

Ballot issue on West Cape May liquor license explained

By CHRISTOPHER SOUTH
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY - Only about 20 residents and others showed up to hear the latest explanation of the liquor license questions up for approval on the Nov. 4 ballot. West Cape May has been soliciting input for over a year on the question of offering two liquor licenses in the borough. Based on its population, West Cape May qualifies to offer one consumption license and one distribution license. The board of commissioners announced their intention in the beginning of the process to offer the consumption license to a restaurant. Currently no restaurant in West Cape May has a liquor license, but customers are allowed to carry in their

own wine or beer, as the case may be.

The other license would be to a retail store selling alcoholic beverages. The commissioners envisioned a wine shop, although local wineries are permitted to sell the wine they manufacture without a liquor license. The ballot questions would read:

1. "Shall the retail sale of all kinds of alcoholic beverages, for consumption on the licensed premises by the glass or other open receptacle pursuant to Chapter One of the Title Intoxicating Liquors of the Revised Statutes (s.33:1-1 et. Seq.), be permitted in this municipality?" The commissioners indicated answering yes would mean the voter supports the sale of a liquor license to be used by

a restaurant.

2. "Shall the retail sale of all of all kinds of alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption pursuant to Chapter One of the Title Intoxicating Liquors of the Revised Statutes (s.33:1-1 et. Seq.), be permitted in this municipality?" The commissioners explained a yes vote would be for allowing a retail liquor store.

3. "Shall 100-percent of the funds generated by the sale of any liquor license be used to provide tax relief for borough residents by being deposited into a dedicated fund?" Discussion at Tuesday night's meeting indicated a yes vote would mean the proceeds of the liquor license sales could not be spent on any particular project, or to buy any particular thing. As a dedicated

fund, the \$1.4 million anticipated from the sale of the two licenses would not be applied to a single year's budget. Municipal auditor Leon Costello said the revenue from the sale of the licenses would go into a fund, and the interest plus a portion of the principal would go to reducing the tax burden over a period of years. The exact number of years would depend on the sale price. Costello projected a savings of 2-cents on the tax rate each year for a period of eight to 10 years.

Asked why the borough would not keep the principal and use only the interest to reduce taxes, Costello said depending on how much the licenses sell for, the interest alone might not add up to much. He said \$1 million

might yield \$70,000 per year, which amounts to about one-cent on the tax rate.

Costello questioned the logic of putting \$1.3 million in an account and not using it for its dedicated purpose.

Costello was joined by borough solicitor Frank Corrado and Cape May Police Chief Diane Sorantino.

Corrado spoke briefly on the process, but said the borough has broad powers to regulate the licenses.

The commissioners have tentatively determined to offer the consumption license to a new or existing restaurant, and permit the serving of alcohol between 10 a.m. and 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Retail sales for the distribution license would be limited to 9 a.m. to 10 p.m., Monday through Saturday

and from noon to 10 p.m. on Sunday. The size of the facility would be controlled by local zoning, and the number of barstools in ratio to dining seats is yet to be determined.

Sorantino, who spoke on the impact of liquor licenses on law enforcement, said her department is involved in that qualification process, including an extensive background check. She said she was already asked about drunk driving in West Cape May.

Sorantino said nothing is guaranteed, but added there are 27 liquor licenses in Cape May and none in West Cape May, but approximately half the arrest for drunk driving made by her department are made in West Cape May.

Candidates debate

Continued from page A1

terrorist threats in that country.

"When history looks back on the Iraq war, they're going to say this was a tragic mistake for the United States," Kurkowski said. "This war has cost nearly a trillion dollars ... I would be in favor of ending the war at this point."

Kurkowski said the United States should have targeted Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan instead of invading Iraq.

LoBiondo said he was a critic of former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's tactics in Iraq and called for his resignation. LoBiondo opposes an immediate timetable for withdrawal in Iraq.

"I've made a number of trips to Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. I've got a chance to see the policy on the ground firsthand. Our military leaders, that my opponent would like to see make the agenda on how we do this the right way, have said repeatedly that if we are not careful on our withdrawal, that we will create a vacuum that the Iranians will fill," LoBiondo said.

LoBiondo said terrorists

have moved from Iraq into Afghanistan that he said shows the successes of American forces in Iraq.

Kurkowski said LoBiondo stood with President George Bush in support for the funding of the Iraqi war. He criticized LoBiondo on not voting for the troop surge in 2007.

"I believe the war was a mistake and we should not have gone in there," Kurkowski said.

LoBiondo teared up as he explained the reason for his missing the vote on the troop surge was to attend a family funeral.

"If that's not good enough for you, then I'm sorry I don't meet your standards," LoBiondo said to Kurkowski.

On the subject of medical care for soldiers returning from duty, Kurkowski said the country is not taking care of the wounded.

"We're seeing a type of injury that we have not seen in previous combat; the tremendous head injuries that soldiers are suffering when they return. There are injuries that are going to require care for a lifetime," Kurkowski said.

"Frankly, I don't think

Congress had budgeted the money to take care of veterans."

LoBiondo said the largest increase in appropriation for the Veteran's Administration in the history of Congress occurred over the last few years.

"The other thing that was done was recognition of the mental health challenges that many of our veterans are facing," LoBiondo said. "The VA in Philadelphia will hire 150 new people. We've increased access for community-based health care for veterans with the clinics we have in Vineland, Cape May and Ventnor."

LoBiondo said Congress is looking to expand the medical services for veterans.

Asked about affordable health care costs for American workers, LoBiondo blamed Congress for not dealing with the issue.

"We all want health care for everyone, but we've got to be careful how we do it.

If we're going to force universal health care on all of America, we're going to force small business and a lot of employers out of America,"

LoBiondo said.

He said Congress should work to make health care more affordable and available.

LoBiondo said he voted against the GOP and to override President Bush's veto on rejecting the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which provides health insurance for students and children.

He said he supports associated health plans for small businesses and community health centers which he said were "very successful" in South Jersey.

Kurkowski said 47 million in America don't have health care. He said people with health plans often have difficulty paying high co-pays or gaps in coverage.

He said emergency rooms are over-utilized and are the most expensive ways of providing health care.

"We have to get the 47 million who don't have health care covered and we have to improve health care for the rest of us," Kurkowski said.

LoBiondo said he doesn't support oil drilling off the New Jersey coast. He said

energy independence will be a "combination of a number of initiatives" that include oil drilling in 68 million acres under lease.

"We need a variety of different measures including alternative fuels, nuclear, conservation and fuel efficiency standards," LoBiondo said.

Kurkowski said he's against off-shore drilling and values beaches and the role they play in local tourism. He said an oil spill, if it occurred off the shore of another state, could wash up on New Jersey beaches.

Kurkowski said LoBiondo voted to allow off shore drilling.

"It's wrong for us to have offshore drilling. The future of our energy does not lie in drilling. It would take five to ten years to get any oil out of that. The future lies in developing good, clean alternative energy," Kurkowski said. "We ought to be harnessing the wind like we are doing right off Atlantic City. The federal government has done nothing to help that process along."

Two other congressional candidates, Jason Grover of the Green Party and Peter Boyce of the Constitution Party, attended the debate, but weren't allowed to participate.

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Notice to City of Cape May Water Customers...

All water mains serving the City of Cape May will be "flushed" to remove build up of rust and sediment in the pipes, thereby improving water quality, between Monday, October 20 & Wednesday, November 5, 7 am to 4 pm as shown below. While flushing does not cut off the supply of water, it does "stir up" rust. Customers should draw water for essential use before flushing in your area.

1. Mon. & Tues., Oct. 20 & 21: West of Perry
2. Wed., Oct 22: North of Mall, Perry to Jefferson
3. Thurs. & Fri. Oct. 23 & 24: South of Mall Perry to Jefferson
4. Mon. & Tues., Oct. 27 & Oct. 28 Jefferson to Madison
5. Wednesday, Oct. 29: North of Michigan, Indiana and Massachusetts Avenues.
6. Thurs. & Fri., Oct. 30 & 31: North of Cape May Avenue
7. Mon. & Tues., Nov. 3 & 5: South of Cape May Avenue

Scheduled by David A. Carrick, Water/Sewer Superintendent

2008 Water Main Flushing Schedule
Oct 20– Nov 05

Thank you for Your Cooperation

Questions? Dial 884-9575 or 884-9577