

Save

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head out to the scene. "The first question we always ask when we receive a distress call is, 'Where are you?'" Fisher said. "You could lose communication at any moment, so you need to know that first. We don't ask what's wrong, who's hurt, what their condition is until we know

where they are." Fisher said if they only know the general vicinity of where the distress is coming from, a helicopter can be dispatched to assist. Crews arrived on scene with the medical equipment they felt was necessary. MK2 Ryan Steglich and Seaman Daniel Forman, who responded to the compound fracture vic-

tim, were forced to improvise when they weren't equipped with a long board or stretcher to carry the victim. Steglich quickly adapted to the situation and suggested his team use a thermal blanket from the med kit to carry the victim. "I throw them curve balls the best that I can. They sometimes don't know what

victim they have or their condition, so they have to do the best they can when they get out here," Fisher said. "They made the right call with the makeshift stretcher." Steglich, an eight-year member of the Coast Guard, said he has come across real-life medical emergencies similar to the one simulated during practice.

"I've experienced this, and I'm used to this drill and the real thing," he said. "It's just staying calm, using your training, and don't rush yourself. If you do it too quickly, you're going to miss a step. Keep calm and think about what you're doing." MK1 Pat Pietrolungo said a certified EMT, or guardian who is medically well trained,

typically goes out with each patrol. He said each boat is issued first aid equipment and can always radio in for support if needed. He said commercial fishermen, recreational boaters and others out at sea can feel safer having the Coast Guard on call, prepared and trained for various types of emergencies.

Costs

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has to go to the hospital, we try to get them out on electronic monitoring, that way the taxpayers aren't responsible for the bills," Schaffer said.

He said the sheriff's office took over transportation of juveniles and electronic monitoring of juvenile offenders. According to Schaffer, this resulted in eliminating positions for transporting juveniles and a reduction in beds required to house juveniles. Any beds exceeding the two contracted beds at Harborfields Juvenile Detention Center in Atlantic City cost Cape May County \$300 per day.

Schaffer said this year there were 1,399 total days served on the electronic monitoring of juveniles. Cost for the elec-

tronic monitors was \$8,177. In 2013, housing costs for juveniles would be between \$201,300 and \$419,700.

There were 3,408 new commitments at the county jail in 2013, an increase of 137, and 3,392 releases, which increased by 134.

Schaffer said the average numbers for January is around 260.

"Part of the reason we jumped is a couple snow days, the courts are closed and it's backlogged," Schaffer said. "In a month's period of time on an average we take in 320 inmates and release 320 inmates."

He said there were 3,814 inmate visits with family members in 2013. Of these visits, 2,102 were by remote conferencing.

Schaffer said Internet conferencing visitation in

January is 60 percent compared to 40 percent in-person visitation. He said this year with the inclement weather, Internet conferencing increased to 75 percent compared to 25 percent in-person visitation.

"We had more Internet visitation because of the weather. It made it easier for them to visit," Schaffer said.

Officer sick time usage decreased from 1,126 days in 2012 to 1,019 days in 2013.

Hospital detail overtime also decreased from 1,673 hours in 2012 to 706 hours in 2013. Schaffer said the move to 24-hour nursing at the county jail saved the county \$27,000 in overtime.

"Before, we used to be staffed from 8 in the morning to midnight. Now we're 24 hours with nursing there. Because of that, it cut down on

our overtime details because we don't have to send people to the hospital," Schaffer said.

The sheriff's office generated over \$1 million in revenues, including \$94,496 in donations to the Cape May County Animal Shelter.

According to the report, the county shelter had 686 cats and 408 dogs.

The euthanasia rate at the county shelter has dipped from last year, from 8.5 percent in 2012 to 8.2 percent in 2013.

"It's a public shelter, but it's a no-kill shelter now. We've been four years in a row under 10 percent which makes us a no-kill shelter and that's virtually unheard of for a public shelter," Schaffer said. "Ocean City (animal shelter) can turn people away when they're full, we can't. We have to take all of the

animals."

Schaffer said the sheriff's office uses the Guardian Tracking program, an early alert employee evaluation system that documents both positive and negative employee actions. There were over 1,356 entries made in the sheriff's office in 2013 compared to 810 entries in 2012. Schaffer said the Ocean City Police Department uses Guardian Tracking program.

Schaffer said his office is exploring the possibility of ending yearly reviews with employees and using the Guarding Tracking system to evaluate employee's progress.

"Any employee can sign on and see what's in their personnel file," Schaffer said. "We're trying to eliminate the evaluation system and utilize this system as an ongoing,

day-to-day verifiable evaluation system... It puts in the negatives as well as the positives."

The Power Data Management System (DMS), a paperless document retrieval system, has been with the sheriff's office for three years, Schaffer said. The system stores and retrieves over 1,000 documents. There are 71,196 recorded signatures in the system.

"Instead of having paper and you signing off for things, it's all done digitally," Schaffer said. "It gives us instant electronic viewing of any record"

He said the system has saved the county \$12.4 million in paper costs.

COC

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200 buses in September, or as many as 23 or 24 a day.

"We had to get help from the police for people to cross the street," Sauerzopf said.

The city and the police have also helped with the logistics of putting on the Dragon Boat Races.

"Dragon Boat Races is becoming a destination event, an excuse or reason to come back to Cape May," Goldstein said.

He said it has also become a way to feature non-profits.

"The people who participate in Dragon Boats, they have a

blast, even the volunteers. We have had people from (as far away as) Ocean City asked to volunteer. We have had the Middle Township school bus drivers. They told me they had so much fun," Goldstein said.

He said last year the Coast Guard Chiefs won the big prize.

Goldstein said both Mayor Ed Mahaney and the Cape May Police Department have complimented the event, and they are working on plans to alleviate parking issues.

"We want to help make it all enjoyable," he said. "We are trying to go more green

and encourage people to ride bikes to the event."

Goldstein said Harbor Fest is going to be bigger and better this year, expanding it to a two-day event, Sept. 27-28. Harbor Fest started about five years ago on a Saturday on Delaware Avenue. It has been growing, and this year they are hoping to add a small-boat building display.

"The Maritime Museum will be involved. We want to improve the educational component. I would like to see more activities going on, and more educational activities," Goldstein said.

Another annual chamber

event is Oktoberfest, held on Jackson Street. Goldstein said the goal is to make Oktoberfest more authentic, with a bigger food court and beer garden.

"I just want people to feel like they are at an Oktoberfest," he said. "There was no difference last year they are hoping to add a small-boat building display."

Goldstein said in 2015 the chamber and the city will put out a joint guidebook.

"That's a big thing. We will have one guidebook rather

than two," he said.

The chamber will continue to run Movies on the Beach. Goldstein said the city provides the revenue for the event and the chamber does the footwork. He said the public really enjoys the free movies, which attract up to 600 people for a good movie.

Goldstein said he would like to see the chamber doing a lot of the traditional chamber things, which includes ribbon cuttings.

"We would like to do more with businesses and non profits, as well. We donated money to Tiger Teens (at the Teitelman Middle School),

will help CCA, and do a bike run with Kiwanis.

A general list of Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May events are:

- Chili and Chowder Cook-Off, Feb. 2
- Spring Festival, April 26
- Fun Bike Ride, May 3
- Footrace, May 10
- Harbor Fest, June 14
- Movies on the Beach, First Thursday after July 4 running eight Thursdays
- Golf Outing, Aug. (TBA)
- Dragon Boat Races, Sept. 27-28
- Oktoberfest, Oct. 4

West Cape May Board of Commissioners authorize liquor license sale

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY - The Board of Commissioners passed a resolution Feb. 26 authorizing the sale of a Class C, or consumption liquor license, with a minimum bid set at \$525,000.

Mayor Pam Kaithern said

she contacted a local brokerage company to research what would be reasonable minimum bid for the consumption license. She said all the examples the broker provided her were out of the area and for substantially less money. The licenses sold for lesser amounts because the municipalities had multiple liquor licenses to offer, as opposed to just one.

When the Board of Commissioners last offered the consumption license for bid the minimum bid was set at \$650,000; however, the

borough did not receive any bids. In November 2011, the commissioners tried to make the license more appealing to potential buyers, by extending liquor sale hours from 10 p.m. to 11 p.m. and lowering the minimum bid to \$500,000. The license was put back on the shelf when a group of five borough residents formed the committee to gather petitions for a referendum on the issue because they did not agree with the change in hours.

The primary concern of the petitioners was that extending the hours could lead to late night noise in residen-

tial areas. The commissioners elected not to change the service hours, which remained 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The resolution passed on Feb. 26 says the deadline for the submission of bids, with all qualification documents included, is April 10 at 3 p.m. Bids are to be submitted to the municipal clerk at Borough Hall. The borough will open sealed bids on April 22 at 11 a.m. and announce and accept the highest qualifying bidder at its regular meeting on April 23 at 7 p.m.

Borough Solicitor Frank Corrado said following the

background check, which takes approximately five to six weeks, the bidder awarded the license would likely not receive it until late May or early June. He said the license year runs from July 1 to June 30, which means if the restaurant owner wanted to start serving alcohol immediately, they would have to pay the license fee of \$2,500 twice; once for the 2013-14 year and then again for the 2014-15 year starting July 1. However, the owner would not be required to do so and could wait until July 1 to start serving alcohol.

The sale of the license will be used for tax relief for borough residents, as was the liquor distribution that sold for \$615,000 in late 2011.

While other municipalities saw an increase in tax rates this year, this license sale helped West Cape May see a one-tenth of a cent tax rate decrease for 2014. The budget utilizes \$45,000 of the \$615,000 to provide tax relief. Residents voted in 2008 to require the money made from the licenses be used for borough tax relief over several years.

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WCM budget introduced with tax rate cut

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY - The West Cape May Board of Commissioners introduced the \$2.17 million 2014 munic-

ipal budget, Feb. 26, with a one-tenth of a cent tax rate decrease.

The small decrease is partly due to the sale of the borough's liquor distribution license in late 2011 for \$615,000. Commissioners agreed to use \$45,000 from the amount in the 2014 budget for tax relief.

At the Feb. 12 meeting, Borough Auditor Leon Costello said the borough can expect a tax rate of 33 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

The tax rate was 33.1 cents in 2013.

The borough could see even more tax relief if a liquor consumption license is sold. The borough is offering the license for sale with a minimum bid of \$525,000. The license, intended for a restaurant operation, will be awarded on April 23 if it receives a sufficient bid.

The \$2.17 million budget has \$1.5 million coming from tax levies. If adopted following the public hearing

scheduled for March 26, borough workers would see a 2 percent salary increase. The budget does not include any layoffs and would allow for the hiring of a new deputy code enforcement officer, Mayor Pam Kaithern said.

The borough's capital improvement fund has been increased from \$5,000 to \$10,000 and the budget also has \$270,000 in debt that will be retired within three years. However, the commissioners have already approved new debt for the purchase of two new vehicles - a \$550,000 fire truck and \$55,000 Public Works vehicle.

The tax collection rate went from 96.37 percent in 2012 to 97.08 in 2013. The borough is "miles within the 2-percent levy cap," set by state statute, Costello said.

He said the average assessment in West Cape May is \$450,000, so the average tax bill for a home would be around \$1,485. Costello said the budget contains only \$89,000 in state aid, but there was an increase in the ratable base of \$1.47 million. He said there was \$209,000 unspent from the 2013 budget and the borough will likely use between \$40,000 and \$50,000 of that amount.

The budget and is scheduled for a public hearing and potential adoption at the March 26 meeting at 7 p.m.

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