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## UPROOTED

Trees lay uprooted on one of the small beach areas at Assateague Island National Seashore as the sun sets on a mild Saturday in February.

## Director could be ousted at board session

Special meeting called for after Phillips resignation

By Greg Ellison

Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) The possible removal of a member of the Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors will be decided at a special meeting, following a board vote Saturday apparently in response to circumstances that might have led to the resignation of Director of Amenities Colby Phillips last week.



Tom Janasek

No director in question was named and no date for a meeting has been scheduled, but the board's consideration of one member's continued service was called for Saturday by Director Tom Janasek and seconded by Director Doug Parks.

"This has been a very sad week in See SPECIAL Page 4

## OP to hold referendum on spending

Trendic suit settlement will allow community to decide limits of board authority

By Greg Ellison

Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) After reaching a recent settlement with former Director Slobodan Trendic on a previously rejected petition to limit spending by the board of directors, the Ocean Pines Association announced this week a referendum will be scheduled on the issue.

OPA President Larry Perrone said in a statement on Tuesday that the board had reached a settlement with Trendic and would now stage a referendum to permit residents to consider approving a proposed \$1 million spending cap.

"The board is in the process of hav-



Slobodan Trendic

ing a referendum question drafted and reviewed by counsel," he said. "Once we have that, we will set a date for a hearing ... and the referendum vote will take place."

Trendic stepped down as a director after abstaining from a vote on April 6, 2019 to approve expansions of the police and administration building, as well as the golf clubhouse and cart barn, which combined totaled more than \$3 million.

During the OPA homeowners annual meeting that August, Trendic presented a pair of petitions. One called for limiting the board's unauthorized spending authority, and the other sought a referendum on the recently



Larry Perrone

begun clubhouse project at the Ocean Pines Golf Course.

Trendic filed suit in November 2019 in response to the OPA Board of Directors' rejection in August of a petition containing more than 800 signatures seeking to amend the OPA bylaws to require the board to conduct a membership vote to approve any single capital expenditure over \$1 million.

Perrone said the settlement requires the association to hold the referendum and to reimburse Trendic's court costs of \$196.65.

Speaking during the board meeting on Saturday, Director Camilla Rogers

See SPENDING Page 4

## Berlin receives emergency relief grant for business

By Ally Lanasa

Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Berlin's Main Street Community has been awarded \$194,113 in emergency relief to support small businesses and other economic recovery efforts.

"We were pleasantly surprised because we're a small town," said Ivy Wells, the Berlin's economic and community development director. "We were very happy with what we received and thank Gov. Hogan and the



Ivy Wells

See BERLIN Page 4



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# Town Council reviews general fund balance

FY22 budget work session to take place on April 12, full schedule posted online

By Ally Lanasa  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) The Berlin mayor and Town Council reviewed the general fund budget during their meeting on Monday to prepare for the budget work session on April 12.

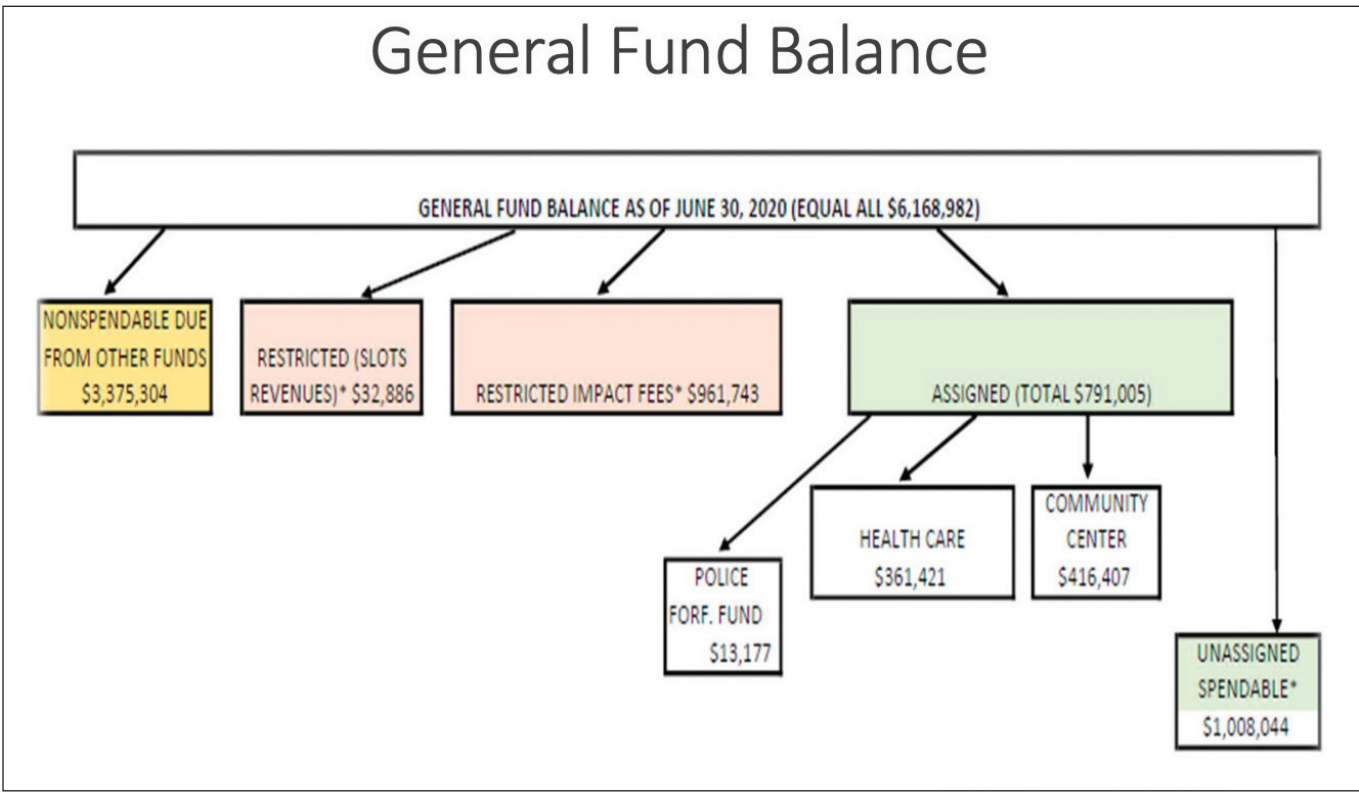
“The general fund is the general operating fund of the town,” said Natalie Saleh, the town’s finance director. “The general fund [is] used to account and report all the financial resources not accounted for and reported in other funds. It includes all transactions for general government services.”

Revenues of the general fund are mostly derived from taxes, grants and licenses and permit fees.

Saleh said the resources generated by the fund are spent for general government according to the budget approved by the mayor and council every year.

“To manage all that, there is a fund accounting in place and it’s necessary,” she said.

In fiscal year 2020, property taxes made up 59 percent of revenue, inter-governmental revenues made up 16 percent and service charges to other



This FY20 general fund balance chart demonstrates the total of each component that represent the “spendability” of the fund balance as of June 30, 2020. Since then, the Berlin Town Council agreed to reduce the interfund transfer due from the sewer fund to the stormwater fund in the non-spendable fund balance to \$1.7 million in FY21.

CHART COURTESY NATALIE SALEH

funds made up 12 percent. The total revenue for FY20 was nearly \$6.8 million.

As for general fund expenditures, 39 percent of funds went to the Public

Safety Department, 26 percent of funds were spent for general government and 16 percent went toward the Public Works Department. The total expenditures in FY20 were approximately \$5.8 million.

The net change in the general fund balance, or the revenue total subtracted by the total expenditures, was \$1 million in FY20.

Then, Saleh described the general fund balance as assets subtracted by liabilities.

“But we’re not talking about long-term. Here it’s mostly over short-term liabilities and short-term assets,” she said.

Saleh added that people will often perceive the government’s financial health by the fund balance.

“It is true that if the balance is low or if we’re running on a deficit that the town will need some improvement in the financial situation, but having a large fund balance at the end

of the year doesn’t mean that it’s great or good because there’s so many components, or layers, of the fund. We should look at and understand what each layer means and what does it do,” she said.

There are five components that represent the “spendability” of the fund balance: the non-spendable fund balance, the restricted fund balance, the committed fund balance, the assigned fund balance and the unassigned fund balance.

Non-spendable amounts are either not in a spendable form, such as inventory or prepaid amounts, or are legally or contractually required to remain in the fund, Saleh explained.

Restricted amounts can only be spent for specific purposes because of restrictions imposed by mayor and council, higher levels of governments or grantors.

Committed amounts can be spent  
See ELEMENTS Page 5





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# Lakernick throws in as Pines board election picks up

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Ocean Pines' 2021 Board election is coming to life with one hat already tossed in the ring, with candidate-filing deadline more than two months away on May 10.



**S. Lackernick**

Lakernick, a Philadelphia-based chiropractic functional neurologist, is also the husband of former OPA Board member Esther Diller.

Two board members, Frank Daly and Frank Brown, have terms that expire this year, with OPA Resolution M-06 requiring two more candidates than open seats.

In a statement, Lakernick said after weighing another election run for the last several months clarity arrived last week.

"Considering recent events, it has become crystal clear to me that I must run," he said. "Change is never easy, but change is what we need."

Lakernick cited "unhealthy dynamics" with current board membership and a lack of diverse viewpoints as primary motivators for his candidacy.

"Having a board with differences in opinions is good and can work in unity for what's best for our association," he said.

The association also announced dates for the upcoming election process beyond the filing deadline.

Candidate forums are scheduled on June 9 from 7-9 p.m. and June 19 from 10 a.m. to noon, with both slated for the Assateague Room in the Ocean Pines Community Center.

Preceding the forums a candidate draw is scheduled on June 4 at 10 a.m. to determine ballot order.

Ballots are due by Aug. 11 to be followed by a vote count on Aug. 13 beginning at 10 a.m.

The OPA Annual Homeowners Meeting takes place on Aug. 14 with time and venue yet to be announced.

For questions about the election, contact [elections@oceanpines.org](mailto:elections@oceanpines.org).

Applications are available at the administration building or on the Ocean Pines website at <https://www.oceanpines.org/documents/10184/89280/Candidate-Registration-Form-Approved-9-March-2019-FORM-003.pdf>.

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# Special session to consider director's future

Continued from Page 1  
the history of Ocean Pines,” he said. “We lost two individuals this week who worked tirelessly for the betterment of Ocean Pines, Jeff Knepper and Colby Phillips,” he said.

Janasek said between the unfortunate passing of Knepper and Phillips leaving her post, the association lost a wealth of institutional knowledge. “The way she was treated was disgraceful and, by the way, the vote was not unanimous,” he said.

Janasek opined that the recent friction between Phillips and OPA President Larry Perrone is indicative of ongoing tensions.

“There’s been a pattern of behavior on this board that includes threats of legal action against directors, blatant lies to influence ... votes and interference with committees managing important projects,” he said.

Janasek reminded board members their principal charge is serving the community, not executing personal agendas.

“This is not a board of one or two and that is what it’s become,” he said. “Therefore, I’m requesting a meeting

to remove an officer of the board from their current position.”

Parks concurred with Janasek’s sentiments and seconded the meeting request.

“I’d like to join that list and put in a formal request to call for a meeting to look at removing a director,” he said.

Former Director Esther Diller said board members should refrain from interfering with operational issues.

“I think this board should be embarrassed,” she said. “You people work for us, [and] you’re not an elitist group.”

Director Frank Daly said the recent tensions obviously struck a chord with the community based on the fact that more than 80 people were viewing the virtual meeting in real time.

“The community should pay atten-

tion to what’s going on,” he said. “We have had two [Resolution] B-08 hearings in 60 days.”

Daly said events over the last few months indicate that Resolution B-08, which outlines Director and Officer Ethics and Conduct, needs revamping.

Resolution B-08 restricts board members from providing specific direction to association management, employees or vendors without prior authorization. Additionally, B-08 prohibits board members from retaliating against an employee alleging impropriety.

“The B-08 process itself is off the rails,” he said. “It’s a bad process and by May 20 we either fix it or I make a motion to rescind.”

Daly said the association should embrace transparency.

“We are not the Central Intelligence Agency,” he said. “This cloak of secrecy that ties hands is extremely unfair ... to the community and ... the people involved.”

Janasek highlighted the importance of avoiding missteps made in the past.

“I’ve been here longer than all the directors combined and I never thought I would see it revert back to a ‘good-old-boys’ network,” he said. “We need to work for Ocean Pines.”

On Tuesday, General Manager John Viola issued a statement announcing Phillips officially resigned on Feb. 18.

“She will continue to teach the swim aerobics class until March 31,” he said. “We are thankful for Colby’s contributions. Please join me in wishing her the very best in her life and career endeavors.”

## Berlin receives business aid grant

Continued from Page 1  
Maryland Main Street Program for allocating this funding for us to be able to help our small businesses.”

Wells said she applied for the funding in November.

“They only gave us three days to write the application, and we literally had to write a grant within a grant because we had to write the grant to [the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development] DHCD and the Maryland Main Street Program for the grant that we would offer our businesses,” she said. “So, we had to write the grant we would offer our businesses and then include that with the grant to get the money to be able to offer the businesses.”

Gov. Larry Hogan announced the \$7 million in awards for 41 Main Street programs across the state on Tuesday. Also among the recipients was the Ocean City Development Corporation, which received \$138,652.

“The pandemic has hit our small businesses particularly hard,” said Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary

Kenneth C. Holt. “The state and Baltimore City Main Street programs have a crucial role to play in supporting those businesses, and this funding will allow them to provide grants to their local businesses that will ultimately restore the vitality of their commercial districts and impact Maryland’s economic recovery.”

Berlin has close to 75 small businesses that could be eligible for the grant awards.

The covid-19 grant awards are available to businesses and commercial property owners only. All downtown/Main Street designated business and property owners will be reviewed first. Businesses located outside of the designated Main Street district will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, Wells said.

Grant awards will vary with a minimum grant award of \$2,500 and a maximum grant award of \$10,000.

It is a one-time covid-19 grant award with no repayment required.

Both property owners and business owners may apply for awards for the same property address.

According to berlinmainstreet.com, eligible grant uses focus on building improvements to help businesses reach more customers, to improve health-safety circumstances, and to pay off certain kinds of debt.

In addition, if businesses and commercial property owners are not in good standing with the town of Berlin, Worcester County or the state of Maryland, they must apply for funds to clear their debt. Debts includes outstanding bills for town of Berlin utilities such as water, sewer and electric.

All grant applications are due by March 19 at 5 p.m.

To apply for a covid-19 grant, visit <https://berlinmainstreet.com/grant/>

“[Grant applications] are going to be reviewed by members of the Maryland Main Street Community as well as town staff,” Wells said.

Last year, the impact of the local efforts of the state’s 33 designated Main Street Maryland communities resulted in 180 businesses expanding or opening, 665 new jobs and 130 private and public investments totaling over \$80 million.

## Spending limits go to referendum

Continued from Page 1  
said based on numerous emails on the topic, a number of residents mistakenly assumed the proposed spending limits were already enacted.

“The establishment of the \$1 million cap is not complete at this time,” she said. “The referendum will be put before the public who will determine the direction.”

Perrone concurred with Rogers and said the settlement was only to stage the referendum.

“This referendum will be to change the bylaws, which now allows for [spending] 20 percent of our annual assessments [without authorization] ... and having it locked in at \$1 million,” he said.

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# OP approves drainage pipe, bulkhead repairs

Board of directors agrees to spend more than \$1.2 million for pair of projects

By Greg Ellison  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Aiming to improve drainage and to continue annual bulkhead maintenance, the Ocean Pines Board of Directors on Saturday approved spending more than \$200,000 to address failing underground piping and just over \$1 million for bulkhead repairs.

General Manager John Viola said the pair of public works capital expenditures includes \$1,095,000 for Fisher Marine to replace 3,000 liner feet of vinyl bulkhead at \$365 per foot.

“This is basically the same request as last year,” he said.

The price quote from Fisher Marine, which was the lowest of three bids solicited, is roughly \$502,000 under the sum allotted for bulkhead repairs for Fiscal Year 21-22.

The bulkhead work is slated for Pintail Drive lots 8-50 and Crab Cay Court lots 3-12.

“We’ve been doing similar amounts in past years,” he said.

The board also authorized spending \$207,167 for Louisiana-based Pelican Underground to repair failing corrugated metal piping through a trenchless rehabilitation method.

Viola said the cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) process involves inserting linings containing an inflatable epoxy-saturated felt tube that cures within a day.

“The main pipes here that we’re looking at are the ones that cross Ocean Parkway,” he said.

Once the resin cures, it forms a tight, joint-less seal, which has proven both more cost-effective and less disruptive than total pipe replacement.

Director Frank Daly said the \$236 per foot price for the CIPP process is a far cry from the roughly \$1,000 per foot paid to replace damaged pipe sections previously.



PHOTOS COURTESY OCEAN PINES ASSOCIATION

Pictured are before and after images inside of a corrugated metal pipe that has been repaired with the cured-in-place pipe process.

“Is this like a trial run to see if that five-mile-plus of underground infrastructure that we have is suitable for this on a planned basis?” he asked.

Viola replied that the CIPP method is a proven process that has been used for years in other regions.

“This is coming in well above a 50 percent savings compared to the conventional method we have been using,” he said.

Viola said the first work would involve lining eight sections of piping measuring between 15-36 inches.

“We want to see how this works,” he said. “It’s well worth it in my mind.”

Viola said if the initial round of repairs goes as planned additional sections could be proposed later this year.

OPA President Larry Perrone said the both the contractor and product manufacturer stand behind the work.

“We have a one year contractor warranty but a 50-year guarantee on the lining,” he said.

Viola said the useful life for the

epoxy liners is rated even higher in many instances.

“The product is designed to last 50 years, if not 100 years,” he said.

Daly said the potential cost savings was welcome news.

“This is some of the better news we’ve heard on drainage for a long time,” he said.

Daly said if the new approach proves successful, which even at the

reduced rate would involve large expenditures, the board should consider creating a funding program similar to bulkheads to perform subsequent pipe repairs.

“People have to be aware what we’re facing with that infrastructure,” he said.

The board voted unanimously to approve both capital expenditures for the next fiscal budget year.

## Coast Guard to offer virtual boat safety course next week

(Feb. 25, 2021) The U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary is offering a virtual Maryland Basic Boating Safety Course, March 2-4 from 6-9 p.m.

The Maryland Safe Boating Certificate is required for all boat operators born after July 1, 1972 and is awarded after successful completion of the course.

The class includes information on

piloting in local waters, tying nautical knots, foul weather tactics, legal issues, updated Maryland regulations, and common marine maintenance.

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# Jacobs to chair communications committee

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) With one eye on current initiatives and one eye looking at fresh ventures, the Ocean Pines Communications Committee agreed to change leadership roles last week, with Cheryl Jacobs becoming chairperson.

Now former Chair Jenny Cropper Rines revived previous discussions about recruiting committee members during the groups' meeting on Feb. 18.

After Rines reminded members that her term, which has previously been extended, would expire this April, Jacobs agreed to assume the post.

"If you'll agree to take the chair position, I'll agree to extend my term," Rines said. "We'll work together and try to build this a little bit."

Rines said despite handing off the baton, she would remain engaged.

"I'll stick around to help you with recruiting and finishing projects," she said.

With leadership issues settled, Jacobs said the main focus would remain attracting new people to join the committee.

"I'm trying to get the message out there," she said.

Rines said in addition to retaining seven members as required by OPA bylaws, achieving greater attendance,

albeit virtual at present, by current committee members has been an issue.

"We've got some great people but schedules can be challenging," she said. "I think that's our challenge at the moment."

Turning to current efforts, Rines said the Worcester County Commissioners had just approved a zoning amendment that would permit the association to update existing analog community marquees with digital messaging boards.

Rines said last Tuesday the commissioners authorized as many as eight signs for Ocean Pines' use.

Now, Rines said, OPA staff members are finalizing details.

"When it comes to design, hopefully they'll let it come back to us for input," she said.

On other fronts, Rines highlighted an OPA virtual town hall conducted Feb. 11 through the Worcester County Health Department on the distribution of the first phase of coronavirus vaccines.

Rines, who hosted the session, said Health Department Public Affairs Officer Travis Brown presented data and answered questions during the live

stream.

To this point the town hall video has been viewed nearly 100 times on the OPA YouTube channel.

In terms of current projects, Marketing Coordinator Julie Malinowski provided a progress report about a new online residents academy under development.

Malinowski said over the last two weeks 15 staff videos were taped at the Ocean Pines Golf Clubhouse

"It's pretty much wrapped up," she said.

The two remaining spots to be filmed would likely be done remotely, she said.

"We're probably done at the clubhouse," she said. "Now we've just got to do all our post-production stuff."

Marketing and Public Relations Director Josh Davis said the next task

would be editing down raw video footage.

"We have a lot ahead of us," he said.

Malinowski said a rough target date to wrap up production is Feb. 28.

"It could be longer," she said. "The plan is to give it to the work group ... for potential suggestions [or] if there are additional resources we need to add."

Malinowski also confirmed Rines' question about the online residents academy providing an informational resource for new board member orientation.

Board liaison Dr. Colette Horn said the virtual academy could help attract new candidates.

"It would be nice to have it done for people that may want to run for the board," she said.



Jenny Rines





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# OP budget hikes assessments \$10

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) With several last-second cost reductions cutting assessment fee increases from \$35 to \$10, the Ocean Pines Board voted 6-1, with Director Tom Janasek opposed, to approve the fiscal 2021-22 budget on Saturday.

OPA Treasurer Doug Parks reviewed the final numbers for the next fiscal year recommended budget, which reflects a basic annual assessment rate of \$996, with about \$15.9 million in anticipated revenue offset by expenses over \$13 million.

The association's FY21-22 operating budget also earmarks more than \$1.2 million for bulkhead maintenance and drainage repairs and just over \$1 million for capital expenditures.

Parks said due to unanticipated changes since the public budget hearing on Feb. 6, Director of Finance and Operational Logistics Steve Phillips was tasked with revising balance sheets this week.

"I had pressed him and [General Manager] John [Viola] to get some updated numbers based on recent events and was uncomfortable that those events didn't reflect the current status of the budget," he said.

Parks applauded the quick revision of budget figures to reflect personnel departures, reduced health benefit premiums and amended depreciation totals.

OPA President Larry Perrone said in addition to eliminating salary and benefits for recently resigned Director of Amenities and Operational Logistics Colby Phillips, significant cost savings for staff health premiums came to light this week.

"We were anticipating a premium increase," he said. "The original information we got from our broker said it would be at about \$300,000."

Perrone said the earlier estimates for health insurance were cut by roughly \$100,000 on Thursday.

Viola said besides the sudden resignation of Phillips, larger expense reductions for medical premiums were delivered during a meeting with the association's insurance broker days earlier.

"It's part of a process so we had to go with estimates," he said. "Right there you have \$220,000."

Viola said roughly \$40,000 in addi-

tional cost cuts was located after Phillips recalculated depreciation rates.

Director Camilla Rogers asked if there were plans to recruit a replacement for Colby Phillips' position.

Perrone noted that call is an operational decision left to Viola.

"At this point he has spread some of the duties that she has to other individuals," he said. "I think that's where it's going to be for the time being."

The last-minute budget revisions gave Janasek cause for concern.

"There's been so many changes to this in literally the last 24 hours," he said.

Janasek said the minimal time provided for review felt inadequate.

"I'm just not comfortable at this time voting to approve the budget, but that's OK I'm sure it will be 6-1," he said.

Daly expressed understanding for Janasek's sentiments.

"I was up to midnight reviewing changes," he said.

Still, Daly felt the budget managed to hit one principal mark.

"The end item of this thing is exactly at the current rate of inflation," he said. "We're managing to do what we're doing and still keep it at inflation rate."

# Berlin adopts Wor. hazard mitigation and resilience plan

**By Ally Lanasa**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) The Berlin mayor and Town Council agreed on Monday to adopt the 2020 Worcester County Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan to remain eligible for funding from several sources, such as the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

"Funding is available for pre-disaster and post-disaster mitigation projects as well as recovery and reconstruction," said Billy Birch, Worcester County's emergency services director.

The funds are not available without an approved plan, he added.

The 2020 Worcester County Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan is a five-year plan required by FEMA and MEMA.

"This was an update from the 2014 plan. It was not a total new plan from start," Birch said.

He added that the Emergency Services Department intends to keep the plan current to "ease the five-year update burden process."

"Therefore, it's essential that we keep this document as a living document, and we update it as needed, so that it addresses any known hazards in

See PLAN Page 10



Camilla Rogers



Billy Birch



Dave Engelhart



Jeff Fleetwood

# Pines fiscal picture remains firm

Continued from Page 8

Through January the association has received \$8,872,591 of a total \$9,126,236 owed for assessments this budget year.

"That's up to 96.7 percent of the amount anticipated to be collected, which reflects a shortfall of \$253,645," he said.

Parks said annual assessment remittance rates have peaked at 98 percent in recent years.

Ocean Pines President Larry Perrone noted the bylaws require an annual report on assessment collection progress is filed in February.

"This report from Doug we will accept as a report to board," he said.

In a related matter, Parks also included a motion to establish a 6 percent interest rate for delinquent assessment fees for the fiscal 21/22 that begins in May.

After the motion passed later in the meeting, Parks noted the associations' governing documents require interest rate for past due assessments be set annually, with the 6 percent rate remaining consistent over the past several years.

Looking at reserve balances through January, Parks said the overall sum deposited among the five accounts is more than \$ 6.6 million.

To end last month the totals include just over \$4 million in replacement funds, \$1.6 million for bulkheads,

\$215,000 for roads, \$675,000 for drainage and \$87,000 for new capital.

After opening fiscal 20-21 with a total reserve balance of \$5.6 million last May, the aim is to end the budget year with a comparable, albeit slightly smaller, sum.

"Our projected balance at the end of April 30, 2021 is \$5.2 million," he said.

Parks said despite significant cash

outlays for capital projects and long-term maintenance needs in the past few years, the association remains on track to meet prior goals for reserve balances.

"In the past we committed to a reserve balance of 22-24 percent of the overall value of assets," he said. "We are well on our way to making sure that we stay along with that commitment."

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# Berlin Mayor and Council Briefs

By Ally Lanasa  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) The following took place during the Berlin mayor and Town Council meeting on Monday:

## Covid-19 update

If the covid-19 positivity rate remains below 5 percent for seven consecutive days, Town Administrator Jeff Fleetwood said the plan is for employees to return to a full schedule on March 1. The following week government buildings would open to the public with limited capacity.

## Park sale meeting

The Town Council agreed to move the public meeting about the potential sale of parcels 57 and 410 at Heron Park from March 22 to March 15 at 6:30 p.m. because a public hearing on the tax rate is also scheduled for March 22.

Councilmembers argued that the public should be allotted time to present ideas for the parcels. Tyndall requested that any presentations to

Town Council be submitted at least a week in advance.

The public comment meeting will consist of presentations followed by public remarks. The meeting will be held via Zoom and live streamed on Facebook. Public input will only be accepted via Zoom, Tyndall said.

## Farmers market

Ivy Wells, the town's economic and community development director, said the Berlin Farmers Market returns every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

from May 2 to Sept. 26.

"Last season, we were faced with unprecedented challenges during the pandemic. We had to adjust to allow for physical distancing. We needed to come up with a new layout, thereby expanded the market from Pitts Street to include Commerce Street," Wells said.

During the 2020 farmers market season, 30 farmers and other producers participated.

"At a time when the local grocery stores were running out of food, the

Continued on Page 11

# Plan will allow Berlin to be eligible for funds

Continued from Page 9  
the future," Birch said.

Each town in the county is provided a section, and Berlin has been focused on addressing resiliency issues in the hazard mitigation plan.

"The Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan seeks to eliminate or reduce hazardous-related human economic and environmental losses. This plan is written by and for Worcester County," Birch said. "This plan includes unincorporated areas in Worcester County and the towns of Berlin, Pocomoke, Snow Hill ... Ocean City's included in the plan, however,

mayor and council, they actually do their own separate plan."

Dave Engelhart, the town's planning director, said Ocean City is large enough with its staffing and resources to create their own plan and address issues like coastal flooding. Berlin has more nuisance flooding concerns driven by rain and snow.

Town Administrator Jeff Fleetwood clarified the difference between a mitigation plan and a resilience plan.

"This is a mitigation plan, and a mitigation plan is to help prepare, if you will, to minimize losses versus a resilience plan, which is basically a

plan that's put together dealing with the capacity to recover, or in laymen's terms, how fast can you spring back?" Fleetwood said.

Engelhart added that Berlin has adopted this county mitigation plan in the past.

"We need to stay in the hunt for grant funding so that we can continue our work we have with stormwater, and that's been our major issue as far as being involved with the hazard mitigation plan," he said.

Responding to Councilman Jack Orris, Birch said adopting the plan does not commit the town to anything. It simply identifies any current or future hazards.

If the town did not adopt the 2020 Worcester County Hazard Mitigation and Resilience Plan, it would have to create its own at a significant cost.

"It's a lengthy process. It takes about a year, and that's if everything goes correctly," Birch said.

In addition, Fleetwood said when FEMA and MEMA visit a site after a disaster, one of the first questions the agencies ask is if the town has a hazard mitigation plan.

Prior to the Town Council meeting, Orris discussed with Birch and Fleetwood a correction about national flood insurance policy statistics. The table chart in the hazard mitigation plan stated that Berlin has 90 policies in force, but actually it has 69 policies in

force with a total written premium in force of \$34,692 and total coverage of roughly \$19.3 million.

"We are going to be updating our plan. We have a master file and that is going to be an amendment, an attachment to our plan moving forward with that new, updated information," Birch told the councilmembers.

Responding to Councilman Jay Knerr, Engelhart said Berlin has adopted the latest versions of the international building code and the international residential code from 2018.

"Some of our communities within Berlin are responsible for their own stormwater ponds. Are they eligible for FEMA funding on their own, or do they have to apply through a municipality like Berlin?" Knerr asked if they have flooding in their homeowner associations (HOA).

Fleetwood replied that he will research that and follow up with the councilmembers.

Knerr also inquired about the difference of tiers for the stormwater projects in the mitigation plan. With uncertainty among the presenters, Mayor Zackery Tyndall asked Birch to research that as well as the stormwater funding for homeowner associations through FEMA and MEMA.

Orris made a motion to adopt the plan and Knerr made a second to the motion. The council unanimously approved the adoption of the plan.



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# OP short-term rental work group finalizing proposals

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Board member Frank Daly updated the Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors Saturday on efforts to establish guidelines for short-term rentals.

The issue erupted last summer because of recurring problems at a few properties that were advertised on web-based platforms such as Airbnb, VRBO, Flipkey or Home-away.

Because of the disruptive behavior, the board formed a work group consisting of Daly, and directors Camilla Rodgers and Frank Brown to investigate the situation.

Daly said the work group uncovered at least 180 Ocean Pines properties that are regularly rented for periods under a month, principally in warmer weather.

"We anticipate the number of properties to increase in the coming years," he said.

Since last summer, the short-term rental work group has held numerous meetings with the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) and public safety officials, including the Ocean Pines Fire and Police Departments, as well as Worcester County zoning.

"The purpose of the meetings was to draft proposed changes to ARC guidelines that covers short-term rentals," he said.

The work group also consulted with property owners and renters.

"The short-term rental work group has worked with the ... stakeholders to draft ARC guideline changes that strike a balance between property owner rights and responsibilities," he said.

Daly said the goal is to maintain peace and calm throughout the Pines community, which in the long run helps maintain property values.

"We wanted to assure our commu-

nity knew the progress and what is entering the final stages," he said.

Daly said a draft version of the proposed ARC rules governing short-term rentals was sent to board members two weeks ago, with OPA attorneys reviewing them last week.

The proposed regulations, which can be found in the board meeting packet posted on [oceanpines.org](http://oceanpines.org), classifies properties rented for terms under 29 days as businesses.

As such, the proposed rules would require Pines property owners providing rental units for under a month, in addition to acquiring a Worcester County rental permit, to also obtain a OPA-issued permit and sticker.

The proposal would require the Ocean Pines rental sticker be displayed conspicuously on the front door at eye level

The rental rules would also require a responsible party associated with the rental to live within a 30-minute drive. Additionally, bed-and-breakfast establishments would be prohibited.

The related annual property inspection would ascertain the maximum number of occupants and assure the name and contact information of a responsible party is on record.

Violations could result in tenants being asked to vacate the property immediately.

Daly said the rental regulations are now awaiting final remarks from counsel.

"Once that is incorporated in writing, it goes back to ARC, who will give their final approval and then it will come to the board," he said. "Once that's done, that governs short-term rental properties in Ocean Pines."

Daly said the association also intends to consult with the Worcester Commissioners and ask that the proposed Pines rules be incorporated in county rental regulations.

"It will give another potential level of enforcement if we have somebody that violates the guidelines," he said.



Frank Daly

## Berlin Mayor and Council Briefs

Continued from Page 10

community could depend on the ability to purchase local food, baked items, seafood and more right here in town, outside where it was safe," she said, adding that masks were required.

She added that pedestrian traffic more than doubled, and the town's small businesses benefited from the market as several merchants set up tables or racks of merchandise on the sidewalks in front of their shops.

"Much of the community and businesses alike have reached out, asking for Main Street to be closed for vehicular traffic on Sunday mornings," Wells said. "After reviewing with this with staff, it is staff's recommendation to close Main Street from Broad Street to the entrance of the parking lot next to World of Toys."

She continued that a community gathering setting could be created by having the 13 café tables and 26 chairs awarded to the town through grant funding to be placed along the shoulders of North Main Street to provide additional seating and physical distancing.

Although some concerns were raised about notifying the Berlin Fire Company and residents of street closures, the council voted unanimously to ask the State Highway Administration for approval for a closure of Main Street during the farmers market. Tyn-

dall added that the closure would benefit the market as well as the shops downtown.

### Short-term rentals

Fleetwood and Mayor Zackery Tyn-dall said the Town Council is expected to discuss short-term rentals during its meeting on April 12.

### Public Works Dept.

Administrative Manager Kelsey Jensen said James (Jimmy) Charles has been hired as the new Public Works Department superintendent and began working on Monday. He will step into the full-time role after current superintendent Dave Wheaton retires at the end of March.

### Backyard Buffers Program

Deputy Town Administrator Mary Bohlen said the Berlin Parks Commission is working with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assist homeowners who have a waterway on or adjacent to their property to create a buffer for erosion of native trees and shrubs by providing a free "buffer in bag." According to DNR's website, the bag includes 20-30 native tree and shrub bare-root seedlings, approximately 1 to 2 feet in height.



*The Town of Snow Hill is seeking an Experienced Restaurateur to submit a Request for Proposal (RFP) to operate the paddlewheel boat, The Black-Eyed Susan from the port of Snow Hill.*

**Deadline: 3/5/21.**

*For RFP details and criteria, please visit [www.snowhillmd.gov](http://www.snowhillmd.gov).*

*Questions? Call Town Manager, Gary Weber at 410-251-7193.*



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# Snapshots



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## CREATING ART

The Berlin Intermediate Afterschool Academy Art Club completed a collaborative art piece demonstrating their love for the school. The piece is inspired by the artist Jim Dine and his abstract heart paintings for Valentine's Day and American Heart Month. Students pictured are Cooper Glover, Luke Riser, Nadia Menendez, Emory Jack, Lily Philavanh and Caitlyn Crockett.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## SENIOR GIFT

The Worcester Preparatory School Alumni Association sponsored a 100-Day Breakfast celebration on Feb. 19, marking the senior class countdown to graduation. In lieu of a speaker, alums sent in words of wisdom that were shared in the event program. Breakfast was sponsored by the alumni association and Dunkin' Donuts and each student was gifted a WPS acrylic tumbler. Pictured is senior Sarah Butler.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## DONATION

Ocean City Lions Club President Mike Hooper, center, presents a donation to the Worcester County Veterans Memorial Foundation, on behalf of the Wall that Heals exhibit. Also pictured are WCVMF members Tim McMullen, right, and Don McMullen. The Wall That Heals, a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, will be hosted by the Worcester County Veterans Memorial at Ocean Pines Foundation in April. The traveling exhibit honors the more than three million Americans who served in the U.S. Armed forces in the Vietnam War, and it bears the names of the 58,279 men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice in Vietnam.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## BREAKFAST

The Worcester Preparatory School Alumni Association sponsored a 100-Day Breakfast celebration on Feb. 19, marking the senior class countdown to graduation. In lieu of a speaker, alums sent in words of wisdom that were shared in the event program. Breakfast was sponsored by the alumni association and Dunkin' Donuts and each student was gifted a WPS acrylic tumbler. Pictured, from left, are Head of Upper School/Assistant Head of School Mike Grosso with seniors, Mason Brown and Brugh Moore.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## CELEBRATING 100 DAYS

The Worcester Preparatory School Alumni Association sponsored a 100-Day Breakfast celebration on Feb. 19, marking the senior class countdown to graduation. In lieu of a speaker, alums sent in words of wisdom that were shared in the event program. Breakfast was sponsored by the alumni association and Dunkin' Donuts and each student was gifted a WPS acrylic tumbler. Pictured, from left, are WPS Development Coordinator Amy Tingle; Head of School Dr. John McDonald; SGA Vice President C.C. Lizas, Secretary Sophia Ludt, President Teague Quillin, Treasurer Arusa Islam and Liaison Hannah Perdue; and Head of Upper School/Assistant Head of School Mike Grosso.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## COUNTDOWN

The Worcester Preparatory School Alumni Association sponsored a 100-Day Breakfast celebration on Feb. 19, marking the senior class countdown to graduation. In lieu of a speaker, alums sent in words of wisdom that were shared in the event program. Breakfast was sponsored by the alumni association and Dunkin' Donuts and each student was gifted a WPS acrylic tumbler. Pictured is senior Meredith Cummings.



# Pines approved for up to eight digital signs

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Ocean Pines years-long campaign to replace manually updated community signs with electronic message boards came to fruition last week after the Worcester Commissioners approved an amendment to county zoning laws.

Worcester Director of Development Review and Permitting Ed Tudor said the conversations with Ocean Pines Association representatives about the signs began about a year ago.

"They're seeking a text amendment to allow internal community identification signs," he said.

In September 2019, the OPA Communications Committee began looking into replacing the community's 13 mar-



Chip Bertino

quee signs with digital versions.

After conferring with county officials it soon came to light that the sign swap would require a zoning code amendment specific to Ocean Pines.

Tudor told the commissioners last Tuesday the signs would be limited to non-commercial information relevant to the community.

"As originally proposed, the amendment would have allowed four such internal signs," he said.

That count was bumped to six following a favorable recommendation for the amendment issued by the Worcester Planning Commission on Dec. 3.



Ed Tudor

Commissioner Chip Bertino asked Tudor if the number recommended by the Planning Commission was firm.

"There was some discussion about more than six signs at that meeting, is that correct?" he said.

Tudor said the discussion at the Dec. 3 meeting was wide ranging.

"There were a lot of numbers thrown around," he said. "Some smaller, some greater."

Bertino asked if the half-dozen figure could be amended.

Tudor said the signs would be internal to Ocean Pines and not visible to the general public.

Based on the dozen-plus existing signs, and the potential for emergency messaging applications, Bertino suggested a larger number would be warranted.

"The ability to have these signs changed remotely electronically would be a heck of a lot easier ... from what we're currently doing," he said. "If we were to increase that number to eight instead of six would it really be a problem?"

Tudor saw no issue with the suggestion.

"It doesn't cause me any angst by any means," he said.

Bertino moved to amend the amendment to permit eight internal community signs, which was seconded by Commissioner Jim Bunting and passed unanimously.

# Shamrocks sold to raise funds for recovery

(Feb. 25, 2021) As Saint Patrick's Day approaches, the Town of Berlin's retail and dining establishments will be helping to promote the mission of Worcester Goes Purple Warriors Against Addiction, Inc. by selling "Shamrocks."

With the support of the Berlin Chamber of Commerce, Worcester Goes Purple partners, Worcester Youth and Family, and Hope4Recovery, this project will bring awareness to addictions in the local community.

Worcester Goes Purple works tirelessly to support events such as "Red Ribbon Week" at Buckingham Elementary School, "Wellness Week with Chris Herren" coming up at Stephen Decatur Middle School and

Hope4Recovery house in Berlin.

As the covid-19 pandemic has raged all over the United States, those affected by the disease of addiction and seeking recovery have had many more obstacles to overcome.

Recovery depends on socialization and routine. By raising funds to support recovery efforts, WGP can assist those suffering and their families

with making the necessary steps to get help.

Starting March 1 and continuing through March 21, visit retail or food/drink establishment in Berlin. While there, purchase a green shamrock with a minimum donation of \$1.

Participants can write a support message on the shamrock, honor someone who has lost their fight with addic-

tion, or celebrate their own recovery.

Businesses will display shamrocks and "Turn Berlin Green." A plaque and gift will be presented to the business and their employee who sold the most shamrocks.

To participate or for more information, call Debbie Smullen at 410-870-5161 or email [wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com](mailto:wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com).

## Limited series to discuss structure of spoken poetry

(Feb. 25, 2021) The Worcester County Arts Council and Worcester County Library will present a four-part series on the art of spoken word poetry during the month of March.

Participants will discuss how to structure, memorize and present spoken word poetry. The series is being taught by Ash'iz tha Rebirth, a poet and writer.

"Spoken Word is a powerful art form that enriches and inspires. Many of us have experienced an unprecedented year, and we hope this series will connect writers of different ages and backgrounds," said Library Director Jennifer Ranck.

The series is limited to 15 people and will begin on Tuesday, March 2 at 6:30 p.m. Other class dates are March, 9, 16 and 23. To register and for more information, visit [WorcesterLibrary.org](http://WorcesterLibrary.org).

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# Berlin in best beer scene contest

By Ally Lanasa  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Berlin is competing in a USA Today 10Best Readers' Choice 2021 contest for the best small town beer scene against 19 other nominations, including Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

Each nomination has a population less than 30,000 and were chosen by a panel of beer experts as having the best beer scenes in the U.S. for their size.

Although Berlin's population is less than 5,000 people, the craft beer selection is quite large.

Burley Oak Brewing Company, 10016 Old Ocean City Boulevard, offers 20 beers at all times with new can releases every month.

For February, beer lovers can purchase Warehouse Graffiti Double IPA, Search and Destroy Triple IPA, Pear Coconut Crumble J.R.E.A.M. fruited sour with lactose, Berry Crumble Cake J.R.E.A.M. fruited sour with lactose and Strawberry Raspberry Vanilla Whipped Icing J.R.E.A.M. fruited sour with lactose online at <https://burleyoak.com/can-release/> and pick up at Burley Oak on Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the order confirmation and a valid I.D.

Owner Bryan Brushmiller got his start in the craft beer business by making beer in his garage as a creative outlet. He went on to open Burley Oak in 2011, which instills sustainable practices and uses local materials and craftsmen.

Brushmiller said he and his employees "understand the tourism behind craft beer and the economic impact" it has on the town. A lot of people visit his brewery from all over the country, which allows him to promote the shops downtown, he said.

Brushmiller also owns The Globe Gastro Theatre, 12 Broad St., which has 10 Burley Oak beers on tap, and the Lost Pantry, 17 Jefferson St., which has four Burley Oak beers on tap.

He added that "it's an honor" to be a part of Berlin's beer industry and be nominated for the best small town beer scene. He encourages his customers to vote for Berlin daily.

Brushmiller recently opened a small brewery in Delmar called Loakal Branch Brewing Company.

"I'm excited to bring what we brought to Berlin to Delmar," he said.

Burley Oak is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., while The Globe is open Monday through Wednesday from 4-10 p.m., Thursday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to midnight and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The Lost Pantry is currently closed for the season and is expected to reopen May 1.

Fins Ale House and Raw Bar, 119 N. Main St., is open Wednesday and Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Happy Hour on Wednesday and Thursday takes place from 3:30-7 p.m. On Friday, it starts at 11:30 a.m. and goes until 6 p.m. Although Happy Hour is not offered on Saturday, Fins has Happy Hour deals on Sunday from open to close.

"The menu not only features Big Oyster Beers at discount but rail drinks and house wines as well as local oysters, shrimp, clams, tacos, and other bar bites," said Molly McEvoy, bar manager.

Fins has 12 beers on tap.

"Big Oyster in Lewes, Delaware, is our house brewery," McEvoy said. "On any given day you're likely to find four to five Big Oyster Brewery beers on tap. We feature local beers from Evolution, Backshore Brewing, Duclaw, Flying Dog and Key Brewing among others in rotation any given week."

She added that she is excited about the town being nominated for the best small town beer scene.

"Berlin is ... a great scene for local people who have so much to offer on the food and beverage front. To be nominated as the best small town beer scene makes perfect sense," McEvoy said, who has worked at Fins since 2016 as a server, bartender and bar manager. "Being surrounded by great breweries has sparked an interest in craft beer and all that comes with it. We are a Delaware-based family business lucky enough to have become a part of the Berlin beer scene. It makes for a lot of fun!"

Fins also has locations in Rehoboth Beach and Bethany Beach.

In addition, Pitt Stop Beer & Wine, 9040 Worcester Highway, carries more than 850 different beers.

The liquor store and bar is open Sunday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Currently, Berlin is in the top five of the contest.

Fans of Berlin's beer scene can vote once per day until March 16 at noon.

To vote, visit <https://www.10best.com/awards/travel/best-small-town-beer-scene/berlin-maryland/>.

Winners will be announced on March 26.



ALLY LANASA/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Bettina Peix, a bartender at The Globe on Broad Street in Berlin, showcases the draft beer list last Saturday, which features Burley Oak Brewing Company IPAs.

## Avoid Pocomoke River waters in Snow Hill for wk.

(Feb. 25, 2021) The recent heavy rainfall contributed to a 500,000-gallon overflow at the Snow Hill Wastewater treatment plant, the Town of Snow Hill reported to the Maryland Department of the Environment and Worcester County Environmental Programs late last.

The town's sewer system also collects stormwater, and the combination of that with the normal wastewater flow is what exceeded the system's capacity.

Worcester County Environmental Programs is advising that, as a precaution, public contact with the Pocomoke River waters in the vicinity of Snow Hill should be avoided for the next seven days.

"We are advising the public to avoid contact with the river due to potential contaminants," environmental programs Director Bob Mitchell said. "Fishing, swimming, wading or other contact with the waterways should not be conducted until this rain event has concluded and this advisory is lifted. Those who do come into contact with the river should wash the area of skin thoroughly with soap and water. If the contacted area has any open wounds or sores, seek immediate advice from a healthcare provider."

With the high-volume stream flow, rapid dilution of the sewage is expected. The high volume of stream flow has contributed mightily to the rapid dilution of the combined stormwater/sewage overflow. The department posted this advisory at the State Park in Shad Landing and along the waterfront in Snow Hill.

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# Opinion

Please send all letters and other editorial submissions to [editor@baysidegazette.com](mailto:editor@baysidegazette.com) by 5 p.m. Monday.

## Time to clear the air

Transparency is an overused word to describe an under-used concept. That’s how it has seemed ever since governing officials and their constituents began to demand more of it in recent years.

Yet, despite these pledges of more openness, the flow of information from authorities to the public has been increasingly managed to prevent the public from misunderstanding the information it receives and to protect it from the generally inept press. That’s how they explain it, anyway.

But that’s not it how works, considering that the greater purpose of information management is to ensure that officials aren’t embarrassed by uncomfortable news.

Which brings us to the latest imbroglio in Ocean Pines. Whatever occurred between former Operational Logistics Director Colby Phillips and the board is subject to speculation.

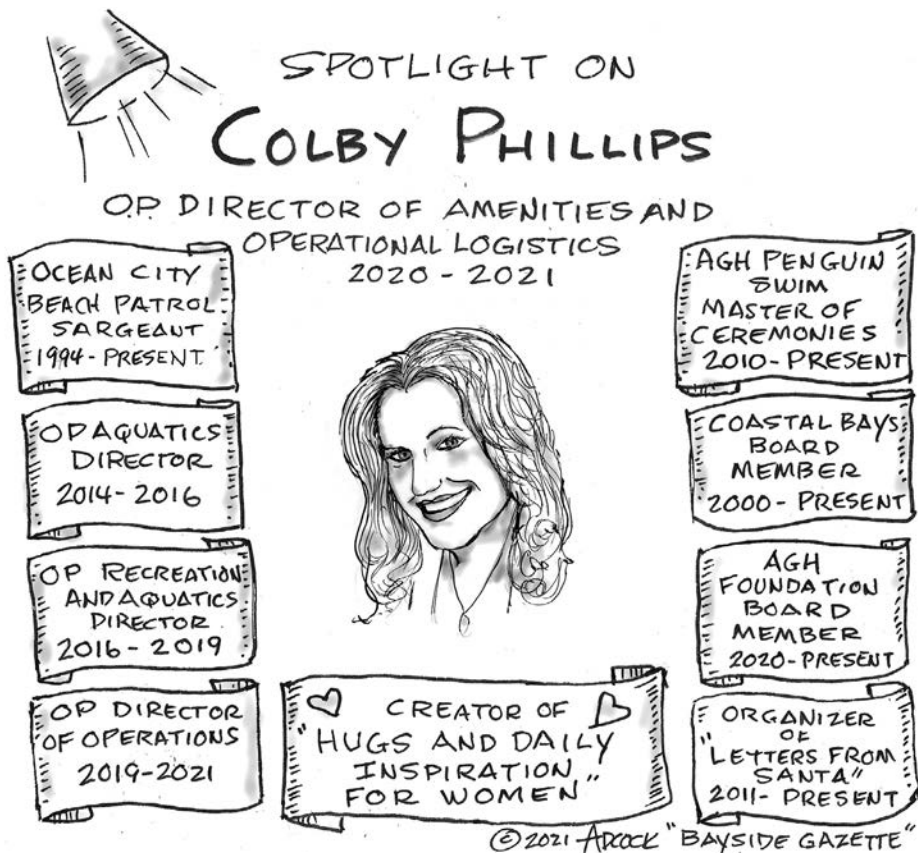
One suspects — or speculates — that behind-the-scenes machinations to discourage her career advancement within the Ocean Pines Association were part of the problem. The question of her qualifications, however, is not the issue. It is how the situation was or might have been handled.

Apparently, at least two members of the board believe that whatever occurred was serious enough to consider removing another member from his post. Even so, no one, except the parties involved know what transpired or why.

Maybe the truth of it will come out during the yet-to-be-scheduled board meeting on one member’s future, but that will require the board to stop worrying about hurt feelings, “personnel issues” and the possibility that the public might misunderstand.

It already misunderstands, because it substitutes what it’s inclined to believe for what it doesn’t know. Now at risk is not the fate of one person, or one or two directors, but the public’s trust in the board overall. The damage done by speculation has to be repaired.

As Director Frank Daly said this week, “We are not the Central Intelligence Agency. This cloak of secrecy that ties hands is extremely unfair ... to the community and ... the people involved.”



## Letters

### Former director addresses OPA

Editor,

Once again, I feel as a former [Ocean Pines Association] director the need to speak out.

This email is not solely focused on Colby Phillips but rather the toxic environment which has come to be again in OPA.

Let’s talk about the facts. I was a director on the board when John Bailey left OPA.

I invited John Viola to meet me at Taylor’s restaurant. It was there I asked him to consider being the interim GM. He was very reluctant to take this task on.

After further conversation and a meeting with then board president Doug Parks, he agreed to take the position with our word it would only be for six months as he mentored and trained Colby Phillips to potentially take the GM position.

No guarantee was ever made to Colby that she would get the position.

I do not pretend to be involved in the day-to-day operations but saw early on first hand there were some issues with this process.

The board that I sat on established the transition man-

agement team. With this structure, the GM would be at the top reporting to the board, and Steve Phillips and Colby Phillips would be sharing on the next level down with the staff reporting to them.

This structure allowed for OPA to never be fully reliant on the GM with the responsibilities spread further down. For almost a year the GM and team were able to accomplish a lot.

For some reason, a decision was made after the pay study (another one) to rename and move positions around. I am aware that this is totally at the GM’s discretion.

However, what was occurring here was that Colby Phillips was systematically being demoted without calling it a demotion. The interim GM had also decided he wanted to stay on in a permanent capacity as GM.

Let me be very clear, that was and is his right to exercise this option along with that of the board of directors.

Having worked in corporate America for many years, it was very easy to see what was occurring.

The fact that the new board President Larry Perrone and Vice President Colette Horn, unlike previous board Presi-

dent Doug Parks and Vice President Steve Tuttle, felt the need to be intimately involved with HR and operations.

Primarily operations that had to do with Colby Phillips role within OPA.

The culture that has now developed since the board of directors allowed Larry Perrone and Colette Horn to be the president and vice president is one of dictatorship and control.

There has been difficulty in getting communication from our association to the media as well. There was no formal mentorship program established for Colby Phillips but a lot of criticism.

I was personally told by a board member after the election that she would never be GM. A board member in January 2020 told me since Colby didn’t have a college degree she would not be a choice for GM.

First, why would board members be involved in these conversations about an employee or even know these things?

It is very clear, in my humble opinion, that this could be perceived as targeted treatment and Colby never had a chance. Regardless, if she was

Continued on Page 16

BAYSIDE

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The Bayside Gazette is published weekly by FLAG Publications, Inc.

at 8200 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Md. 21842.

The Bayside Gazette is available by subscription at \$75/year or \$40/6 mos.

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# Letters

Continued from Page 15

to get the GM job, she never had a shot.

Why did VP Horn say the first time the board heard of the complaint was Jan. 26 after receiving a letter from Colby's husband, when the GM notified Colby that he spoken to the board president on Jan. 21 and said there would be no further interaction between the board president and Colby?

All communication would go through the GM to her from the board. The board president should have immediately notified the rest of the board and he did not.

Why was this complaint hidden from the rest of the board.? Why did it take Colby 10 days to get a response from HR from the GM with numerous follow ups?

The board didn't acknowledge publicly the complaint until three weeks later? When the GM had an issue with a board member it moved at warp speed and publicly! Why would an employee complaint not get the same priority? Good question!

Gossip among employees is common place in all businesses. However, why did our board agree to an investigation into Colby on the allegations she was starting a smear campaign against the GM?

Was anyone else investigated? How much did this investigation cost the homeowners? Do we really believe that no one else on our staff complains amongst themselves?

Are we now going to investigate every employee who chooses to complain about their boss or job? Oh, and by the way, it came back unsubstantiated and no proof of claims made against her. Once again this could be perceived as a witch hunt.

We have to be fair on both sides of the table here in Ocean Pines. We have by-laws and rules for a reason. There are some directors on this board who are entirely too involved in operations. This is not allowed by our bylaws.

The board of directors are voted in by the homeowners of this association. They work for us, they are not above us. The board is made up of seven individuals.

Each has equal voice and voting rights as told to us when I was on the board repeatedly by then President Doug Parks. President Perrone and VP Horn would do well to remember that and try to foster more of a team approach and communication on this board and with the community.

We lost a great employee. Whether or not she would ever be GM is irrelevant. The current political environment and culture of OPA made her leave. With no future advancement path for her, she choose to go find one for herself and she did.

*Esther Diller*  
*Former board director 2018-2019*  
(Ed. Note. The author's husband, Stuart Lakernick, declared his candidacy for the board this week.)

# Superintendent Lou Taylor appointed to second term

**By Ally Lanasa**  
Staff Writer

(Feb. 25, 2021) Superintendent Lou Taylor was unanimously appointed to another four-year term effective July 1 during the Worcester County Board of Education meeting last Tuesday.

"We've had our challenges, none more than we've had the last year with covid, but the thing that always rings out in my mind that gets us through those tough times are the 6,700 kids that go to our schools, and so all of you know, I've done this for a long time," Taylor said. "I've been at it for 37 years, and I think now is one of the most important times in our country's history for educating our young people because of the challenges that they face. We've all seen what our world has turned into for the last 10, 12, 18 months, and so teaching our kids and giving them a foundation is what's in the forefront for me as I move this school system forward."

Taylor added that he strives to do his best every day, implementing the lessons he was taught as a young man "to make sure that our kids are shown love, that they're shown respect and that we give them an opportunity to be successful."

He also thanked the board members for their confidence in his leadership and the opportunity to continue serving the

county school system.

"We have a lot of work to do. We've taken 50 steps back because of covid, and we've got a lot of work to do once we come out of this covid environment, but I assure you we have a great team assembled to move us forward," Taylor added.

District 4 Board member William Gordy recognized Taylor for his "remarkable" leadership.

"The results of that leadership have proven to be unparalleled. Mr. Taylor is richly deserving of the opportunity to continue as our superintendent and to continue to lead the Worcester County Board of Education in the exemplary manner we have become accustomed to," Gordy said. "We thank you Mr. Taylor for agreeing to continue to lead us and to move forward providing a top-quality education for every child in Worcester County."

District 7 Board member Todd Ferrante also commended Taylor for guiding the county schools through the last difficult year.

"He has been a great communicator. Not only is he a great communicator, he is a great listener," Ferrante said. "He might not always agree with you, but he will sit down and listen. We've seen that time and time again."

## OPEN HOUSES

### FEB. 25 - MARCH 4

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Fri-Mon, 11am-4pm	Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside	1BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+	Condos, Towns & SF	-	Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate
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# Puzzles

SEALED WITH A KISS

BY LISA BUNKER / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Lisa Bunker, of Exeter, N.H., is the author of two novels for young readers — “Zenobia July,” about a trans girl with a troubled past starting over with a new family and school, while tackling a cybermystery; and “Felix Yz,” about a boy fused with an alien facing a risky procedure to separate them. Both were published by Viking. She also represents Exeter in the New Hampshire House of Representatives. This is Lisa’s sixth puzzle for The Times and her first Sunday. — W.S.

ACROSS

1 Percussion instrument in a marching band

7 Prefix with sexual

10 Prefix with sexual

14 Animals in a pod

19 Start of a playground taunt

20 Kitchen brand with a palindromic name

21 What an article may come with?

22 Drain, as from soil

23 Fatsis who wrote “Word Freak”

24 Most feathery, as clouds

26 “Thong Song” singer, 2000

27 Sharp, in a way

28 Early tie

30 The ones over here

32 In the capacity of

33 Some Ivy Leaguers

34 Born yesterday, so to speak

36 Calm

38 Comfy slip-on, in brief

39 What an outstretched arm with an open palm can mean

41 Fleet org.

42 It means business

43 Stakes

44 Narrow

46 Group tour vehicle

49 Playground comeback

52 Build up

53 Sci-fi publisher of “Ender’s Game” and “The Wheel of Time”

54 Popular beer brand, briefly

57 With 3-Down, one of the Avengers

59 \_\_\_ smear

61 Reduced

63 Opposite of a standing order?

64 “Do me this one favor ...”

67 French vineyards

68 Prats

69 Contrariwise

71 North African capital

72 Nongendered, as language: Abbr.

73 Sui \_\_\_

74 Kind of dash

76 Best Supporting Actor winner for “Dallas Buyer’s Club”

78 Prefix with friendly

79 Rules out?

80 West Coast beer brand, in brief

81 “\_\_\_ ruled the world ...”

83 :

86 Capital of Yemen

87 Kind of modern office plan

89 Smell of a rose

92 Smell of a rosé

95 \_\_\_ Fridays

96 Barrister’s deg.

97 Bench tool

99 Quibble

101 Student’s bonus points

103 Drawn-out campaigns

105 When doubled, another name for dorado

106 Call \_\_\_ night

107 Eighth letter

109 British tennis champ who invented the sweatband

111 \_\_\_ impasse

112 Guardian spirits

114 Especially

116 Soubise sauce is made from them

118 Greenish-brown

119 \_\_\_ cake (dim sum dish)

120 Suffix with social

121 “Wheel of Fortune” freebies

122 Sharp

123 Label for Otis Redding and Isaac Hayes

124 Latin king

125 Sea lion, for one

2 Few

3 See 57-Across

4 Subsequent versions

5 Thurman of “Kill Bill”

6 Word before and after “a”

7 Turned on

8 Kind of symmetry

9 A pretty capable sort

10 Singer DiFranco

11 Big name in bubbly

12 Small woodland songbird

13 “Town square for the global village of tomorrow,” per Bill Gates

14 Jimmy of the Daily Planet

15 L.L. Bean competitor

16 Medieval helmet

17 Exonerate

18 Prime snorkeling spots

25 Like many stuffed animals

29 PX shopper

31 The Quran, for one

35 Mango Madness and Go Bananas, for two

37 Ones initiating handoffs, for short

39 Some mattresses

40 Indulgence

45 Capital of French Polynesia

47 Show again

48 Caterer’s container

Online subscriptions: Today’s puzzle and more than 4,000 past puzzles, nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
19						20			21				22					
23						24			25				26					
27					28	29			30			31			32			
33					34				35		36				37			
38				39	40				41			42			43			
	44		45						46		47			48				
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92	93	94				95				96				97	98		99	100
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106					107				108		109				110		111	
112					113				114		115				116	117		
118									119					120				
122									123					124			125	

50 A fine mesh this is!

51 Debussy prelude inspired by a water sprite

54 Outcast

55 Out of focus

56 Surface anew, say

57 Post production

58 Without a doubt

60 Turkish officers

62 Timid sort

63 Instrument in “O! Susannah”

64 They’ll be mist

65 Super Bowl of 2022

66 Place with robes and sweaters

70 Seasick sea serpent of old cartoons

71 Bank posting

73 Words after throwing a ball

75 Grams

77 Unbalance

82 Packaging list

84 “L’chaim!”

85 (a, b), e.g.

87 Anthem contraction

88 Suit perfectly

90 France from France

91 Singer who founded Fenty Beauty

92 What ponies express?

93 Field-plowing duo

94 Poem piece

97 Notable point in geometry

98 U.N. member since 1949: Abbr.

100 Glittery decoration

102 Listing

104 Beau \_\_\_

105 Ones with plenty of reservations

108 Blade brand

110 Days of old

113 Suffix with court or cash

115 Deli supply

117 Surveillance org.

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HARD - 6

Fill in the blank spaces in the grid so that every vertical column, every horizontal row and every 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9, without repeating any. There is really only one solution to each puzzle.

3 8 5 4 9 6 1 7 2

6 7 1 5 2 3 4 8 9

9 4 2 8 7 1 5 6 3

5 1 4 2 3 7 6 9 8

8 3 7 9 6 4 2 5 1

2 9 6 1 5 8 7 3 4

4 5 9 6 8 2 3 1 7

7 2 8 3 1 5 9 4 6

1 6 3 7 4 9 8 2 5

Answers to last week's puzzles

DOCK

OPRAH

UTILE

LIMERICK

ANELEPHANTINTHEWOMB

SOY

SWEAT

HITWOKBOTTOM

ANNE LOUSE

DEADHEAT

GETWITCHQUICK

PIVOTS

IVANV VIES

ZINE

ZEN

ADASTRA

WEEDBETWEENTHELINES

SCHWAS

WHISKEYBUSINESS

AUTO

GMEIN

POISE

ASNER

TAKEAWAYNECHECK

INA

FLORAS

ERASE

WIG

DOORS

NOD

WEAK

CASH

NCAAGAME

PACER

THEWHEELDEAL

ARM

SALSA

LOL

LEASE

BODEREK

ELI

AWOL

ADEPT

SNORES

ALOE

USEBY

OYL

THELINES

AIRALERT

BICEP

YUCCA

MOTT



# Cuisine

## Suplee's pork and duck sausage recipe

Oh, will wonders never cease? I was on the phone with my girlfriend today and I was haphazardly planning a trip to the mountains with my son this weekend. She politely mused, "Umm, you know that you have the catering this weekend, right?"



By Paul Suplee,  
MBA, CEC, PC-3

I quickly quipped "No, that's in a few wee..... oh, crap! How is it the end of February already?"

Scrambling to get my head wrapped around the parties this weekend, I closed my eyes, took a few deep breaths, lowered my shoulders, did a downward and upward dog and then told myself that we had everything under control.

Good lord, how did this happen? It is literally insane that March is next week. Don't get me wrong. This is an amazing time for us, as it only means that Spring is right around the corner. The ocean becomes a playground again, both on the beach and off-shore, we start to see weddings taking place throughout the shore, perhaps the sun will shine a touch more than it has recently and above all, we will finally be done with the wettest, dampest, chilliest winter that I can remember. Really? 32 degrees and raining? That's just plain cruel.

And as we usher Spring in, it will be a time when recipes transition (typically) from the thicker, heartier and heavier foods of winter to more of the fresh and vibrant dishes that we would all like to eat on vacation; watermelon salad, chilled soups and ice cold drinks come to mind.

But for now, we are still in the grind of this bizarre winter of ours, and I had to share this breakfast dish that I made last week. Yes, it is for breakfast, although I know I could not personally eat this every day. But, when the snow, ice and slush were falling last week, this is just what the doctor ordered.

I don't know about you, but I like to keep a decent stock of, well, stock on hand. I typically have chicken and beef vacuum packed and frozen in smaller bags that I can use as needed. They come in quite handy.

Simply put, I poached then grilled some homemade pork and duck sausage, using a grill pan that would catch all of the juices and fats as the



sausage cooked. Deglazing the pan with some stock, a little butter was added, and the broth was complete. Yes, this is definitely a hearty dish, but man oh man was it perfect to get the day going.

Served with some over-easy eggs, it certainly fueled me for the day ahead.

One word of advice, though, is with the meat grinder. Always make sure that everything is chilled in ice water throughout the process. That will leave you with a nice, fatty and delicious sausage. And if you have a plastic meat grinder attachment for your stand mixer, make a planter out of it and search for a metal one. They can be a bit pricy, but they are well worth the small investment as it mimics the large commercial ones that we use in the industry.

At the end of the day, making sausage is incredibly simple, and it is a skill well worth learning. Don't worry. You can use it for light, seafood sausages as well. You know, like in the Spring.

### Pork & Duck Sausage

*makes about 4#*

- 1# Duck breast with skin
- 2.5# Pork butt
- 4 oz. Bacon
- 1 Tbsp. Sage
- 1 Tbsp. Fennel seeds
- 1 Tbsp. Paprika
- 2 tsp. Cayenne pepper
- 1 Tbsp. Cracked black pepper
- Salt to taste

1. Keep your grinding attachment or grinder ice cold. Place any removable metal parts in an ice bath.

2. Cut the duck into small enough pieces to fit through the grinder with ease, ensuring that it stays cold.

3. Do the same with the pork butt, but pay attention to removing the sinew as this will clog the grinder

4. At the end of the day, make sure that your meat to fat ratio is around 3 to 1. If you go less than 25 percent fat, you stand the chance of having a dry sausage. No one wants that.

5. Cut the bacon into chunks.

6. Toss the ingredients together in a large bowl, again ensuring that it remains cold. I know I'm a broken record, but this helps the emulsification, which is a fancy science word for

making sure that it all stays together. If it gets warm during the process, then you stand the chance of all the fat running out in the cooking process. We don't want that.

7. Run your mixture through a large grinder plate twice and you are almost done!

8. Place in a stand mixer bowl and beat with the paddle attachment. Add crushed ice if you feel that the mixture is getting too warm. This will help the mixture emulsify.

9. Pay attention, as this is probably the single most important step. Take a small patty and cook it up. This is called a tester or taster. This will tell you what you need to add to balance out the seasoning to your taste. If you wait until you have stuffed your sausage casings, it is too late.

10. And you are now done. You may stuff it into casings as in the picture, or you can use this as patties, stuffing or in meat sauces. Voila!

—Paul Suplee is a Professor of Culinary Arts at Wor-Wic Community College and owner of boxcar40.

Visit him at [www.boxcar40.com](http://www.boxcar40.com).



# Calendar

Please send calendar items to [editor@baysidegazette.com](mailto:editor@baysidegazette.com) by 5 p.m. Monday. All community-related activities will be published at no charge.

## Thurs., Feb. 25

**‘HEART & SOUL’ FREE ART CLASS**  
Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94th St., 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Barbara Buford will instruct this class. Geared towards adults dealing with stress, trauma or grief, projects are designed to focus on centering and healing. All materials provided. Masks required. Advance registration required: 410-524-9433 or [www.ArtLeagueofOceanCity.org/Classes](http://www.ArtLeagueofOceanCity.org/Classes).

**ZUMBA FOR BEGINNERS**  
Meeting via Zoom, 2:00 PM. These classes uplift and improve mood. This is a webinar style program, meaning you can practice your moves without being seen. Register: [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org).

## Fri., Feb. 26

**LOVE ON TAP VIRTUAL SHORE CRAFT BEER FEST**  
Swing by the Princess Royale to purchase from a variety of specially curated beers in packs of 6 and log into exclusive content from breweries and chefs around Maryland and the Shore. Finally, order your 2 Shore Craft Beer face masks and 2 commemorative glasses online, <https://www.shorecraftbeer.com/love-on-tap.html>. Hotel packages are available.

**MID-DAY MINDFULNESS BREAK**  
Meeting via Zoom, 2:00 PM. Join psychotherapist Bevin Jones as she leads participants through a mid-day mindfulness break. Take some time out of your day to practice self care. Register: [worcesterlibrary.org](http://worcesterlibrary.org) under events.

## Sat., Feb. 27

**LOVE ON TAP VIRTUAL SHORE CRAFT BEER FEST**  
Swing by the Princess Royale to purchase from a variety of specially curated beers in packs of 6 and log into exclusive content from breweries and chefs around Maryland and the Shore. Finally, order your 2 Shore Craft Beer face masks and 2 commemorative glasses online, <https://www.shorecraftbeer.com/love-on-tap.html>. Hotel packages are available.

**FREE FAMILY ARTS DAY**  
Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94th St., 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Barbara Buford will instruct this class. For the whole family, so children must be accompanied by an adult and adults must be accompanied by a child. All materials provided. Masks required. Advance registration required: 410-524-9433 or [www.ArtLeagueofOceanCity.org/Classes](http://www.ArtLeagueofOceanCity.org/Classes).

**THE WIENERMOBILE AT THE PIER**  
Jolly Roger Pier in Ocean City, 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM. The Hotdoggers of the Oscar Mayer Wienermobile will hand out those famous Wiener Whistles, hats, T-shirts and more. Small groups may also be able to tour the Wienermobile.

**FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET**  
*Saturdays* - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Open to the public.

## Sun., Feb. 28

**LOVE ON TAP VIRTUAL SHORE CRAFT BEER FEST**  
Swing by the Princess Royale to purchase from a variety of specially curated beers in packs of 6 and log into exclusive content from breweries and chefs around Maryland and the Shore. Finally, order your 2 Shore Craft Beer face masks and 2 commemorative glasses online, <https://www.shorecraftbeer.com/love-on-tap.html>. Hotel packages are available.

## Mon., March 1

**INTERACTIVE STORY TIME ‘EXPLORE ART’**  
Meeting via Zoom, 10:30 AM. Stories, songs and rhymes and art. Also, preview this week’s craft kit Explore with Clay. For ages 2-5 years. Register: [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org) under events.

## Tues., March 2

**MIDDLE SCHOOL ZOOM BOOK CLUB**  
Meeting via Zoom, 11:00 AM. Discussion of the book “Absolutely Normal Chaos” by Sharon Creech. For ages 12-14 years. Register: [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org) under events.

**RETIREMENT SUCCESS CLASSES**  
The virtual webinars will take place in three parts, Feb. 16, 23 and March 2, 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM. The third class is titled, “Retirement Investing.” This is a detailed retirement planning seminar designed to educate those who are nearing retirement or who have recently retired. Register: <https://worcesterlibrary.org>.

**VIRTUAL MARYLAND BASIC BOATING SAFETY COURSE**  
The course is held over 3 evenings, March 2-4, 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM. The Maryland Safe Boating Certificate is required for all boat operators born after July 1, 1972 and is awarded after successful completion of the course. Cost is \$20. Register: Barry Cohen, 410-935-



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

**SEAGULL GATHERING**  
Seagulls hold a meet-up along the docks outside the Ocean Pines Yacht Club on Saturday.



ALLY LANASA/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

**LIVE TUNES**  
The Natalie Davis Band, an Eastern Shore-based cover band, performs R&B, pop and modern alternative hits at The Globe on Feb. 19.

4807 or [CGAuxOC@gmail.com](mailto:CGAuxOC@gmail.com).

**WHAT IS SPOKEN WORD? PART 1**  
Meeting via Zoom, 6:30 PM. Compare and contrast between the spoken word poetry and literary poetry. Participants will begin learning and working on poem structure. Register: [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org) under events.

## Wed., March 3

**WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM ANNE FRANK, HER LIFE AND SURPRISING LEGACY**  
Meeting via Zoom, 6:00 PM. As we are experiencing isolation, perhaps we can draw solace from thinking about the war time teenage diarist and Holocaust victim Anne Frank. Learn how she coped with her two-year isolation whilst in hiding from the Nazis and the astonishing effect her story has had on people in

some of the world’s most turbulent and violent regions. Register: [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org) under events.

## ONGOING EVENTS

**AARP FREE TAX PREPARATIONS**  
AARP will be at Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway on Mondays and Thursdays. Taxpayers will bring their documents in to be scanned so that the councilors can prepare them remotely. The taxpayer will then return the following week to pick up his/her tax return. Make an appointment by calling 443-373-2667 or visit [www.mdweb-scheduler.com/](http://www.mdweb-scheduler.com/).

**DIAL-A-STORY**  
Call 888-964-2686 to hear a children’s book read by a librarian. Updated every week on Wednesday.



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- Room Attendant
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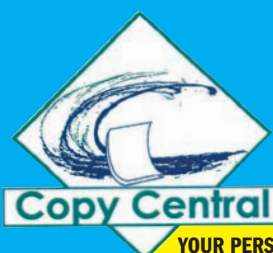
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