

# Stop

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said. Mayor Mike Beck said he didn't realize how easy his life was two years ago before having to deal with FEMA and the school funding issue. "But we are not going to lose this," Beck said. During the Feb. 18 Cape May City Council meeting, Jo Tolley of West Perry Street said she believed the city should not pursue its effort to change the school funding formula. She said Cape May County is one of the poorest counties in the state and the best way out of poverty is through a quality education. "Cape May city can't exist as an island. We're a part of this whole bigger community," Tolley said. "We're totally dependent on each other and to pull out of this education when we're the richer community and over 60 percent of our residents are

second family homeowners... We're not a poverty city." Tolley said she felt the city's fight was putting needless pressure on the school and its students. Bernard Haas of Illinois Avenue said he also disagreed with Cape May trying to alter the formula. "I just think it's so wrong, and if it's all about money, there's more to living here than money," he said. "If we're a richer community we really need to pay our fair share." Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman, who has been spearheading the fight to change the formula, said he didn't believe paying \$6.3 million annually or one-third of the school district's costs, isn't what he considers to be a "fair share," especially when having just one member on the school board representing the city. "We think that's nonsense," Wichterman said on the

behalf of council. "If we're going to pay a third of the cost, we should at least have a third of the members on the board." He said changing the formula is not going to harm the school or the quality of education the students receive. "We are not trying to hinder the school system one bit. This is simply a process that we have to go through before we finally end up in court," he rebutted. "Hopefully we're going to have some people in court with more common sense than what we're trying to deal with now." Wichterman said because of the current funding formula, Lower Township has been paying much less than Cape May. At the same time the township is sending the majority of the students to the school district, and has a stronghold on the school board. "For years they've been

getting a free ride, and we're putting up with it. And I'm not going to put up with it. As long as I'm going to be on this (council), I'm going to fight to get it changed," Wichterman said. Councilmember Deanna Fiocca weighed in on the matter and said the school district will not receive less money, but altering the formula will only change where the money comes from. She said the students and school district will not suffer because of it. "It's just that Cape May city is not going to be paying the brunt of it," she said. "All of the elected officials that are sitting here, we have a fiduciary responsibility to the people who elected us. They are the people who we are supposed to have in our best interests, not the people in Lower Township."



Cain Chamberlin/Cape May Star and Wave

## Officer Derrick Murphy sworn

Police Officer Derrick Murphy was administered the Oath of Office by City Clerk Louise Cummiskey at the start of the regular city council meeting Feb. 18. His wife, Regina, is seen, at right, holding the Holy Bible for Murphy's oath. According to Mayor Ed Mahaney, Murphy joined the Cape May Police Department seven years ago as a special law enforcement officer. The mayor said Murphy has had three other job opportunities over the last three years and he has turned them down, with no guarantee the city would be able to hire him full time.

"I appreciate that kind of loyalty and I think the other men and women in the police department do too," Mahaney said. Mahaney said Murphy, while working a part time security job recently in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., helped rescue a man from a burning building. A number of Murphy's fellow officers and first responders were in the audience at the meeting to witness the event. Capt. Rob Sheehan said Murphy needs to complete his training at the academy, but will be on patrol duty in no time.

# Food

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ness start from. We look at this as a great opportunity to bring what we do back home to highlight." The fare at the festival will be prepared under the instruction of Chef Instructor Ruth Lattore of the Atlantic Cape Community College (ACCC) Culinary Arts Program and Rusty Nail's Executive Chef Jim Burton. Lattore gave those in attendance at the press conference a sneak peek at some of the cuisine that will be offered at the festival by whipping up seafood hors d'oeuvres. There will also be professional cooking demonstrations at the festival featuring celebrity chef Mike Colameco and students from ACCC who will hold culinary workshops. Eight food stations will have different cuisine available. Stations include a (fish) taco station, soup station, broiled and fried flounder and shell fish platters, a seafood salad

station, a raw bar, a station devoted to underutilized species and a kid's station with hot dogs, chicken tenders and fries for those who aren't big on seafood, but just there to have a good time. The city's nonprofit co-sponsor, Cape May Forum, will organize the educational components of the festival with exhibits and presentations on topics like fisheries, ecotourism, aquaculture, nutritional benefits of seafood, water safety and stories from crewmembers and captains. Mahaney said there will also be fishermen skills competitions, which involve making fishing nets, shucking oysters and clams, and tying traditional fishing knots. Cape May Forum could potentially see some proceeds from the event, according to Mahaney, while the city will do its best to break even on cost. The mayor said he believes this event will be successful however and is the perfect way to "kick off the

summer's high peak mark" at the end of June. Mark Allen of South Jersey Marina, an organizer of the popular Harbor Fest, which is being held two weeks prior to the first Cape May Seafood Festival, said the city and Cape May Forum should utilize people who have been involved in making such large Cape May events successful to ensure this new event is just as prosperous. "They should really learn from what we've done with Harbor Fest. We've done a lot of the same things they're doing like cooking demonstrations, exhibits, presentations, all that stuff," Allen said. "They could really pick up on what we've done and use it to better this event." As for parking for the seafood festival, the city is offering free trolley service from remote parking lots, such as the Cape May Elementary School. The event will be held Saturday, June 28 from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., with a rain date

of Sunday, June 29. Raw and cooked seafood will be available for purchase in the tented area from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Live music will be featured at the festival, including a 7 p.m. free beach concert with the "Beach Bumz." There is no admission charge, but there will be seafood sold as well as locally brewed beer and wine. Mahaney said there will not be other vendors as they could take away from the primary focus on the fishing industry. The companies contributing to the inaugural Cape May Seafood Festival include Atlantic Capes Fisheries, Inc., Cold Spring Fish and Supply (The Lobster House), Lund's Fisheries, Inc., Lamonica Fine Foods (Cape May Foods), Dock Street Seafood, Bumble Bee, Surfside Foods and Cape May Salt Oysters. For more information, visit [www.capemayseafoodfestival.com](http://www.capemayseafoodfestival.com).

## CM budget includes 1.9-cent tax rate increase

By CAIN CHAMBERLIN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY - Cape May City Council voted to introduce the \$16.6 million 2014 Cape May budget, along with adopting a resolution permit-

ting a 3.5 percent spending cap, and establishing a cap bank. According to Municipal Auditor Leon Costello, the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) cap is one-half percent for 2014, limiting growth

in total appropriations to 2.5 percent. By statute, municipalities are allowed increase expenditures to 3.5 percent if they pass a resolution. City Manager Bruce MacLeod recommended the resolution be passed during his budget proposal in January saying, "the city should create the caps (sic) bank just in case the budget

rules change in the future, or there is a specific need to exceed the calculated cap." This increase in the cap allows spending under the COLA cap to be \$12,318,056. Costello said after expenditures, he expects a remaining amount of \$205,300. If adopted on March 18, the budget of \$16,635,198 would reflect a local purpose tax rate of 32.9 cents, which would mean \$329 for a home assessed at \$100,000. This is a nearly 2 cent increase from 2013 when the tax rate was 31 cents or \$310 for a home assessed at \$100,000.

Please see Rate, page A7

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**3D The Lego Movie PG 12:00, 2:30, 4:50, 7:15**  
**Winter's Tale PG13 9:40**  
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**\*\*3D Pompeii PG13 2:35, (7:40 Fri-Wed)**  
**\*\*300 Rise of an Empire R Thurs Premier 9:00pm**  
**Robocop PG13 11:35, 4:30, (9:35 Fri-Wed)**  
**About Last Night R 2:10, (7:00 Fri-Wed)**  
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## Point

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they could do the reassessment in 2015 for the 2016 tax books.

Point's debt could

disappear in two years

vanHeeswyk said if the borough does not borrow any money, it could be debt-free in a couple of years. "In a few years, if we don't add debt we will have it paid off," she said. According to vanHeeswyk, the borough anticipates paying the last \$216,200 owed on the fire truck in 2014. She said over the next two years the borough should be paying off surveillance equipment, a beach vehicle, the Public Works pole barn, some Public Works equipment, road improvements, portable radios for lifeguards and the last of the beach nourishment contract. She said as the local budget looks now, the local purpose tax would not be going up in 2014, and the borough would have a surplus of \$400,000.

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