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**Plan is not the cat's meow with state**

By **Christopher South**

CAPE May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY – A proposed referendum on liquor sales that would allow two liquor licenses for small villages in the First Legislative District, including West Cape May, is off the ballot, Mayor Pam Kaithern said.

Kaithern said a “filing error” has resulted in the referendum not making the ballot. Kaithern said unless a special election is held, the referendum could be delayed for as long as one year.

Kaithern made the announcement at a special meeting held Monday in Borough Hall. Kaithern was taking part in a panel consisting of borough solicitor Jennifer Russo-Belles, Cape May Police Chief Diane Torrection, and municipal attorney Leon Costello. Kaithern said the purpose of the panel was to provide answers to citizen questions on the two liquor licenses the borough is considering.

Based on population figures, West Cape May is allowed to offer for sale one Coca Cola, which permits on- premise consumption of beer and wine. The sale of liquor is for retail sales of alcohol. The heart of the board of commissioners has said repeatedly their goal is to allow for both to be offered to the citizens of the borough for the distribution of retail, package, and on-premise liquor.

The commissioners have also discussed the quality of life and told us two liquor licenses offer a public referendum. The commissioners could decide the issue by local legislation rather than making a public decision, but decided against that option.

Kaithern said the public has started to talk to them on Election Day to discuss the impact it has had on their neighborhood and they had hoped to address the impact of the license issue.

The proposed liquor license will not make the ballot.

The first question asked was how the commissioner arrived at selling prices for the license. The license would be sold at $3,000. The commissioner did not know the amount of the licensing fee, but the majority of the commission has stated that if the license is approved, the amount would need to be put toward the alcohol law.

The borough predicts that the borough also needs to receive around $2,000 per year in renewal fees for the license.

Kaithern said what would happen if the public fell below the minimum. Russo-Belles said the license would not be accepted.

In response to another question, Kaithern said the borough has not formally approached West Cape May businesses with regard to them finally talking to a liquor store. Some other than an existing town, state and local agents over the decision. Christian Peter Bosco said that the time for them to make a decision about bringing your own bottle (BTO) policy. It is decided if a minimum number of votes (all registered voters were present) were cast for the resolution, the resolution could pass or fail by a simple majority.