower Cape May Regional High School girls basketball team May 28 for its record-setting season of 28 wins and three losses en route to the South Jersey Group II championship. Senior Lauren Holden was also recognized for scoring 2,476 career points, a school record for both girls and boys.

County holding up West Cape May roundabout

By BETTY WUND
Special to the Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — It was hoped it would be done by this summer, but it never happened. Now construction of the roundabout in

West Cape May might not start in the immediate future.

Cape May County has not finished appraising the properties that will be impacted by the construction, Mayor Pam Kaithem reported at a June 3 Borough Com-

mission meeting.

"They said that they had the appraisers looking at the properties and could not give us a definitive answer as to when they would have

See **Roundabout**, Page A7

Budget cap hinders bid to hire new firefighters

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The graying of the city's population is diminishing the number of able-bodied volunteer firefighters and increasing the number of ambulance calls.

A fire department review committee appointed by City Council held its first public meeting May 26. The committee included council members Bea Pessagno and Shaine Meier, City Manager Bruce MacLeod and Fire Chief Alex Coulter.

At issue is the need for the city to hire more paid firefighters, which is complicated by the state 2 percent spending cap.

MacLeod said the Cape May Fire Department has been a blended mix of full-time staff and volunteers for years. He said what brought the committee to the table was the reality of the volunteer corps shrinking in size, not necessarily in number of individuals but in the number of volunteers that are able to serve as a front line firefighter.

MacLeod showed a PowerPoint graph of volunteer staffing of the fire department during the past five years. In 2010, the fire department had 23 volunteers, of which 12 were certified in using self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), passed a

See **Budget cap**, Page A6

County, Atlantic City Electric prepare for worst

By JACK FICHTER
Cape May Star and Wave

AVALON — Preparation is the key for the safety of the public and less loss of property during a weather-related emergency.

That point was driven home when the Cape May County Emergency Management Office and Atlantic City Electric held a conference attended by first responders and the media May 28 at Avalon Community Hall.

County Freeholder Director Gerald Thornton noted Cape May County was the sixth-most-difficult county in the nation to evacuate. He said the county's population swelled from 96,000 in winter to 750,000 to 800,000 a week in the summer season. The county was successfully evacu-

Tips for weathering the storm.

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ated in 36 hours during Hurricane Irene, Thornton said.

County Emergency Management Director Martin Pagliughi said the county had to stand on its own for the first 72 hours in an emergency before aid comes from outside agencies.

"Each municipality and each organization that has an emergency plan has to stand on their own for at least 72 hours," he said. "The Red Cross cannot respond that fast. FEMA will not come in. They're

all long-range-recovery type organizations, and that's where I think during Hurricane Sandy, Cape May County made out pretty well because the municipalities understood that."

Pagliughi said not everyone in the county had the ability to evacuate. He said most municipalities have a database of residents with functional needs and senior citizens that don't drive.

"I'm trying to fashion what we're doing in the county after what we did in Avalon about 10 years ago," he said. "We made every person in the municipal government part of the emergency plan."

"Everyone has a job in an emergency, from the tax office to the borough clerk, all the way to public works," Pagliughi

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE
Cape May County Emergency Management Director Martin Pagliughi addresses first responders during a conference May 28 at Avalon Community Hall.

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Serving Dinner from 5pm

CAPE MAY RESTAURANT WEEK MENU \$35

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Grilled Shrimp and Oaxaca Guacamole
Spring Spinach and Strawberry Salad
Almond Crusted Goat Cheese with Fresh Pickled Beets
Roasted Ramp and Scallion Vichyssoise Soup

Fresh Berry Shortcake with Whipping Cream
Classic Creme Brulee

Entrees
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Grilled Organic Meyers Steak
Seafood Cioppino with Garlic Rouille
Plancha Seared Chicken Saltimbocca

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