



OP bylaws revisions include elections focus

Daly compromises on his proposals to gain approval of rest of board of directors

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) The Ocean Pines Board of Directors approved 31 proposed bylaw revisions, while Director Frank Daly withdrew a number of motions tied to candidate qualifications, during a five-hour special meeting on Monday morning.



Colette Horn

Daly offered a slew of changes to bylaws section 5.02A in the wake of the association losing the lawsuit brought by Rick Farr over being disqualified in the midst of the 2021 board election.

"There are a number of changes from me, some from [bylaws] committee suggestions and some from residents," he said.

Among Daly's recommendations was instituting a three-year residency requirement for board candidates, with one year service on an advisory committee an acceptable substitute.

"It's a good way to learn the inner workings of the association," he said.

Director Doug Parks opposed the measure, noting eligibility and qualifications are separate issues.

"It's OK to define items for eligibility that can be put into bylaws, but what we can't define as a board is what somebody perceives as a quali-

fication," he said.

Based on significant dissent, Daly altered proposals to amend section 5.02A to prohibit board candidates, or their spouses, from seeking election if convicted of a felony in the last 10 years.

"HOA boards in the United States are not well-trusted," he said. "When you have a felon sitting here on this board that is not going to do anything to build community trust."

Daly said based on data from the
See REVISIONS Page 2



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

MASKED ON MAIN

Heeding ample caution for health safety concerns masked shoppers peruse Main Street in Berlin on Sunday.

Berlin budget work begins publicly Mon.

Citizen comment not allowed in workshop

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) Berlin Mayor Zack Tyndall and the Town Council will launch the months long FY2023 budget process during a work session on Monday at 5 p.m.

Topics covered during the Valentine's Day session, the first of eight meetings slated through May, will include general fund capital projects and real estate tax projections.

Public comments are not allowed during work sessions, which are intended for the mayor and council to confer with department heads.

By contrast, on March 14, residents' input will be welcomed during budget introduction and first reading of the FY23 proposed tax rate. The meeting starts at 7 p.m.

Two weeks later on March 28, Town of Berlin officials will hold a public hearing to review the proposed tax rate prior to adoption by council. The proposed constant yield rate will also be reviewed during the 7 p.m. meeting.

During April, a trio of budget work sessions is scheduled on the first three Mondays starting at 5 p.m.

On April 4 the agenda lists reviewing general fund details, including departmental breakdowns, as well as fire and EMS services.

Utilities funds will be the focus on April 11, with another session on April 18 discussing financial specifics for electric, water, wastewater and storm water.

Following the half-
See BERLIN Page 3



Zack Tyndall



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Revisions will go to OP counsel

Continued from Page 1
U.S. Department of Justice, recidivism rates drop to under 2 percent a decade after convictions.

“That’s the purpose for 10 years,” he said.

Parks questioned the recommended length of time.

“What additional risk would we incur after five years?” he asked.

Parks said residents should ultimately be the arbitrators if board candidates are suitable to serve based on qualifications.

Director Rick Farr took exception to the inclusion of a passage that prohibited the candidacy of anyone whose spouse had a felony record within 10 years of the filing date.

“I can’t support the spouse piece,” he said.

Association attorney Jeremy Tucker said the proposal to include spouses with felony backgrounds is based on a hypothetical scenario of influencing board votes.

“The concern is if this could be considered arbitrary,” he said.

Daly said the intent was to eliminate the possibility that a convicted spouse of a board member might affect financial management decisions.

“It’s not intended to target a specific member,” he said.

Parks asked how Daly’s scenario would differ from the potential for other family members to exert influence.

“If the premise of this motion is based on influence, we can shoot it down,” he said.

Parks said each board member represents only one of seven votes.

“Even some influence isn’t all seven members,” he said. “I’m more concerned were introducing unnecessary risk for the organization.”

Association President Colette Horn agreed that the probability of spousal influence was unlikely, while also supporting prohibiting felons convicted in the last decade from qualifying for board service.

“It’s not just that your spouse is a felon, it’s your integrity as an individual,” she said. “If my husband committed financial crimes, he wouldn’t be my husband anymore ... but that’s not the kind of person I married.”

Horn said integrity is exhibited through individual choices.

“You want them to have a central core of integrity and ego strength that allows them to make decisions based on facts, data and what’s right,” she said.

In a similar spirit, Daly proposed updating bylaws section 5.12C to include felony convictions, which would also extend to spouses, as a basis for removing a sitting board member.

Director Amy Peck suggested reducing the time limits for convicted felons to qualify as board candidates to five years after restitution and probation are concluded.

The board agreed with the change, while Daly also agreed to drop the spouse portion for both proposals.

Under candidate qualifications, the board agreed to amend bylaws section 5.02B rules for forming an annual Search Committee to solicit board applications.

Approved revisions include restating the committee membership to be between three to five members eligible to vote, which also deleting a requirement to have two more candidates than open seats.

Also approved was amending bylaws section 5.02C to include a new candidate application form that would require full legal names and potentially supporting documents to establish residency.

Peck forwarded a recommendation to amend bylaws section 5.13C to limit board powers to sell, mortgage or encumber real property or assets.

“If over 10 percent of current income from annual charges it would need a referendum approval of members,” she said.

The board also voted in favor of amending the motion to permit a super majority two thirds board vote to approve sums over the 10 percent margin.

In a statement after the meeting, Horn said community input is greatly appreciated.

“I am pleased to announce that we had a total of 82 community participants,” she said. Horn said initial steps in the bylaws revision process included a work group formed last year to identify possible language changes with clear rationales for the updates.

“Other changes were proposed by Director Daly in consultation with our corporate counsel, based on review of the findings from the court in the two lawsuits addressing issues related to candidate verification,” she said. “In all, nearly two years’ time was devoted to development of the proposed changes under review today.”

Horn said revisions examined during Monday’s meeting would be forwarded to corporate counsel to develop referendum questions.

“Following that, a town hall meeting will be scheduled that will give the membership the opportunity for additional comments and discussion with the Board on the proposed bylaws changes and the language of the referendum questions,” she said.

Horn said prior to the pending town hall a summary of proposed changes would be available for member review.

“The final step will be for the referendum questions to be put to the membership for a vote,” she said. “The questions that receive a majority vote by the membership will determine the revised version of our bylaws.”

Berlin Tindley mural plans to be revisited

Historic Dist. Commission will weigh revamped idea to honor music pioneer

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) Revised plans for a building-side mural honoring Berlin native son Dr. Charles Albert Tindley are on tap for the Historic District Commission in March.

A pioneer of modern gospel music during the post-Civil War era in Philadelphia, Tindley was native to Berlin.

Credited with writing standards such as “Stand By Me,” and “We Shall Overcome,” Tindley was born in Berlin in 1851 but re-located to Philadelphia with his wife, Daisy, following the Civil War.

In October, commission members balked at a proposal for artist Jay Coleman to paint a mural directly on vintage brick on the corner of Bay and William streets.

J.E. Parker, who owns the building, issued a letter supporting the painting of a large mural, proposed at 12-feet-wide and potentially twice that height, on the side of the town-center structure.

After the Worcester County Commissioners approved Berlin’s request to seek grants for the project on Aug. 17, town officials met with Coleman

on Aug. 24 to discuss plans.

Beach to Bay Heritage Area interim Director Lisa Challenger, which is facilitating the artwork, said organizers plan to revive the topic during the commission meeting on March 2.

“We have listened to the Historic District Commission,” she said.

According to its website, the Beach to Bay Heritage Area seeks to promote, preserve and protect cultural heritage historical and natural assets of Maryland’s Lower Eastern Shore.

Following the October meeting, Challenger researched alternative means to pursue the project and discovered a different approach had been taken in Cambridge.

Challenger said several murals in Cambridge were done on large wood panels that were mounted to building exteriors.

“We’re hoping by putting it on panels it allays concerns with brick,” she said.

During the October meeting, Economic and Community Development Director Ivy Wells presented examples of Coleman’s work and told commission members that he was still finalizing the design.

At that time, commission member Mary Moore expressed concerns that Coleman’s artistry felt “excessively commercial.”

Challenger said in addition to feedback on surface materials, the Historic District Commission stylistic sentiments are being considered.

“We’re tweaking the graphic for the design,” she said.

The revamped plans could also bring back into consideration, the first location considered, the Bruder Hill building on Commerce Street.

Commission members had concluded earlier the Bruder Hill would

be too expensive to paint because of its exterior textures.

Challenger said, if approved, the Tindley mural would be part of comparable efforts in Princess Anne and Somerset County, with the undertakings being backed by the Maryland Council for the Arts.



Lisa Challenger

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Berlin budget process outlined

Continued from Page 1
dozen meetings and related refinements, the first reading of the FY23 budget is scheduled for May 9 at 7 p.m.

Two weeks later, on May 23 a public hearing on the FY23 budget is slated for 7 p.m. prior to council adoption.

The annual budget process opens following a recent discussion of whether to bolster revenues for utility enterprise funds, including electric, water, sewer and stormwater funds during the council meeting on Jan. 24.

During the January council meeting, Leslie Michalik and Michael Kleger with PKS & Company presented the town’s FY21 budget audit.

Auditors reported the electric fund had an operating income of \$501,310 for FY21 after losing \$144,054 during FY20.

The other three enterprise funds operated at a loss for both FY21 and FY20.

Berlin’s water fund ended FY21 with an operational loss of \$156,853, preceded by \$127,494 for FY20.

Sewer fund operational losses in FY21 were \$181,088 and \$140,924

during FY20.

Lastly, the town’s stormwater fund operated at a loss \$101,512 in FY21 and also was in the red by \$74,430 in FY20.

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Public outcry rebukes Daly's bylaw changes

Current and past OP Board members question reasons for candidate rule updates

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) “Vindictive” and “egregious” were a few of the frequent adjectives included in the criticisms leveled on Monday morning during a special meeting of the Ocean Pines Board of Directors to review more than 30 proposed bylaws changes being finalized for an eventual referendum.

Among the list of language revisions were a number of suggestions from Director Frank Daly that involved board candidate requirements and verification processes. These were largely developed after Circuit Court Judge Sidney Campen ruled against the Ocean Pines Association’s decision to disqualify candidate Rick Farr midway through the 2021 election.

Daly recommended prohibiting anyone with a felony conviction within 10 years of the filing date from running for director, while also proposing to ban their spouses from running as well.

Further, Daly recommended that if a director or the director’s spouse committed a felony, that would be grounds for the director’s removal

from the board.

Lastly, Daly proposed instituting a three-year residency requirement for board candidates, including an exemption for serving one year on an advisory committee.



Tom Janasek



Doug Parks

Regardless of the meeting convening at 8 a.m. a deluge of public comments poured in questioning Daly’s revisions.

Bob Schwartz said lumping in spouses convicted of a felony to prohibit board candidates would likely be challenged in court.

“It really smells funny,” he said.

Former Director Tom Janasek said the candidate qualification changes would introduce undue restrictions.

“I find it egregious to go after a spouse,” he said. “We already have a hard time getting board members.”

Janasek argued that the current board, which includes appointed members Amy Peck and Josette Wheatley, should refrain from pushing the bylaw changes for a quick referendum vote.

“The public did not vote two of these members on,” he said.

Peck and Wheatley were appointed in October following the resignations of Janasek and Camilla Rogers.

“These changes ... seem vindictive and like you’re just trying to get back at the judge’s decision,” he said.

For his part, Daly acknowledged the Farr litigation resulted in the court issuing a 45-page decision that largely rebuked the associations’ actions.

“That court case showed us we had serious flaws in our bylaws,” he said.

While Farr was disqualified by then association secretary Rogers in late July after an anonymous tip questioned property ownership status, Daly noted under current bylaws comparable scenarios could arise if a candidate died while campaigning or owned property tied to a partnership of LLC.

“What we’re trying to correct is known flaws pointed out to us by the court,” he said.

Despite the eventual court decisions favoring Farr, who was subsequently seated on the board after receiving the most votes, Daly defended the association’s legal actions.

“At all times every decision was made under the guidance of counsel based on the rules that existed,” he said.

Janasek rebutted Daly’s assertion, noting association lawyer Jeremy Tucker had advised against several

board decisions tied to the Worcester Circuit Court case.

“He told us not to have a re-election,” he said. “He told us not to do some of the things that we did anyway.”

Director Doug Parks said the 30-odd bylaws updates included, in addition to Daly’s proposals, a host of revisions recommended by a work group formed last year.

In addition to Parks, work group members included Bylaws and Resolutions Committee Chair Jim Trummel, Jenny Cropper-Rines and Rogers.

“Our charter was to propose changes to the bylaws,” he said. “We disbanded our work group by design and handed the changes to the Bylaws Committee.”

Parks said the work group addressed wording changes to standardize terminology, as opposed to candidate eligibility or policy changes.

“There are issues that are policy changes that need to be understood and the community educated on prior to voting,” he said.

Parks said bylaws updates should be fully reviewed before a referendum is held.

“What I don’t share with my board colleagues is a sense of urgency that it needs to be done right away,” he said.

See HOST Page 5

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Finally Yours splits into twin shops

A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a blue and white patterned jacket over a red top. She is smiling at the camera. Behind her is a jewelry display case with several necklaces on mannequins. One necklace has a heart pendant. A sign in the background says "Birthday!".

Business Briefs

New position

The Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland recently announced Leslie Porter-Cabell as the new Lower Shore Workforce Alliance director.



Leslie P. Cabell

“Leslie brings a wealth of experience from regions ranging from New York City and Boston to DC and Philadelphia. Her thoughtful and comprehensive approach to partnership building between governmental, non-profit and private sector entities will be a significant asset as she applies that experience to the Lower Shore,” said Greg Padgham, executive director of the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Over the span of her 20-year career, Porter-Cabell has successfully developed programs that target youth and underrepresented populations, partnered with community institutions to advance education to career pipeline programs, and managed the administration of several major grant-funded projects.

She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Urban Studies from Boston University and a certificate in Environmental Impact Statements.

She joins the Lower Shore Workforce Alliance at a time when the organization is actively mapping out a diversification of services, including an expanded busi-

ness services department focused on increased collaboration with private sector employers of the Lower Shore.

Group awarded

The American Institute of Architects Chesapeake Bay Chapter (AIA CBC) recently named Becker Morgan Group 2021 Firm of the Year.

The award recognized Becker Morgan Group's commitment to the chapter across a wide range of activities, member involvement and design awards.

The AIA CBC is a regional component of the American Institute of Architects serving architects in 11 counties bordering Maryland's Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The chapter is committed to promoting ethical practices, advocating for codes and regulations that govern the quality of the built environment, and providing support for architectural services that enhance the quality of life for all people.

Becker Morgan Group is an active member of the AIA CBC, encouraging staff participation in professional development activities and with numerous firm members having been and currently engaged in its leadership.

Established in 1983, Becker Morgan Group is a leader in architecture, engineering, surveying, land planning and interior design in the Mid-Atlantic and southeast regions of the United States. The full-service design firm delivers award-winning work in education, health-care, public safety, hospitality, commer-

cial, government, residential, and land development. Learn more at www.becker-morgan.com.

Promotions

Taylor Bank recently announced the promotion of three employees.

Carolynn Vogel has been promoted to internal auditor.

Vogel has worked with Taylor Bank since 2018. She began her career as a customer service associate at the Bank's main office.

In October 2019, she transitioned to compliance specialist. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Management from The Pennsylvania State University. Active in the community, she volunteers with several local organizations, including Lower Sussex Little League, Raven Nation Music Boosters, and Cub Scout Pack 280 in Ocean View.

Scott Williams has been promoted to assistant vice president.

Williams serves as credit administrator and has worked with Taylor Bank for 16 years. In 2006, he joined as customer service associate, and was subsequently promoted to management

trainee in June 2008.

In 2009, he became assistant manager of the main office. In 2014, he transferred to the loan department where he served as credit analyst and loan operations supervisor before his promotion to credit administrator in 2017.

He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Management Information Systems from Salisbury University and volunteers with Salisbury Elks 817.

Cindy Meyer has been promoted to assistant vice president, director of human resources.

Meyer has more than 20 years of human resources experience, and has served the Bank since 2019, when she was appointed human resources manager.

She is a member of the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics from the University of Maryland College Park.

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Cindy Meyer



Carolynn Vogel



Scott Williams

Bowen aids relative in business

Continued from Page 5
area of Finally Yours.

“Our pop-up shop opened on Oct. 6 during Oktoberfest,” she said.

Harris said sales were steady through the Christmas season.

“We sell soy-based candle waxes made in the U.S.,” she said.

Harris also sells handmade jewelry, primarily for women and children.

“Most items are reasonably priced between \$5 to \$10,” she said.

Following the holiday season, Harris decided to shutter the storefront during the bleak winter months.

“After Christmas seemed like a good time to close,” she said. “People shop less in January.”

At this point Harris is tentatively planning to reopen on March 5.

“I’m waiting for warmer weather in March,” she said.

Harris said store hours are generally from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the business open on Saturdays until expanding to Friday through Sunday in summer.

“We will reopen, unless the weather is bad, the first Saturday in March,” she said.

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Ocean Pines Library opened new art exhibition this week

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) Artists Betty Latourney, Lisa Mitchell and Isabel Morris will be displaying their oil and acrylic paintings beginning this week at the Ocean Pines Library.

Latourney, who has shown there before, said the 30-odd canvases would be on display and available to purchase through April.

"We would have hung last week but the snow delayed us," she said.

Latourney, who is approaching two decades at the easel, met Mitchell and Morris several years ago through art instructor Kate Cashman.

"She has an artist's studio called Random Juxtaposition in Bishopville," she said.

The three artists recently hatched plans to combine efforts for a three-month library exhibition.

"The three of us paint so differently that it will make a really nice show for the library," she said.

Despite earlier misgivings, Latourney embraced her creative spirit after she retired.

"I enjoyed art as a young child but never did feel like I could do it," she said.

After signing up for classes at the Art Institute Gallery in Salisbury, her perspective was altered.

"When I was 60, I went to AIG in Salisbury," she said.

Latourney credited instructor John Losoncy for providing inspiration.

"He said if you buy this list of materials, I guarantee you can paint," she said.

In short order, Latourney acquired the recommended supplies.

"I bought a smock" she said. "In fun I put my name on it and it said artist."

After attending a few classes Latour-

ney formed a bond with contemporaries.

"The ladies that were in the class just accepted me," she said. "They understood I didn't know anything from anything."

The creative freedom afforded Latourney helped foster her development.

"I decided early on that I didn't have to be the best. I could just have fun," she said.

Over the years, Latourney continued to refine her work by taking classes in Cambridge, Easton and with Ann Coates at Bishop's Stock Fine Arts & Fine Crafts in Snow Hill.

"I just decided I was going to have fun in the class, and I didn't have to compete with anybody," she said.

Shining the spotlight elsewhere, Latourney expounded on Mitchell's artistic vision.

"She paints beautiful whimsical paintings," she said.

Latourney said examples include the Statue of Liberty depicted in nearly two-dozen hues, and a flamingo with a frog riding on its back.

"They are minutely painted and very tight inside the lines," she said.

By contrast, Latourney said Morris tends to exhibit greater realism.

"She was born in Maine and she has painted over the years a lot of Maine seascapes with rocks and waves," she said. "She lives now in Bishopville and she's learned to love painting our seascapes."

As for her own output selected for the show, Latourney is focusing on area-related pieces.

"I've been in there at least two other times in last 10 years," she said. "In this particular show I'm trying to put things that are relative to the Ocean Pines and Ocean City areas."

See OP Page 9



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE
Opening the current art exhibition at the Ocean Pines Library on Tuesday, from left, are Paulette Mari, Isabel Morris, Betty Latourney and Lisa Mitchell.



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State's attorney starts expansion

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) In a rare 4-0 vote, the Worcester County Commissioners gave State's Attorney Kristin Heiser the go-ahead to start searching for new hires on Feb 1.

Commissioners Chip Bertino, Ted Elder and Jim Bunting abstained from the vote.

Heiser told the commissioners that her office is sticking with its goal of having all its hires done by July 1, 2023.

"As I said from the beginning, the best-case scenario for my office to recruit and hire ... is (that date)," Heiser said. "It would be an ambitious goal ... That's why it's important that I start sooner rather than later."

Heiser explained the \$822,916 her office needs to respond to the implementation of police body-worn cameras countywide breaks down to \$480,000 for six additional attorneys, \$246,354 for six legal assistants and \$96,564 for office furnishings, equipment and licenses for the new attorneys and assistants.

If all goes to plan, her office will grow from 24 staff members to 36. Heiser added that the office could grow to as many as 41 by fiscal year 2024.

Increasing her staff by 50 percent



JACK CHAVEZ/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan speaks to the Worcester County Commissioners during their meeting on Feb. 1. Meehan was there to endorse the State's Attorney Kristin Heiser's request to begin the hiring process for new attorneys and assistants right away, in order to have police body-worn cameras up and running by the town's Memorial Day weekend goal, citing what he sees as a challenging summer coming up for the Ocean City Police Department regardless.

will require more office space, which the Town of Ocean City has volunteered to help supply by offering space for an office in the new Department of Public Works building on 65th Street.

Ocean City is now proposing two options: the existing but unfinished second floor of the aforementioned facility and an entirely new office that has yet to be built.

Further details on what that new office could look like are pending, Heiser said, but she estimates that 10,000 square feet will be needed if her entire office is under one roof or 7,500 square feet if they retain the existing office in Snow Hill.

Bertino acknowledged that moving as quickly as possible is the most prudent

path forward, but said he would like to see Heiser's figures given more scrutiny before formally beginning the search for new hires, citing a past instance when the county paid a price for moving hastily.

"I'm reminded of when we bought the radio system several years ago," Bertino said. "We had all this info and thought we knew what we were doing and it ended up constantly ... costing us money to fix on a \$5 million expense. We didn't have any outside consulting to help us with that mistake."

The radio system in question was a \$4.8 million purchase for the Department of Emergency Services in 2015.

See STATE'S Page 10

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Nonprofit Unstoppable Joy funding for cancer patients

(Feb. 10, 2022) Unstoppable Joy, a local nonprofit foundation that provides natural and positive support to individuals diagnosed with cancer, recently received funding from two organizations.

Ameri Group allocated \$2,500 to Unstoppable Joy for the fiscal year 2021. The Billy Banning Family Giving Fund presented \$5,000 to Unstoppable Joy.

“These funds will go to support our local cancer warriors and their families,” said Tonya Agostino, founder of Unstoppable Joy and breast cancer survivor. “The foundation offers three different services to cancer warriors.” Healing bags, filled with natural feel-good products are available and distributed to local cancer centers as well as sent via mail upon request.

In addition, self-care services are offered by Unstoppable Joy’s team,

such as chiropractic/holistic, massage therapy, sound therapy, hair services, nail care, breath work, and Zen time – a way for the cancer warriors and their families to have a time out from thinking about the everyday fight to relax, recharge and breath.

“This is the first year we’ve received funds from [both organizations],” Agostino said. “This grant will help many cancer warriors receive these much-needed services.”

Unstoppable Joy provides natural and positive support to individuals diagnosed with cancer of any kind. The cancer journey can be very lonely and Unstoppable Joy’s mission is to help local cancer warriors, support their mind, body, and spirit, and to show them that they are not alone.

For more information, contact Agostino at 410-422-6322, tonya@unstoppablejoyco.org, or visit www.unstoppablejoyco.org/.

OP Library art display refreshed

Continued from Page 7

Latourney credited current art exhibit coordinator Paulette Mari, who took the reins from predecessor Mary Doellgast in 2016, for invaluable assistance with planning the event.

Several of Latourney’s works also involve ocean and bayfront scenes.

“I do have one painting ... Route 90 bridge view from BJs,” she said.

Latourney created the piece, which highlights an osprey nest behind the former restaurant, in August during the Ocean City Art League Plein Air event.

“In the distance you get a glimpse of the bridge,” she said.

Seasonal considerations were also factored in for the art exhibition.

“In one of the rooms we’re going to put some things that are more wintry,” she said.

Included in that number is a cardinal perched on a tree branch during wintry conditions.

“I love to stick cardinals in where I

can, but, of course, you can’t put cardinals in an ocean picture,” she said.

Other works feature marsh scenes with herons and a sunset view from Fager’s Island.

“It’s the gazebo at Fager’s island,” she said.

Latourney said all art displayed is available to purchase, with 30 percent of sales donated to the Ocean Pines Library.

“These are affordable,” she said.

On average, paintings are priced under \$200, typically running between \$125 to \$150.

“Some art show prices are unreachable for the local person,” she said. “This is priced at a price most anybody spends at the grocery store.”

Latourney said the art exhibition also provides an excuse for non-readers to peruse the Ocean Pines Library.

“It’s a beautiful facility and a wonderful place to show because it’s so bright and airy,” she said.



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State's attorney hiring prosecutors and aids

Continued from Page 8

Bertino suggested having “another set of eyes” to look over the county’s needs to ensure that this money will be spent wisely. Further, the Maryland General Assembly, which is currently in session, could always throw another curveball Worcester’s way that alters the state’s attorney’s needs.

“I suspect (the state won’t change) much at all if anything, but I’d like to see guidance through this so we know exactly what we’re looking at moving forward because this is an open-ended responsibility,” Bertino said. “It’s only going to grow moving forward. The efforts of the state’s attorney certainly paint us a picture of what we can expect but (after the radio system experience), this feels the same way to me. It’s open-ended

and we don’t know what we’re getting ourselves into.”

Commissioner Joe Mitrecic pointed out that there will be casino money available for this undertaking, unlike the radio system, since the state is diversifying uses for casino revenue to include public safety initiatives such as this one.

Mitrecic conceded that a decision was not absolutely necessary that day, but it needed to be done by the time the commissioners begin setting the next fiscal year’s budget.

“We cannot wait until budget time. It might take (Heiser) four or five months to hire the attorneys she needs — if she can find them,” he said. “We need to move forward with this and allow her to ... see if she can get two or three attorneys hired (quickly).”

Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan also addressed the commissioners regarding what he sees as challenges for the Ocean City Police Department coming up this summer and beyond — with or without body cameras implemented but certainly carrying the risk of it being much worse without them.

“It’s not just about the money — it’s about public safety,” Meehan said. “If you look at what’s happening across the country and some of the incidents that occurred in Ocean City last summer, the obstacle we face is that the cameras are only facing one way. They’re the cellphone cameras that are facing the police officers. No cameras are facing from them out to the crowds.”

“I firmly believe that our police officers will be challenged this summer, without question. I think they’re going to be put in some very, very difficult positions. These cameras will help deter some of those things from happening and also, they’ll be able to record the other side of the story,

which is so important today because in many cases, only one side is being told.”

Meehan reminded the commissioners that the Ocean City Police Department intends to have body cameras in place by Memorial Day this year with plans to purchase AXON camera systems already in place.

“What we know is that we need to work with Worcester County and we need to make sure that we can work with the state’s attorney’s office ... Hopefully, with your funding, you can transition into this.”

Moving quickly is imperative for Maryland’s second-largest city during summertime, which has “become Times Square,” he said.

“And all fingers are pointed at Ocean City,” he added. “We’re doing everything we can to address all issues... We’re trying to (always open our town to everyone) but at the same time, we want to protect our police officers so they aren’t hesitant to respond because they’re not protected by these cameras.”

National cellular companies to shut down 3G technology

By Greg Wehner
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) Over the next few months, major cellular phone service providers will be cutting off older networks to pave the way for what they says are faster and more reliable networks.

But as these networks get shut down, the ability of individuals to call 911 using a phone tied to them also goes away.

The Maryland 9-1-1 Board is warning consumers that the older phones that rely on 3G technology — some medical alert devices, home security systems, tablets, smart watches, and phones — may cease to operate in 2022 as the networks are shut down.

“In 2022, AT&T, Verizon, and T-

Mobile will discontinue using the 3G network service,” Ocean City Police Department Deputy of Communications Ashley Miller said.

Her concern is that countless 3G dependent phones have gone to vulnerable adults, domestic violence victims and others so they can call 911 if they have an emergency.

According to AT&T’s website, the 3G network the company provides is expected to be shut down on Feb. 22.

“We’re phasing out our 3G network in February 2022 to make room for an even better one that will improve your experience,” AT&T said.

T-Mobile, which now owns Sprint, plans to start phasing out Sprint’s 3G network by March 31, the Sprint LTE

See OLD Page 11

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Old phones to lose 911 ability

Continued from Page 10
network by June 30, and its own 3G network on July 1.

The company also has a 2G network that it plans to shut down, but no date has been set for its expiration to date.

“Moving customers who are on old networks onto modern, advanced high-speed networks means they will need to have phones and devices that can tap into the latest technologies and don’t rely on older ones,” T-Mobile said on its website. “We’ll ensure that we support our customers and partners through the transition. We began sending notifications late last year, and everyone who needs to act will be given advanced notice and hear directly from T-Mobile.”

Verizon first announced it would shut down 3G in 2019, but that was extended to the end of 2020 before being extended even longer to the end of 2022.

The mobile carrier is now planning to close its 3G network on Dec. 31.

The company’s website states that less than 1 percent of its customers are still using the 3G network.

“We’ve already communicated to customers that we are no longer allowing devices that are not 4G LTE capable to be activated on our network, so the focus now is the smooth migration of the remaining 3G de-

vices in the market onto 4G LTE or 5G capable products and services.” Verizon said on its website. “Customers who still have a 3G device will continue to be strongly encouraged to make a change now. As we move closer to the shut-off date, customers still accessing the 3G network may experience a degradation or complete loss of service, and our service centers will only be able to offer extremely limited troubleshooting help on these older devices.”

Miller said even though efforts are underway to replace or upgrade the 3G phones that are only used for dialing 911, the Maryland 9-1-1 Board is concerned many people may be unaware that they may lose their service.

“Most users of these services will be notified directly by the carriers if this discontinuation affects them,” the board said in a press release. “However, users of older phones used for 911 only purposes may not be notified if they do not have active service with the provider. It has long been the practice of some organizations for the homeless or domestic violence shelters to provide clients with older phones with no service, since those phones could still be used to call 911 in an emergency.”

The board encouraged low-income individuals who are concerned their



PHOTO COURTESY METRO CREATIVE GRAPHICS
Top mobile carriers like AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile plan to shut off their 3G networks in 2022 to make way for what they call better and more reliable service. As a result, individuals who have phones on the 3G networks will not be able to make calls, including victims of domestic assault who may rely on free phones only for calling 911.

911-only phones may longer be supported, to apply for service through the federal Lifeline Program by visiting www.lifelinesupport.org.

DPW briefs county on 611 bike path and road projects

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) The Worcester County Commissioners unanimously approved a request from the Department of Public Works to apply for two grants totaling \$200,000 for a proposed shared-use bike path along Route 611 on Feb. 1.

The grants will cover a concept study for the path, which will identify right-of-way needs, environmental permit requirements and existing utility locations, department Director Dallas Baker said. It will also suggest a path location, project phasing and preliminary costs based on the study.

“One of the priorities in our (Con-

See BIKE Page 12

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Bike path along 611 will run from Route 50 to Assateague

Continued from Page 11

solidated Transportation Program) from 2021 was a shared-use bike path along Route 611 extending from Route 50 down to Assateague. The state has money available for these projects. To get (the feasibility study) started they helped identify challenges such as environmental permitting, right-of-way requirements, utility conflicts, those types of things and just getting the ball rolling. We can then take that and parlay it into future money for design and construction."

Baker also gave the commissioners an update on several transportation plan projects around the county.

The State Highway Administration has completed the design for a requested pedestrian crossing at the intersection of Interstate 113 and Route 346 in Berlin.

"Right now the only way to get across 113 is down there by Uncle Willy's at 376," Baker said. "So this

would be connecting the (Atlantic General Hospital) side (of Interstate 113) to the Food Lion side."

The intersection of Routes 611 and 376 in Berlin will be getting a traffic signal as the SHA is starting a study to determine what improvements can be made to alleviate congestion.

State highways also is conducting a study for the intersection of Routes 376 and 368 in Bishopville.

Preliminary planning is also underway for widening Route 90.

"We're in the process of scheduling an update with the Office of Preliminary Planning and Engineering within (SHA)," Baker said. "We're looking at possibly the second week of February to see where we stand on that project."

Referencing a suggestion in Baker's memo by the state to widen Route 90 by one interchangeable lane, Commissioner Jim Bunting clearly stated his opposition to the idea.



JACK CHAVEZ/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

The proposed shared-use bike path along Route 611 would start at the Route 50 intersection and end at Assateague Island. The state of Maryland will be conducting a feasibility study for the proposal in the near future to determine what needs must be met for the project.

"(Having a) center lane on Route 90, I'm going to try to let someone know how I feel about it but three 11-foot lanes on Route 90 during the summertime is not going to work," he said. "If we've had bad accidents now, I'd hate to see what that scenario would be if we're changing (the lane direction) twice a day. It's just not going to work."

Baker said that design would be similar to how the westbound span of

the Chesapeake Bay Bridge opens up one of its lanes to eastbound traffic in the summertime.

Bertino pointed out losing the guardrails on Route 90, which were put up specifically in response to crashes along the narrow corridor, would be counterproductive to ensuring safety on the road.

Baker said the option would be omitted from the upcoming transportation plan.

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Worcester County Commissioner Briefs

By Jack Chavez

Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) The Worcester County Commissioners discussed the following during meetings held on Jan. 25 and Feb. 1:

911 batteries

The commissioners unanimously approved a request from the Department of Emergency Services to waive bidding to replace the Uninterruptible Power Source (UPS) units that serve 911 telephone equipment, owing to the age and reliability of existing equipment for both the primary and

backup 911 call centers.

The price tag registers at \$43,514.40. The commissioners also approved the replacement of UPS batteries at a cost of \$67,599.91. The emergency services department requested that the commissioners select Frederick IT company En-Net as the vendor.

Parks bid

The commissioners unanimously approved the selection of Long Fence as the vendor for several fencing projects, including the Northern Worcester Athletic Complex's bullpens, the

Showell Park fencing extension and batting cage, the John Walter Smith batting cage and the Stockton Park fencing project.

Recreation and Parks Director Kelly Rados estimated in a December memo that the fencing projects would cost around \$140,000. The approval is pending the state's approval. The projects are 100 percent reimbursable.

Groundwater monitoring

The commissioners unanimously approved a proposal from EA Engi-

Continued on Page 14

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Opinion

Please send all letters and other editorial submissions to editor@baysidegazette.com by 5 p.m. Monday.

Public needs to pay attention to budget

With Berlin’s water and wastewater utilities continuing to fall far short of breaking even, and a cash reserve that needs big-time bolstering, the public process of hashing out the town’s budget for the new fiscal year takes on greater importance.

Property owners — i.e. taxpayers — should acquaint themselves with the town’s fiscal facts now so they will have a better understanding later when the mayor and council determine the time is right for an increase in water and sewer charges.

As it is now, the town continues to subsidize these operations with revenue from the general fund, a large portion of which is generated by property taxes. In that respect, the town’s taxpayers are already helping to cover these shortfalls, albeit indirectly.

To be clear, the mayor and council did not create this problem, which began years ago, but it will have to be dealt with sooner or later by them or their successors, and whatever they decide isn’t going to be greeted warmly.

The public, however, has its own job to do, which is to learn more about the town’s financial circumstances. Gaining a greater understanding of where the town’s revenue comes from, how and why it’s spent and what areas need more financial support will help take some of the sting out of otherwise unpopular decisions.

All too often members of the public are quick to blame government for actions they oppose without having made much of an effort to inform themselves about the circumstances that caused or influenced those actions.

Unfortunately, many people don’t realize they also have a role to play in good government, and that is to pay attention to what it’s doing.

Come Monday, they will get another opportunity to begin doing that. It’s important, too, because when the town does tackle its weak reserve fund and utility rates problems, people won’t be shocked by something they just can’t understand.



“The February 7th Special meeting of the Ocean Pines Board to review 30 proposed Bylaws changes was met with Public criticism.”

OP Chamber hosts Community Expo

(Feb. 10, 2022) The Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce’s annual Spring Community Expo will be held on Saturday, April 30, from 9 a.m. to noon at White Horse Park.

Dozens of locally-owned businesses will be on hand as well as many community service organizations and governmental agency resources.

The event is free to attend, and all are welcome. Vendor spaces are available, and registration is open on the chamber’s website, OceanPinesChamber.org.

The Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce is a 501 (c) (6) nonprofit corporation comprised of area businesses organized to advance the general welfare and prosperity of the area so that its citizens and all areas of its business community shall prosper.

Wor. Arts Council shows student work

(Feb. 10, 2022) During the month of February, the Worcester County Arts Council will present an exhibit featuring entries submitted by local high schools students for the annual art competition sponsored by the Berlin/Ocean City Optimist Club.

The goal of this competition is to encourage, recognize and honor the artistic expression of talented art students in Worcester County as well as to emphasize the importance and support of quality art programs.

The competition offers a total of \$1,400 in cash prizes to the student artists. The selection of paintings and drawings entered for this contest has been judged by artist and former art educator, Gloria Richards.

Monetary awards and ribbons for the first, second and third place as well as People’s Choice will be presented to students on Friday, Feb. 11.

Visitors to the exhibit will have an opportunity to vote for the “People’s Choice” award. Voting will end on Feb. 11.

Please join us as we celebrate the artistic young talent in our Community!

The exhibit will be on display until Feb. 28.

In addition to the featured exhibit, new artworks by Gallery Co-Op members are on display and available for purchase.

The Gallery hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The Worcester County Arts Council is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support, promote, and encourage visual, performing, and literary arts in Worcester County. As designated by the Maryland State Arts Council County arts agency, the Worcester County Arts Council is committed to fostering the excellence, diversity, and vitality of arts, artists, and arts organizations and increasing access to the arts for all members of our community.

The Worcester County Arts Council is funded by the grant from the Maryland State Arts Council and supported by memberships, donations, and local sponsorships.

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Matt Owens named fire marshal

(Feb. 10, 2022) The Worcester County Commissioners appointed Chief Deputy Fire Marshal Matt Owens to serve as the new fire marshal. He will step into his role March 7.

"It has been a pleasure working with Matt for almost 26 years," said Fire Marshal Jeff McMahon, who will retire in March following 35 years of service. "He is well respected in the community and, especially, among the county's public safety agencies."

Owens, a highly-trained, certified law enforcement officer, joined Worcester County Government (WCG) in 1996, when the Fire Marshal's Office consisted of a team of two housed in the basement of the Worcester County Court House.

He also serves as a part-time certified instructor at the Police Academy at Wor-Wic Community College, where he plays a role in training each new generation of law enforcement and correctional officers.

Prior to joining the WCG team, Owens worked as a fire investigator/inspector in the former Wicomico County Fire Marshal's Office.

"When people call 911, it's the worst day of their life," Owens said. "We have a good team. We're here to do a job and to do it professionally. The satisfaction you get out of this

doesn't come from someone patting you on the back saying you did a good job. It comes from helping others on their worst day."

Owens followed his father and brother into the fire service. He became a cadet with the Parsonsburg Volunteer Fire Company at age 13.

"I knew at that point the love for the fire service was in my blood," Owens said. "If it wasn't for my family pushing me to be the best person I can be, I would have never been able to do this job."

Owens and his wife, Kim, have two children, Tyler and Trevor. Owens enjoys spending time at Assateague and hunting.

The Worcester County Fire Marshal's Office includes a team of six, responsible for conducting fire investigations in Worcester County where arson is suspected, the fire is undetermined by the fire department, and/or an injury or death has occurred.

The Worcester County Fire Mar-



Chief Deputy Fire Marshal Matt Owens

shal's Office is the local enforcing agency for three municipalities and the county, including all provisions of the Maryland and Worcester County laws insofar as such powers and duties relate to fires, fire prevention, fire protection, fire inspections, fire investigations and explosive incidents. Staff are active in the area of fire prevention and fire education. They also respond to and mitigate all hazardous material and bio terrorism incidents in Worcester County.

Worcester County Commissioner Briefs

Continued from Page 12

neering for groundwater monitoring and analytical services at three closed landfills in Berlin, Snow Hill and Pocomoke City for calendar years 2022 and 2023.

The services will cost approximately \$119,000 over the two years, an increase of 40 percent over the previous two-year period, according to a memo from Department of Public Works Director Dallas Baker, owing to the Maryland Department of the Environment raising the required number of groundwater samples from 187 to 264.

Landfill gas

The commissioners approved a proposal from EA Engineering to conduct a "Tier 2 landfill gas analysis for the central site landfill," according to a memo from Baker. The analysis will cost \$24,925.

The operating permit for landfills requires the estimate of the annual emissions of non-methane organic compounds released from the landfill be updated every five years. The number of sampling locations required has increased from 18 in 2017 to 42 today.

Employee fun time

The commissioners unanimously agreed to sponsor two social activities for county employees, known as "Worcester County Government Employee Appreciation" events, according to a memo from Chief Administrative Office Weston Young.

The events at "Night at the Shorebirds," which will offer free tickets to each employee and additional tickets for family and friends at \$7 each at a total cost to the county of \$1,400 for 200 tickets, and "Jolly Roger Day," which will bear no cost to the county.

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LAYING WREATH

The General Levin Winder Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) recently placed a wreath on the Veterans Memorial in Berlin. Pictured, from left, are Jane Bunting, Pat Arata, Sharon Moak, Jackie Spurrier, Patricia Ayers, Regent Gail Weldin and Barbara Rusko. The DAR is a women's service organization dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education. For more information, visit www.dar.org.

Worcester approves grants for Rural Legacy easements

By Jack Chavez
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) The Worcester County Commissioners approved agreements for the utilization of two rural legacy grant agreements — for Coastal Bays Rural Legacy Area and the Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Area — on Tuesday.

The approval covers the remainder of FY22, in which Coastal Bays was awarded \$760,000 and Dividing Creek brought in \$1,005,000, and FY23, which totals both areas at \$2.71 million.

“(The Rural Legacy) program is funded by state open space money and general obligation bonds from the capital budget — so it cost us nothing,” Environmental Programs Director Bob Mitchell told the commissioners. “This will be used to fund three to five conservation easements with the landowners in the next 18-month cycle.”

With the approval, Mitchell’s department can begin using the award money.

The Rural Legacy Area grants pay landowners for permanent conservation easements on their properties.

The funding pays for the perpetual easements and reimburses the county for administrative costs. The usual award is around \$1 million or \$2 million per Rural Legacy Area, depending on the state budget process.

Counties with two such designated areas are required to indicate which one is preferred for funding. Worcester prefers to alternate one or the other in each budget cycle, according to a memo from Environmental Programs Planner Katherine Munson.

For FY23, the county will submit a preference for the 67,812-acre Dividing Creek Rural Legacy Area, which is shared with Somerset County. The 19-mile tributary of the Pocomoke River forms the boundary between Worcester and Somerset. The application for

\$1.7 million in FY23 pledges to use the grant money to protect 805 acres.

The Coastal Bays Rural Legacy Area is 45,945 acres and the FY23 application for \$1 million pledges to utilize the funds toward approximately 380 acres.

The county plans to protect 4,780 acres in the Dividing Creek area and 2,800 acres of the Coastal Bays area over the next 10 years.

Obituaries

GEORGE HOLLMAN
Ocean Pines

George “Wayne” Hollman, 70, of Ocean Pines, passed away on Sunday, Feb. 6, 2022, at his home surrounded by family.



George Hollman

Wayne was born Jan. 25, 1952, in Daniels, Maryland, to George and Nora (Shifflett) Hollman.

In 1965, the family moved to Carroll County where Wayne attended South Carroll High School and graduated in 1970.

He was a natural athlete who played football but loved baseball and held the county record for 19 out of 21 strikeouts. He received a full scholarship to Belmont Abbey, North Carolina, where he continued his baseball career until tearing his rotator cuff.

In returning home, he pursued work in the construction field and in 1977, Wayne and his brother, Kirk, started Hollman & Hollman General Contractors. Their reputation quickly spread through the county and for over 30 years they worked together until Wayne semi-retired in 2005 and moved to Ocean Pines.

Wayne loved being active, whether it was skiing, fishing, boating, riding

his Harley, bowling, or playing corn hole. He enjoyed his furry companions, Macy and Munchkin, who could be seen with Wayne on walks or napping on his lap.

Wayne loved his family and enjoyed spending time with them. He was a devoted husband, great dad, wonderful Poppop, best big brother, and loyal friend to so many.

He is preceded in death by parents, George and Nora Hollman; first wife, Catherine Hollman; and brother-in-law, James Busey.

He is survived by wife, Paulette Hollman; son, Zach and wife, Michelle Hollman; grandsons, Hunter and Chase Hollman; daughter, Heather Hollman; grandson, Cody Talbott and wife, Kristen; granddaughter, Kaitlyn Riddle and husband, Ben; siblings, Kirk Hollman and wife, Sandy, Debbie Pickett and husband, John, Tammy Harry and Wayne Buckler, Charlotte Busey and Geoff; sister-in-law, Kathy Davis and husband, Fred Germano; numerous nieces and nephews and great nieces and great nephews.

The family will have a Celebration of Life at a later date.

Donations may be made to Coastal Hospice, Worcester County Humane Society or a Pancreatic Research Foundation in his name.

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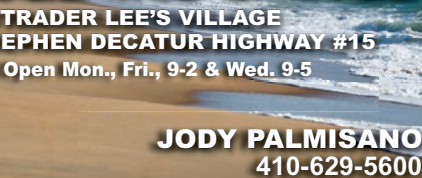
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Viola changes course, opts to resign by end of month

By Greg Ellison
Staff Writer

(Feb. 10, 2022) After agreeing to delay stepping down until the fall while a replacement candidate was being recruited, Ocean Pines General Manager John Viola changed course on Wednesday and tendered his resignation at end of this month.

In a statement issued on Wednesday morning, Association President Colette Horn said Viola “informed me that his resignation date under his current contract as General Manager of Ocean Pines will again be Feb. 28.”

Horn said Viola had “generously agreed to extend his current contract until at least Sept. 9 ... to allow for a smoother transition to a new general manager.”

Despite those earlier assurances, Horn said “after considering a number of factors, he felt proceeding with ending his current contract was in his and his family’s best interests.”

Horn said Viola has agreed to “remain in place beyond Feb. 28, on a week-to-week at-will basis, without a contract and with no change in com-



John Viola

pensation, to ensure stability until the position is filled or until the annual meeting in August, whichever comes first.”

Horn also said if the position is vacant at the time of the annual homeowners’ meeting, “the Board will follow the provisions of Section 9.06 of the OPA Bylaws to appoint someone to assume the duties of the general manager on a temporary basis, until the position is filled.”

Viola, in a separate statement, said, “With the completion of the FY 2022/2023 Budget, the stability of the open position that the Board asked me to achieve and discussions with my family, I have opted not to sign the current contract put forth to me.

“Feb. 28, 2022 will be the date for my resignation as originally planned and as agreed upon with the president of the Association. I would like to thank my entire team for all the great support I have received.”

Horn added, “On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire Ocean Pines community, we thank John for his willingness to extend his departure date and for his many valuable contributions to Ocean Pines. The search for the new general manager remains underway.”

Cricket Center hires Cooper to fill executive director role

(Feb. 10, 2022) Lauren Cooper has been named the new executive director for The CRICKET Center, Worcester County’s Child Advocacy Center.

Cooper believes that there is no more impactful and meaningful work than serving as a voice for children who have witnessed or experienced abuse.

She most recently worked for the Children’s Advocacy Center of Delaware as the center coordinator and forensic interviewer, where she served as a member of the multidisciplinary team and coordinated a comprehensive response to child abuse allegations.

Cooper has conducted over 600 forensic interviews of child victims and witnesses and has worked tirelessly alongside local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, child protection workers and medical providers to ensure every child has a voice.

Cooper’s dedication to public service began when she served the Circuit Court for Wicomico County as the drug court resource manager and

later became the family services coordinator.

Cooper is distinguished by her determination to raise awareness of child abuse, community engagement and ability to lead and educate others.

She was the recipient of the Children’s Advocacy Center’s Outstanding Leadership Award in 2020 and serves as a faculty member for the state of Delaware’s forensic interview protocol training for multidisciplinary team members.

She graduated with honors from Wilmington University and holds a Master’s of Science Degree in Criminal Behavior, a Master’s of Science Degree in Leadership and Administration, and a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Salisbury University.

“We are fortunate to have found a dynamic and passionate leader like Lauren. Her background and experience on the front lines along with her creativity and advocacy are just a perfect fit,” said Deborah Travers, president, CRICKET Center Board of Directors. This is demanding work for all of the agencies involved and her understanding of that will aid in supporting the needs of everyone.”



Lauren Cooper



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Calendar

Thurs., Feb. 10

STORY TIME ‘AUTHOR SPOTLIGHT: BRYAN COLLIER’
Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and rhymes. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

INTERACTIVE PUPPET SHOW: ‘JACK AND THE BEANSTALK’
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Come watch and join in on the fun while the library tells its silly version of this fairy tale. Take home activity included. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

WORCESTER COUNTY GOVERNMENT JOB FAIR
Worcester County Human Resources - Third Floor, 1 W. Market St., Snow Hill, 12-3 p.m. WCG, a member of the Maryland State Retirement System, offers full benefit packages for full-time employees. List of Jobs opportunities: <https://worces-terhr.co.worcester.md.us/>. 410-632-0090.

ZUMBA FOR ALL LEVELS
Held via Zoom, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Join certi-fied Zumba instructor Joyce Landsman for an hour of movement. These classes uplift and improve mood. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under “Events.” 410-632-2600

PRE-AUDITION PREP CLASS - YOUTH AGES 8-17 YEARS
Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6-7 p.m. The Ocean Pines Players will review the music and concept of the musical, “The Big Bad Musical.” En-couraging the youth of the community to participate in live theater. www.ocean-pinesplayers.com

BEACH SINGLES
Thursdays - Join us 55 plus at Harpoon Hanna’s, 39064 Harpoon Road, Fenwick Island, DE, 4-6 p.m. Info: 302-436-9577 or BeachSingles.org

Fri., Feb. 11

OCEAN CITY FUTSAL CLASSIC
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Offering soccer or futsal action for those with 2004 birth year and up. \$225 per team. tournaments@oceancitymd.gov, www.oceancitymd.gov/soccer, 410-250-0125

OCEAN PINES BOOK OF THE MONTH: ‘IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK’ BY JAMES BALDWIN
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Lively discussion facilitated by Kelley Rouse and Nancy Mitchell of Salisbury University.

Books are available at the Ocean Pines branch, 410-208-4014. www.worcesterli-brary.org

Sat., Feb. 12

OCEAN CITY FUTSAL CLASSIC
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Offering soccer or futsal action for those with 2004 birth year and up. \$225 per team. tournaments@oceancitymd.gov, www.oceancitymd.gov/soccer, 410-250-0125

AARP TAXAIDE
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. AARP Foundation Tax Aide is offering tax preparation free of charge to the citizens of the lower shore. The group is IRS certified Tax Preparers. Appoint-ments: 443-373-2667 or www.aarp.org/taxaide.

PFIZER COVID-19 VACCINE CLINIC
James G. Barrett Medical Office Building, 10231 Old Ocean City Blvd., Berlin, 9 a.m.-noon. This clinic is available to those 5 years and older. Register: www.agh.care/vaccine. 410-641-1100

OCEAN PINES ANGLERS CLUB MEETING
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 9:30 a.m. Speaker is Dave Wilson, avid fisherman, president of Maryland Bird Conservation Project and serves as state development manager for US Wind. Should be fully vaccinated, masks optional. 410-641-7662

CRAFTY SATURDAY: VALENTINE’S DAY CRAFTS
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m. Make some great crafts to celebrate Valentine’s Day. For ages 4 years and older. While supplies last. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY
Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. The Black Panther Party, one of the most revolutionary and misunderstood political parties in the United States, would be 56 years old in 2022. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

ANNUAL VALENTINE’S DAY DINNER
American Legion Synepuxent Post 166, 2308 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, 4-7 p.m. N.Y. Strip Steak & Shrimp Dinner with baked potato, vegetable, dessert and complimentary drink. Cost is \$20. Tickets are available at the post or by calling 410-289-3166.

FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET
Saturdays - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 9:00 a.m. to noon. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to

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Sun., Feb. 13

OCEAN CITY FUTSAL CLASSIC
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Offering soccer or futsal action for those with 2004 birth year and up. \$225 per team. tournaments@oceancitymd.gov, www.oceancitymd.gov/soccer, 410-250-0125

SUPER BOWL SCRAMBLE
Eagle’s Landing Golf Course, 12367 Eagles Nest Road, Berlin, 9 a.m. Breakfast/brunch party at 9 a.m., kick off at 10 a.m. (shotgun start). Cost is \$60 which includes green fees, cart and tail-gate party. Prizes awarded. Sign up: 410-213-7277 or RCroll@oceancitymd.gov.

Mon., Feb. 14

AARP TAXAIDE
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. AARP Foundation Tax Aide is offer-ing tax preparation free of charge to the citizens of the lower shore. The group is IRS certified Tax Preparers. Appoint-ments: 443-373-2667 or www.aarp.org/taxaide.

IN 3D!
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2:30 p.m. Join the group for a classic 50’s crea-ture feature sequel in 3D. Limited to 20 participants. Register: www.worcesterli-brary.org under “Events.” 410-632-2600

T.O.P.S. OF BERLIN - GROUP #169
Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 5-6:30 p.m. Take Off Pounds Sensibly is a weekly support and educational group promoting weight loss and living a healthy lifestyle. Rose Campion, 410-641-0157

DELMARVA WOMEN’S A CAPELLA CHORUS
Mondays - Ocean Pines Community Cen-ter, 239 Ocean Parkway, 7:00-9:00 p.m. All ladies that love to sing invited. Contact Mary, 410-629-9383 or Carol Ludwig, 302-242-7062.

Tues., Feb. 15

STORY TIME ‘WADDLING PENGUINS’
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and fingerplays. Take-home activity included. For ages 2-5 years. www.worces-terlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

STORY TIME ‘DINOSAURS’
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 10:30 a.m. Sto-

ries, songs and crafts all about dinosaurs. For ages 2-5 years. www.worcesterli-brary.org, 410-632-2600

TRIVIA WITH JIM MECKLEY: VALENTINE’S DAY
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3-4:30 p.m. A Valentine’s Day trivia contest. Prizes (awarded to the top three teams) and re-freshments provided. www.worcesterli-brary.org, 410-632-2600

THE ROOTS OF BLACK MUSIC IN AMERICA
Held via Zoom, 6:30 p.m.. Learn about the music of America’s black musical gi-ants. This is a joyful show that encourages audience participation. Register: www.worcesterlibrary.org under “Events.” 410-632-2600

DELMARVA DANCING
Tuesdays - Selbyville Elks Lodge 2173, 13324 Worcester Highway, Bishopville, 5:30-9 p.m. Dance to the sounds of the ’50s and ’60s. A \$5 donation to benefit Veterans. Participants show proof of vac-cination or wear a mask. delmarvahand-dance@gmail.com, 410-208-1151

Wed., Feb. 16

STORY TIME ‘RAINBOWS’
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories about rain-bows. For those 2-5 years old. www.worcesterlibrary.org, 410-632-2600

STEAM - ANCIENT ROME
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 4:30 p.m. Learn about the culture, architecture, inventions, art and food of the Ancient Romans. For ages 8-12 years. Register: www.worcester-library.org under “Events.” 410-632-2600

ONGOING EVENTS

VALENTINE’S DAY ESCAPE ROOM
Teams of four or fewer may participate throughout the month of February at all Worcester County Library branches. At the end of the month, teams with the shortest time will win a special prize. For ages 12-18 years. www.worcesterlibrary.org

FREE WELLNESS WORKSHOPS
Free workshops dealing with hyperten-sion, chronic pain self-management, chronic disease self-management, dia-betes, fall prevention and a free 6-week workshop titled, “Building Better Care-givers.” If you would like to register for one of these workshops or you would like more information about bringing any of the workshops to your business or group, contact Jill at MAC, 410-742-0505, Ext. 159 or jak@macinc.org.

Cuisine

Serving up fresh oysters on the half shell

I tend to find interesting articles when I am on the road. I was fortunate enough to jump on a commercial fishing trip out of Wanchese, heading out a mere 39 miles offshore to balmy 75-degree water and an ambient air temperature of 60.



By Paul Suplee,
MBA, CEC, PC-3

It was truly strange as when we left, and when we got back to the dock, it was 40 degrees, raining and absolutely miserable. But out on the gulf stream, it was a different world.

As anglers don't typically go out around here when it is this cold (the fish are south of us, so there is little point), I had never experienced the dramatic climate shift. That alone made the trip worthwhile.

After a brief moment of trolling, the boat landed a dressed, 264-pound bluefin tuna that is probably in Japan as I type.

It was the fattiest fish of the day leading up to our weigh-in, and that earned it a one-way ticket to the Tokyo auction. It was a good day, and we were in the slip and cleaned up by 3:00 so it was an early day at that. Pretty work, boys. Pretty work.

After an evening of deep rest, I was up early to get back to the real world. I stopped at a couple places on my way up and sampled some wares.

I had never taken the turn to Cape Charles, and I was delighted by the quaint little town that I had heard so much about. As the brewery had just opened, I stopped in for a pint and a pound of steamed shrimp, cooked with garlic butter and one of their fine ales.

A little further up the road, I stopped by one of my favorite haunts, the Island House in Wachapreague. It's just a few miles off the main drag, so it was a given to stop in for some oysters. And they were good, salty Chincoteague oysters.

If you are not familiar with these, they are world-renowned for their briny and crisp taste, perfectly accentuated with just a touch of lemon and cocktail sauce.

But let's get back to the article in question. After all, I did open with that hook, so let's get to it.

As I was sitting there at the bar, it dawned on me that I had never really taken into consideration the rule to never eat or serve oysters with any month not containing the letter 'R'. I am the "why guy" so I was surprised that I had never taken the time to delve into



the matter.

May, June, July and August are apparently out, but the reason that I had never given this a second thought was because I have served and eaten oysters every month of the year since 1983.

During the summer months, my coworker Heidi and I would shuck bushels of the blasted things every day at McGarvey's.

The reason, and I did know this, is because algae can bloom in the oyster beds and make the oysters dangerous to eat. But, there never seemed to be a shortage of brave souls, willing to tempt fate and their digestive tract, so shuck away we did.

Curious about this, I pulled out my little pocket computer and looked it up. I found a fascinating article from the University of Florida that noted everything above, with an astounding finding; that humans have followed this rule for upwards of 4,000 years.

Scientists have found settlements dating back to this time, with evidence that oysters were a major part of their diet.

In studying the shells, they were able to isolate parasitic snails known to latch

onto oyster shells. And in the process of studying these little free-loaders, and understanding their life cycle, the researchers were able to show that the oysters were collected, shucked and presumably eaten in the cooler months, once again the months that have the 'R' in the name.

I guess I'm a nerd, but I find this incredibly fascinating.

It's all in a day's work. And now, I know and now you do as well. You are more than welcome.

Oysters on the Half Shell

serves 4

- 24 ea. Salty fresh oysters
- 1 each lemon
- 12 oz. Cocktail sauce (recipe follows)
- Fresh horseradish, as needed

The first most important thing when shucking oysters is staying safe. If you have never shucked before, watch tutorial videos before, or find a good raw bar with a shucker who is willing to teach you

The second most important thing about shucking is to not destroy the meat. Many times they come mangled

and mixed with bits of shell. Take your time and do it right. There is nothing like a plump oyster with some fresh cocktail sauce to make the day a brighter one

Be sure to separate the muscle from the bottom shell, making it easy for the guest to simply pull the oyster out

Serve the oysters on rock salt or ice along with the lemon and cocktail sauce. Serve with optional crackers.

Cocktail Sauce

makes about 1 quart

- 2 1/2 c. Ketchup
- 1 c. Horseradish
- juice of 2 lemons

- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 teaspoon hot sauce (I prefer Hank's)
1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl and whisk well.
2. Allow to sit in icebox overnight so the flavors come together.

—Paul Suplee is a Professor of Culinary Arts at Wor-Wic Community College and owner of boxcar40 and boxcar on main. Visit him at www.boxcar40.com; www.boxcaronmain.com

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Contact: Matt McGinnis

410-641-3575 or

mmcginnis@worcesterprep.org



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