



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

## BABY DRIVER

You're never too young to take up golf, as evidenced by a pair of fresh faces working the driving range at the Ocean Pines Golf Course on Sunday.

## Berlin's HDC clears design for storefronts

But with host of conditions on building's renovation

By Greg Ellison  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Renovations for a string of storefronts along Main Street in Berlin that formerly housed Town Center Antiques are continuing after the Historic District Commission approved design plans last week.

Samantha Pielstick, representing property owner Jack Burbage, presented architectural renderings and detailed aesthetical considerations for a revamp of buildings between 7-19 N. Main St. during the commission meeting last Wednesday.

"We went ahead with the demolition so we could see what's underneath," she said.

Pielstick said second floor sections would remain largely unaltered.

"The windows will all remain very similar if not exactly the same," she said. "Any rotten wood will be replaced."

Commission Chair Norman Bunting asked if wood would be used for replacement windows.

Pielstick said window updates would only occur where mandated by subpar conditions.

"If the windows were rotten, we would replace them but with windows like the rest of the building," she said.

Storefront awnings would also be included in renovation plans and fashioned to be reminiscent of the shade covering in front of the adjacent J.E. Parker building.

Pielstick said architectural details along rooflines would remain in place.

"I know you are very keen on us keeping them intact," she said.

Pielstick said the bulk of proposed renovations would take place along ground-level areas.

"I did try to keep it very consistent above the metal awning but just have

See MAIN Page 10

## Town hall Sat. on bylaws revisions

Association members will be brought up to speed on 30-some possible changes

By Greg Ellison  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) A host of proposed bylaw changes that are subject to a referendum by Ocean Pines Association voters will be reviewed during a hybrid town hall meeting at the Golf Clubhouse on Saturday at 9 a.m.

Over the past year the board of directors have spearheaded a comprehensive bylaws language review, which was last revised in 2008.

The public hearing scheduled this weekend follows a special board meeting on Feb. 7 where more than 30 changes were considered and approved to include on the referendum



Frank Daly

ballot.

Among the list of language revisions are a number of suggestions by Director Frank Daly regarding board candidate requirements and verification processes.

Daly had 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 proposed 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 recommended instituting a three-year residency require-

ment for board candidates, including an exemption for serving one year on an advisory committee.

Based on negative responses to his suggestions during the Feb. 7 meeting, Daly withdrew the spouse felony inclusion, while also agreeing to amend the 10-year span for prohibiting board candidates with felony convictions to five years after restitution and probation are completed.

Daly also withdrew the three-year residency requirement for board candidates.

Other motions from Daly include amending the definition of owner of record in section 1.11 as "person(s) listed on the deed ... in Land Records of Worcester County."

Daly's proposal for section 1.11 also states that in instances of property

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# Strategic Planning Cmte. plots next steps

By Greg Ellison  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Analyzing survey data acquired in 2021 to develop long-term strategies was the focus of the Ocean Pines Strategic Planning Committee last week.

On Tuesday evening, Committee Chair Bernie McGorry hosted a town hall to review results of the recent property owners' survey. That was followed by a group meeting on Wednesday morning to contemplate the committee's next steps.

McGorry said the committee would work with the board of directors to formulate plans with a target date of this August.

"Strategic planning is a process and we're trying to drive the process," he said.

On Wednesday, McGorry said Pines property values have recently trended upwards after previously stagnating. "It's up significantly over the past three years," he said.

McGorry said compound annual growth rates in Ocean Pines have averaged 4.6 percent over the past decade, with the figure jumping to 11.6 percent in the last three years.

Committee member Jenny Cropper Rines said Pines home values have grown significantly over the past several years, with the average closing price nearing \$400,000.

"Higher-end homes are definitely selling more, which does skew that average selling price," she said.

Other survey conclusions released on Wednesday included community stature.

"Ocean Pines is the largest community in



Ocean Pines Strategic Planning Committee Chair Bernie McGorry, center, orchestrated a town hall meeting to discuss results of the recent property owners' survey last Wednesday.

Worcester County," he said.

McGorry said compared to Worcester overall, Pines residents are generally less diverse, skew older with slightly higher income and education, along with a lower percentage of renters.

"From a strategy standpoint, we need to make sure we're getting our fair share or more," he said.

McGorry advised improving diversity while leveraging relative size within the county.

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# Pines Bylaws Committee suggests changes

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Final refinements of proposed governance rules tied to Ocean Pines Board candidate qualifications were drafted by the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee last week ahead of a related town hall this Saturday.

Committee Chair Jim Trummel said the group began crafting bylaw changes last April, with a laundry list of revisions reviewed and voted on during the board meeting on Feb. 7.

During the group's meeting on March 4, Trummel said clarification for changes to bylaws section 1.11 defining owner of record were proposed.

Director Frank Daly proposed that section 1.11 define owner of record as "person(s) listed on the deed ... in

Land Records of Worcester County."

Daly's motion for section 1.11 further outlines that in instances of property listed under a trust, the owner of record is a trustee(s) or co-trustees.



Keith Kaiser

who is a member of the ... [LLC] ... or a living person who is a partner in the partnership..."

"The definition recommended in the motion refers to a person on the deed," he said.

Trummel said committee members

Lastly, the proposed section 1.11 language states if a corporation, LLC or partnership is listed as owner on a property deed, owner of record would be, "an officer of the corpora-

tion, a living person

made a motion during its Feb. 25 meeting to eliminate the last section for corporate or partnership interests.

"In the definition, all those entities are included but it goes on further to identify who as owner of record is eligible," he said.

During subsequent discussions last Friday committee members concluded the corporate ownership aspect should be a disqualifier under bylaws section 5.02A relating to board candidate qualifications.

Committee member Keith Kaiser said a major problem is that land records for property owned under corporate-type structures would not specify individual(s) on deeds.

Based on recent board meeting discussion on the matter, Kaiser said a clear delineation between company-owned property and family-based

trusts has been lacking.

"I don't recall there being a discussion ... that these are two entirely different things when it comes to the potential motivations of the people involved," he said. "One board meeting I saw it seemed people were lumping them together."

Board liaison Colette Horn said despite raising the matter of fiduciary duties for corporate interests owning property in early February, the concern failed to gain traction.

"In the summary I gave to the board, I stated the concern that you had about the conflict in fiduciary between an owner of a corporation and a director," she said. "Serving two masters, so to speak."

Kaiser, who has experience performing property inspections for homeowners' insurance companies, said the percentage of corporate owned homes is significant.

"I can tell you that in Ocean Pines and in Ocean City there are many many of these single-family-detached homes that are owned by companies," he said.

At the same time, Kaiser said there are few precedents of corporate interests holding property deeds seeking to run board candidates.

"Maybe it hasn't happened in the  
See BYLAWS Page 7



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# OP Strategic Planning Cmte. reviews owners' survey data

Continued from Page 3

Ocean Pines resident Stuart Lakernick, who attended Wednesday's hybrid meeting virtually, after the board voted to deny his committee membership application last month, highlighted a recent influx of new faces.

"We have over the last couple of years had a lot of younger folks and families moving in," he said.

Lakernick estimated roughly 1,500 Pines homes have changed ownership in the past several quarters.

"We should aim our efforts to engage them for more community involvement," he said. "Half of them may not know all the amenities."

McGorry said Ocean Pines generally has an annual turnover of up to 500 homes, compared to 150 on average at comparably-sized HOAs in the area.

"Why is it that Ocean Pines has three times the turnover compared to the other HOAs we looked at?" he asked.

As for community safety, McGorry said 58 percent of survey respondents identified the topic as being significantly or slightly above expectations.

"Ocean Pines was ranked as the safest city in Maryland in 2021," he said. "We should have a banner out front that says, 'Welcome to the safest community in Maryland.'"

McGorry said safety, maintenance of infrastructure and community appearance were the top three issues of importance culled from survey results.

"The largest gaps between what's important and current customer satisfaction are in maintenance of infrastructure, community appearance and HOA fee value for money," he said.

In total, only 23.6 percent of respondents ranked infrastructure maintenance as significantly or slightly above expectations, while 24.7 percent ranked assessment fee value in the same manner.

From the data received, McGorry suggested the association should prioritize infrastructure investment, along with community beautification, while simultaneously limiting assessment fee hikes.

"There was higher positive support for investing in current versus new amenities," he said. "Overall, Ocean Pines residents using amenities are very satisfied."

In total, 58.7 percent of respondents slightly or strongly agreed with investing in current amenities, while 35.7 percent preferred fresh concepts.

In terms of top issues, over 80 percent of respondents included trans-

parency, infrastructure and collaborative work between the board and general manager.

Looking at core values, the top five deemed very or extremely important by respondents were integrity at 86.4 percent, accountability at 82.2 percent, collaboration at 76.3 percent, respect at 74.4 percent and sustainability at 74 percent.

"Ocean Pines should adopt, embrace and activate the five core values," he said.

In total, 1,382 survey replies were received, with 96.5 percent completed online. Full-time residents accounted for 61 percent of replies, while 37 percent were part timers.

The next Strategic Planning Committee is March 24 at 9 a.m.

# Snow Hill Chamber Oyster Roast slated for March 26

(March 10, 2022) For the past 11 years the Snow Hill Chamber of Commerce has hosted its annual Oyster Roast in the spring.

The event features all-you-can-eat oyster-themed delicacies from an array of local chefs and restaurants.

This format, paired with bottomless beer, live music, and other activities, has made the Snow Hill Oyster Roast one of the most anticipated events in the area, with tickets regularly selling out.

The Snow Hill Chamber of Commerce will host the 11th annual Oyster Roast on March 26, from 1-5 p.m. in the historic downtown district of the town.

This event is expected to bring over 800 people to the area. Menu items include a raw oyster bar, steamed shrimp, oysters Rockefeller, and numerous other oyster variations.

In addition to the food, attendees will enjoy two live bands, unlimited beer, prizes and other festivities.

Tickets cost \$55 and are available on the chamber's website, [www.snowhillchamber.com/annual-oyster-roast](http://www.snowhillchamber.com/annual-oyster-roast).

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# We Heart Berlin ping pong pitch, skatepark gain steam

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) The nonprofit We Heart Berlin is gaining ground on installing table tennis facilities at Burbage Park and is continuing to compile funding for a proposed skate park at a yet-to-be-determined location.

We Heart Berlin President and CEO Tony Weeg said a fundraising campaign is underway to install ping pong tables at Burbage Park.

"I submitted the plans to the town for the table tennis park today," he said.

To help finance the pocket park pitch, We Heart Berlin members are selling commemorative bricks that can be personalized for \$100.

"There's going to be an abundance of bricks," he said.

Project renderings include a 25-foot brick wall measuring two-feet high and two-feet wide.

Ping Pong park bricks can include up to three lines with 14 characters

on each.

"People can buy after the fact," he said. "They'll be done in groups of 25."

Weeg said with a memo of understanding now signed by Berlin officials, the table tennis project is ready to get underway.

"I've got the infrastructure in storage and the park creation paid for," he said. "We're literally just waiting on the town."

In November, the Town Council authorized Weeg to purchase ping pong tables and equipment ahead of pending approvals.

Weeg said to this point about 20 commemorative bricks have been purchased.

Weeg said Brian Zollinger with Vista Design completed project renderings, which are on the agenda for the Town Council meeting on March 14.

Although a bit farther from focus, soliciting funding to build a skate park in Berlin is also gaining traction.

"Over the last four months we have



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

**We Heart Berlin President and CEO Tony Weeg is promoting a fundraising venture selling commemorative bricks for planned ping pong tables at Burbage Park.**

received \$25,000 in three checks," he said.

Weeg said \$10,000 was provided through the Baker Dickerson Family Foundation.

"Their daughter, Peyton, works at Casual Design and lives on Main Street," he said. "They were very happy to donate this year."

Also, Verizon employee Jerron Whaley was able to solicit corporate backing.

"He submitted our names in a hat for a \$10,000 donation and we got it," he said.

On Monday, another \$5,000

check was delivered from a Main Street business.

Weeg said the proprietors wish to remain anonymous but hope the generosity is echoed by others.

Looking ahead, Weeg said the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore is applying for a FY22 Maryland Community Initiative grant to help finance the skate park project.

"We're in the running to get a portion of a \$100,000 pool," he said. "It's going to be a sizable chunk, maybe the most sizeable we've gotten yet."

See BURBAGE Page 7



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**PRESENTATION ABOUT BEES**  
T.J. Myers, a retired veterinarian and local beekeeper, gave a presentation on bees to the Worcester County Garden Club during a recent luncheon at Lighthouse Sound Restaurant. He is pictured with Worcester County Garden Club President Deb Young, and Myers' husband, Tom Sullivan. Individuals interested in learning more about Worcester County Garden Club can contact [WorCityGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WorCityGardenClub@gmail.com).  
SUBMITTED PHOTO/ BAYSIDE GAZETTE



## Burbage Park table tennis near

Continued from Page 6  
Despite already garnering relatively hefty sums, Weeg said total project costs are estimated at over a million dollars.  
“My goal is \$1.5 million,” he said.  
Although an eventual location has yet to be determined, Weeg said the Business, Economic, and Community

Outreach Network from Salisbury University has been retained to complete a feasibility study.  
“The step we’re on right now is community fundraising and getting the town to give us a space,” he said.  
“On that day when we know we’ve got a space we can really start drawing pictures and looking at topography.”

## Bylaws debates owner of record

Continued from Page 4  
past,” he said.  
Still, Kaiser said the matter was under discussion if future instances arise, with the intent to block business entities but not individual homeowners from qualifying for board membership.  
“Some of the LLCs are family-based groups but how do you distinguish from company-owned property?” he asked.  
Committee member Stephen Jacobs said earlier recommendations for section 1.11 language revisions forwarded to the board in January included subsections for 5.02A prohibiting board candidates from being corporate entities.  
“Without addressing the corporate entity in 5.02A, you’re setting everything up for the conflict of interest, which drove us to this point in the first place,” he said.  
Committee member Lora Pangratz said it was crucial for association members to recognize the clear distinction between corporate and privately held properties.  
“Homes owned by corporations are very different for family trusts,” she said. “There needs to be a way for us to better define what we’re talking about.”  
Jacobs made a motion, which was unanimously approved, to recommend the board consider revising section 5.02A to prohibit corporate entities (including but not limited to

corporations, LLCs, partnerships or agencies) listed as owner of record from running candidates.  
Committee members also recommended including a caveat that the “subsection does not apply to a trustee or co-trustee.”  
Horn said the changes would provide new information for the membership to consider and could be raised with the board during the public hearing on March 12.  
“I can’t say they won’t entertain this change,” she said.  
Trummel said although it was too late to update details on specific bylaw proposals already distributed to members for the March 12 meeting, further revisions are possible.  
“We’re providing committee comments to the board for the public hearing,” he said.  
Trummel said per bylaws section 4.08A board members have the option to either modify or withdraw proposals after the upcoming public hearing.  
“It could be added to referendum materials still,” he said.  
The OPA is scheduled to mail homeowners referendum ballots including 30-plus bylaw changes by March 25 with a voting deadline of April 29.  
Prior to printing and mailing ballots the association is holding a mandated hybrid public hearing on Saturday at 9 a.m. in the Golf Club-house banquet room.



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# Berlin Parks Commission looks to springtime

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Spring plantings and town clean-up efforts dominated discussions during the Berlin Parks Commission meeting last Tuesday.

Deputy Town Administrator Mary Bohlen said signup for the annual Backyard Tree Buffer giveaway is getting underway.

"I've already had 14 people sign up," she said.

To this point, Worcester County has allocated 50 tree bundles for the program, which is orchestrated



Mary Bohlen

through the Maryland Forest Service.

Each bundle contains 20 seedlings with evenly divided selections including bald cypress, chickasaw plum, northern bayberry, southern crabapple and willow oak.

"If we need more, there's more available," she said. "We normally do 70-80."

Buffer tree bundles will be distributed on April 9 from 9 a.m. to noon

at Berlin Town Hall at 10 William St.

Bohlen said the program is open to all county residents, with property owners located near streams or waterways urged to participate.

"It's not just Berlin, we are actually the host for Worcester County," she said.

For more information about the tree buffer program visit <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/pages/programs/backyard-buffer-program.aspx>

Sign up forms are available on the Town of Berlin webpage under the

Parks Department or email [mbohlen@berlinmd.gov](mailto:mbohlen@berlinmd.gov) or call 410-641-4314.

Plans are also being developed for a "Spring Celebration" on April 16, which coincides with Easter weekend.

"We will have a lot of crafts," she said.

Work is also underway to hold a "Cleanup Day" in Berlin on April 23.

"We're just getting started on planning," she said.

Bohlen said the trash and debris

See TREE Page 9

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# Commissioners approve RCA land rezoning

**By Jack Chavez**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Options are dwindling for the South Point residents who are attempting to block the reclassification of a parcel of land off Route 611 from resource conservation area (RCA) to limited development area (LDA).

The Worcester County Commissioners voted 7-0 on March 1 with no discussion to approve the reclassification of the 8.43 acres — owned by local developer Todd Burbage — on which the Maryland Coastal Bays Office sits.

The state Critical Area Commission will now give the final decision.

In a memo to the commissioners from January, county Director of Environmental Programs Bob Mitchell downplayed the effects of the reclassification in the immediate future.

According to Mitchell, any use other than for a non-profit office would be dependent on the actions of other divisions and departments on the existing zoning code and new critical area designations.

No new uses are permitted and the land can't be tied into the Mystic Harbor sanitary area, according to the memo. Lot coverage limits — 15 percent of the property — remain the same, and the property has already used up all of that allowance, meaning no new buildings can be placed on the property.

However, South Point couple Diane Stelzner and Stephen Katsanos are skeptical that truly nothing will change.

"I guess it's unfortunate that the commissioners chose to ignore their own regulations simply to enhance the value of a developer's property,"

said Stelzner, who in January spoke out against the reclassification during a public hearing.

Stelzner said the South Point residents opposed to the reclassification will petition the state commission in a last-ditch effort to stop the reclassification.

In explaining his skepticism, Katsanos said that representatives of Burbage indicated that they could be back before the commissioners to discuss removing the regulation that prohibits more building on the property.

He also said he found it highly unusual that Burbage has not explained why he sought the reclassification aside from the fact that it corrects an error in the zoning code.

"I looked through every decision on the Critical Area Commission's

website to see where in the past they approved a change (of this nature) and in every case, the applicant explained what they intended to do once the change was made," Katsanos said. "This is a precedent, as far as I'm concerned. (And so far) there's been no explanation. It's just based on, 'What if the environmental group leaves and I can't lease my property to someone else?'"

"That's the tough love that goes with protecting environmental resources. The law says if the property went dormant, which this one did, (it should be) ceded back to nature for resource conservation. (Am I skeptical?) Absolutely. I think there was no effort by the county to do any independent analysis. I think they're simply trying to accommodate a very powerful developer in this county."

## Tree buffer giveaway on April 9

Continued from Page 8

removal event is scheduled during "Take Pride in Berlin Week."

Economic & Community Development Director Ivy Wells is spearheading the latter event.

Bohlen said Public Works Director Jimmy Charles would have crews on hand to assist with spreading mulch and would provide backhoe services where required.

"We will provide lunch for volunteers," she said.

Bohlen said participants could bring their own trash removal supplies, but trash bags and gloves would be provided for those who need them.

"It's kind of a spring cleanup for the park after the winter," she said. "We have to ask Jimmy [Charles] to maybe stop cleaning the park so well so people have something to do."

Residents are also encouraged to collect discarded items clogging drainage ditches or lingering near corners designated for regular trash collections.

"There's more to it than just the

parks," she said.

Bohlen asked residents to inform the town of any cleanup efforts performed outside of area parks.

"We will come and collect the trash bags," she said.

Leapfrogging into May, Bohlen highlighted Berlin's "Spring Walk" slated for the morning of May 7.

"The health department was trying to come up with fun ideas for walks," she said.

To that end, Berlin hosted a "Glow Walk" last fall starting from Stephen Decatur Park.

Other ideas considered included a "Color Walk."

"Usually they're color runs where people throw packets of chalk dust," she said. "It's a huge spectacle."

Bohlen had doubts about that approach being well received downtown Berlin.

"I don't think it will work well in town," she said.

Bohlen is working with Wells to craft other plans for community walks.

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# Main Street building plans clear HDC, with conditions

Continued from Page 1  
that little bit of differentiation down at the street level,” she said.  
In terms of exterior hue selections, Pielstick said the goal was to employ color schemes that would fit Berlin traditions.

“Navy is such a timeless color,” she said.

Commission member Mary Moore said color selections should not compete visually with brick facades.

“Colors should be complimentary and flowing,” she said.

Commission Vice-Chair Laura Stearns lauded the plan overall, but said paint swatches should be further reviewed.

“Everything looks good, but we should be readdress paint colors, which need to be coordinated,” she said.

Planning Director Dave Engelhart suggested focusing less on specific shades.

“Do you want them to be more or less uniform?” he said.

Moore concurred that consistency among color patterns was preferable.

“I wouldn’t want to see a hodge-podge look or anything reminiscent that it wasn’t really thought out in a professional way,” she said.

The commission voted unani-

mously to approve plans based on a host of conditions, including replacing subpar second-floor windows with comparable materials, installing front awnings painted in black and exterior brick columns cleaned with-out painting.

Lastly, Moore and Stearns would consult further on exterior color selections.

Engelhart said following the commission sign off the project would begin moving forward in the coming weeks.

“We don’t have a permit applica-tion yet,” he said.

Commission member John Hol-loway was enthused by the presenta-tion.

“I think it’s fantastic you’re restor-ing these buildings and you’re preserv-ing the architectural details,” he said.

While future tenants for the Main Street block remain unknown, former Town Center vendors have relocated to Pitts Street Treasures and Uptown Emporium.

Stearns said the forthcoming rede-velopment should provide a signifi-cant upgrade for downtown Berlin.

“You’ve given us what we’re looking for [and] what an improvement,” she said. “It’s the main part of Main Street.”



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE  
Design details for renovations at the former Town Center Antiques, located between 7-19 N. Main St., were approved by the Berlin Historic District Commission last week.

# Bylaws rewrites could affect who can vote or seek office

Continued from Page 1  
listed under a trust the owner of record is a trustee(s) or co-trustees.

Lastly, the proposed owner of record description specifies if a corporation, LLC or partnership is listed as owner on a property deed, owner of record would be, “an officer of the corporation, a living person who is a member of the ... [LLC] ... or a living person who is a partner in the partnership...”

Other bylaw sections up for changes are 4.08D outlining vote percentages required to approve referendum issues. The proposed updates would require a minimum of total votes cast for or against equal to 40 percent of total votes eligible to be cast.

Also revisions to section 4.07C for

resident petition requirements are under consideration. The change would require petitioners to obtain signatures at least equal to a minimum of 10 percent of eligible voters, as well as requiring 15 percent of eligible voters to hold a special meeting.

The OPA is scheduled to mail homeowners referendum ballots including more than 30 bylaw changes by March 25 with a voting deadline of April 29.

To review the entire list of motions for proposed bylaw changes slated for forthcoming referendum questions visit <https://bit.ly/OPAmotions>.

Existing bylaws can be found by visiting <https://bit.ly/OPAbylaws>.

To join the meeting virtually visit <https://bit.ly/OPApublichearing>.



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# Berlin Historic District Commission Briefs

By Greg Ellison  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) In addition to re-assignments made necessary by a resignation, the Berlin Historic District Commission also approved a sign plan for Sound Storm Records at 14 Broad St. and received updates on the proposed 410 Social Eatery and Barroom on the corner of 16 Pitts St. during its meeting last Wednesday.

## 410 Social Eatery

Planning Director Dave Engelhart updated the commission on the status of development plans for the 410 Social Eatery and Ballroom slated for the corner of Pitts and William streets.

After addressing commission members' concerns in December regarding exterior design details, including paint schemes and façade surfaces, additional snags surfaced during the interior renovations phase.

"They had an engineering plan for the remaining inside," he said.

Engelhart said interior design plans, which were approved last summer, neglected to account for the condition of a north-facing front brick wall.

"We're waiting for their repair to that front wall," he said.

Engelhart said the need for wall alterations came to light after masonry workers declared the existing brick appeared beyond repair.



GREG ELLISON/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Sound Storm Records owners Brandon Zlatniski and Lauren Carlson were granted approval for outside store signage by the Berlin Historic District Commission last Wednesday.

"We found out from a letter from their mason," he said.

In terms of salvaging the existing brick, the odds sounded limited.

"He wouldn't work on it," he said. "That's when our antenna went up."

Engelhart said the town was advised the wall should come down.

"That's when we stopped everything," he said. "The building hadn't had the maintenance it needed over the last 40-50 years."

Despite the hiccup, Engelhart said updated renderings should be forth-

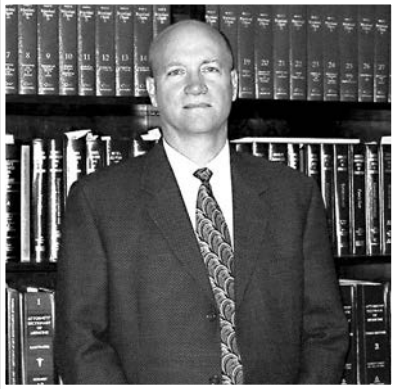
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# Ocean City, Berlin put forth budget requests

By Jack Chavez  
Staff Writer

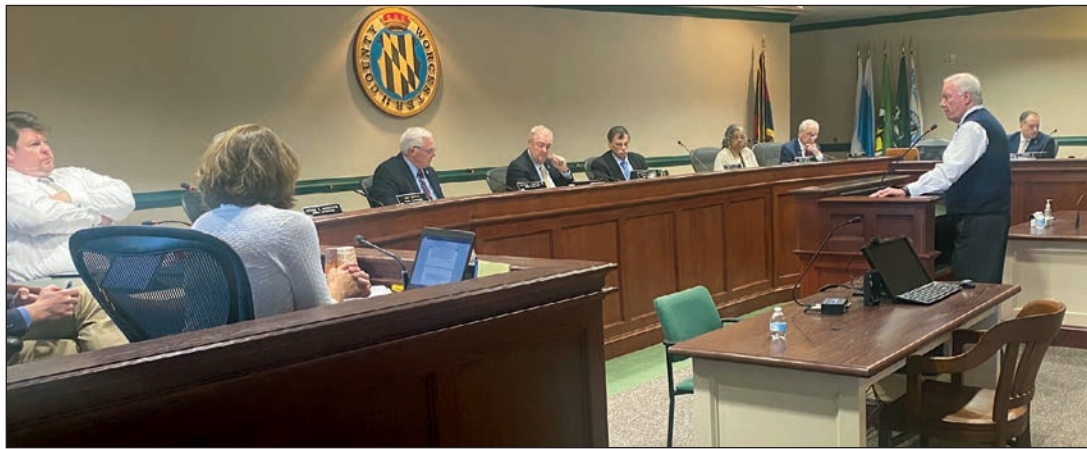
(March 10, 2022) The municipalities of Worcester County briefed the commissioners on March 1 with their FY23 budget requests, with Ocean City leading the way at a total of \$8.46 million requested.

The price tag for Ocean City is only marginally more than the \$8.32 million approved in FY22. Among the changes are a requested 2.5 percent increase in the unrestricted grant — roughly from \$2.55 million to \$2.62 million — and a 5 percent increase in the ambulance grant request — roughly \$1.66 million to \$1.74 million.

“We would like the county to continue to provide funding at the same level as they did in FY22 for recreation, convention bureau, tourism and the park and ride,” Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan said during the meeting.

Meehan added that the Ocean City Development Corporation will ask the county for \$125,000, up from its typical \$100,000, and that the Town of Ocean City will receive the same request from them and approve it.

Meehan thanked the county for considering Ocean City taxpayers when figuring out how to provide EMS services to the West Ocean City area and working with the city to re-



Representatives of municipalities in Worcester County briefed the commissioners last Tuesday regarding their budget requests for FY23. Ocean City's requests paced the rest of the towns and Ocean Pines at \$8.46 million. Berlin requested \$2.6 million, Ocean Pines \$2.24 million and Pocomoke \$1.91 million. JACK CHAVEZ/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

imburse those costs. Those services cost \$323,350 in FY22 and the town is requesting \$365,182 in FY23.

Meehan also took time to brief the county on a handful of issues in Ocean City, including the police body camera program, which he said would be implemented by June, and state's attorney office space.

Meehan said that State's Attorney Kristin Heiser has accepted the city's offer to utilize two offices at the 65th Street district courthouse at no cost. He estimated it could house four to six employees and added that the offer to use the larger nearby office building was “still on the table.”

Meehan also spoke of seasonal employee housing, which resort gov-

ernment is “working through every avenue we can to address.”

“We're going to do what we can do to support any projects off the island by providing transportation to and from Ocean City and whatever else we can do to help those projects be successful and viable,” he said. “I know there have been some discussions about tax abatements for these sorts of projects. They are essential and I would just ask that you consider that because I know how important that is, not just to the Town of Ocean City but to Worcester County.”

The Town of Berlin's request came to \$2.6 million, up roughly 8 percent. Mayor Zack Tyndall explained that the biggest differences are an in-

crease in the “Rails to Trails” program — \$39,875 to \$73,796 — and a new endeavor, constructing a round-  
See OCEAN Page 16

## Berlin Historic District Commission Briefs

Continued from Page 3  
coming within days to either repair or remove the structural issue.

“Then we'll get our engineers to assess that design,” he said.

## Committee assignments

Leadership changes occurred due to the resignation of Vice-Chairman Robert Poli.

Poli said he opted to end his three-year term that was set to expire this November after reaching a predetermined benchmark.

“I was volunteered, maybe challenged ... with the opportunity to formulate a manual setting forth guidelines,” he said.

Poli complimented Planning Director Dave Engelhart for working on developing the commission standards.

Based on that vacancy, the commission voted for new chair and vice-chair appointments.

Approved for chairman was Norman Bunting, while Laura Sterns received the nod for vice-chair.

## Store signs

Sound Storm Records owners Lauren Carlson and Brandon Zlatniski appeared before the commission to seek approval for outside signs at their Broad Street location.

The recently launched vinyl retailers unveiled a square black sign emblazoned with its moniker and signature logo

Zlatniski said the store marker was designed to fit the existing brackets on the building's brick façade.

“I like the design and logo,” Commission member John Holloway said, while commission member Mary Moore characterized the new venture as an “innovative idea.”

“I would think it would become a destination shop,” she said.

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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.

## Town hall gives voters look at amendments

Who can vote, who can run for the board of directors and who shall be considered the property owner of record are the headline topics of one of the more important Ocean Pines Association town halls to be held in some time.

On Saturday, beginning at 9 a.m., this public hearing will cover more than 30 changes to the bylaws proposed by the Bylaws Committee and board of directors.

Obviously, the impetus for some of these amendments was last summer's board of directors election brouhaha, which ended with the association on the wrong side of a circuit court judge's ruling.

Just as obvious, however, is that something needed to be done about how property ownership — and the right to participate in association affairs — is defined.

Whether the changes proposed for that section of the bylaws will past muster with most association members will be determined via a referendum on this and the dozens of other possible changes later this year.

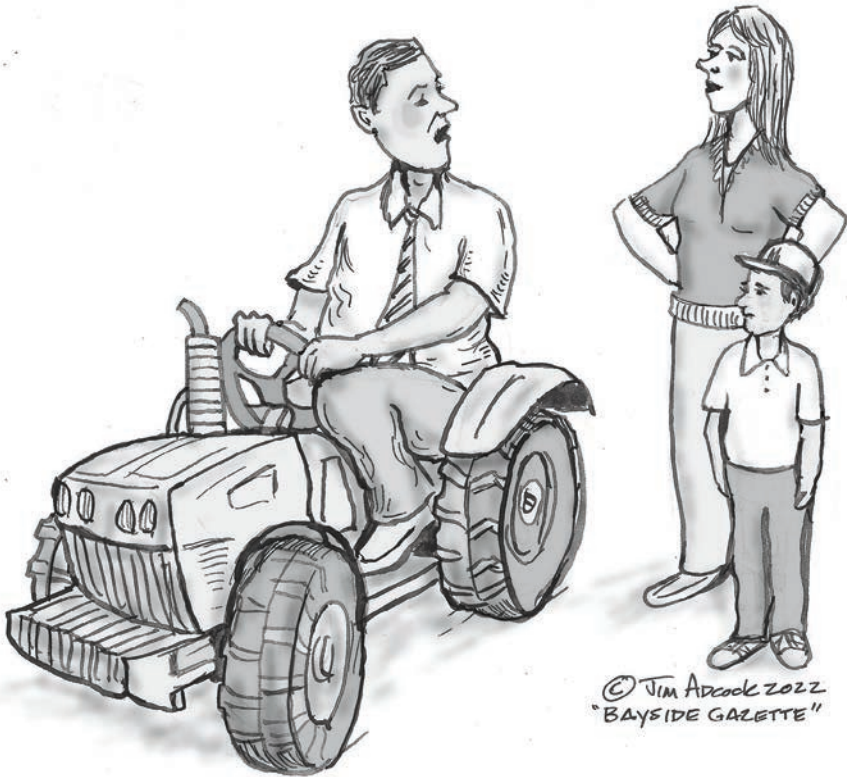
That assumes, however, that these suggested amendments emerge intact from this town hall and the discussions that will follow.

Considering that the last time the bylaws were revised was 2008, the results of this referendum will affect association governance for the next decade or so. That makes Saturday's town hall doubly important.

The hearing will be held in the Clubhouse Banquet Room of the Ocean Pines Golf Club on 100 Clubhouse Drive. People who are unable to be physically present can participate via the Microsoft Teams meeting platform by checking in at <https://bit.ly/OPApublichearing>.

Association members who wish to do their homework before the hearing can review the referendum questions online at <https://bit.ly/OPAmotions>. They will also find there information on how to participate.

The opportunity to know more, ask questions and to comment is there. Association members should take advantage of that before they are called on to vote.



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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Heron Park project preference

Editor,  
*(This letter was recently sent to the Berlin mayor and council members and forwarded to Bayside Gazette).*

After reviewing both proposals for Heron Park, I would like to share with you my thoughts and recommendation. The Gillis Gilkerson project has appeal only in the fact that it would not require 78 EDUs, though there is no mention of how many EDUs are involved in its development that I remember seeing.

They both talk about walkability but do not mention sidewalks on Old Ocean City Boulevard connecting the development to either Main Street or the shopping areas in the other direction.

Is the state going to widen that road enough for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely navigate?

If Gillis-Gilkerson project were putting in some type of well-paying industry that would be one thing, but we do not really need more restaurants and whatever else Gillis-Gilkerson project

is offering, and we have a need for more affordable housing.

I am inclined toward Natelli Communities, even though they called Old Ocean City Boulevard the wrong name (Old Bridge Road). They are offering enough commercial space to be in line with the other commercial establishments and a nice residential community would be more appropriate around the pond areas of Heron Park.

Both will be disruptive to the nature park (we are forgetting that is what that actually is), a residential development would be less so.

On the Natelli Communities drawing, I did not see where the access to the park was. I am assuming it would be similar to Herring Creek park in West Ocean City.

The Natelli proposal's real attraction for me is the parcels they are willing to give up around Stephen Decatur Park. That is an area worth developing into the things people talk about for Heron Park.

You could conceivably put a small amphitheater at Stephen Decatur Park if we

ever get our finances straight.

Those parcels would be big enough for a skate park, a dog park and more parking for the park and town events. Parcel 1508 is access to Bay Street which would open the park to more walkability for those on the other side of Route 113.

It would make Stephen Decatur Park the center uniting the “East” and “West” sides of Berlin. The police department is right across the street and would be a good deterrent for any problems encountered by those at the skate park or dog park.

It would put those amenities close to where you are proposing the Community Center, which could also serve the amphitheater purpose. The concerns that were expressed about the demolition costs were valid, but they are offering more in monetary value. It seems fair.

As to the safety of the area free of environmental issues, I would think that is also fair. It is unfortunate our previous council and mayor did not have that same clause. If the town had

Continued on Page 14

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

11934 Ocean Gateway, Suite 6, Ocean City, Md. 21842.

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

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from Page 13  
enough EDUs to consider the project along Route 50, this one is half of that.

You know I am not in favor of development, but this is something that will give us back \$200,000 a year in debt service while adding to the tax base and amenities of the town.

It is a project that does not require annexation or much in the way of zoning changes. It might even deter more development for the time being.

The added benefit is we would be doing something for the kids of Berlin, not just the “business” of Berlin. If you don’t have any other offers, I truly hope you will consider Natelli Communities as I believe it is a win for the town of Berlin.

Sincerely,  
Marie Velong  
Berlin

# Skinkle’s manslaughter reversed

By Greg Ellison  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Berlin resident Robert Skinkle, 32, who was sentenced in 2016 to 10 years in prison for involuntary manslaughter stemming from the overdose death of Christopher Taylor, had his conviction overturned last month by the Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

In May 2016, Skinkle was convicted in Worcester Circuit Court of involuntary manslaughter, distribution of heroin, possession of heroin and reckless endangerment for providing Taylor five bags of heroin that resulted in an overdose.

In November 2015, Berlin Police and EMS responders found Taylor unconscious inside a residence on Pitts Street and subsequently uncovered evidence of drug use.

After examining Taylor’s cell phone at the scene, police discovered Skinkle was one of the most recent calls made.

Investigators proceeded to contact Skinkle claiming to be a cohort of Taylor seeking heroin, to which he reportedly admitted having access.

Police also uncovered text messages between Taylor and Skinkle concerning the sale of five bags of heroin for \$50, which Skinkle allegedly delivered in person.

Investigators said after the pair injected heroin inside the Pitts Street residence, Taylor exhibited signs of lethal intoxication, at which point Skinkle researched the topic on his phone.

During court proceedings in 2016, Skinkle said he witnessed Taylor pass out after shooting up and tried in vain

to lend assistance.

The recent decision from the Maryland Court of Special Appeals reverses the involuntary manslaughter and reckless endangerment convictions, while also sending the case back to Worcester Circuit Court for resentencing on possession and distribution charges.

The appeals court concluded there was a lack of evidence that Skinkle sold illegal substances to others or had any inkling the heroin procured contained other potent opioids.

In its opinion issued on Feb. 17 the appeals court said the prosecution’s evidence did not show Skinkle knew of the potential dangers associated with heroin, and therefore did not support a finding that his conduct amounted to wanton and reckless disregard for human life.

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**KIWANIS GENEROSITY**  
The new officers of the Stephen Decatur Middle School Kiwanis Builders Club were installed by parent organization, Kiwanis Club of Greater Ocean Pines-Ocean City President Tim Lund and Kiwanis advisor Sarah Walker on Feb. 3. The Kiwanis presented a \$500 check to the Builders Club for its service projects. SDMS is one of the five school clubs for students sponsored by the parent club. Pictured, from left, are Teacher School Advisor to the Builders Club Mindy Ouellete, Builders President Lily Perella, Vice President Kirby Bounds, Walker, Lund, Builders Secretary Araceli Gauntmer, Treasurer Lizzie Thompson and Stephen Decatur Middle School Principal Lynne Barton. Not pictured is Teacher Co-Advisor Kathy McDaniel.  
PHOTO COURTESY D.J. LANDIS, SR.

# Ocean City, Berlin budget requests to county

Continued from Page 12  
about on Flower Street with a \$122,000 price tag.  
“Rails and Trails” strives to im-

prove biking and pedestrian paths throughout the county and Tyndall said that the town is asking for funding for “phase two” for FY23.

“That’s basically going to connect the north end of town where Heron Park is all the way ... down by Worcester Prep,” he said. “It would run straight through Berlin and I think some of our other municipalities are trying to work from the south end north to hopefully increase the biking and pedestrian safety options for the residents of Worcester County.”

Tyndall said the Flower Street roundabout would likely be a multi-year project but is sorely needed in an age when GPS mapping has tourists venturing off the beaten path and onto Berlin’s backroads to avoid congestion on Routes 611 and 113.

“We’re requesting (funding) for the construction and engineering side,” Tyndall said. “It’s a major thoroughfare for bus traffic, residents and visitors trying to make their way east toward the beaches. It’s become a highly traveled route where speed is of concern, right through a residential area. Putting a roundabout at this location will hopefully slow drivers down, make the neighborhood safer and add to the livability of Berlin.”

The Ocean Pines Association, rep-

resented by OPA President Colette Horn, requested a 20.2 percent increase to their funding, up to \$1.86 million. The biggest changes were a new request for \$150,000 for roads and bridges and corresponding infrastructure, some of which Horn claimed to be more than 50 years old, \$75,000 more for “police aid,” and a new \$25,000 request for “tourism.” The tourism request would help reimburse Ocean Pines residents who bear the brunt of the maintenance cost for the associations’ free amenities.

The Town of Snow Hill requested \$2.24 million, up roughly 10.3 percent. The biggest item, which met some resistance from Commissioner Chip Bertino, was \$225,000 for wastewater treatment probes. Bertino asked whether this is a cost that should come from the county taxpayer’s wallet.

The Town of Pocomoke requested a 3.8 percent increase in funding at \$1.91 million, with the biggest change coming from a requested \$46,500 increase to the town’s unrestricted grant.

County budget hearings will start at the end of March.

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# Wor. Co. Arts Council exhibit opening slated for March 11

(March 10, 2022) During the month of March, the Worcester County Arts Council presents an exhibit featuring artwork by two local artists and Gallery members: Kathy Gibson and Barbara Kern-Bush.

The opening reception of this exhibit will be held on Friday, March 11, from 5-7 p.m. at the Arts Council's Gallery, located at 6 Jefferson Street in downtown Berlin.

Come meet the artists and enjoy complimentary refreshments. Visitors will have an opportunity to place their bid on pieces of artwork, donated by each featured artist to benefit the Arts Council's Arts Scholarship Program.

Exhibit will be on display until March 31.

In addition to the featured artists' exhibit, the Arts Council will also showcase "Tiny Art," a youth art exhibition.

This vibrant exhibit of miniature artwork (3 inches in diameter) highlights 10 winning entries created by children ages 8-15 and submitted for a "Tiny Art" contest, sponsored and coordinated by the Worcester County Public Library system.

The exhibit is presented in conjunction with Youth Art Month, an annual observance in the month of March, to emphasize the value of art education for all students and to encourage support for quality art programs.

Exhibit on display through March 31.

The Worcester County Arts Council is a nonprofit 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.

# OP Restaurant Week still in action through Saturday

**By Greg Ellison**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) Ocean Pines Chamber of Commerce's inaugural Restaurant Week, which kicked off last Sunday, continues through Saturday.

Chamber Executive Director Kerrie Bunting said the first year event has been well received by the community.

"It's going amazing," she said.

Bunting said the fresh venture was planned in conjunction with the ERA Martin Associates Shamrock Division on Racetrack Road.

Roughly a dozen Pines-based food establishments are participating, including A bagel And, Abi's Diner, Denovo's Trattoria, Hunan Garden, Ocean Pines Country Club and Yacht Club, Paul & Vinnies, Pines Public House, Plaza Tapatia, Southgate Grill, Taylor's and the Hungry Donut.

To participate in the event, diners obtain food cards to get stamps from participating restaurants.

Three stamps are required to be entered into a raffle drawing held on St. Patrick's Day.

Bunting said shortly after launching the promotion last week, at least two eateries had to request a restock on food cards, with others depleted during the week.

"Evidently people are showing up," she said.

Food cards can be obtained from participating restaurants, the Ocean Pines Visitors Center at 11047 Race Track Road or the ERA Martin Associates Shamrock Division office at 11049 Race-track Road.



Kerrie Bunting

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## TOWN OF BERLIN, MARYLAND NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE ORDINANCE 2022-03

Public Hearing Monday, March 28, 2022, 7:00 PM.

The Town of Berlin of Maryland proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2022, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 4%, from \$481,534,886 to \$499,291,425.
2. If the Town of Berlin maintains the current tax rate of \$0.8150 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 4% resulting in \$144,740 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.7860, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The Town of Berlin is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The Town of Berlin proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.8150 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 4% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$144,740 in additional property tax revenues.

Proposed real property tax rate will be introduced at 7 pm on March 14th at Town of Berlin, Town Hall, 10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 7 pm on March 28th at Town of Berlin, Town Hall, 10 William Street, Berlin, MD 21811.

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged.

Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call 410-641-2770 for further information.



# Worcester election campaigns taking form

**By Jack Chavez**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) With 11 days left for Worcester County citizens to throw their hats into the ring for the county commissioner elections, battle lines are becoming clearer.

Aside from District 3's Bud Church (R), who said he will not seek reelection earlier this week after 20 years as a commissioner, every incumbent has filed for reelection. Two commission-

ers — District 2's Diana Purnell (D) and District 7's Joe Mitrecic (R) — were running unopposed as of March 8.

Aside from District 1, each race so far looks to be single-party, meaning they will be decided in the Republican primaries.

In District 1, Caryn Abbott (R) will challenge incumbent Josh Nordstrom (D).

In District 3, Eric Fiori (R) will

take on Thomas Gulyas (R).

In District 4, a three-way, single-party race is shaping up between incumbent Ted Elder (R), Worcester County Fire Marshall Jeff McMahon (R) and former commissioner Virgil Shockley (R). McMahon is set to retire at the end of this month.

In District 5, Grant Helvey (R) will challenge incumbent Chip Bertino (R).

In District 6, Richard Addis (R)

will challenge incumbent Jim Bunting (R).

In other races, State's Attorney Kris Heiser (R) is running unopposed and Jeffrey Buhrt (R) will challenge incumbent Sheriff Matt Crisafulli (R).

The primary elections are scheduled for June 28 and the general elections are scheduled for Nov. 8.

The deadline to file for elected positions at the county level is March 22.

# State bill would require lesson plans online

**Superintendent Taylor says legislation driven by push against critical race theory**

**By Greg Wehner**  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) State legislators are expected to vote on a bill requiring public schools to post the curriculum for each course online after its approval, raising concerns by local school officials that it will require additional resources, time and money to fulfill.

On top of the resources, officials like Worcester Public Schools Superintendent Louis Taylor, who has 38 years of experience as an educator, are con-

cerned that the push is coming from the National Republican Party to allow parents to filter and object to topics that don't coincide with their own beliefs.

"We don't do anything in our public school system that we don't want parents, or anyone involved, not knowing. We want to be in full transparency of everything we do," Taylor said last week. "The issue, to be quite honest ... is people are very concerned that school systems across the country are teaching Critical Race Theory. That's the driver behind this."



Lou Taylor

Critical race theory, briefly, is not a class or a curriculum but is more of a perspective based on the argument that the advancement of people of color in this country has been obstructed by the ripple effects of things such as slavery, segregation, and countless measures before the Civil Rights Movement.

Worcester County Schools, as Taylor explained, is not a "one-size-shoe fits all" district and instructs kids of all shapes, sizes, races, and genders.

State Senate Bill 786, if approved, would require public schools to post the curriculum used for each course taught in the school on the school's website.

Curriculum, according to the bill, refers to instructional materials, assessment techniques, internet links or the name of textbooks, and the course syllabi.

ods worth of lesson plans to the website each day under the proposed law.

"When you start thinking about how many lesson plans that is to upload, I think as a legislator, that probably sounds really simple," Wallace said. "Like, 'Oh, just post your lesson plan,' not thinking that that's seven lesson plans a day that a teacher would have to be posting somewhere."

Each teacher's lesson plan is different, she said, though they are required to fit within the standards set forth by the Maryland Department of Education, which are posted online currently.

The district is also required by the state to have a researched-based curriculum approved by the state, so district officials are not permitted to go out and pick what they want.

"Part of what's concerning to me about this bill is that our standards, or our curriculum processes, are already required to be on our website, and we have them there," Taylor said, but a big part of what is being asked for is included in lesson plans. "To ask teachers to post lesson plans is such a monumental task that I don't have enough personnel to correlate or gather that information on a daily basis and put it up on a website."

Dr. Annette Wallace, the district's chief operating and academics officer said each of the approximately 700 teachers would be responsible for uploading between three and eight peri-

State Delegate Wayne Hartman opined on the bill on last week and said he was under the impression it refers to curriculum, and not lesson plans.

He said his daughter works as a teacher and could understand the burden posting lesson plans online would be to teachers.

Hartman also said the bill was not necessarily for Worcester County, but more so for other areas of the state.

Even so, Worcester would still have to comply with the law were it to clear the legislature and make it into law.

Taylor's many years as an educator allowed him to say he is confident that parents who are involved in their child's

See BILL Page 25

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# Cuisine

## Mahi ceviche served with plantain chips

Last year was a year to end all years.



By Paul Suplee,  
MBA, CEC, PC-3

I have been fishing for decades, but until I met my girlfriend four years ago, I had been limited to river, pond and bay fishing — namely the Chesapeake. I love fishing the bay, but it wasn't until 2018 that I was drawn offshore to start that mighty endeavor of game fishing.

With a slew of marlins under her belt already, Dawn got me offshore in the Keys, and from there it was off to the races. I was hooked, literally and figuratively.

On a side note, we were fishing with her cousin off Islamorada on my very first trip and she was tending to the port rod while I tended to the starboard.

Distracted by a discussion with her cousin, Todd, my reel popped. When she saw that I wasn't paying a lick of attention, she stole my fish. Yes, she stole my fish. At the end of the day, I know she was just doing her job, and I was slacking.

Since then, I pay much more attention to the goings-on of the cockpit. Lesson learned. And at least we had mahi-mahi to take to Sharkey's that night in Key Largo for some you-catch-we-cook dining.

We would do the same thing in Key West at Dante's after a morning trip, just barely making it to our friend's wedding on time. Priorities.

Back to fishing in Ocean City, I became known as "that guy" who will bring a cooler of food (I cater boats in-season) to keep everyone fat and happy for the duration of the trip.

Whether the fish boxes are filled by 11, or we don't get our first bite until the late afternoon, we are fed. There is always plenty.

But, last year was an incredibly dry year for me here. Despite going out for a couple of tournaments, I did not boat my first fish locally until Dec. 28, a beautiful rockfish that was too big to keep because of those rascally game laws.

As much as I enjoy catch-and-release fishing, rockfish is an all-time favorite and I can always find a use for it in the kitchen, so it was difficult to throw her back in. But it's easier to



do what is right than explain to a game warden why you have the old girl in the fish box.

In Costa Rica last summer, we did catch some sailfish (more catch-and-release) and mahi-mahi (no release there) and as we continued our hunt for more sailfish, the first mate threw together a delightful ceviche. I believe I have written about ceviche multiple times in the past, with one rendition more of a loose variation on a theme, being a simple slice of mahi on cream cheese on a cracker with some lime juice sprinkled on top. While not a traditional ceviche, it is a fishing favorite in some parts.

The simplicity of the dish below, and the obvious freshness of the mahi having just been caught, cleaned and chilled, made this ceviche the most delicious that I had ever eaten.

With only a small handful of ingredients, this was done with the boat underway as Capt. Mumford found new hunting grounds, fresh avocado sliced to adorn the dish and a cooler full of Imperial.

This season will yield better results for me, I am confident. I'm taking the year off from tournament fishing and sticking to the weekdays when it is less of a parking lot out

there. I'm looking forward to a year of ceviche.

### Mahi Ceviche

*makes about 1 quart*

3 c. Diced raw, fresh Mahi  
2 ea. Fresh jalapenos, sliced thin  
1/2 c. Fresh orange juice  
1/2 c. Fresh lime juice  
Salt & Cracked black pepper  
1/2 ea. red onion, julienne  
Plantain chips (recipe follows)

- While this dish is a godsend to chefs in that we can utilize fish pieces instead of discarding them, make sure that you are using the premium parts of the filet. If you use pieces with a lot of cartilage, it will be overly tough.

- Combine everything except for the pickled onions and place in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.

- Serve with freshly fried tortilla chips, pickled onions (you should know how to make those by now) and homemade plantain chips.

- Optionally, you can serve this with avocado, a natural go-to that perfectly meshes with the dish.

- Serve with an ice cold beer of your liking. If you can find Imperial, for the fun of it, I'd say give it a shot.

### Plantain Chips

*makes about 20*

2 ea. Plantains, unripe and hard  
Oil for frying

Seasoning of salt, sugar and cinnamon, to taste

- Slice the plantains on the bias about 1/3-inch thick.

- Heat oil to 325° and lightly fry the plantains until softened.

- Remove and pat dry, allowing to cool enough to handle.

- Place each plantain between 2 pieces of wax or parchment paper.

- Light smash them with a meat tenderizer, tortilla press or the bottom of a pan until they are thin and spread out.

- Bring the heat of the oil up to 350° and fry the chips in batches until they are golden and crispy.

- Remove to a paper towel to drain and then season to your liking.

- Keep them in an airtight bag or Tupperware until ready to serve.

—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](http://www.boxcar40.com); [www.boxcaronmain.com](http://www.boxcaronmain.com)



# CLASSIFIED Marketplace

Classifieds appear in Ocean City Today & Bayside Gazette each week and online at [oceancitytoday.com](http://oceancitytoday.com) & [baysideoc.com](http://baysideoc.com)

Call **410-723-6397**  
by Monday 5 p.m.



## HELP WANTED

## HELP WANTED

## HELP WANTED

## HELP WANTED

## HELP WANTED

## HELP WANTED

Come join our team in a friendly, team-oriented environment at the beach, in a beautiful bayside community, with stunning water views, in Ocean City, MD.

### Now Hiring - Clubhouse / Pool Attendants

Part-Time up to 15 to 40 hours. Seasonal employment. Excellent people skills are a must, and you must be able to work mornings, nights, and weekends, 5 and 8 hours shifts available. Start dates in May the position runs through October 1st.

Please send resume to [Olivia.smith@casinc.biz](mailto:Olivia.smith@casinc.biz) or fax to 410-520-0398



### NOW HIRING!!!

## FULL TIME BARTENDER

CALL JOHNNY @ 410-723-5600

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FOR INTERVIEW OR APPLY WITHIN  
5601 Coastal Hwy., OCMD

**Help Wanted.**  
Bottom Painter for West Ocean City Boat Yard. \$15 an hour. Call 410-213-1383.

### PGN Crab House 29th Street & Coastal Hwy.

Now Hiring for  
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Apply within after 11:00 am

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**MED TECH.** CPR, first aide certified. Must be able to pass background check. Drug free facility. Full time position and every other weekend. Email resume to [truittsandy@yahoo.com](mailto:truittsandy@yahoo.com) or call 443-880-7341.

**SEASONAL CUSTODIAN - Full Time** \$16 per hour, 40 hours per week. Vacuum, clean windows and other general duties. Email [9400@9400condo.org](mailto:9400@9400condo.org) or call 410-524-9400.

**PLUMBER'S HELPER NEEDED** Must be able to lift over 25 lbs. Driver's license a must. Benefits offered. 401K, Life insurance, Dental, Health & Vision insurance. Short-term disability & vacation pay. **443-727-3091**

**PAPA JOHN'S ALL POSITIONS**  
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Apply in person:  
29C Atlantic Ave.,  
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**www.baysideoc.com**

The Greater Ocean City, Maryland Chamber of Commerce

## JOB FAIR

SAT. APRIL 2, 2022  
10AM-2PM

some employers offering seasonal housing!

ROLAND E. POWELL CONVENTION CENTER  
4001 COASTAL HIGHWAY, OCEAN CITY, MD  
contact [heathereoceancity.org](mailto:heathereoceancity.org) for info

### Sunset Island Ocean City, MD

Work with us in a friendly, team-oriented environment at the beach, in a beautiful bayside community, with stunning water views. Sunset Island is accepting resumes for a **Clubhouse Facility Manager**. The position is a full-time Seasonal Position that runs from April 1st to October 1st. (no benefits offered), Personnel Management and scheduling experience are required. The job includes the oversight of a seasonal staff of 15- 20 people and oversight of contractors. Nights and Weekends are required. Excellent people and computer skills are a must.

Please provide a resume and cover letter to send resume, [linda.horensavitz@casinc.biz](mailto:linda.horensavitz@casinc.biz), fax 410-520-0398.

### Rental Office Manager Needed Full-time Position Year Round

We have two busy rental offices. We are looking for someone who can train for a Office Management position in our Ocean City office. Vacation Rentals and some Year-Round Property Management.

- ☐ Real Estate License Required
- ☐ References Required
- ☐ Professional/Friendly
- ☐ Must be willing to travel to meet with prospective owners and inspect properties as needed
- ☐ Must work most weekends as needed
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Please fax resumes, letters and references to or inquiries to

**Hileman Real Estate, Inc.**

Attn: Chris to fax # 410-208-9562 or email [Hilemanre@aol.com](mailto:Hilemanre@aol.com)

### TOW TRUCK DRIVER

Ocean Area Tire now has an opening for a **FULL-TIME TOW TRUCK DRIVER** to join our team. Experience preferred but will train the right person. Must have a clean driving record, pass DOT physical and a minor background check. Bi-weekly salary along with a generous percentage of after hour calls. Apply in person at any one of our three locations - Ocean View, DE; Millsboro, DE; or Ocean Pines, MD - or call our Tow Manager, Lee at 443-878-5362 to schedule an on-the-spot interview.

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- Earn Valuable Sales & Customer Service Skills
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3BR Suite .....\$425/wk  
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Classifieds

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www.oceancitytoday.com

SEEKING RENTAL

Retired, Single Female seeking immediate year-round rental in Ocean City, Ocean Pines or Berlin area.  
443-754-7054

ROOMMATES

Seeking Roommate - Bayview Estates, Selbyville. 5.7 miles to beach. Includes utilities & Internet. Shared kitchen, W/D, living room, outdoor space, POOL.  
\$850/month.  
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2 Office/Retail Spaces available in West Ocean City. Each are approximately 1600 sq. ft.  
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DONATIONS

Do you have an old bicycle not being used? It could mean a world of difference to a hard-working international student. We are looking to get as many bikes as possible. Your donation will be tax-deductible. **Contact Gary at 443-975-3065.**

FOR SALE

8 Off-Shore Rod & Reels.  
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# 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., March 10

**STORY TIME ‘CLOUDS & RAINBOWS’**  
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](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**STEM STORY TIME: SPACE**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Come listen to stories about the great unknown. Take home activity included. For ages 2-5 years. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**WOMEN IN HISTORY**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Held in-person and via Zoom. The program looks at dynamic historical women who impacted others’ lives. Presented by Martina Mathisen. Registration required: [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**ZUMBA FOR ALL LEVELS**  
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4:30 p.m. Join certified Zumba instructor Joyce Landsman for an hour of movement. These classes uplift and improve mood. Register: [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org) under “Events.” 410-632-2600

**WSW’S 20TH ANNUAL PINK RIBBON BINGO**  
Williards Lion Club, 36393 Hearn St., 5-9 p.m. Games begin at 6 p.m. Cost is \$30 in advance or \$40 at the door. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/20th-annual-pink-ribbon-bingo-tickets-247278696237>. Food and beverages available for purchase. 410-548-7880

**TOWN HALL SERIES: ONE PILL CAN KILL**  
Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6 p.m. Learn about “fake pills.” Designed for parents and those who work with youth. Register: <https://forms.gle/Dhxc8uFMd5EokAMY8>. Worcester Goes Purple, 410-870-5161, [wgp-warriors2021@gmail.com](mailto:wgp-warriors2021@gmail.com).

## Fri., March 11

**ST. PATRICK’S SOCCER TOURNAMENT**  
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Adult Men’s and Women’s Divisions. Team entry is \$400. [tournaments@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:tournaments@oceancitymd.gov), 410-250-0125, <https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/st-patricks-soccer-tournament/>.

**DELMARVA WOOL AND FIBER EXPO**  
Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Featuring vendors with raw and finished products for sale, classes, demos and prizes. Class information and sign up: [www.woolandfiber.com](http://www.woolandfiber.com). Admission cost is \$4/day or \$5/weekend. 443-235-2926.

**OCEAN PINES BOOK OF THE MONTH: ‘CIRCE’ BY MADELINE MILLER**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Set during the Greek Heroic Age, it is an adaptation of various Greek myths, most notably the Odyssey, as told from the perspective of the witch Circe. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**SURVIVAL SPANISH: ‘TRANSPORTATION’**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2-3 p.m. The library will hold four classes that focus on conversational Spanish. The second class will be about transportation. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**IN 3D! (JURASSIC PARK)**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2:30 p.m. Join the group for a wildly popular ‘90s classic featuring dinosaurs in 3D. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**MARYLAND CRAB CAKE DINNER**  
Stevenson United Methodist Church, 123 N. Main St., Berlin. 4-6:30 p.m. Costs are \$14 for a one crab cake sandwich platter; \$25 for two crab cake sandwich platter; and \$10 for a crab cake sandwich. Platters include green beans, bake potato and Cole slaw. Carryout only.

**ART EXHIBIT OPENING RECEPTION**  
Worcester County Arts Council, 6 Jefferson St., Berlin, 5-7 p.m. Featuring Kathy Gibson, Barbara Kern-Bush and the “Tiny Art” youth art exhibit. Meet the artists and enjoy complimentary refreshments. Place a bid on pieces of artwork to benefit the Art’s Council.

## Sat., March 12

**ST. PATRICK’S SOCCER TOURNAMENT**  
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Adult Men’s and Women’s Divisions. Team entry is \$400. [tournaments@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:tournaments@oceancitymd.gov), 410-250-0125, <https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/st-patricks-soccer-tournament/>.

**MARYLAND AAU GRAND PRIX**  
Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. Win a bid to the biggest volleyball event in the world. Admission cost is \$25 for a 2-day pass. Children 10 years and younger are admitted free. 410-202-8849, [info@webuildyou-play.com](mailto:info@webuildyou-play.com)

**DELMARVA WOOL AND FIBER EXPO**  
Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Featuring vendors with raw and finished products for sale, classes, demos and prizes. Class information and sign up: [www.woolandfiber.com](http://www.woolandfiber.com). Admission cost is \$4/day or \$5/weekend. 443-235-2926

**AARP TAXAIDE**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 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. Appointments: 443-373-2667 or [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide).

**ST. PATRICK’S IRISH SCRAMBLE**  
Eagle’s Landing Golf Course, 12367 Eagles Nest Road, Berlin, 9:30 a.m. Featuring 4-player scramble. Cost is \$60 and includes green fee, cart, prizes and Irish American lunch. Sign up: 410-213-7277, [RCroll@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:RCroll@oceancitymd.gov). [www.eagleslandinggolf.com/golf-extra](http://www.eagleslandinggolf.com/golf-extra)

**OCEAN PINES ANGLERS CLUB MEETING**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 9:30 a.m. The speaker will be Wolfgang Rain who is an on shore fisheries liaison contracted to US Wind. Also a discussion of fresh water trout fishing and upcoming opportunities for discounted charter fishing.

**SATURDAY WRITERS**  
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10 a.m. Novice and established writers gather to share their projects. Structure includes critiques and appreciation, market leads and writing exercises. Drop-in welcome. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**PROJECT T(W)EEN: LIVE GAME SHOW!**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 11 a.m. Tweens and teens work together on new projects and develop new skills. Introductory meeting and family favorite live game shows. Jake Nail, [jnail@worcesterlibrary.org](mailto:jnail@worcesterlibrary.org). For ages 11 years and older. 410-632-2600

**ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADE AND FESTIVAL**  
Coastal Highway & 57th Street, Ocean City, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.,The parade, beginning at noon, proceeds along Coastal Highway from 57th Street to the 45th Street Shopping Center, where the Irish festival will be located (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.). [www.delmarvairish.org](http://www.delmarvairish.org), 410-289-6156

## Sun., March 13

**MARYLAND AAU GRAND PRIX**  
Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City. Win a bid to the biggest volleyball event in the world. Admission cost is \$25 for a 2-day pass. Children 10 years and younger are admitted free. 410-202-8849, [info@webuildyou-play.com](mailto:info@webuildyou-play.com)

**ST. PATRICK’S SOCCER TOURNAMENT**  
Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City. Adult Men’s and Women’s Divisions. Team entry is \$400. [tournaments@oceancitymd.gov](mailto:tournaments@oceancitymd.gov), 410-250-0125,

<https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/st-patricks-soccer-tournament/>

**DELMARVA WOOL AND FIBER EXPO**  
Roland E. Powell Convention Center, 4001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Featuring vendors with raw and finished products for sale, classes, demos and prizes. Class information and sign up: [www.woolandfiber.com](http://www.woolandfiber.com). Admission cost is \$4/day or \$5/weekend. 443-235-2926

## Mon., March 14

**‘IRISH’ YOU LUCK SCAVENGER HUNT**  
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Use your research skills and the Dewey Decimal System to find all 10 clues. Names will be entered in a special drawing. For ages 8 year and older. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**AARP TAXAIDE**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10 a.m.-2 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. Appointments: 443-373-2667 or [www.aarp.org/taxaide](http://www.aarp.org/taxaide). 410-632-2600

**PI DAY PARTY**  
Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 3:30 p.m. Learn about this mathematical phenomenon, make a craft, play a game and enjoy some pie. For ages 6-12 years. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 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

**TOWN HALL SERIES: ONE PILL CAN KILL**  
Buckingham Presbyterian Church, 20 S. Main St., Berlin, 6 p.m. Learn about “fake pills.” Designed for parents and those who work with youth. Register: <https://forms.gle/Dhxc8uFMd5EokAMY8>. Worcester Goes Purple, 410-870-5161, [wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com](mailto:wgpwarriors2021@gmail.com), 410-870-5161

## Tues., March 15

**‘IRISH’ YOU LUCK SCAVENGER HUNT**  
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Use your research skills and the Dewey Decimal System to find all 10 clues. Names will be entered in a special drawing. For ages 8 year and older. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600



# Puzzles

## CINEMAGRAMS

BY SHELDON POLONSKY / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Sheldon Polonsky, of Cincinnati, is a pediatrician and medical software analyst at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. He loves movies and wordplay and sees films in theaters whenever possible. The theme clues for this puzzle took varied amounts of time to compose: 75-Across came in five minutes; 119-Across took half an hour; 22-Across required three days, on and off. This is Sheldon's second Times puzzle and first Sunday. — W.S.

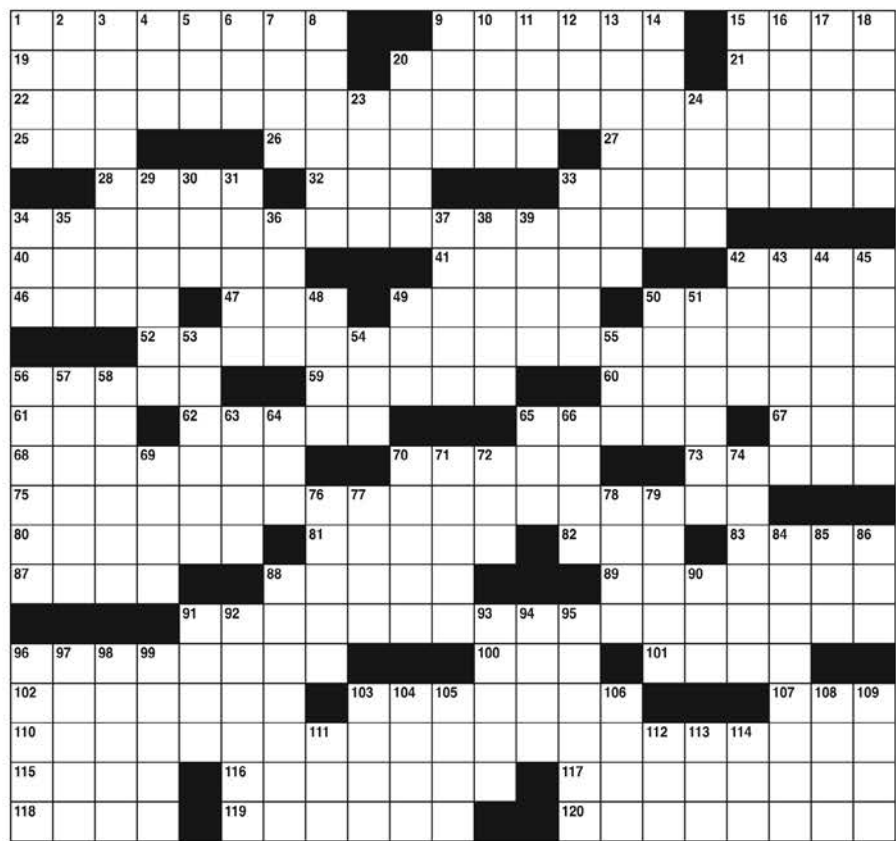
**ACROSS**  
1 Items used with PINs  
9 There's one for the U.S. Census  
15 In a tussle  
19 Dismiss  
20 Takes it one step at a time  
21 Pad Thai garnish  
22 Sea captain: robber, thief (2003)  
25 Photographer's tool, for short  
26 Unlike this puzzle, we hope  
27 Source of suffering  
28 They're hoppy at happy hour  
32 Quaint lead-in to while  
33 All the kings' men?  
34 True fellow is a find (1946)  
40 With room for interpretation  
41 Top  
42 Game pieces in Mastermind  
46 Word after contact or before cover  
47 Chill (out)  
49 Bit of deception  
50 Unfinished attic space  
52 Re: town fire one night (1974)  
56 "Whoopee!"

**DOWN**  
1 First courses, informally  
2 Drudgery  
3 First Black woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature  
4 When doubled, a dance  
5 Quick to learn  
6 Spawn in the sea  
7 "\_\_\_ thou love life?": Benjamin Franklin  
8 Drove (away)  
9 \_\_\_ Men ("Who Let the Dogs Out" group)  
10 One with a password, maybe  
11 Document stamp abbr.  
12 That: Sp.  
13 Blimp, e.g.  
14 Humanitarian org. with Halloween fund drives  
15 First name in Harry Potter  
16 Ranks  
17 Would you look at that!  
18 Believe in it  
20 Overtime dentist's supply  
23 Front  
24 Company with sound financials?

**ACROSS**  
59 Origin of the words "club" and "gun"  
60 It's a lot in London  
61 Tip of the tongue?  
62 Best-selling crime novelist Gregg  
65 Breed featured in 2009's "Hachi: A Dog's Tale"  
67 Miff, with "off"  
68 One seeking a new agreement, perhaps  
70 Ground-breaking tool  
73 "Not interested"  
75 Evil Streep had award (2006)  
80 Be a paragon of  
81 Guys that rhyme with "girls"  
82 Folder attachment  
83 The "Y" of Y.S.L.  
87 Beams  
88 Wallop  
89 One of the Roys on "Succession"  
91 M. Ryan, what's her yell? (1989)  
96 They have massive calves  
100 "OK!" in Okayama  
101 Puts forth  
102 Account  
103 Protected creature in the Congo Basin  
107 Alternatives to tablets  
110 R.E.M.: alarming to the teens (1984)  
115 \_\_\_ colada  
116 "Louisiana \_\_\_," music show that helped launch Elvis's career

**DOWN**  
117 Fried, filled Filipino fare  
118 Part of STEM: Abbr.  
119 Angry dog sounds  
120 Elf at the North Pole, e.g.  
29 Target with a throw  
30 "!!!!!" feeling  
31 Crack  
33 Held tightly  
34 "'Tis an \_\_\_ cook that cannot lick his own fingers": "Romeo and Juliet"  
35 The third of three X's  
36 Opposite of da  
37 All \_\_\_ (English card game)  
38 Release, in a way  
39 Soul singer Bridges  
42 School for the college-bound  
43 Paper slips?  
44 Signs in a bookstore, perhaps  
45 Encourages  
48 Out of the park  
49 Each  
50 Airborne irritant  
51 Chicken ... or cowed  
53 Addicted  
54 Broke the finish line ribbon  
55 "\_\_\_ on parle français"  
56 Lead-in to day or year  
57 Pulmicort targets it  
58 Adverb in many legal documents  
63 Impose, as a fine  
64 \_\_\_ Lanka  
65 Certain banner fodder  
66 Didn't ditch  
69 Certain partners' exchanges

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



- 70 Brand with an iComfort line

71 Less vibrant

72 Harvard dropouts, maybe?

74 Recurrent space in The Game of Life

76 Depends (on)

77 Break-even situation

78 Aid in putting together a fall collection

79 Drives the getaway car for, say

84 Slangy SoCal dialect

85 Sharp turn

86 Designing

88 Rhea with four Emmys

90 Phone-tracking org.

91 Accompanying

92 Shrubby areas

93 Europe's Three Countries Bridge crosses it

94 Big name in locks

95 Grain variety

96 \_\_\_-Nuts

97 World leader who appeared on a Time magazine cover 40 years after his death

98 Sailing through

99 The world's most expensive one, the Gurkha Royal Courtesan, costs over \$1.3 million

103 Angry dog's sound

104 Trompe l'\_\_\_

105 Sticks

106 Some finds in Fortnite

108 Hand over

109 Have the lead (in)

111 Actress Cash of FX's "You're the Worst"

112 Who might bug you?

113 Headwear with a pompom

114 Vaccine molecule

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**HARD - 52**

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.

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# Calendar

Continued from Page 22  
**STORY TIME 'MO WILLEMS STORIES'**  
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.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**SILLY SONGS - 'SHAKE YOUR SHAMROCKS'**  
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 10:30 a.m. Choose from a variety of rhythmic instruments to play while we sing and dance to silly songs. For ages 2-5 years. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**GO GREEN OC PRESS CONFERENCE**  
In Front of the Hobbit Restaurant, 121 81st St., Ocean City, 3 p.m. Go Green OC recognizes the potential for the food-waste composting program. There will be special guest speakers and representatives from the city. <https://www.gogreenwithoc.org>

**SENSORY STORY TIME: 'SPRING'**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 4 p.m. Stories, songs and fun all about spring. An inclusive story time for children ages 3-7 years who have multi-sensory needs or who are on the autism spectrum. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

## Wed., March 16

**RESERVATION DEADLINE FOR 2022 LINCOLN DAY DINNER**  
To be held March 26 at The Clarion Hotel. Cocktail hour begins at 5:30 p.m. and dinner and program at 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$75. Reservations: [www.WorcesterCounty-GOP.com](http://www.WorcesterCounty-GOP.com). Info: Loretta, 443-614-4953.

**BARIATRIC SUPPORT GROUP**  
Surgical patients meet via Zoom. Contact the Bariatric office at 410-641-9568.

**'IRISH' YOU LUCK SCAVENGER HUNT**  
Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 301 Market St., 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Use your research skills and the Dewey Decimal System to find all 10 clues. Names will be entered in a special drawing. For ages 8 year and older. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**STORY TIME: 'ST. PATRICK'S DAY'**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Stories, songs and crafts all about St. Patrick's Day. For children ages 2-5 years. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**BREAST CANCER SUPPORT GROUP**  
John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center, 9707 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 1-2 p.m. For survivors and current patients battling breast cancer. Women Supporting Women, 410-548-7880

**JOB AND RESOURCE FAIR**  
Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 3-6 p.m. Helping people find employment and access to resources and community organizations. Elena Coelho, 443-783-6164, [ecoelho@worcestlibrary.org](mailto:ecoelho@worcestlibrary.org), 410-641-0650

**TRIVIA CONTEST: 'ALL THINGS WITH A TOUCH OF GREEN'**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3-4:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to this free event. Prizes to the top three teams. Refreshments and snacks provided. No limit to team sizes. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**JOB SEARCH WORKSHOP**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 3-5 p.m. Drop in to receive one-on-one guidance from library staff to strengthen your resume and help with your job search. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**LEPRECHAUN SCIENCE**  
Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 3:30 p.m. Explore the scientific method by making a Rainbow in a Jar and Fizzy Pots of Gold. For ages 12 years and older. [www.worcesterlibrary.org](http://www.worcesterlibrary.org), 410-632-2600

**GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP**  
Atlantic General Hospital, Conference Room 1, 9733 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 5:30-7 p.m. Providing participants with hope for the future. Also held via Zoom. Gail Mansell, 410-641-9725, [gmansell@atlanticgeneral.org](mailto:gmansell@atlanticgeneral.org)



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# Bill targets district transparency

Continued from Page 18

education know what is being taught and communicate regularly with the teachers.

“I have some real concerns that this is not really a parent request because if they’re doing what they should as a parent, they’re communicating with their school, they’re communicating with their teachers, and know exactly what is going on,” Taylor said, adding that he believes the bill is much more than on the surface.

“They hear words like equity and equality, and they automatically relate that to things like critical race theory. That is the furthest from the truth, if you ever look into it.

“I’m very concerned this bill...is geared to a subset of folks who really want to proclaim that they know a little bit more than we do in the public school sector, about what’s going on,” he added.

The few people Taylor has spoken to on the matter struggle with the truth behind decisions and make it what they want to, instead of looking at the entire picture, Taylor said.

Senator Mary Beth Carozza, who Taylor has spoken to about the measure, said she has consistently supported the increase of parental involvement in schools.

“I think it’s healthy when parents and others ask questions about the ed-

ucation of our children, and I have appreciated the leadership and school personnel of Worcester County Public Schools in listening and being responsive to many of the tough issues that have had to be worked through during the pandemic,” the senator said in an email on March 2.

She went on to say she introduced the bill, seeking support for curriculum transparency for parents, taxpayers, and the public.

“I have been in contact with the leadership of Worcester Public Schools about this legislation and am aware that some course materials are posted on the school system’s website,” Carozza said. “However, I believe additional information such as the instructional materials, course syllabi, and the links for textbooks can be shared on the school’s website as well, without causing an undue burden on school personnel. I am more than willing to amend my bill to make it more workable for our school systems and have asked to work with the Eastern Shore Educational Consortium to do so.”

Taylor said Carozza told him the push for this bill was coming from the other two counties she represents, not so much from Worcester County.

Despite that, he also said he believes the push is coming from a room full of people and their lack of trust, which is uncalled for and unfair.

“Now all of a sudden, everybody wants to know every little move that you make. Where does it stop,” Taylor asked. “Where does it stop? It’s not the masses. This is not a problem caused by the masses. It’s only a select handful of those folks that are diving this bus and politicians have to get votes. So, they’re trying to find a compromise. This, to me, is way over the top.”

If the bill is approved, it could be costly, and Worcester County, which puts up a little over 80 percent of the district’s funding, would have to fork out the money.

But given the way the bill is being presented, Taylor said, it will be a challenge from the standpoints of personnel, hours in a day to complete the work, and financially, just to appease the handful of people complaining.

“I am adamantly opposed to making teachers do that because we’ve asked them to teach. We’ve asked them to make adjustments in teaching over this pandemic; we’ve asked them to go home and grade papers and prepare for tomorrow; and now to put this on them? It’s got to stop somewhere,” he said.

“We want to be transparent. There is nothing we do that I would not show anybody. There is nothing we don’t think is good for kids. Every question we make ... the question is asked, if it’s good for kids, let’s talk about it.”

# Worcester schools happily adjust to optional masking

By Mallory Panuska  
Staff Writer

(March 10, 2022) For the first time ever, Buckingham pre-kindergarten Sebastien Bishop was able to attend school without a mask last week.

And with a smile on his face on the morning of March 2, he said the ability to be in his classroom without a face covering made him feel “warm and fuzzy.”

At just five years old, Sebastien barely knows life without covid restrictions. And until Feb. 28, he did not know what it was like to see the faces of his teachers and fellow students in his classroom as he learned throughout the day. He could not see them smile, and he could not see their lips move as they were talking to help him understand as he learned.

Sebastien’s situation is common among most county students who started school after March 2020. And for them, and dozens of other students and teachers who have experienced the various challenges of wearing masks in school during the course of the pandemic, the recent decision to allow Worcester County

See MASK Page 26



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PLEASE GET YOUR SCREENINGS

Mask mandate dropped Feb. 28

Continued from Page 25  
Public Schools to be mask optional was a big one.  
"It's a breath of fresh air, it really is," Buckingham Elementary Principal Christine Welch said last week while standing with Sebastian and his smiling classmates in teacher Michaela Hatlee's Pre-K classroom.  
"Everybody seems a little more relaxed," Welch continued. "I think we were ready for it. We were ready for the transition."  
Welch pointed out that the students, teachers and staff are still practicing social distancing and safe and healthy practices, which Sebastian was quick to point out includes washing your hands, and staying at home when you feel sick to "take sleep to get better."  
Masks have been required for everyone inside county public schools except during meals and designated breaks since the buildings reopened after covid. Members of the state board of education ensured all schools required masks just before the start of the 2021-22 school year, citing concerns about high virus transmission rates, potential variant spikes and a need to keep school open for in-person learning.  
But with case and hospitalization rates dropping across the country, and new Centers for Disease Control & Prevention guidelines that ease

masking restrictions in counties with low- and mid-level transmission rates, many school districts across the country have ditched the mandates.  
In Worcester County, the decision came on Feb. 25 after members of the state's Joint Committee on Administrative, Executive & Legislative Review, or AELR, voted 17 to one to uphold a recommendation from the state board of ed to allow individual district officials to make their own decisions on masking.  
Worcester County Superintendent Lou Taylor announced that as of Feb. 28, the district would no longer require face coverings in school facilities, but that officials still "strongly recommend" the wearing of masks for students and staff members.  
At Buckingham Elementary, Welch said that the ultimate masking decision is left up to the parents, and that some have opted to continue having their kids wear masks. She said she is glad that the option exists.  
"We feel like it's a family choice," Welch said.  
For Terrence Bratten, a fourth grader at Buckingham, the option to not wear a mask has made learning easier. He said last week that he likes that he can see the smiles of his teachers and classmates, and that they can see his, and he likes that he can learn without the obstruction of

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# Following vote by state officials

something on his face.

“It’s great because I can breathe,” Terrence said.

The AELR approval was the last one needed for county school officials to make their own decisions on masking, outside of meeting one of several off ramps that would have unilaterally allowed them to lift the mandate if they met certain metrics regarding vaccination and transmission rates. While some counties met one or more of the off ramps, most did not.

During the Feb. 25 virtual AELR meeting, several people spoke, most of whom were parents who favored removing the mandate. They cited evidence showing that masks did more harm than good because of the mental and behavioral issues that wearing them caused, particularly among young children. They likened the forced wearing of masks to child abuse, and accused members of the state board of abusing their powers to issue the mandate in the first place, among other grievances.

Statements from two people who spoke against removing the mandate included claims that masks create a level of protection against covid that is needed, especially for disabled students and children who are not old enough for vaccinations.

Local district officials were first stripped of unmasking powers just

before the start of the school year when state board members voted in August to pass the original emergency regulation requiring everyone to wear masks inside school buildings. The board members cited a distrust in local leaders to make what they deemed the right decision when it came to public health.

The board’s vote did not technically become law until members of the AELR voted for it after a hearing weeks later. State board members did not clearly state that AELR approval was needed at the time of the vote. They also did not make clear that AELR approval was needed to pass a second order in December that tacked the off ramps onto the original order.

During a state board meeting on Feb. 22, members gave more attention to the legislative process, making it clear that the vote to rescind the emergency order required AELR approval, before voting.

State Superintendent of Schools Mohammed Choudhury said at the time that he does not regret recommending the original mandate and would do it again, given the metrics and the information health officials had about the virus at the time. However, he said that the latest metrics and information made him confident that recommending the lifting of the mandate was the right move.

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