

# Cape May City limits public comment to 3 minutes

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY – Cape May City Council adopted a new public comment policy, Tuesday, which will limit members of the public to three minutes of comment and will prevent the public from engaging city council members in dialogue during the meeting.

The new policy, which was put into effect immediately, was explained by Deputy Mayor Niels Favre at the beginning of the meeting. The new policy says:

1. The public comment period will be limited to three minutes (per speaker).
2. The city clerk will monitor the three-minute time limit and it will be strictly enforced for all individuals seeking to speak at this time.
3. An individual will be allowed to address the council only once during the public portion of the meeting.
4. The mayor will indicate to the public what the policies are concerning public comment, prior to the comments being initiated.
5. Council members will refrain from making any comments or respond to any

statements made by the public until after the person has finished his or her comments.

6. A statement will be made indicating that, should anyone from the public wish to ask questions of the council or seek an opinion, they should contact the individual council member(s) before or after a council meeting to get that member's opinion or comments on certain issues.

The motion to adopt the new policy was made by Councilwoman Linda Steenrod and seconded by Councilman David Craig.

"We've all been talking about the fact that there

needs to be more consistency in the public comment portion," Steenrod said.

Some individuals, Steenrod said, speak at length, after which others end up being told to keep their comments brief because the meeting is running long. Steenrod said rather than limiting free speech, the council is trying to make the public comment time more courteous and consistent, and to make the speaker be more focused in his or her comments.

"We're trying to take a more positive and consistent approach to give everyone a chance to speak," she said. "Some people are told at the end of the night to make it short and that's not fair."

Steenrod said part of the new policy means city council members would not be interrupting the speakers during their three minutes. At the same time, council members will not respond to any questions or comments during the three-minute time period.

"We want to know how people feel, but this is not a time for grilling us," Steenrod said. "We want people to give us opinions on what's being discussed, or will be discussed, or will be acted on. I think it's a step in right direc-

tion."

The new policy was almost immediately challenged by resident Christine Miller, who asked every council member to state whether or not they had given city manager Lou Corea the authority to investigate selling Cape May's desalination plant to a private operator. Miller said privatizing the desalination plant would "raise water costs through the roof."

"Are you done?" Favre asked, while Miller waited for a response.

Favre said city council would not respond until Miller was finished with her comments and questions.

Miller said she would take the council's silence as a "yes."

When Miller returned to her seat, Favre said there was "no plan, nothing authorizing the sale of the desal plant."

"You can take that to the bank," Favre said. "You can put 17 books of the faith in front of me and I'll swear on them."

In other Cape May City Council news:

**Lawsuit settled**

City solicitor Anthony Monzo announced a settlement agreement over litigation between the city and

plaintiffs Kathleen Elwell and Janice Bieber. The plaintiffs, who Monzo said are her "call-in" employees with the Cape May Fire Department, were dismissed after the city created a nepotism policy in 2003. The two filed a lawsuit claiming sexual discrimination. The court awarded the plaintiff's \$175,000, of which the city is liable for \$30,000. Monzo said if the city had not agreed to the settlement it could have wound up paying the entire amount plus attorney's fees.

**Bond ordinance for new Convention Hall design passed**

City council passed Bond Ordinance 126-2007 authorizing the city to spend nearly \$1 million for the planning and design of a new Convention Hall. Corea said the cost was about 10 percent of the estimated cost of the entire project.

City council also tabled Ordinance 124-2007 giving the city manager the authority to close certain streets for public events until the January work session. Favre asked for the ordinance to be removed until the work session when the fire and police chief could attend the meeting and offer their opinions.



**SPEND A DAY IN CAPE MAY**  
**HOLIDAY SHOPPING ALONG THE CAPE**  
**UNIQUE GIFTS, GREAT FOOD, HOLIDAY SPIRIT,**  
**FRIENDLY PEOPLE AND GLAD TIDINGS**  
**ALL THE SHOPS ARE OPEN TO GREET AND SERVE YOU**  
**DURING THIS WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON**



**Whale's Tale**  
Jewelry • Gifts • Toys  
Cards & More  
312 Washington Street Mall  
Open Daily 10-5:30 PM  
Fri. & Sat. Evenings  
884-4808



**Madame's Port**  
Everything  
**20-50% Off**  
311 Washington Street Mall  
Open daily 10-5  
Friday & Saturday 10-9  
884-5858



**Tea By The Sea**  
Tea • China • Childrens Tea Sets  
Candles • & Gifts  
Mon-Fri 11am-4pm  
Sat & Sun 10am-5pm  
405 W. Perry Street  
**609-898-4832**

**The Butterfly Tea Room**  
Pamper Yourself,  
come in for an  
Afternoon Tea & Goodies  
  
Tuesday - Saturday 11-4  
Will Open For Private Parties  
Gift Certificates Available  
898-4550 • 109 Sunset Blvd.

Looking for a Special Gift  
**THINK ALPACA!**  
Come see our beautiful  
alpacas and shop at our  
farm store. We have...  
  
• Alpaca Yarns & Fleecce  
• Sweaters & Capes  
• Scarves, Hats, & Socks  
• Woven Throws & Handbags  
• Alpaca Fur Bears & Toys  
542 New England Rd.  
(N. Higbees Beach)  
Open Saturday & Sunday: 10-4  
609-884-0563

**FIBER ARTS**  
YARN SHOP  
  
Remember Gift  
Certificates for your  
Favorite Fiber Art-ist!  
541 Tilton Rd.  
Northfield, NJ  
641-8878  
315 Ocean St.  
Cape May, NJ  
898-8080

**Steve LaManna**  
Pianist  
PERFORMING IN CAPE MAY SINCE 1990  
PURE MUSIC PLAYED PASSIONATELY  
5TH CD LADY FAIR- SIGNING PARTY  
SATURDAY, DEC. 22ND 5-6PM  
AVAILABLE IN CAPE MAY • LISTEN TO MUSIC  
& ORDER ON WEBSITE  
FRIDAY & SATURDAYS- BROWN ROOM CONGRESS HALL, CAPE MAY  
**WWW.STEVELAMANNA.COM**  
609-861-2115

**THE CAPE MAY DAY SPA**  
— & HOLISTIC CENTER —  
607 Jefferson St. ♦ 609.898.1003  
www.capemaydayspa.com  
  
**The Victorian Lace Inn**  
901 Stockton Avenue ♦ 609.884.1772  
www.victorianlaceinn.com

*Get Ready for the Holidays!*  
  
**Treat your special someone with a Gift Card or a Gift Basket for the Holidays.**  
For the Perfect Escape...  
Enhance your get-a-way at Cape May's finest day spa featuring a range of superb spa treatments. Escape for a few hours or indulge in a full day of pleasure.  
For the Perfect Gift Basket...  
The Spa carries a full range of spa accessories, aromatherapy candles and oils, relaxation music, bath oils, hair and skin care products, mineral baths, Chai Tea and herbal tonics, with a selection of soothing spa products by Aveda and Phytomer.  
For the Perfect Get-A-Way...  
Enjoy a romantic get-a-way at our charming Victorian Lace Inn. Chocolates and champagne will be waiting for you when you arrive for your two night stay in one of our charming suites. In the mornings, join us for a scrumptious homemade breakfast, indulge in luxurious spa treatments, and enjoy dinner one evening at one of Cape May's finest restaurants.

## CM Stage final raffle days

CAPE MAY – Ever dream about lounging at a large Cape May beach-house for a week and bringing lots of your friends and/or family with you? Cape May Stage, in cooperation with local real estate offices, is offering such a fantasy thru a Vacation Raffle being held up until

Dec. 23.

Cape May Stage Board Member Dagmer Chew, the broker/owner of a thriving local real estate office, spearheaded a very unique opportunity for the Equity theatre this season. Through purchasing raffle tickets (one ticket for \$5 or three for \$10),

one lucky winner will receive a week's free vacation in 2008 at 205 Pittsburgh Avenue, Cape May. All proceeds from the raffle go to support the non-profit theatre's operations, and hopefully raise more awareness about the Arts in our Victorian vacation town.


"What better way to support Cape May Stage than to simply purchase a raffle ticket?" comments Chew. "If, or should I say when, you win, you will be able to share this fantastic home with up to 14 of your friends. Make it a college reunion party or a family reunion; just imagine all the great fun you will have."

Chew continues, "Even if you live in Cape May you can still enjoy a house retreat with your own company, have all the kids at once, and it would only cost the price of a raffle ticket. And, just think of the wonderful theatre organization that you are supporting. I encourage all of you to help support the local arts."

During the 2007 season local real estate offices acted as a conduit to make this raffle available to those visiting from outside Cape May County. Raffle tickets were offered to every vacationer renting through one of the local real estate offices this summer. The raffle tickets are still available to the public at these real estate offices. Cape May Stage will also continue selling raffle tickets at the box office before and after each production of the Stage's holiday comedy, "Every Christmas Story Ever Told!" This most-popular family holiday show is now running Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m. through Dec. 30.

The drawing will take place on Sunday, Dec. 23 before the show begins. Call (609) 884-1341 for tickets and further information.

**The Antique Doorknob**  
**CONTEMPORARY ARTWORK SALE**  
  
**FEATURED ARTISTS**  
Stan Sperlak • Melvin Miller • Matt Lively  
• Lewis Poole • Judith Anderson  
**"Original Antique Artwok also available for sale"**  
Wine & Lite Refreshments available every weekend from 1-4PM  
*Lighting/Hardware/Mantels/Stained Glass/Architectural Items*  
Thurs. - Sun. 11 - 4  
Monday Appts. Only  
Closed Tues. & Wed.  
600 Park Boulevard  
West Cape May, NJ  
www.theantiquedoorknob.com  
**609-884-6282**

*Home for the Holidays*  
  
**M.P. Myers**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY** *Family Portraits*  
*Gift Certificates Make Perfect Gifts!*  
www.mpmymersphotography.com - 884-6354



**Salt Water Taffy • Fudge • Macaroons • Mint Rolls • Chocolates • And More!**  
**A Huge Selection of Delicious Candies available**  
**\$3.00 OFF**  
Your Candy Purchase of  
**\$25.00 or more**  
Valid in store only Exp. 12/31/07

**Want to Avoid Last Minute Shoppers?**  
**Shop At**  
**Shriver's**  
**Salt Water Taffy and Fudge**  
9th Street & Boardwalk, Ocean City  
**www.shrivers.com**  
**We Make Gift Giving Easy!**  
**Open through the New Year, 7 days a week**  
**Free, Convenient, On-Site Parking**  
**We ship anywhere in the U.S.**  
**Gift Towers • Gift Boxes • Candy filled Tins • Christmas Candies • Christmas Gifts • Giftware • Corporate Gifts • Mailings**  
**Gift Certificates Available**  
**For Phone Orders or Store Hours**  
**609-399-0100**

**Cape May Stars&Wave**  
153 Years Old  
1854-2007  
600 Park Blvd. #28  
W. Cape May, NJ 08204  
PHONE: 609-884-3466  
FAX: (609) 884-8893  
Entered at Post Office in Cape May, NJ 08204 as a periodical (USPS 519020)

**SUBSCRIPTION PRICES:** By mail in Cape May County: \$22; East of Mississippi, \$25; West of Mississippi: \$29, Mail subscriptions paid in advance. Newsstand price: \$.50 per copy.

**PUBLICATIONS SCHEDULE:** Weekly, every Thursday.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address change to Cape May Star and Wave, 600 Park Blvd. #28, West Cape May, NJ 08204.

**ASSISTANCE:** For information on starting mail home delivery of the Cape May Star and Wave, call (609) 884-3466 weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.