

# Taxes

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Diamond Beach. A committee has been formed to study relocating the Public Safety Building to the municipal complex on Bayshore Road.

The township has three volunteer fire companies, which are located in Villas, Town Bank and Erma. Residents are taxed an average of 5-cents per \$100 of assessed value for fire protection. The township also budgets \$105,000 per year for the Lower Township Rescue Squad for services rendered to the township.

Lower Township has a fire vehicle at the Diamond Beach substation, where they have a mutual aid agreement with Wildwood Crest to back up the Erma Fire Company. Lower Township Rescue Squad provides 24/7 rescue response, Voll said.

Lower Township does not have guarded beaches, but does use Public Works to keep beaches clean for the 23,000 year around residents and 70,000 to 100,000 summer population. Voll recently announced a crackdown on people not cleaning up after dogs on the beaches.

He said the summer trash and recycling collection reflects the large influx in population. The township has weekly pick up of trash and recycling using township vehicles.

"We pick up recycling and trash in every part of township. We have some commer-

cial accounts that pay for pick up," Voll said.

He said the township also picks up leaves and branches at designated times during the year. The township also operates a recycling center where residents may drop off lawn debris and branches without leaving the township.

"Having a recycling center saves us a lot of labor that's a real plus for us," Voll said.

The recycling center also accepts items, such as electronics, which are not picked up at the curb. Voll said this keeps items from being illegally dumped or left on streets.

Voll said he will put out a "robo call" to announce upcoming leaf and branch schedules, including which zones will have collection during specific time frames. He said they can be interrupted by the weather.

He said he has instructed Public Works to pick up bulk items left at the curb, but asks residents to call ahead and schedule a pick up for large items.

Trash and recycling pick up also results in hiring temporary laborers in the summer.

The code enforcement workload also increases in the summer with the rise in population. Voll said second homeowners are more likely to respond to a warning from code enforcement if they are in the township.

The township maintains a pool on Wilson Boulevard,

where a lifeguard is on staff. Voll said the township hired a park attendant to patrol Mulligan Field, Mindy Park and other recreation properties. He said the attendant is spending a lot of time at Mulligan Field, where there have been a number of complaints about teenagers loitering and harassing people. He said Mindy Park is a pocket park in North Cape May and there have been complaints about teens hanging out, smoking, cursing, etc. Voll said the attendant is there to help enforce the park closing time of 9 p.m. and call police if necessary. He said the attendant has been working out well.

The Millman Center is a facility the township provides mainly for senior citizens activities, often supervised by recreation aides. He said the center is going to be refurbished in the early winter.

The farmers market is another activity provided by the township. Voll said it has not been very successful this summer because of the heat and rain, but it doesn't cost the township much to put it on; just a couple of staff members and the music provided.

Voll said while trying to keep services at the same level he is constantly trying to reduce spending. He has been working on a goal of reducing energy costs by 15 percent for the year and is on target for that. He said in an effort to reduce gasoline consumption

by 15 percent, the township has replaced Ford Explorers getting 12 to 14 mpg with Ford Focuses advertised to get 38 mpg.

"I think the average in town has been 32 mpg, but that is better than 12 to 14," Voll said.

New black and white patrol cars for the police department have V-6s, rather than the gas guzzling V-8s. The township also replaced a Recreation Department vehicle with a 4-cylinder pick up.

In addition, township buildings have been converted from oil to natural gas, and the buildings have started using lights with two fluorescent tubes and a reflector instead of four tubes.

"We're trying to do more with less," Voll said. "We're cutting and looking at every area, council is looking at every area to create savings and still provide the same level of services."

Voll said they are also saving costs with personnel. He reduced the number of captains in the police department by one, saving the township \$180,000 per year including health and pension costs. Voll said Gov. Chris Christie's "tool box" is helping because township employees are now contributing more toward their healthcare. The township has also looked at more affordable healthcare plans.

"We always shop for better deals. Last year we went out of the state benefit plan, went

to another provider and saved \$183,000," Voll said.

Voll said the 2 percent cap on municipal budgets has made spending control easier on municipalities.

"Now everyone's got to grin and bear it and do the best we can," he said.

Mayor Mike Beck said the township has tried to match the workforce to the workload, and believes they have been successful over the past several years.

"We've been using part-timers, and that has a lot to do with not only salaries, but the benefit package. They don't have the healthcare benefits, which is a huge cost of any payroll," Beck said.

Beck said the township is trying to increase services for the benefit of the township. He referred to a concert held in conjunction with the DRBA a couple weeks ago that he said was so successful they are looking to expand the number of events next year.

"Before, to have a concert like that our people would have had to go to Cape May or the island communities," he said.

Beck also pointed to free music programs and picnics at the historic Fishing Creek School. This Friday marks the last of three events, running from 5 to 7 p.m., which also includes free food. He said they are trying to make the Fishing Creek School a community and cultural center, and perhaps include kids'

drama classes.

"It's really a chance for us to provide something for the people," he said.

Beck said this goes along with the Fourth of July events, which have been supported and paid for by local businesses, and ideas for future events and facilities such as the Heritage Byway and a municipal fishing pier. Beck said he has seen no red flags indicating a problem with the fishing pier concept. He said Matt Ecker, director of the Lower Township Municipal Utilities Authority is a marine engineer, and he has been putting together plans for the fishing pier and showing the township how it can be done.

"We are also trying to solve the parking issues and talking with the DRBA about that," Beck said.

He said they have also included on the fishing pier committee two neighbors from the proposed site at Lincoln Boulevard and the beach. Beck said the fishing pier is still in the beginning stages.

"It's slow but sure that wins the race," he said.

Even with the new ideas, Voll said the township is dedicated to saving on spending.

"There was no tax increase this year and last year it was one percent or less," he said. "We will start working on the new budget in fall."



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# Down

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means an approximate 4.5 percent increase in parking meter revenue.

MacLeod said occupancy tax revenue has also seen a growth from 2011. Through the end of July, Cape May collected \$258,899.90 in occupancy tax and in 2011 had collected just \$229,505.27. He said this was a 12.8 percent increase. MacLeod said the current numbers only represent roughly 20 percent of the overall fiscal year. He said the next five months will be

the most significant numbers to observe.

"But, as of right now, we are ahead of last year's rates," MacLeod said.

Deputy Mayor Jack Wichterman noted that Hurricane Irene ended the tourist season weeks earlier than usual in 2011 because of the mandatory evacuation. He said hopefully there will not be another major storm to hurt the summer tourism so Cape May can make up for the loss.

# Dogs

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bags into dunes."

Voll said the township is going to have unannounced enforcement campaigns using plain clothes officials and will start writing summonses for violators, who face a \$200 fine for each offense. Voll said this is what it might take to get some people to comply.

"Some people don't care, and it's really rude. If you walk the dog you have to clean up after it. This is our beach, not a dog park, and not a place to take your dog to do its duty," he said.

Voll said the township has provided plastic bags at street ends for the convenience of dog walkers.

"We are going to make every effort to keep our beaches safe, clean, and an enjoyable place to go and watch the best sunsets along the Delaware," Voll said.



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 \*\*THE BOURNE LEGACY PG-13 12:20, 3:30, 7:00, 9:55  
 \*\*THE CAMPAIGN R 12:10, 2:30, 5:00, 7:40, 10:00  
 HOPE SPRINGS PG-13 11:55, 2:10, 4:50, 7:30, 9:50  
 THE DARK KNIGHT RISES PG-13 11:45, 3:10, 6:30, 9:50  
 ICE AGE (FRI THRU TUES) PG-13 12:30, 3:20, 7:25, 10:05  
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 \*\*CAMPAIGN R (1:25), 3:20, 5:15, 7:15, 9:35  
 \*\*PARANORMAN PG (1:20), 3:15, 5:10, 7:05, 9:05  
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	High	Low		
	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
15	7:03	7:18	12:52	12:38
16	7:46	7:59	1:31	1:23
17	8:26	8:38	2:09	2:07
18	9:06	9:17	2:46	2:52
19	9:47	9:58	3:25	3:37
20	10:30	10:41	4:04	4:25
21	11:15	11:27	4:47	5:17
22		12:06	5:33	6:14

Moon Phases  
 Full Moon, Aug. 1, 21  
 Last Quarter, Aug. 9  
 New Moon, Aug. 17  
 First Quarter, Aug. 24  
 Apogee, Aug. 10  
 Perigee, Aug. 23