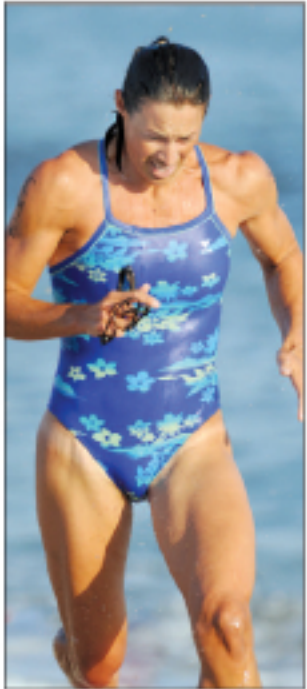


## INSIDE



### SPORTS

First Cape May Point Women's Lifeguard Challenge, **B1, 2**

### ARTS

Access to Art presenting Daedalus String Quartet, **A10**

SOMA NewArt Gallery showing Victor Grasso, **A11**

### COMMUNITY

Captain Kidd's annual Treasure Hunt is this Sunday, **B4**

### JULY TIDE TABLE

	HIGH	LOW		
	am	pm	am	pm
7/24	12:18	12:56	6:26	7:02
7/25	1:08	1:51	7:14	8:08
7/26	2:07	2:54	8:09	9:18
7/27	3:16	4:02	9:11	10:28
7/28	4:30	5:09	10:16	11:34
7/29	5:40	6:12	11:21	
7/30	6:44	7:10	12:35	12:23
7/31	7:41	8:03	1:30	1:21
	Full Moon		July 18	
	Last Quarter		July 25	

## Council rescinds hall bond, introduces another

New ordinance saves taxpayers about \$30,000 in referendum spending

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Cape May City Council voted 4-0 to rescind a bond ordinance appropriating \$10.5 million for a new Convention Hall, and then introduced a nearly identical ordinance.

During a special meeting held Monday, July 21, city council rescinded Ordinance 152-2008, which appropriated the money for the demolition and reconstruction of Convention Hall. That bond ordinance prompted a successful referendum petition campaign. Had council not rescinded the ordinance, Cape May would have been forced to schedule a special election around the end of August costing the city approximately \$30,000.

After the 4-0 vote to rescind the ordinance, with Councilman Niels Favre absent, council introduced bond Ordinance 161-2008 for the same \$10.5 million, but notes that it would only take effect upon a referendum scheduled for the Nov. 4 general election. Council's intention was to give voters the opportunity to vote on the ordinance, but save the cost of the special election.

Christine Miller, who was a supporter of the referendum movement, asked city council why they opted not to go ahead with the referendum.

Mayor Edward Mahaney said it was a matter of saving the city money it would have spent on a special election, held in the heart of the summer season.

"That expense would affect the taxpayers directly," Mahaney said.

However, Mahaney added that he believed Ordinance 152-2008 would have been defeated because the taxpayers haven't seen a final design, and don't know the projected use, location and final cost of the project. He said the plan was to rescind the ordinance and hold town meetings between now and

the general election. The first of two town meeting dates already scheduled will be held on July 29 at the elementary school.

"City council, individually and collectively...are putting our credibility on the front burner...and we will come up with a workable plan for a new Convention Hall," Mahaney said.

Mahaney said council has

not yet seen a final design, only some preliminary sketches, and the architect, Martin Kimmel of Kimmel Bogrette, would be presenting a third preliminary design at the town meeting. He said Kimmel presented two previous designs and was to prepare a third concept based on input from the previous two designs. Miller asked if the public would see

a design before the Nov. 4 election, and Mahaney said that was the goal.

Miller also said the city had authorized \$130,000 in payments to Kimmel Bogrette, and was informed the city could terminate its contract with the architect after the first \$100,000. Interim city manager Bruce MacLeod said he had informed Miller the contract was in three stages

and the city could indeed terminate the relationship with Kimmel Bogrette after any stage, but it didn't mean it would happen.

Miller said the \$448,000 contract with Kimmel Bogrette was still waiting for Mahaney's signature and asked if he intended to sign it. Mahaney said while he does

Please see Hall, Page A5

## Relaxing at the Point



Summer is the time for kicking back, especially during the recent heat wave. Above, a girl takes off her shoes and relaxes in a Cape May Point lifeguard chair. At right, Ventor's Debbie Bateman and Stone Harbor's Emily McVan are silhouetted against the sand and surf as they participate in the first Cape May Point Women's Lifeguard Challenge last Wednesday. For more on the triathlon, see Page B1 and 2.

Photos by David Nahan



## So just what is Convention Hall used for, anyway?

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - The replacement of Cape May's Convention Hall is big news locally, with polarized opinions about the proposed capital project - perhaps the largest since the desalination plant.

The city council passed a \$10.5 million bond ordinance for the project which was recently rescinded and reintroduced, but some estimate the cost could rise as high as \$15 million. Petitions were filed with the city clerk requiring a public referendum on the bond ordinance, which the petitioners believe is premature.

A final design has not been approved, and presentations in town meeting forums by

architect Martin Kimmel of Kimmel-Bogrette, are scheduled for July 29 and Aug. 14.

One of the central issues surrounding the project is whether or not to build a structure to provide for organizations and events currently being held in Convention Hall, or to expand the structure and its use potential.

A calendar of local events listed 29 events scheduled to use the main hall at Convention Hall. Other events listed their location as Convention Hall, where registrations were being taken, but did not utilize the hall, per se.

Of the 29 events on the 2007 schedule, 24 consisted of eight craft shows, six flea market/antique shows/auctions, four festivals or musical presentations, two trade

show type events, and two annual city events.

The remaining six events included the Presidents' Day Weekend Skating event, The Nature Center's Kids Can Fair, the Lower Cape May Regional High School Prom, Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast, and the Cape May Film Festival.

The 2007-2008 Cape May Convention Hall Weekly Schedule (fall/winter/spring) indicates there is roller skating on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. On Fridays skating is followed by a teen dance, and on Saturdays by country line dancing. Dog obedience classes were scheduled for Tuesdays and bridge was scheduled on Wednesdays, as well as occasional skating parties.

No events were scheduled on Mondays and Thursdays.

The U.S. Coast Guard also used Convention Hall for roller skating between November and Easter. Weddings and other special events, such as the Police Athletic League's Comedy Night, are scheduled on a case by case basis, as are city-sponsored town meetings.

Former city manager Lou Corea said Convention Hall has no debt and the operation is basically self-sustaining or self-liquidating. He said an expanded facility including retail and restaurant space would generate more revenue, but the building would now have to be paid for (debt service).

"It would not break even for some period of time," he said. Corea said at times the city needs a larger facility in which to hold meetings, and

that is why a town hall meetings on the design for Convention Hall are scheduled at the Cape May City Elementary School.

Another example was the town meeting on the Washington Street Mall renovation project, when it was determined that the seating in City Hall would be insufficient for the anticipated crowd.

"For the hearing on the Beach Management plan it was standing room only," Corea said.

Corea said regardless of what replaces Convention Hall the city will incur some debt.

Jeanne Powick, who worked on the petition drive to have a referendum on the bond ordinance for the Convention Hall project, said she would want to see the people get the kind of building they want. Her complaint is that the city's former administration and its Convention Hall committee had not considered various options.

"They have told us, 'This is it. What do you think?' We were not even told 'What do you think?'" she said.

Powick said no one has shown what has been proposed for a new Convention Hall would be profitable.

## New lifeguard headquarters an issue

By JOHN K. ALVAREZ

Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - The subject of the new lifeguard station was the topic of discussion at the Cape May City Council work session and regular meeting Tuesday. Remington-Vernick engineers Ray Roberts and Paul Martin spoke at the meeting about the project bringing city council up to date.

"Originally, the conceptual design was a two-story facility on the existing site," Roberts said. "That facility was to be air-conditioned on both floors."

During the conceptual design stage, there was a discussion about cost of the new structure. A decision was made to remove the air condi-

tioning from the locker rooms and multi-purpose rooms and only air condition the first aid room and the offices on both floors. The estimated cost for that project came in at about \$875,000, which was beyond the budget the city had set for this project.

A new station was redesigned to eliminate the second floor, which would have included an office for the lieutenants, a separate office for the captains and a locker facility with several lockers and two showers for the officers, restructuring everything to a one-story facility.

"The new building will have storage unit, first aid room, a multi-purpose room, and locker rooms for the men and women lifeguards," Roberts

said. There will also be no air conditioning in the headquarters. Instead, what would be put in is an exhaust system, which would exhaust air out and bring fresh air from the outside in and circulate through the building.

Also with the single floor design, the women's locker room would be reduced by 30 square feet while the men's locker room would be expanded by 40 square feet. This because of the addition of the extra lockers needed for the officers that would have been on the second floor. The first aid room, which was to be separate, is now in the hallway. The storage room, that was to be on the first floor, was converted to an office, and supposed to

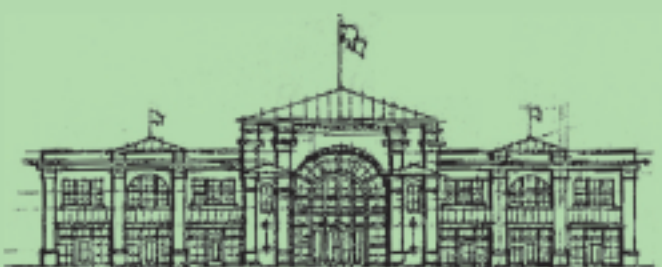
be on the first floor originally.

"What happened with the redesign was taking a much smaller space and reprogramming it with as many rooms as we possibly could," Roberts said. "That project, when budgeted, came in at \$460,000.00. So the second design reduced the cost by about \$415,000.00."

One of the complaints about the existing lifeguard station is the problem of water drainage in the locker rooms. "This water has not been accepted," Roberts said. "This work is being planned and the floors are to be ripped up after the season, and reconstruction will address the drainage of the drain so that next year

Please see Lifeguard, Page A5

## Two town meetings on Convention Hall scheduled



CAPE MAY - The public is invited to two upcoming meetings, Tuesday, July 29 and Aug. 14, to discuss a new Convention Hall facility. On the agenda are design, usage, financing, size, timetable and construction. Both meetings will be held at Cape May City Elementary School and will begin at 7 p.m.