

Sewer rates

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MUA has fixed and variable costs. Of its \$28 million budget, about 83 percent are fixed costs, principally debt payments for capital improvements. The county charges consider both fixed and vari-

able costs, which include electricity, chemicals, etc.

Cape May pays 8.3 percent of the fixed costs. Norkis also said Cape May's rate has increased 4.27 percent over the past 10 years, almost double the aggregate rate of the county's municipalities. He

said this was based on summer and annual flow. Cape May has gone from producing 7.7 percent of the flow in 2002 to 8.3 in 2008.

"The 2009 flow is estimated to be less than 2002," Norkis said.

Norkis said the trend in barrier island communities in the county has shown a lower rate of flow than Cape May. A number of these island communities have seen spikes in flow rate over the weekends, but the same is not true for Cape May.

Councilman Niels Favre told Norkis the data shows Cape May summer flow in 2008 was the highest since 2002, yet the water use was down 18 million gallons.

"I having trouble making that connection," he said. "It sounds like other communities flow is less than ours."

City Manager Bruce MacLeod said Cape May's share could go up even though the flow is down, and Mayor Edward Mahaney said Cape May had its highest flow in 2004, but the rate the city was charged was just two-

tenths of a percent less than it is now.

"We've been affected less than other towns," he said.

Norkis also commented on the roll of storm water infiltration into the sanitary sewer system. Rainwater that finds its way into sanitary sewers is counted as sewage. He said Cape May is generally not affected unless there is a large rain event. However, he said there are always things that can be done to help prevent infiltration.

"Maybe it's time for you to do a study. But you should focus on the big problems. The little ones you'll never solve," he said.

"Little ones" could be homeowners who have a shower tied into the sanitary sewer system.

According to Norkis, the average share of the sewer charge in Cape May is \$293

per dwelling unit.

"It's less than \$300...I'm not upset about it," he said.

Norkis said he did not expect to see increased costs

and comments, and resident Jeanne Powick asked why year-around residents could not be charged a flat rate. She said the sentiment has been

'It's less than \$300 ... I'm not upset about it.'

-County MUA director George Norkis on Cape May's cost per dwelling unit for sewer service

for capital improvements in the near future, saying none of the MUA's facilities need to be expanded. In addition, they have been looking at using alternate energy sources as a means of cutting utility costs. The county MUA paid about \$2 million for electricity last year.

For the county MUA, only 12 to 13 percent of the budget goes to variable costs such as electricity. MacLeod said Cape May's situation is the opposite, with most of its cost going to variables.

Mahaney opened up the meeting to public questions

that the drivers of the cost should bear the cost, and it's the summer residents who are driving up the water use.

"The year-around people are not driving up the cost. We're offsetting the increase although we use the same rate all the time," she said.

Norkis said he hears from summer residents saying they are paying 88 percent of cost.

"They drive it," Powick said.

Powick was a candidate for council in the 2008 municipal election.

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Point meeting

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that an off-shore dredge should be arriving soon and is planning to pump sand onto the beach, primarily within the state park area, including some dune maintenance for piping plovers. He also noted that the Corps was surprised to find that significantly less sand than anticipated had been "lost," which necessitated work to accommodate some swimming areas.

One important concern to be addressed in this project is the possibility of finding munitions during the excavation, and Dixon assured the residents that while the chance of finding them during the work is quite slim, inspectors will be on-site to respond if needed. He also introduced Dave Sutter from Arthur R. Henry, Inc., whose

company is the sub-contractor for the job, expected to begin March 2, 2009, and end by mid-to-late April. Sand from both Coral Avenue and Whildin Avenue beaches will be re-located to the St. Pete's beach, and every effort will be made to inconvenience the public as little as possible during the work.

Dwight Pakan of the U.S. Corps of Engineers provided the second half of the presentation by giving some of the scientific data behind the studies, noting that using "advance nourishment" designed for long-term health of the beaches had worked too well, since the limited sand movement had resulted in swimming being curtailed in two areas.

Pakan and Dixon reminded the residents that "the beach returns to its [own] equilibri-

um" based on currents, waves and tides. Some questions were answered by the presenters on such topics as steepness of the slope, the possibility of reef placements and the variability of each beach cell responding individually.

Dixon concluded by alerting residents that the scope of the work was "up to you to decide," but he also stated that "our primary goal is to provide storm damage protection, recreational use is secondary" in this ongoing beach experimental project.

The second crucial issue of the meeting arose toward the end of the agenda, in response to a bill recently introduced in the New Jersey state legislature regarding the merging of small municipalities in the state and intended to reduce local tax rates.

Connie Mahon, Municipal Clerk, informed residents that a legislator from Mercer county is backing a bill to define and "consolidate 'doughnut municipalities and doughnut-hole municipalities' within 10 years" (Assembly Bill A-3690). Mahon explained that this bill would likely negatively

impact many of the state's 566 townships, boroughs and cities, including Cape May Point. Further, she noted that a "doughnut-hole" community is defined in this bill as one completely surrounded by another (a "doughnut" municipality) or having a portion of its boundary as a body of water or a state boundary, causing the area to be encapsulated.

Mahon expressed confusion about these definitions, as well as great concern and outrage about the legality and appropriateness of this legislation, on behalf of the Board of Commissioners and local legislators, sentiments that seemed to be shared by many of the residents at the meeting.

Consequently, Resolution 26-09 was unanimously passed, vehemently opposing the adoption of Assembly Bill A-3690.

Other borough business included discussion of plans to consider changing a portion of E. Lake Drive to one-way, an idea strongly encouraged by many and currently being supported by a 10-to-1 margin; the passing of Ordinance 560-09 raising the price of beach tags, primarily to fund lifeguards; correspondence in favor of Cape May Point's ongoing cooperative relationship with the county library system; and a strong reminder to residents from Commissioner Joe Nietubicz to be wary of door-to-door and telephone solicitations for money by unauthorized groups.

Commissioner Anita VanHeesyk explained that she had been chairing the meeting in Mayor Carl Schupp's absence due to his being on temporary medical leave. The meeting adjourned by 8:30 p.m.

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Energy

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the recommendations we could get the other 25 percent paid off."

McPherson said the township is committed to doing everything possible to make its buildings more efficient. She said the township has been looking at the cost of electricity for public buildings, adding that the public safety building is the township's biggest user.

MacLeod said Cape May is putting out requests for proposals in order to solicit one of the five or six vendors authorized to perform the audit.

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2/20	4:41	5:07	10:58	10:46	
2/21	5:29	5:53	11:42	11:32	
2/22	6:12	6:34		12:21	
2/23	6:51	7:11	12:15	12:56	
2/24	7:27	7:47	12:55	1:29	
2/25	8:02	8:21	1:34	2:01	
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