



## Sheehan retires from Cape May Police Department

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## House of the week

B1



167th YEAR NO. 27 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 2021 \$1.00

# West Cape May may allow marijuana business

## Borough Commission introduces ordinance to permit retail sales, cultivation

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

WEST CAPE MAY — Borough Commission introduced an ordinance to allow retail sales and cultivation of marijuana as a future tax revenue source in a town without beach tags or parking meters.

During a meeting June 23, Mayor Carol Sabo said Borough Commission has had a great deal of discussion on the matter.

During public comment, resident Pat Tucker asked commissioners why they felt a need to bring mari-

juana into the community. She said there was a moral issue in allowing marijuana businesses.

Sabo said use of marijuana is legal for adults and minors would not be permitted to partake of cannabis. Tucker said many communities have rejected marijuana businesses.

"We have such a lovely community, and I just don't think it's necessary," she said.

Tucker asked if anyone applied for a license for a cannabis business. Sabo said the borough has not received guidelines from the

state, so no business can apply for a license at this time.

"There has been a lot of interest in licenses," the mayor said.

Deputy Mayor Peter Burke said Lower Township passed an ordinance allowing marijuana retail locations.

"So, it's not miles and miles and miles away," he said.

Burke noted marijuana was made legal for recreational use at the state level, so it was not a matter of keeping it out of West Cape May. Voters in the borough voted 2-1 in favor for legalization of marijuana,

he noted.

Solicitor Frank Corrado said the borough's ordinance is subject to all state guidelines. He said the ordinance does not put any limit on the number of cannabis establishments but if the state limits the number West Cape May can have, it must follow those guidelines.

Tucker asked if the borough had such a need for revenue that it needs marijuana businesses. Sabo said the borough has a number of items on its wish list.

"We do not have beach tags, parking fees. The only thing we have is

property taxes," she said.

The borough has some increased revenue due to development taking place, she said, adding that the borough has not had a reassessment from the county in terms of property values in a considerable period of time.

Business owner Gary Padussis said very few people like change. He said he is in favor of cannabis businesses in the borough with proper controls.

"How are we going to raise and See West Cape May, Page A7

# Bezaire freed after 13 days in county jail

## Second accuser delays release of councilman

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Cape May Councilman Chris Bezaire, arrested by the county Prosecutor's Office on June 16 on charges of invasion of privacy, cyber harassment, stalking and contempt of court, was released from jail June 28 following 13 days of incarceration.

Bail-reform legislation combined with a detention motion for additional charges kept Bezaire in custody, according to his attorney, John Tumelty.

Since May, detectives from the county Prosecutor's Office with the assistance of detectives from the Middle Township Police Department have been conducting an investigation into cyber harassment allegedly committed by Bezaire involving a former girlfriend.

Bezaire was taken into custody June 16 without incident and court-authorized

search warrants were executed at his home in the 200 block of Windsor Avenue and work in the 500 block of Washington Street.

According to the first complaint, Bezaire committed "cyber harassment by knowingly sending, posting lewd or obscene material to or

about a person with the intent to emotionally harm a reasonable person, specifically by posting an image of the victim performing oral sex on the website Facebook, without her permission."

The first complaint states Bezaire committed invasion of privacy by knowing he was not licensed or privileged to post the photo on Facebook "by an alias account that was positively lined to the suspect."

The first complaint states Bezaire committed stalking by purposely or knowingly engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a



BEZAIRE

See Bezaire, Page A2



Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

## Governor visits Cape May for Independence Day

Gov. Phil Murphy visited Cape May on Saturday, July 3, and spoke briefly at the beginning of the city's Independence Day parade. See more photos on A8.

# Stabilization, weatherproofing 1st phase of AME Church work

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) examined plans last week for the first phase of restoration of Allen AME Church, now owned by the city.

Deputy City Manager Lou Belasco said the building suffered from a fire and some neglect.

"We decided to phase this project into a stabilization and then a final preservation plan that will

come forth," he said.

The main objective of the stabilization process is to ensure the church is weathertight.

Architect Catherine Lorentz said the city is applying for various grants and wants to keep the weather out of the building but do it in a historic manner. She said the stained-glass windows have been removed and are under repair at a glass studio. The stained-glass work is about 60 percent completed.

Lorentz said a second

goal is rebuilding the bell tower, which was destroyed in a fire. She said a report she submitted to the HPC contained field survey work and structural information.

Two windows located on either side of the bell tower melted during the fire. HPC Chairman Warren Coupland said the original contract includes reproducing those two stained glass windows.

For the exterior, Lorentz See First phase, Page A5

# Man, 81, carjacked in Rio Grande

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

RIO GRANDE — An 81-year-old man reported a carjacking June 29 while waiting in the parking lot of the ShopRite store at 1700 Route 47 South in the Rio Grande section of Middle Township.

Middle Township police responded to the parking lot at about 6:05 p.m. The victim reported a Hispanic male, described as about 5 foot, 8 inches tall, clean-shaven with short hair, got into the driver's seat of his running vehicle while he was sitting in the front passenger seat

waiting for his wife.

The unknown subject then told the man to exit the vehicle and he refused. The man said at that time, the perpetrator threatened him, stating he had a gun. Authorities said a gun was not brandished during the incident. The perpetrator then began to drive away from the parking lot with the victim still inside the vehicle.

The victim reported a physical altercation occurred while the vehicle was in motion, at which time the perpetrator stopped the vehicle. The victim then reported the accused reached over, opened the passenger

door and pushed him out. The perpetrator then fled the scene. The victim's vehicle was later located in Trenton.

The incident is under investigation by the Middle Township Police Department's Major Crimes Unit and the county Prosecutor's Office. Anyone with information on this case or who may have witnessed the incident is asked to call (609) 465-8700, report it anonymously through the County Sheriff's Tip Line at cmcsheff.net (click on anonymous tip) or through the Cape May County Crime Stoppers at (609) 889-3597.

### "Wellness Together" Community Event

## PAIN MANAGEMENT AND THE OPIOID EPIDEMIC

#### SPEAKERS:



Dr. David May  
General Surgeon  
Shore Physicians Group



Dr. John Millili  
General Surgeon  
Shore Physicians Group



Dr. Natacha Falcon  
Board Certified Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation  
Interventional Spine

Tracy Fooks, LCSW, LCADC  
Social Worker | Shore Medical Center

Laurie K. Smith  
Community Initiatives Coordinator  
Join Together Atlantic County

Eric Scheffler  
Sheriff | Atlantic County Sheriff's Office

Have you or a loved one been impacted by the opioid crisis? Join Shore and leading local health and addiction experts for a panel discussion on opioids. As part of Shore's new "Wellness Together" Health Education Series, this event will focus on pain management, opioid use disorder, recovery, prevention and more!

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14 | 7PM

Great Bay Country Club  
901 Somers Point-Mays Landing Rd. | Somers Point, NJ 08244

Light desserts and refreshments served.

This event is FREE and open to the public. To RSVP, please call 609.653.3671

