Lower hires architect for police station

By JACK FICHTER

CAPE STAR-AND-WAVE

VILLAS — Lower Township Council approved a $192,000 professional services contract May 5 with architect Dan Beck of Haines, Brock, and Beck Architects of Cape May to do preliminary building and land use plans for a new police station next month in Villas.

The federal funding is linked to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Small Community Airport Improvement Program. It will be used to upgrade the airport to make it more user friendly.

The vote split, with three independents on council — Mayor Michael Beck, Councilman John Clark, and Councilwoman Lisa Shousky — voting in favor and the two Republicans — Councilman Tom Conrad and Erik Simonsen — voting in opposition.

At an April 21 meeting, council agreed to hire an architect to design a new police operations building. At that meeting, Conrad and Simonsen asked the borough to consider the consolidating the police and fire department headquarters before they would vote on a bond ordinance to finance the construction.

Shousky said the estimated cost of a new police headquarters would be $13.5 million plus a possible $200,000 for site work.

At the May 5 meeting, Conrad said he felt the council was being asked to vote on a resolution without knowing all the facts.

He said that if the council would have the presentation, he could vote for going forward with the project.

Conrad questioned the $192,000 price tag for a cost analysis on the police headquarters.

He said Shousky's argument of "gross dishonesty" was "boiler plate, it's one of the things that are put in proposals." This is the way schools are currently being funded, and the method to one based 100 percent on pupil enrollment so inaccurate and incongruent with the way the state funds the schools, he said.

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Beck said Shousky volunteered to be the purchasing agent for the Cape May County Regional Medical Center to receive federal funds for upgrade the county airport to receive federal funds.

Beck also questioned the timing of the resolution, stating the new police station would be built in Villas.

Conrad and Simonsen asked the borough to consolidate the police and fire department before building the police station.

Shousky opined that there was nothing improper concerning the purchase of the federal funds, but said Beck's point was in order.

Gelzunas said the resolution had received support from New Jersey Health Insurance Exchange (NJ Health) and the Cape May County Regional Medical Center to help Jersey residents apply for state-based insurance programs with the Eighth Federal Marketplace.

The New Jersey Hospital Association has received support from New Jersey Health Insurance Exchange to modernize the funding program of the Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital’s medicine program.

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The market for health insurance was not being driven by the Affordable Care Act because it was not available at Cape Regional Medical Center.

The Certified Application-Connectors Program, sponsored by the New Jersey Hospital Association, will provide information such as Social Security numbers, personal data, and state identification numbers for legal immigrants to vulnerable individuals who need help signing up for insurance or shopping through the Marketplaces.

Lower Township Board member Mike Vied said the estimated cost of a new police headquarters would be $13.5 million plus a possible $200,000 for site work.

At the May 5 meeting, Conrad and Simonsen asked the borough to consider the consolidating the police and fire department headquarters before they would vote on a bond ordinance to finance the construction.

Simonsen said he appreciated Shousky’s work, noting that he appointed him to the Building Committee, but the council did not receive a roll call vote (LPCL) and spoke with Township Purchasing Agent Margie Haines in determining that the district is not currently "consistent with the past methodology employed by the township amid at violation of the Local Public Contracts Law (LPCR), and spoke with Town- ship Purchasing Agent Margie Haines in determining that the district is not currently "consistent with the past methodology employed by the township amid at violation of the Local Public Contracts Law (LPCR), and spoke with Town-