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SEPTEMBER 25, 2025

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Hundreds turned out for the opening night of the Berlin Fiddlers Convention last Friday in Berlin. Above, attendees are pictured enjoying the sounds of The String Buzzards before The Plate Scrapers took the stage. See more photos on page 20.

Board kills its advisory committees

Three required by association remain after directors eliminate all others

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) The Ocean Pines Association's advisory committees, who are charged with identifying needs and possible improvements in their assigned areas, are officially a thing of the past.

The OPA Board of Directors on Saturday voted 5-1 to dissolve most of the association's committees, effective immediately, despite passionate pleas from association members to spare them.

The association's bylaws require that the Budget and Finance Committee, the Elections Committee, and the Architectural Review Committee remain intact.

Axed in the purge were the Aquatics Advisory Committee, the Golf Advisory Committee, the See OPA Page 6

OP eager to get new cell tower

Board hears update from Verizon rep as it seeks end to on-and-off service

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) An update on the proposed cell phone tower for the Ocean Pines Association was provided this week, as community officials, carriers and the construction company hope to get the project underway soon.

Ocean Pines Police Chief Tim Robinson, who is See CELL Page 4

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Cell tower project moves ahead

Continued from Page 1

leading the project, said he plans to inform the cell tower building company, Milestone Towers, this week that OPA wants to proceed.

Poor cell phone reception in Ocean Pines has been a persistent issue for the community for years, and Robinson noted last year that calls, including 911 emergency calls, were dropped frequently during busy holidays and summer weekends.

As a result, the association, in collaboration with Milestone Towers and carriers Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T, has its sights set on a 143-foot cell phone tower behind the maintenance facility at the Ocean Pines Golf Course. Officials said this location was deemed the most viable due to its centrality.

At the OPA Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, Paul Plymouth, director of state and local engagement for Verizon, provided an update to the board about the cell tower's capacity and how the structure would enhance service for Ocean Pines residents and visitors.

Plymouth said a previous map indicating that people who lived the closest to the tower — within a one-mile radius — would derive the most benefit did not fully show the tower's reach.

He said the map was more technical and was to be used internally, when the fact is most Ocean Pines residents would see a noticeable improvement in their cell phone reception.

"I think in the old maps, folks were focused on just the one-mile radius, and we were saying, 'hey, no, there is going to be a larger benefit than just the one-mile radius," Plymouth said.

Plymouth added that he had recently received a question from Robinson about the possibility of building a higher tower and whether that would result in improved coverage for a larger area. He told the directors that his team is considering increasing the proposed 143-foot structure to 175 feet.

However, anything more than 175 feet could have a detrimental impact on the community, Plymouth added, so it is something his group is evaluating cautiously.

"Anything higher than [175 feet], believe it or not, tends to do more harm than good," Plymouth said.

He noted that two other towers are nearby and said if the new structure is too large, it could disrupt the cell reception system.

If the plans for the proposed tower are revised to build up to 175 feet, Plymouth has said that that update will be provided to the community.

Board members emphasized the importance of cell phone reception, particularly in terms of safety and the ability to reach emergency personnel. John Latham, board president, asked

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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

Pictured is what a cell phone tower in Ocean Pines could like look, blending in with the surrounding community to resemble a tree. If approved, the structure would be placed near the maintenance building at the Ocean Pines golf course.

Plymouth if the use of temporary equipment was considered to improve service during the planning, permitting, and construction phases of the proposed cell tower. The work is estimated to take approximately 18 months or more.

Plymouth said Ocean Pines reception is "nearly unusable" and fixing it requires a holistic, drastic measure, such as a tower, and that smaller, quick fixes are likely not feasible.

"Unfortunately, there is not much that can be done right now because of how bad the current state of the network is for the area," Plymouth said. "... In terms of implementing supplemental measures for the network deployment, such as having some existing towers focus a bit more on Ocean Pines, that's unlikely to have any appreciable impact.

"That would be the equivalent of losing about five to ten pounds, not bad if you're looking to lose a little weight. Still, if you need to lose a significantly higher amount, like 100 pounds, you have to do something drastic in the form of diet and exercise ...something serious needs to be done in the form of alleviating the stress of the network."

Latham questioned whether cell carriers are doing enough to help the community alleviate its connectivity issues.

See NO Page 8



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- Wednesday, Oct. 1, 2025, from 10:30 am to 1 pm at St. Peter's Lutheran Church (10301 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, MD 21842).
- Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025, from 9 am to 1 pm at the Pocomoke City Volunteer Fire Company (1410 Market St., Pocomoke City, MD 21851).
- Friday, Oct. 3, 2025, from 8 am to noon at the Ocean Pines Community Center's Assateague Room (235 Ocean Parkway, Berlin, MD 21811).
- Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2025, from 11 am to 1 pm at Stevenson United Methodist Church Spirit Kitchen (123 N. Main St., Berlin, MD 21811).

- Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025, from 10 am to 1 pm at Holy Savior Catholic Church (1705 Philadelphia Ave., Ocean City, MD 21842).
- Friday, Oct. 10, 2025, from 8 am to noon at the Ocean Pines Community Center (235 Ocean Parkway, Berlin, MD 21811).
 This event is a drive-thru flu clinic.
- Saturday, Oct. 11, 2025, from 8 am to noon at the Gudelsky Family Medical Center (10614 Racetrack Road, Berlin, MD 21811). This event is a drive-thru flu clinic.
- Thursday, Oct. 16, 2025, from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Atlantic Club (11827 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, MD 21842).
- Saturday, Oct. 18, 2025, from 10 am to 2 pm at the Snow Hill Volunteer Fire Department (4718 Snow Hill Road, Snow Hill, MD 21863).

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OPA directors kill all but three committees

Continued from Page 1

Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee, the Environment and Natural Assets Committee, the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee, the Bylaws and Resolution Advisory Committee, the Communications Advisory Committee, and the Marine Activities Advisory Committee.

Board member Jeff Heavner initiated the action by moving to disband the committees. With a second from Director Stuart Lakernick, President John Latham, Director Elaine Brady, Director Rick Farr voted for the motion. Director Steve Jacobs was the sole dissenting voice. Treasurer Monica Rakowski was absent.

The associations committees consist of OPA homeowners who pursue projects they believe will enhance specific amenities or sections of asso-

ciation life. These members are all volunteers, many of whom bring expertise — and a resident's perspective — to their assignments.

But as was demonstrated Saturday, the majority of the board feels that the existence of these advisory panels has become unnecessary, and in many cases, redundant or unproductive. Heavner sent a memorandum to all chairs of the groups on the chopping block ahead of Saturday's vote

The director's statement reads, "the current dynamic (which I believe has existed for some years) has resulted in understandable frustration on the part of the above-listed Advisory Committees, as they seek in good faith to find ways to make contributions to the Association, but their unilaterally formulated ideas and plans

may not be practical or feasible and/or in keeping with Board and Management goals and priorities."

Saturday's in-person meeting was filled with residents, most of whom came to plead with the board to keep the committees. Some offered to work with the directors to develop a more productive volunteer system.

Keith Kaiser, a member of the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, noted that the advisory teams provide a platform for OPA citizens to have their voices heard and serve as an avenue to promote volunteerism.

"Recent national events have taught us once again that if we stop talking, bad things happen," Kaiser said. "In my opinion, an HOA is the purest form of self-governance that there is. That's what we're attempting to do here: we're attempting to govern ourselves. We do that with volunteers from the people, who are of the people being governed.

"One of the big challenges of doing that is that there are a lot of people who aren't interested in participating in their governance...but the problem with that is that it makes it easier to take advantage of a community that's not paying attention ... It's incumbent upon those of us paying attention to show up and speak up. Governance of a free society is never easy. The only kind of society that's easy to govern is a tyrannical one."

Gary Miller, who chairs the aquatics committee, also urged the board to reconsider. Miller agreed that the current volunteer formula could use some fine-tuning, but said stronger communications between the board and committees could ensure that projects are in sync with the association's priorities.

Miller pointed to Heavner's letter, in which the latter described the interaction between committees and the board and staff as "inefficient and strained."

"As you said, the lines of communication between the committees and the board and/or management have become 'inefficient and strained, resulting in unproductive conflict and disagreement," Miller said.

"The main reason for this, in my opinion, is due to a lack of communication between the committees and their liaisons and the department the committee was established to help. It should be noted that several committees have made suggestions to improve communication among the committees, the board, and OPA management, including a request that their respective department heads attend committee meetings on a quarterly basis. This would bring the committee up to date on problems or concerns, as well as any new projects that may be planned for the future."

According to the board, the association's email, info@oceanpines.org, is the most effective way to share sug-

gestions, instead of relying on the committees. Aquatics committee member Vivian Koroknay, however, countered that an email address is insufficient to bring about meaningful improvement.

"My takeaway is that some members of the board do not see the benefit of resident advisory committees and see no value in the work that the advisory committees do," she said. "That's sad. Really sad. The advisory committees provide a window to the board and to management as to what association members want and what they observe daily in their own community."

Miller and Linda Yurche, chair of the Communications Advisory Committee, pointed to the successful Ocean Pines Season Kickoff, an event that, for the last two years, has welcomed OPA citizens to learn about the various clubs, amenities, and organizations within the community. The idea for the kickoff, which she and Miller lead, came out of an aquatics committee meeting.

Board members acknowledged the while the kickoff was an outstanding event, it was run by an ad hoc committee rather than a standing group. Ad hoc committees were mentioned in Heavner's letter as a possible replacement for the dissolved advisory groups.

Miller and Yurche, however, maintained that while a working group was created to take on the event, the well-attended kickoff would not have been possible without the brainstorming and work of committees that meet regularly.

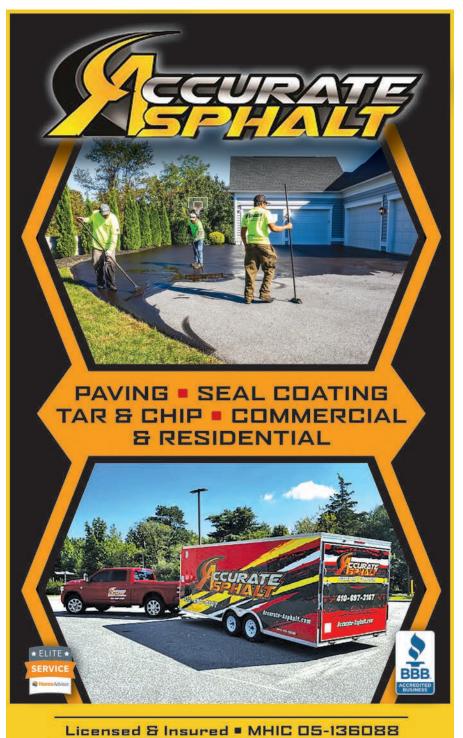
Despite a dozen residents imploring the board to save the advisory committees, board members argued that they are no longer necessary. The directors also said they are looking at more effective ways to encourage volunteerism in Ocean Pines.

"I know this is a contentious issue and we have a lot of very passionate people that want to volunteer, but we've gotten to the point where we've grown, and to where we want to put more of this talent to use better," Lakernick said.

"I mean ...why can't these people who are in these committees, why can't it be a club? Why can't we have clubs that advise? I mean, agree or disagree, we have talented people; we have groups, one that's maintaining a graveyard they found. These are not committees ... [Eliminating the committees] is a restructuring to make better use of your talent."

Brady concurred with Lakernick, pointing out that there are thousands of homes in Ocean Pines, and that a reorganization of the volunteer system would make way for more participation.

"I think we all agree that it's not the people on the committees," she See TEMPORARY Page 8



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Temporary teams may be given assignments

Continued from Page 6

said. "We value every one of them ... It's the process that needs to be changed. It needs to be more efficient and effective for everyone.

"There are ways we need to look at to do that at this point. I think that all of you have expertise and a lot of ideas, but we have about 50 people on these committees. We have 8,500 homes. There are a lot of people who aren't participating, but they do have a lot of expertise and additional opinions that can also be heard and are welcome to be shared.

"It is sometimes easier if they don't have the constraints of attending a monthly meeting. There are other ways that we can look at the process to include everybody and to try to grow those voices."

Heavner reiterated that temporary teams assigned to specific missions will serve the community better.

"I brought this motion because I believe it's time to try a different approach using ad hoc, working groups, and, as [Lakernick] pointed out, even clubs, where we can still value the expertise and experience of all the association members," he said.

"I didn't come to this position without talking and listening to a lot of people over the last eight months. I've spoken with existing chairpeople, and I've spoken with past chairpeople. I've talked to existing committee members, past committee members...and the majority answer is the reason this motion came about is because they supported this."

Members of the audience interrupted Heavner, demanding to know who these committee members were and why they were not present at the meeting.

Heavner replied, "I have no obligation to share that with you."

Jacobs, who voted against the motion, said that while he sees value in restructuring committees, he believes their elimination is a last step. He suggested tabling the motion until the November meeting and in the meantime holding an executive council meeting can take place for further discussion. At that time, committees can make recommendations for improving the communication setup, he said. In November, once more information is gathered, the board can vote on the future of the advisory groups.

No quick fix for OP's cell problems

Continued from Page 4

"We're struggling here," the president said. "I just hope it's not a function of AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon not wanting to step up and saying, 'Hey, Ocean Pines folks can wait.' If there's anything, we would like to pick up every rock and try to figure out if there's a way."

Plymouth replied that the Ocean Pines network problem is too serious to be amended with temporary measures. The solution is to simply wait for a cell tower to be implemented, he said

"You guys want something for now until the date of tower construction and tower completion, and we don't realistically have something like that that will be able to support [Ocean Pines] for that longer period of time," he said.

However, Plymouth added that COWs (cell on wheels), portable cellular base stations mounted to a truck or trailer, could be requested by the association for short-term use, such as the Fourth of July celebration or other festivities. This equipment can be used for just a day or a weekend.

"If you do have events that are going to have a swell of people coming into a dense environment, we can begin the process of requesting some support for that," Plymouth noted.

While all parties appear to be eager to proceed with the tower project, the board has not yet voted on the matter. However, Latham said that the governing body is "ready to move forward. We don't want to be holding this thing

up."

Robinson said he would inform Milestone Towers this week that OPA is ready to get the ball rolling. Local and statewide permits must still be obtained, however.

Plymouth said that when it comes to seeking these licenses, Del. Wayne Hartman (R-38C, Worcester) is aiding the process and hopes to expedite things "from a state and local level."

Equipment like steel and other supplies must still be ordered, and due to supply chain issues, Plymouth added that the timeline for that "is what it is" and cannot be accelerated.

Director Rick Farr pushed back on that, saying that when it comes to safety, there are workarounds to receive materials quickly.





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Residents set to receive electric bill credits

First of two rebates already disbursed with another one planned early next year

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) Marylanders should start seeing the first of two rebates hit their electric bills this month after state leaders agreed to pledge \$200 million in direct relief for ratepayers.

In fact, Berlin residential customers received a \$53.88 credit. A note in the most recent bill from the town read, "Maryland House Bill 1035, enacted by Governor Wes Moore and the Maryland General Assembly in 2025, established the Legislative Energy Relief Refund to help offset high energy costs for residential customers in Maryland."

Rebate amounts will vary based on a household's energy use and by utility company, but most ratepayers can expect to see between \$30 and \$67 coming off their August or September electric bills, Gov. Wes Moore's office announced Monday. A second rebate will land between January and February.

"The reason we are so passionate about the issue of energy affordability is because we hear from our constituents about it every day," said Gov. Moore, a Democrat, in a statement "Marylanders are deeply frustrated, and their frustration is justified."

Funding for the rebate comes from the state's Strategic Energy Investment Fund, or SEIF, authorized by legislation the General Assembly passed earlier this year, called the Next Generation Energy Act.

The Next Generation Energy Act also expands financial support to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from multi-family residential buildings and establishes new standards to advance nuclear energy generation across the state, the governor's office said.

The legislature created the SEIF in 2008 to receive proceeds from Maryland's share of a regional carbon capand-trade initiative. The fund is supposed to be supported by multiple revenue streams, including by utilities

that pay a compliance fee for not sourcing a certain percentage of electricity from renewable sources.

Maryland's Public Service commission says some utilities have been known to pass the cost of that compliance fee onto customers, leading some Republicans in the General Assembly to criticize the Moore administration.

The GOP-led Freedom Caucus in its own statement accused Moore and state Democratic officials of "moving money around to make it look like they're helping" instead of addressing the root cause of high utility rates, which they claim is a "relentless catering to environmental activists."

"Governor Moore isn't giving out relief – he's just recycling ratepayer money Maryland families already paid on their utility bills," Senate Minority Leader Steve Hershey said Monday. "Instead of fixing the failed policies that caused rates to skyrocket in the first place, Democrats are raiding the (SEIF) as a short-term political gimmick."

Moore's office has publicly made cost-saving measures for Marylanders' energy bills a priority this year.

The governor in June announced a new \$19 million Customer Relief Fund to offer one-time financial assistance to low- and middle-income ratepayers for energy costs. Money from that fund is administered through non-profit organizations to communities in need.

And, in May, Maryland joined a partnership with federal, state, and regional policymakers that's pursuing cost-saving solutions for consumers and increased reliability of energy delivery. That collaboration is being called the Northeast States Collaborative on Interregional Transmission.

Upgrades eyed for food, beverage

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) The Ocean Pines Association's food and beverage facilities are likely to receive hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of improvements over the next few years to enhance the customer experience, with costs split between OPA and the vendor Touch of Italy.

The work will include basement renovations, an ADA (The Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant elevator, second floor deck addition, and accordion doors at the Beach Club, an outdoor kitchen facility at the Yacht Club, as well as a shade structure at the Clubhouse Bar and Grille with a pizza oven.

The estimated potential capital

spend at the Yacht Club for the outdoor kitchen's structure is \$125,000.

The overhang at the Clubhouse is expected to cost \$75,000-\$100,000, and the basement work and architectural/engineering plans at the Beach Club are likely to come to \$75,000.

The Beach Club elevator is anticipated to yield a price tag of around \$225,000.

At the OPA Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, Sept. 20, John Viola, the community's general manager, requested permission to move forward with obtaining proposals, bids, and contracts to present to the governing group at a later date for these initiatives at the food and beverage facilities. Viola maintained that he did not seek approval for the ac-

tual spend, which will be a subsequent step.

The work on the food and beverage structures is OPA's responsibility, while Touch of Italy will handle the "dressing up" of the buildings' interiors.

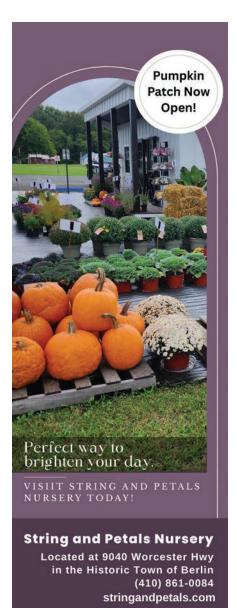
"We are responsible for the structure," Viola said. "We will continue to be responsible for our structure. [TOI] would be responsible for the interior. They would invest in kitchens, bathrooms, and bars."

Ocean Pines leadership maintained that work at the Beach Club is a priority.

"We have put very little into the Beach Club over the last few years," OPA Board President John Latham See OUTDOOR Page 11

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Outdoor kitchen eyed for club

Continued from Page 10

said. "There is a fair amount of work that can be done. It's time for us to invest in that facility."

Work here will include a secondfloor deck, accordion door, an elevator, and basement renovations.

As for the Clubhouse, OPA will install a wooden overhang or a shade structure. Underneath, TOI will, at their cost, place a pizza oven.

A motion to proceed with the bid process for the overhang was passed. The shade structure is likely to cost between \$75,000 and \$100,000. Directors Latham, Rick Farr, Jeff Heavner, Elaine Brady, and Stuart Lakernick voted in favor, while director Steve Jacobs abstained.

Jacobs said that he could not push the shade structure toward the bid process, as he did not have enough information. Viola said that TOI will likely install a pizza oven underneath the overhang, but that the restaurant group will present their specific plans for the facilities, including the pizza oven for the shade structure, at a later date, likely next month. Jacobs said that he would have liked to hear TOI's proposal before making a decision.

"I am unclear on what we're approving here, if Touch of Italy is going to come in and tell us how they plan to use it," Jacobs said. "I would like

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to have that information before we go ahead and approve some sort of building that may run the risk of sitting there fallow because we don't agree with what Touch of Italy wants

At the Yacht Club, OPA will construct an outdoor structure to house a kitchen to service the tiki bar and pool area. Viola said that the building itself, to be paid for by the association, will be around \$125,000. TOI will be responsible for the cost of the kitchen equipment.

The OPA board maintained that the new addition at the Yacht Club will be a win-win, providing more profits for the community and TOI, and offering an elevated restaurant experience.

"This [kitchen] will generate additional revenue while increasing the dining experience for the pool and patio area and relieve some of the stress in the [existing] kitchen," Farr said.

The new kitchen structure will be placed in a location that does not encroach on the patio space.

Officials maintained that the approvals for these improvements were to simply move forward with the proposal and bid process, and that these costs are, at this point, an estimate. Contracts will be submitted to the board at a later date for final review.





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WOC housing project county green lighted

Developer Ferrante revises plans after commissioners denied project last year

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) Worcester County officials approved a zoning change this week that gives developer Todd Ferrante the go-ahead to build apartments for seasonal workers on the same property as his Park Place retail complex in West Ocean City.

The county commissioners on Tuesday unanimously approved a zoning amendment that allows detached multi-family dwellings as an accessory use to a commercial development. It means new residential units can now be built as detached accessory dwelling units on the same commercially zoned lot.

Before this, the zoning code dictated that new residential units had to be directly attached to or adjoining a commercial structure — which is why Ferrante, with plans to develop seasonal workforce housing along his Route 50 property, launched his bid to have the law changed nearly two years ago.

"I'm very happy that the commissioners felt it was the right thing for the community," Ferrante said Wednesday. "I was very appreciative that the commissioners agreed with what we had presented to them and look forward to offering the community much-needed year-round rentals."

Tentative plans call for a threestory, 12-unit apartment building with two- and three-bedroom units behind Ferrante's Park Place Plaza shopping center on Route 50.

The property can accommodate the housing project because it extends hundreds of feet back into a densely wooded area, while his retail storefronts are close to the highway.

"It makes sense to do residential where it abuts residential, which is what we did. The unit is so far back away from commercial activity that it's more in the residential community," Ferrante said.

Ferrante said he hopes to start construction next spring after getting clearance from the county's Planning and Zoning Commission.

The zoning amendment comes with specific stipulations. Parcels must already be 65% developed, but

then also must have sufficient open space, aisle width, and parking. Subject properties must be on public water with the ability to connect new public water and sewer hookups, known as equivalent dwelling units, or EDUs

While the commissioners denied a similar version of the proposed amendment by a 4-3 vote in March 2024, Tuesday's yes vote was 5-0, with Commissioners Caryn Abbott and Jim Bunting absent.

One final tweak to the amendment got the commissioners to yes: it only applies to lots zoned C-2 General Commercial that are directly adjacent to properties zoned in the county's R-3 or R-4 districts, which is a designation for multifamily housing.

Before, the change would have applied to more than 1,000 properties in the C-2 zoning. Now, the narrowly tailored zoning policy applies to just 63 properties in Worcester County, nearly all of which are clumped together in the West Ocean City corridor.

Commissioner Eric Fiori (District 3, West Ocean City) said he cast a yes vote after Ferrante narrowed the scope of the amendment to apply to

fewer properties.

"I was not in favor of the original text amendment coming through for that exact reason," he said. "I think the idea of transitioning from commercial into residential, I think this is a great fit for our community, especially pushing for our lack of single-family dwellings in the county. I think it's a great use of the land and I think it's very well written the way it is.

"We're getting additional residential housing. We gotta be excited, right?"

Worcester County's comprehensive plan in a 2009 update did provide for accessory residential units, but they had to be attached to the commercial building, like a mixeduse building where apartments or condos sit above ground-floor retail, according to Hugh Cropper, the attorney representing Ferrante,

"Unfortunately, we haven't really seen any of those projects. There's a couple around, where maybe somebody has a single apartment upstairs. But the town centers of having commercial uses where people live upstairs, that really never happened. Hopefully this will allow that to happen," Cropper said Tuesday.



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County seeking to buy sewer flow from city

Commissioners to request \$1 million-plus purchase at Mayor and Council meeting

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Sept. 19, 2025) To lighten the load on strained wastewater facilities in the West Ocean City area, Worcester County government officials will formally ask the Ocean City Council to sell them more space at the resort's midtown treatment plant to process sewage flow.

The county commissioners agreed in a 5-0 vote Tuesday to send Commission President Ted Elder and Vice President Eric Fiori to a meeting of the council to make their formal pitch. Commissioners Caryn Abbott and Jim Bunting were not at Tuesday's session.

They'll ask for 170,000 gallons of daily sewage capacity at Ocean City's midtown wastewater treatment plant to handle the flow from two wastewater service areas, The Landings and Assateague Point, according to Public Works Director Dallas Baker. Cost estimates to the county range from \$1.08 to \$1.3 million.

If Ocean City accepts the updated agreement, it would increase the county's total allocation to 1.17 million gallons per day and would require an amendment to their existing agreement, according to Baker, which states that only treated effluent from the Mystic Harbor plant may be discharged into the Ocean City system.

The upside to offloading county sewer capacity could mean less of a strain on the existing sewerage plants in the short term, and lower costs for upkeep and replacement in the long run, county officials have

Constructed for homes along Route 611 in the West Ocean City corridor, The Landings wastewater treatment plant "has not been operational for some time" Baker told the commissioners at their meeting Tuesday.

County officials took it out of service nearly 20 years ago because it didn't have enough of a customer base to offset its high operating cost. Its flow was eventually routed to the Mystic Harbor wastewater treatment plant, which also lies along the Route 611 corridor.

With increased residential development in The Landings at Bayside subdivision, Baker said his department had looked more closely at reactivating the facility. But testing showed that's not a viable path forward because, while the plant can treat 100,000 gallons a day, its injection well can only get rid of 36,000

One solution to make The Landings facility operational again – one of 11 total wastewater plants servicing Worcester County, each meant to operate as its own self-contained district – would be to build an extensive pipeline system to send flow to a nearby golf course for spray irriga-

Add to that the price of acquiring land and building storage lagoons, and the upgrades would cost the county about \$10 million, Baker said.

The cost differences could be significant, county officials said. To build additional pipeline for sending sewage directly to Ocean City would cost about \$1 million, while fixes to the under-performing county facilities could end up in the \$30 million range, officials noted.

At the Assateague Point treatment plant, Baker said state environment officials had been pushing an upgrade from a simple treatment lagoon - where sewage is aerated, chlorinated, and sprayed onto a field to an enhanced nutrient removal system, or ENR, that would filter out nitrogen and phosphorus.

"We were successful in pushing back on that, so (the Maryland Department of the Environment) removed the ENR requirement," Baker told the commissioners, "but we think it's going to get harder and harder moving forward to fight back on that, as more of the state moves to enhanced nutrient removal.'

Such an upgrade doesn't come cheaply. Baker noted how a sewage treatment facility in Oxford, Maryland, had been converted in 2023 from a lagoon to ENR at a cost of \$20 million.

An ENR plant is also a more complex operation that would require hiring more certified wastewater operators, Baker said in an internal

Behind the scenes, it's been a deal county and city leaders have been hashing out for weeks.

Ocean City's representative on the county board, Commissioner Joe Mitrecic, said at the board's previous meeting on Sept. 5 how he'd been in talks with Ocean City officials, discussing multiple scenarios for pumping sewer flow from West Ocean City to the resort's midtown treatment plant.

The 65th Street facility, with a maximum capacity of processing See SEWER Page 15

Register



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Trunk-or-Treat planned for Oct. 2 in AGH parking lot

Pathway to Excellence will host second annual event

(Sept. 25, 2025) It will be a sweetly ghoulish evening on Thursday, Oct. 2, 2025, when the Atlantic General Hospital (AGH) Pathway to Excellence Committee hosts its second annual Trunk or Treat at the John H. 'Jack' Burbage, Jr. Regional Cancer Care Center located at 9707 Healthway Drive in Berlin.

AGH team members will decorate their vehicles and fill their trunks with Halloween goodies for a safe, supervised and family-friendly event. The event will run from 6 to 8:30 p.m., or until all goodies have been distributed.

All kids are invited, and costumes are encouraged. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children at AGH's Trunk or Treat.

Designated parking will be available at the event for the public. No public vehicles will be allowed in the Trunk or Treat area for the safety of all participants.

Pathway to Excellence, awarded by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, honors organizations that foster nursing excellence and a supportive work environment. This designation strengthens patient care and quality in our community. AGH is proud to be on this journey and anticipates receiving the designation in Winter 2026.

Treat your family to a fun, safe and enjoyable Halloween event from your friends at AGH.

To learn more about this event, please contact Kayla Wallace, MSN, RN, CMSRN, NE-BC, at 410-629-6480 or kayla.wallace@tidalhealth.org.

Sewer treatment facilities failing

Continued from Page 14

about 15 million gallons per day of wastewater, has ample room to spare for the county's 170,000-gallon request, Mitrecic said.

Worcester County already has an agreement with Ocean City that can send, if needed, about a million gallons of sewage daily to the 65th Street facility under Isle of Wight Bay using an existing sewer main.

Separately, Ocean City officials say they're planning for a three-year, \$41.6 million upgrade to its wastewater treatment plan. That project aims to rebuild the front end of the facility, which first came online in 1969, Public Works Director Hal Adkins told the Ocean City Council at a Sept. 2 meeting.



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SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZETTE

An architect's rendering of the new Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department's south side station is pictured.

New fire house start date pushed to winter

By Tara Fischer Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) The construction start date for the new fire station planned for Ocean Pines' south side has been pushed back from fall 2025 until winter 2026, officials said this week.

At the Ocean Pines Association's board meeting on Saturday, Sept. 20, community general manager John

Viola provided an update about the ongoing project to replace the deteriorating firehouse located at 911 Ocean Parkway. That initiative was expected to break ground in October of this year. However, that estimated start date has been pushed back a few months, and the new facility's actual build-out will begin sometime in the winter of next year.

The replacement of the fire depart-

ment's South Side Station has been a long-standing desire of the community. The original structure, now unfit to adequately service the fire team, was built in 1981, said Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department President Joe Enste at a public hearing this summer.

In 1985, a 4,200-square-foot addition was added to accommodate the new EMS side of the department, and

in 1987, a 500-square-foot addition was made for administrative offices. However, since those modifications, only minor improvements have been made to the building, such as paintings and replacing kitchen cabinets.

"Structurally, this building has stayed the same as it has been since 1987," Enste said at the summer's public meeting.

See STATION Page 17

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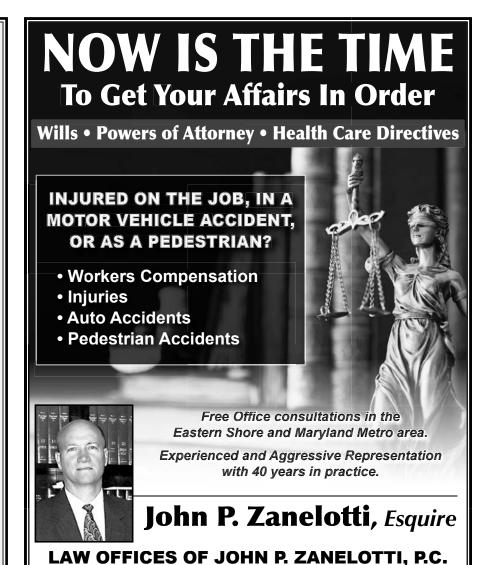
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Station project seeks approvals

Continued from Page 16

In addition to drainage issues, leaks, and mold concerns, the old structure's engine bay doors are only 12 feet wide and not large enough to accommodate the modern, larger fire trucks.

Additionally, the new building will feature the creation of a proper decontamination station, which is currently lacking in the existing facility, and gender-separate bunk rooms that will be spacious enough to accommodate the department's overnight needs.

Despite the fire station's construction date being pushed back a few months, the project is still progressing. Viola stated at Saturday's meeting that the initiative had been seen by Worcester County's Technical Review Committee during the previous week.

On Oct. 2, the project will be presented to the county government's planning commission. Viola said that construction permit plans will be submitted following that meeting, and that costs for plumbing and mechanicals will be confirmed by mid-October.

OPA officials will update the community on the South Station's progress as necessary.

"This [project] is a big one for Ocean Pines," Viola said.

OP's Viola provides monthly report

General manager details ongoing, completed and upcoming maintenance

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) The Ocean Pines Association continues to upkeep its amenities and utilities, including the racquet center, the golf course, and neighborhood parks, officials said at a community monthly board meeting.

Last week, OPA General Manager John Viola updated the association's board and residents on ongoing and recently completed maintenance projects. Viola first touched on the work at the neighborhood's golf course.

OPA has begun investing in its golf course, and as such, last year, a project to replace the site's 50-year-old failing irrigation system kicked off. Phase one of that initiative included work on holes one and nine, the practice range, and the pump station. The total cost of this stage was \$934,000.

Now, Ocean Pines is gearing up for that project's second leg. Phase two will include holes numbered four through eight and is scheduled to begin in November, with an expected completion date of March. This portion of the irrigation replacement is estimated to yield a total price tag of around \$900,000. Additionally, bulkhead replacement on the 18th green and fairway is planned for 2026.

Viola said that some issues on the golf course arose at the end of August and early September, when an abundance of rain created puddles that boiled and killed the turf. The general

'It used to happen to the greens.
"[This time], it didn't happen
on the greens.'

OPA General Manager John Viola

manager maintained that this is common for the area towards the end of summer, and that golf staff were proactive, aerating and seeding promptly to maintain the course's conditions.

"It used to happen to the greens," Viola added. "[This time], it didn't happen on the greens."

Furthermore, earlier this month, Ocean Pines staff added mulch to the dog park and playgrounds. A gazebo, or weather shelter, was also installed at the dog park in August as part of an effort to enhance the space. At the bocce court, Viola said that pavers will be installed in October.

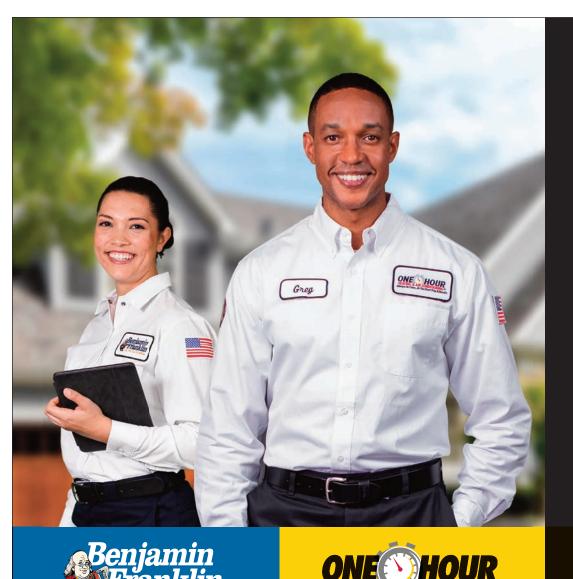
"I believe that's going to look really nice," the general manager said.

Repair work continues at the racquet center, with cracks at a total of 10 courts fixed and restriped on Monday, Sept. 22. That maintenance was approved earlier this year for a cost of \$57,875.

Viola noted that the association continues to invest in the racquet center, spending \$759,615 over the past six years to enhance the space. This includes building renovations and repairs. The general manager added that to improve the sports complex further, OPA hired a full-time director within the past few years to provide residents with a professional and thriving place to participate in paddle-wielding activities.

Additionally, OPA staff updated the community on next month's reserve study. The association's leaders have contracted with DMA Reserves for \$18,480. The findings will aid Ocean Pines in developing budget estimates and upgrading the strategic plan

DMA's team will be on-site in mid-October to complete the study. The draft report will be released before the budget, likely by the end of December



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Diakonia project scores \$150K from state

Funding commitment seen by nonprofit officials as major 'vote of confidence'

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) Local legislators have secured a \$150,000 pledge from the state toward local nonprofit Diakonia's ongoing headquarters project in West Ocean City.

Maryland's Board of Public Works on Sept. 10 approved the funding, which will support of the acquisition, planning, and construction of Diakonia's new supportive living campus along Route 611.

Lower Shore lawmakers Del. Wayne Hartman and Sen. Mary Beth Carozza requested and secured the money through a capital bonds process dating to 2023. The full project, estimated to cost \$12 million, will bring dozens of affordable housing units to the area when completed.

Carozza (R-38) said the organization is well-respected statewide and is in "a class of its own" by providing community services for veterans and the homeless, including its proactive Rapid Response Team that strives to provide services before a person's living situation becomes desperate.

"Diakonia is a leader in helping the most vulnerable in our shore community," she said.

Hartman (R-38C, Worcester) said Diakonia's transitional housing opportunities provide a unique and much-needed service to the community.

"Some of those people that they're helping would not have had the help if it wasn't for the efforts of Diakonia, going out into the community, identifying some of the homeless folks, and actually getting them to services," he said. "It's a win for the community and certainly a win for those individuals and having a more stable environment."

When completed, the new campus will be "a lifeline for those in crisis," said Amanda Shick, Diakonia's capital project manager. She said the agency is deeply grateful to the state for its investment.

"This support is a powerful vote of confidence in Diakonia's mission to provide 'Help for Today and Hope for Tomorrow' for the families, Veterans, and individuals we serve. As we continue writing grants and building our capital campaign fundraising committee, this funding helps lay the groundwork to bring this vision to life," she said in a statement.

Founded in 1972, the nonprofit has long since outgrown its current headquarters along Old Bridge Road, home to a food pantry and office space. Its emergency housing is at capacity nearly year-round, as fewer affordable housing units and rising rents mean people stay longer in the shelter space.

An official groundbreaking at the new site was held Aug. 13 and attended by local community members, volunteers, and elected officials, including Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Jake Day.

The legislative largesse will support Phase 1 of the campus project on 4.4. acres, including an upgraded community thrift store, an expanded food pantry and distribution center, a dedicated veterans resource center, as well as consolidated office space for staff.

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any other offers or coupons. Some exclusions apply. Expires 10/31/25 Phase 2 will include 42 new longterm and transitional housing units, with a focus on living space for veterans and their families.

Carozza also noted that Maryland is facing a housing shortage that has led to a severe lack of affordable units on the Lower Shore. About 40% of the population in her district, which includes Worcester, Wicomico, and Somerset counties, is living below the poverty line.

Both lawmakers added that their initial requests were much higher: Hartman sought \$200,000 in aid, while Carozza, in a direct request last year Gov. Wes Moore's office, sought \$862,000 from the governor's budget.

And, because bond initiatives made through the legislature are typically in the \$50,000 to \$200,000 range, Carozza also said she's preparing to make another "significant" request of Gov. Moore for his fiscal 2027 budget.

"The way these projects work, given the high cost of the expansion project, done in phases, you work in your budget request over a period of time," she said.

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Obituaries

ELIZABETH FLYNN DUFF

Ocean Pines

Elizabeth (Betty) Flynn Duff, age 96, died on Monday, September 15, 2025, at Brightview Senior Living in

Catonsville.



Born in Fayetteville, North Carolina, she was the daughter of the late Thelma Caddell Flynn and the stepdaughter of the late Charles A. Flynn, Jr. In addition to her

parents, she was predeceased in 2015 by her loving husband of 65 years, James A. Duff.

She is survived by her four children, Catherine, James and his wife Karen, Michael and his wife Marilyn, and Matthew and his wife Jodi. She is also survived by eight grandchildren, Jacqueline, Elise, Kevin, Caitlin, Brian, Kellie, Shannon, and Patrick, as well as five great grandchildren, Frances, James, Tate, Elliott and Mason.

During her younger years she lived in various places as her stepfather worked for a Navy contractor and was assigned to sites for navy base construction from Florida to Virginia prior to and during World War II.

Mrs. Duff graduated from Benjamin Franklin University in Washington, D.C.

During her husband's career with General Accounting Office, the family lived in Madrid and Paris. After returning to the states, they made their home in Bethesda, Maryland until Betty and her husband retired. After retirement, they moved permanently to Ocean Pines, Maryland in 1982.

In Ocean Pines, she became active in many community organizations and served on various boards. Mrs. Duff was a parishioner of St. John Neumann Catholic Church, where she served as a Eucharistic Minister and was a member of the Altar Guild. She also served as Secretary for the U.S.S. Miami, a reunion group for her husband's WWII ship.

A viewing will be held on Monday, Sept. 29 from 5 to 7 p.m. at The Burbage Funeral Home, Berlin. A mass of Christian Burial will be held at St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Ocean Pines on Tuesday, Sept. 30 at 11 a.m. Interment will follow at Garden of the Pines Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can

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be made in Betty's name to Gilchrist (gilchristcares.org/donate). Letters of condolence can be sent to the famwww.burbagefuneralhome.com. Arrangements are in care of The Burbage Funeral Home in Berlin,

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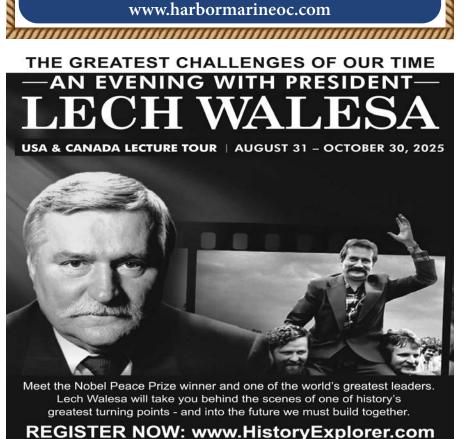


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33rd Annual Berlin Fiddlers Convention







Berlin was packed last Friday and Saturday for the 33rd Annual Berlin Fiddlers Convention. Main Street was closed Friday evening for performances by The String Buzzards and The Plate Scrapers. Kicking off Saturday morning's live music was The High and Wides at 11:30 a.m. followed by the competition for top fiddle and banjo players, among others. The Clendenen Brothers closed the event making its first appearance at the event.

STAFE PHOTOS/BAYSIDE GAZETTE







Ocean Pines to relocate helicopter landing

County requested new pad after old site determined by officials to be too small

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) A new, larger, and more capable helicopter pad is being installed in Ocean Pines in the near future to accommodate the increased size of modern emergency aircraft.

At the OPA's Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, Sept. 20, the community's general manager, John Viola, presented plans to shift the current helicopter pad outside the neighborhood's south side fire station about 20 yards away.

A fresh and enhanced landing zone will be created. The county requested the upcoming work, as the existing

pad is too small. The anticipated cost to move the helicopter space is \$10,000-\$15,000. The Ocean Pines Volunteer Fire Department will apply for a grant to cover the project's price tag.

OPVFD Joe Enste said that the county's request is to align better with newer, larger helicopters. Over the past few years, the Maryland State Police have updated their emergency aircraft to accommodate a team of four, a patient, and sometimes an additional provider.

"The pad we currently have does not fit appropriately for that kind of helicopter," Enste said. "They can still land, but it is a challenge. Depending on the wind direction and things like that, there have been instances where the helicopter has slipped off the side of the roadway." The current pad's width is around 25 feet, the fire president added. The recommendation is that these sites be installed in an area of approximately 100x100 feet. Enste said that the new zone will only reach about 40x40 feet, but that it should be enough space for a helicopter to land.

"It'll be a big improvement," he

Additionally, the fire department and county staff are considering following Ocean City's lead, which has recently installed an IRF (Instrument Flight Rules) landing zone near Northside Park. Enste said that these sites allow helicopters to "use just their instruments to land during bad weather events."

This inclement weather could include something as simple as excessive wind in one direction, which would impact a helicopter's ability to fly.

"Having an IFR landing zone would allow pilots to navigate through many more conditions than they normally would," Enste said. "Right now, they have that on the island, but there is no other spot in the county that has that. There's a new emergency manager, Director Chris Shaffer, who has taken over at the county level. He's exploring options to create a site at the north, south, and middle of the county, so that we can have more access to the medevac helicopter, even during inclement weather. We will keep the community informed of any updates on that."

There is no set timeline for the creation of the new helicopter pad in Ocean Pines, but Viola said that the association will begin the process "in the near future."

Worcester winding down comp plan process

Commissioner questions why Ocean Pines excluded from demographic data

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) While Worcester County officials report nearing the end of the long planning process for the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, one county official wants to make sure his constituents aren't left out.

When the County Commissioners were presented with a preliminary version of the document Tuesday, Ocean Pines representative Commissioner Chip Bertino wanted to know why his district – which is a homeowners association, not a formal municipality – wasn't included by name on a page showing census and demographic data.

"Ocean Pines is not listed here and it's the largest population base in the county," Bertino said. "I was curious as to why they're not separated out. ... I believe very strongly that Ocean Pines should be recognized as an entity whose interests should be regarded moving forward."

The county's Planning Commission had raised that same point and they've already addressed how including more Ocean Pines data will be part of later plan revisions, responded Jennifer Keener, director of the county Development Review & Permitting office.

State law requires that local jurisdictions prepare comprehensive plans to guide growth and development for environmental resources, transportation, economic development, and more. Worcester County's first Comprehensive Plan was re-

leased in 1965, followed by updates in the mid 1970s, and then another in 1997.

While the county Planning Commission is supposed to review its comp plan every 10 years, it hasn't formally updated a new plan since 2006.

By this December, the Planning Commission should have its final draft ready, which would then be sent to the state for a 60-day review, according to according to Michael Bayer, with consulting firm Wallace Montgomery.

He told the commissioners Tuesday it typically takes 18 to 24 months to put together a comprehensive plan. Now, after months of meetings with county planning staff, the process is nearing the end of the early data compilation and writing process

Bayer reported that data gleaned from a public engagement campaign had reached 1,500 people. It's been used in monthly meetings with the county's Planning Commission, where they've been discussing "chapters" of the document on topics like water resources, housing, and land use, among others.

Following that, the document comes back to the Planning Commission for last looks before they send it along to the commissioners for review and adoption. The document should be finished and released to the public early next year, according to Bayer.

"It's a very collaborative process," he said. "If there are some other comments from you, groups or anybody that you want to give us direction for, you know, we'll work through that as well."

County chooses Keller firm to manage BES

Company would oversee school construction project expected to start May '27

By Tara Fischer

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) The Worcester County Board of Education unanimously approved hiring a construction manager to oversee the Buckingham Elementary School replacement project, pushing that undertaking closer to officially breaking ground.

At its meeting this week, the school board approved a contract, for \$3,075,294 with Keller Brothers Inc., a Maryland-based company

that will act as the BES rebuild's construction manager. Keller Brothers will be responsible for providing preconstruction, construction, and post-construction services to the school replacement project.

School board member Jon Andes, who once service as the superintendent of schools for Worcester, asked if Keller Brothers has any previous experience in building schools on the Eastern Shore. The school system's maintenance and operations manager, Sam Slacum, assured him and the board that the firm is well-equipped to take on the BES work

"Keller Brothers have not been involved in building a new school;

however, they have been involved in several contracts constructing buildings on the shore," he said. "They have an office in Salisbury, so they are invested in this community ... Most recently, they have completed construction on the Berlin State Police barracks. They are also the construction management firm that is building the public library in Pocomoke."

The school board's approval of the contract with Keller Brothers was unanimous. Member Elena Mc-Comas moved to accept the agreement and member William Gordy seconded.

The Buckingham Elementary School replacement project has been a county priority for some time. The project was officially approved last year, when the state and county both pledged the funds to ensure it could come to fruition. The local government will pay \$47.9 million, while the State of Maryland will provide \$25.8 million for the initiative.

According to the new school's design plans, the building will be a two-story school with sufficient space to house grades pre-K through grade four. The facility will be about 90,750 square feet, with around 69,387 square feet planned for the first floor and 21,364 reserved for the top story. Construction is set to begin in May 2027.

Opinion

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

Citizen involvement can still continue

The Ocean Pines Association Board of Directors certainly has the courage of its convictions, as it shut down most of the association's committees despite pleas to spare them.

Rather than take a slower approach that might have been less alarming to the public, the directors on Saturday ripped off the Band-aid, suggesting they believe acute pain is easier to endure than lingering uncertainty about which committee would go down next.

The directors also helped themselves by packing into one day all the objections to their plan instead of having to address the same arguments over the next few months while they went down the roster of committees one by one.

Regardless, the directors now have a more efficient management model with just three committees reporting to them: the Budget and Finance Committee, the Elections Committee, and the Architectural Review Committee.

Although the work of the budget committee could be handled in-house, the association's bylaws require its existence, as they do the other two, but for different reasons.

Like boards of elections everywhere else, the Elections Committee's job is to keep the ruling body's politics out of the process, while the architectural review committee is similar to a planning and zoning commission.

As for the others, they were as much advocacy groups as they were advisory committees, hence the friction between them and board members when committees got ahead of themselves and the board's conservative financial approach.

But now, with these committees' departure, the question is whether this reduction in citizen involvement has made association government less democratic.

No. There is no prohibition against groups organizing according to shared interests or against the right of individuals and group representatives to be heard at public meetings.

In that instance, the only requirement would be that association members who wish to be involved must attend the meetings.

BAYSIDE W GAZETTE

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Letters

Committee vote a sad day for Pines

Editor,

On September 20 2025, the Ocean Pines Board of Directors majority voted to disband most of the advisory committees in our home owner's association, which existed for several decades. This day will be one of the saddest in Ocean Pines history when Directors with limited to no experience working in any of these committees decided they knew better now.

Reasons included that the Ocean Pines management organization is now larger and has the "capability" to replace committee work, "lines of communication" between the committees and board were "inefficient and strained," and the sitting committees were just "searching" for things to do. In my over 30 years as a project manager in the environmental industry, when there was a communication problem. I worked to resolve the breakdown and learned how to work with colleagues, not find ways to cut off communication channels. The Board has the luxury of high authority in this association and it is their responsibility to properly lead and communicate with other groups of people.

As a former committee member and observing other committees, all of these members come from professional backgrounds with skills, talents, and energy ready to serve. We are not sitting robots waiting to be turned on to act. In my experience, the committees did not insist on or push certain actions, but only made recommendations with the full understanding that most may not be implemented based on further Board consideration. We all accepted that condition. We just wanted clear feedback as that was our experience as professionals.

It is a fallacy that committee work could easily be replaced with a paid staff member in the management organization. The committees provided many beneficial services for free, which represented what home owners desired in their association. I agree that some past committee actions were awkward, but that is what people do. We are not programmed robots. That is when leadership needs to step up and lead, not eliminate.

It is another fallacy that intermittent ad-hoc workgroups could operate anything like the past committees. What will likely happen in the future is that Ocean Pines management will have to outsource at a great expense to business entities to fulfill some of those services, as has occurred in Captain's Cove. Say good-bye to the low assessment fee and to most of the services we received through the committees.

We can only hope that in the near future we can get new Board members with intelligent insight to repair the severe damage we now suffer. Unfortunately, it will be highly challenging to recreate the strength of the past committees that evolved over several decades.

Tim Peck Ocean Pines

Disappointed by committee move

(The following letter was sent to the OPA Board of Directors prior to last Saturday's meeting and vote with a copy forwarded for publication.) Editor,

I am writing to express my disappointment in your decision to put forth a motion to disband most of the advisory committees. This disappointment has to do with the motion itself but also with the awareness that the community can expect no discussion of this motion that would reflect your having earnestly considered the ramifications of this decision.

The rationale presented in the proposed motion is that "OPA's management team has grown in size and in depth of talent and ability." The management team, as you know, is not there to be advisory to the board of directors, nor is their role to speak to governance issues. One of the most important governance duties of the board is to prioritize spending such that it reflects not only operational needs but also the priorities of the OPA The advisory members. committees have their fingers on the pulse of the membership's priorities and have historically served as a conduit for information to the board about community priorities.

There is a long history of

member priorities that were germinated and incubated in advisory committees then eventually got a life in the imaginations of the board and the general manager and came to fruition because the board did their job of approving the required funding. Among many great improvements that were first germinated in advisory committees are the electronic signs and good neighawards (Communications Committee); the statement of values and priorities that became wedded to the general manager's priority list and formed the basis for the now published General Manager's Strategic Plan (Strategic Planning Committee); several iterations of amendment and restatement of the OPA Bylaws (Bylaws Committee); Family Fun Night at the YC Pool (Aquatics); outsourcing our food and beveroperations (Clubs-already disbanded); expanding the pickleball courts and rebuilding the racquet center building (Racquet Sports); resisting the call to shut down the golf course and instead to invest

in it (Golf); humane man-

Continued on Page 23

Letters

Continued from Page 22

agement of the goose population (Environment and Natural Assets); Ocean Pines Expo (chairs of all the committees); to name a few. These have not only brought quality of life benefits to Association Members but have also directly or indirectly reaped financial rewards for OPA.

As you know, members of the board do not come to their positions with in-depth knowledge of all aspects of the social (amenities) and physical infrastructures of Ocean Pines. Historically, they have relied on the passion and knowledge of a broad spectrum of volunteers to be their eyes and ears on the ground in the form of advisory committee membership.

As a former director, I am intimately familiar with the many ways in which the relationship between the board and its committees has been fraught, and both sides of that equation have required repeated reminders of the boundaries of their respective roles and responsibilities. This has not always been comfortable or seemed efficient, but nonetheless, outcomes were achieved that may never have come to fruition without the committee members' lively discussion of pros and cons, and their passionate commitment to responding to and informing the board of the community's priorities and wishes.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to these passionate and hard-working volunteers not only for the work they have done and the outcomes they have achieved, but for their courage to persist in their efforts to be heard (despite push-back from the board and vilification in social and news media). If approved, the motion you are considering is not only a slap in the face to these volunteers but it is also a huge loss of human capital and the potential improvements to our community these volunteers are yet to germinate and bring forth.

This board is one of the most opaque in recent memory for coming to meetings and voting on motions without any meaningful discussion of the pro's and con's of what is being proposed.

I will applaud Steve Jacobs for being the consistent voice of dissent--if only in service of bringing forth minority community opinions on things. Yet, his attempts to spur honest debate have consistently fallen on deaf ears, and in some cases have been ridiculed by the board leadership. You can take a page from the playbook of your advisory committees who have modeled for you how to engage in earnest research and honest debate that fully examines a diverse complement of issues related to proposals they put forth to you (sometimes year after year until you finally see the light).

I urge you to at least engage in

honest and earnest debate about this motion before you — yet again — dismiss Steve Jacob's comments and proceed to a mindless vote on this. More importantly, I urge you to withdraw the motion or vote against it. I regret that I am unable to attend your meeting on Saturday to express these thoughts in person.

Colette Horn Ocean Pines

(The writer is a past OPA Director, Secretary, Vice President, and President and past Liaison to the Communications, Parks & Rec, Strategic Planning, ARC, and Racquet Sports advisory committees.)

Compromise mindset needed on wind farm

Editor.

As a resident of Berlin, within an eight-minute drive of Ocean City, I often go there and take advantage of the beach, the ocean and its expansive views.

While I philosophically greatly support wind energy and its expansion, I can see and understand arguments, both economic environmental, against the proposed installation within the site distance of Ocean City. I believe those involved should take a good hard look at a different location or a different environmentally safe and sustainable energy source. It seems the only voices which have spoken out on this issue are those totally committed to an unwelcome installation near one of our nation's top resource and fishing areas or those totally against it, who present no viable alternatives.

I grew up in one of the most polluted areas of New Jersey, not far from an Exxon refinery that exploded several times, and the Elizabeth area waterfront which saw several oil tankers leak toxic pollutants into the Arthur Kill section of the Hudson River. I certainly don't want to see it happen in the area to which I moved to get away from the destruction of the environment I saw where I was born and raised.

I hope both sides can tone down the rhetoric and come to a compromise that doesn't result in a return to the toxic pollution caused by either coal burning or pollution from oil or other soon-scarce and harmful fossil fuels. Although I am not an expert, I have lived through the negative and unhealthy effects of pollution and don't want to see it coming to the Delmarva Peninsula.

I have expressed my feelings both to the Environmental Defense Fund and Ocean City Mayor Rick Meehan, and occasionally to other state and federal officials, but have not as yet received a response. I hope someone will answer my concerns shortly.

Bob Faszczewski Berlin





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October 9, 2025 6:30PM
Worcester Technical High School

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Authority of the Democratic Central Committee of Worcester County Cherie McNett. Treasurer

52

Puzzles

BIRD'S EYE VIEW BY DANIEL GRINBERG / EDITED BY WILL SHORTZ

Daniel Grinberg, of Philadelphia, is a user-experience researcher for a consulting company. This is his ninth crossword for The Times since 2019. The unusual arrangements of black squares in the middle of the grid playfully hint at its theme. The shaded squares in the lower left and the three black squares under them represent a "sign" that's also part of the theme. — W.S.

ACROSS

- 1 New H.S. student
- 6 They're here today. gone tomorrow
- 10 Complete
- 14 Swanky Tokyo shopping district
- 19 Supplier of
- oxygenated blood
- 20 Very similar
- 22 Shaped like a kiwi
- 23 Orange creature in an arcade game
- 24 Trees native to the Yukon
- 25 Young bucks, say
- 26 Supplier of 110-Across 29 Locale of the oracle
- of Apollo
- 32 Some tots' transports
- 36 Allhallows
- 37 Trees on the National Mall 40 Nintendo character
- with a long, sticky tongue
- 43 Emmy-winning actress Edebiri
- 44 Celebration dedicated a saint
- 46 Vessel that infuses and pours
- 48 Italian for "year"
- 49 Reason to atone
- 50 Lindsay who played both twins in 1998's The Parent Trap'
- 51 Monumental

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

SMITH'S

MARKET

BEER • WINE

LOTTERY

PROPANE REFILLS

- 52 Voice of 110-Across
- 91- and 110-Across
- 56 Confectioner said to have co-created Rocky Road ice cream
- 57 Liverpool's borders?
- 58 Bowie collaborator
- 59 Key that a Mac lacks
- **60** 1949 short that marked the first appearance of 91- and 110-Across
- 69 Left-wing activist movement
- 72 Sax who invented the saxophone
- horse
- 77 Emulate an owl
- 78 Closely tracking
- 80 Love letters? 81 Apropos
- 82 It pumps up the volume
- 84 What a queen may lay
- Wong, co-star of "Always Be My Maybe"
- 88 Signature sound of 91-Across
- 91 Target of 110-Across
- 93 Partner of a pestle
- 94 Broadband connection. in brief
- 95 North Carolina college town
- 96 Eccentric
- 97 Personal trainer's count
- 98 "That's useful information"

- 54 Artist and co-creator 106 P, to Pythagoras
 - - 107 DuBois's portrayer in the film "A Streetcar Named Desire'

101 Unscheduled slots

- 110 Devious character who's the subject of this puzzle
- 112 Company that once offered "50 Free Hours" CDs
- 113 Bert's best buddy
- 114 Supervised
- 115 Upper limit
- 116 "Huh?" in Honduras 117 Mercilessly mock
- 118 Part of Wayne's world?
- 119 Nonkosher sandwich, in brief

DOWN

- 1 Page for online answers
- 2 Stick up
- 3 Source of minerals 4 Part of many purses
- 5 It's buried to make
- peace
- 6 Cost of a cab
- 7 Baldwin of "The Boss Baby'
- 8 Imbecile
- 9 Overhead light?
- 10 Gucci who pioneered bamboo-handled handbags
- 11 Auditorium balcony, e.g.
- 12 Cajun cooking staple
- 13 Shaving on citrus desserts
- 14 "You have my blessing'

- 15 Russian ruler nicknamed "The Moneybag"
- 16 This very moment
- 17 Wine also known as Primitivo, familiarly
- 18 Purchased spots
- 21 View from St. Moritz 27 Certain taco topping
- 28 "Uh-uh"
- 29 Run down
- 30 Tied up
- 31 With little excess
- Big ____ Burger, fictional Hawaiian **33** Big fast-food chain in "Pulp Fiction"
- 34 Cream that's said to combat dark circles
- 35 Holding the biggest grudge
- 38 Prime retail area: Abbr.
- 39 Match up, as two devices
- 40 Oscar-winning Michelle
- 41 Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum site
- 42 Dazed and confused story
- 46 R&B group with the No. 1 hit "Waterfalls"
- 47 Stand-up comic Margaret
- 53 It falls in the fall
- 55 Day, in Dijon 60 Be part of the crowd,
- with "in" 61 "That feels incredible!"
- 62 Silence-enforcing doc 70 "Uh-uh"

TAG & TITLE

SERVICE

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Mon-Sat 8am - 4:45pm

63 Avoid, as a falling anvil

113

- 64 Spokeswoman in Progressive commercials
- 65 Rising

112

- 66 Some megafauna, informally
- 67 Summer cabin, maybe
- 68 "Go _!" (Boston cheer)
- 69 Captain in a classic novel

- 71 Head over head? 74 Actress Pflug
- 75 Rod in a hot rod
- 76 Word after film or
- pinot 78 Vocally combine
- talking and crooning 79 H.S. diploma
- alternative
- 82 Tummy-toning tool 83 Renowned N.Y.C.
- venue for divas 85 Energy-saving vehicle
- 86 Guzzle

- 89 Raw fish dish 90 Be a buttinsky
- 92 Lack of a voice
- 97 Witherspoon of "A Wrinkle in Time"
- 98 Modern locale of ancient Babylon
- 99 You, to Shakespeare 100 Ozone layer issue
- 101 Accented exclamations

brand

- 102 Two-in-one shampoo and conditioner
- for one
 - 104 Latin list shortener, in brief

103 Paris's Panthéon.

115

- 105 Risqué message 108 Italian architect
- Ponti
- 109 Nest builder 110 Awe
- heard enough!"



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su|do|ku

© Puzzles by Pappocom

HARD - 67

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.

		9		7				
3	2				8		9	
1				9				4
							6 7	
	9	4		1		5	7	
	9 5							
4				3				7
	6		7				8	2
				5		6		

Answers to last week's puzzles



County tables solar ag legislation for now

Emergency bill needs at least six commissioners to vote before can be enacted

By Brian Shane

Staff Writer

(Sept. 25, 2025) Worcester County officials failed to enact emergency legislation last week that would have increased local oversight for solar panel farms, including setting new decommissioning procedures, because two lawmakers were absent for the vote.

Instead of taking effect after the usual 45 days, an "emergency" bill goes into law immediately when passed. It also has a higher standard than a simple majority, instead requiring six of seven county commissioners to vote yes.

But because representatives Caryn Abbott (District 1, Southern) and Jim Bunting (District 6, Bishopville) didn't attend the Sept. 16 meeting of the Worcester County Commissioners, the body didn't meet the emergency standard.

That led Commissioner Chip

Bertino to work out a quick compromise. He asked his fellow commissioners – all of whom were ready to vote yes on the solar bill – to table their emergency vote for the next commissioners meeting, which is scheduled for Oct. 7.

A yes vote on Oct. 7 puts the emergency bill into effect right away. Had the board approved the legislation on Tuesday with five votes, it would have taken effect Oct. 31.

Why the hurry? The commissioners have been eager to update the county's laws on solar panel farms – specifically, they want developers on the hook for decommissioning costs should a facility suddenly go dark.

Decommissioning in this case means the removal of solar equipment from its acreage and restoration of the site to agricultural use, including cleanup of hazardous materials.

As more and more developers pitch solar panel farms on agricultural land in Worcester County, commissioners expressed concerns that property owners, like generational family farmers, would be stuck with cleanup costs, or might see their land forced into a tax sale, should developers walk out on a land lease.

Officials asked staffers to write new regulations that would have forced developers to pony up for cleanup costs at the start of the permitting process, not the end, which had been the case.

The county's emergency bill says developers must post a bond for 125% of the anticipated cost of decommissioning, which mirrors a state regulation. Bonds are re-evaluated every five years.

The decision Tuesday to postpone the emergency bill vote won't impact the two major solar farm projects now in the pipeline for Worcester County, according to Jennifer Keener, the county's director of Development Review & Permitting.

Keener shared the top-level details of the bill with the commissioners ahead of their vote to delay Tuesday. It modifies the solar farm review process to be consistent with current practices in state law and adds the bonding stipulation for decommissioning.

The bill also says utility-scale solar

farms – ones generating at least 2 megawatts of electricity, enough to power hundreds of homes – that don't generate power after six months are said to be formally abandoned. After a year, an abandoned solar farm is then deemed a public nuisance.

State law also requires posting a bond for utility-scale solar but that doesn't include the cost of salvage. The county's bill does include salvage costs.

The commissioners have more closely eyed solar farm oversight since state lawmakers passed the Renewable Energy Certainty Act in May, which set new state zoning standards for community solar projects that were more restrictive than what Worcester County had on the books.

That law (SB 931) not only set new aesthetic standards for buffering, lighting, and height restrictions, it also altered the level of control the state could exert on county solar projects: any solar farms meeting the utility-grade standard of more than 2 megawatts can be preempted by the state, snatching the final say from county leaders.

Sept. 25 - Oct. 2 DAY/TIME **ADDRESS BR/BA STYLE PRICE** AGENT/AGENCY Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm 2BR/2BA 12430 Old Bridge Rd., West OC Single Family from from \$284,750 Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community Fri-Mon 11am-4pm Heron Harbour, 120th St., Bayside 1BR/2BR/3BR/4BR+ Condos, Towns & SF Nanette Pavier/Holiday Real Estate Friday 12:30-2:30pm 703 Loop Road, Ocean City 4BR/3BA Single Family \$1,249,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty 3BR/2BA Friday 3-5pm 124 75th Street #103, Ocean City Condo \$799,000 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty Saturday 10am-Noon 12140 Pimlico Lane, Berlin 4BR/3.5BA Single Family \$999,000 Kim Heaney/BHHS/PenFed Realty

Saturday 10am-Noon 114 Georgia Avenue, Ocean City 3BR/2BA Condo \$574,900 Team Bouse House/ReMAX/Advantage Saturday 10am-Noon 4 Mayflower Court, Ocean Pines 4BR/2.5BA Single Family \$425,000 Katie Quinn/BHHS/PenFedRealty Saturday 10am-Noon 609 Bayshore Drive #32, Ocean City 3BR/2BA Townhome \$849,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty Saturday 10am-1pm 12117 Pimlico Lane, Glen Riddle, Berlin 4BR/2.5BA Single Family \$995,000 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker

Saturday 11am-1pm 10 Cannon Drive, Ocean Pines 3BR/3BA Single Family \$445,000 Marlene Ott/BHHS/PenFedRealty

Saturday 11am-2pm 11204 Coastal Highway Unit 3C, Ocean City 2BR/2BA Condo \$674,900 Tim Meadowcroft/Long & Foster Real Estate

from \$284,750 2BR/2BA Sat & Sun 11am-3pm 12430 Old Bridge Rd, West OC Single Family Shelly Wilson/Salt Life Community Saturday Noon-2pm 10300 Coastal Highway #1802, Ocean City Studio Condo \$268,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty Saturday 12:30-2:30pm 201 S Heron Drive #G5, Ocean City 2BR/2BA Condo \$398,400 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

Saturday 1:30-3:30pm 703 Loop Road, Ocean City 4BR/3BA Single Family \$1,249,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

Saturday 3-5pm 27450 Covered Bridge Trail, Harbeson, DE 3BR/2BA Single Family \$575,000 Katie Landon/Coldwell Banker Realty Sunday 10am-Noon 609 Bayshore Drive #32, Ocean City 3BR/2BA Townhome \$849,900 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

Sunday 11am-1pm 12117 Pimlico Lane, Glen Riddle, Berlin 4BR/2.5BA Single Family \$995,000 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker

Sunday 12:30-2:30pm 201 S Heron Drive #G5, Ocean City 2BR/2BA Condo \$398,400 Nancy Reither/Coldwell Banker Realty

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Calendar

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

Thurs., Sept. 25

STORY TIME: FALL

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 10:30 a.m. Songs, crafts and a story. For ages 2-5 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

PLAY TIME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Join in for a variety of activities and toys. Play and socialize with other families. For ages 2-5 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

OC CHESS CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Enjoy a relaxing game of chess every Thursday at the library. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

NATURE FAKERS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 2 p.m. Dr. Ralph Lutts discusses John Burroughs, who, with an assist from Theodore Roosevelt, campaigned against writers who were selling embellished nature stories as nonfiction. 410-208-4014

INTRODUCTION TO SCULPTURE

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 2 p.m. Learn something new and try your hand at sculpting. Presented by Wocky Pots Studio. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FIRESIDE CHAT

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 3 p.m. A book discussion featuring books participants have already read and want to share. Find your next great read. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

DRY PANTRY

Thursdays - St. Paul United Methodist Church, 405 Flower Street, Berlin, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. For those in need of resources such as paper products, laundry products, baby items, and personal care items. Limits apply. 410-641-0270

Fri., Sept. 26

OCEANS CALLING

Ocean City Inlet, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., 12-11 p.m. Performers spanning various genres including Weezer, Fall Out Boy, Noah Kahan, and Green Day; gourmet food; amusement park rides; games; and more between stages. Tickets: www.oceanscallingfestival.com.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT BINGO NIGHT

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6 p.m. Parents are requested to play the games with their children. Admission fee is \$5. Food and drinks welcome. Ice cream will be sold. Prize donations accepted. No cash prizes. 410-641-7052

OC MAHJONG CLUB

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Join in for a fun morning of playing tile Mahjong. Feel free to bring your own tile set. All adults welcome. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SURVIVAL SPANISH: NUMBERS

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 1 p.m. Learn vocabulary for numbers in Spanish. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

DISCOVERY DEN AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 3:30-4:30 p.m. Come enjoy a new topic every week. Week 1: Art Studio. Best for elementary and middle school students, but all are welcome. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SIPPIN' WITH SLOTHS

Coastal Wilds, 34215 Peppers Corner Road, Frankford, 6-8 p.m. Cost is \$40 and includes sloth encounter, selfguided tour, and one complementary glass of wine. Tickets: https://book.singenuity.com/469/activity/details/2284/ rates. 302-829-1548

KIGHTS OF COLUMBUS BINGO

Fridays - Knights of Columbus, 9901 Coastal Highway, behind St. Luke's Church. Doors open at 5 p.m., bingo starts at 6:30 p.m. Light snacks available before bingo and at intermission. 410-524-7994

Sat., Sept. 27

OCEANS CALLING

Ocean City Inlet, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., Ocean City. 12-11 p.m. Performers spanning various genres including Weezer, Fall Out Boy, Noah Kahan, and Green Day; gourmet food; amusement park rides; games; and more between stages. Tickets: www.oceanscallingfestival.com.

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BREAKFAST BUFFET

Whaleysville United Methodist, 11716 Sheppards Crossing Road, Whaleyville, 7-10 a.m. Buffet will include pancakes, bacon, sausage, scrapple, scrambled eggs, chipped beef, hash brown potatoes, toast, fruit and assorted beverages. Cost is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

LIBRARY CARD WALLETS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 11 a.m. It's Library Card Sign-Up Month, and you may need a safe place to keep your new card. Come make your own library card holder. For ages 6-11 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

ANNUAL MEN'S FASHION SHOW

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 405 Flower St., Berlin, 6 p.m. Free will offering and refreshments.

OCEAN PINES FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

Saturdays - White Horse Park, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Shop for everything from fresh local produce to unique handmade artisan goods. Also featuring family-friendly activities, music and unique shopping experiences. Open to the public, year round. 410-641-7052,

https://www.oceanpines.org/web/pages/farmers-artisans-market

Sun., Sept. 28

OCEANS CALLING

Ocean City Inlet, 809 S. Atlantic Ave., 12-11 p.m. Performers spanning various genres including Weezer, Fall Out Boy, Noah Kahan, and Green Day; gourmet food; amusement park rides; games; and more between stages. Tickets: www.oceanscallingfestival.com.

BERLIN FARMERS MARKET

Sundays - Pitts Street, Commerce Street and Main Street, Berlin, May through October, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine. Producers only market featuring more than 50 farmers, food cultivators, bakers, distillers, seafood, meat and more. Also featuring a petting farm (9-11 a.m.), free kids art station and live music. The-BerlinFarmersMarket.com

SEWING FOR A CAUSE

Sundays - Buckingham Presbyterian Church, 20 S. Main St., Berlin, 10:30 a.m. to noon. Learn how to sew while making a difference. 410-641-0234

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Sundays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 10 a.m. www.jw.org

Mon., Sept. 29

STORY TIME: GOSSIE AND FRIENDS

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories. For children ages 0-5 years. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

COLONIAL CRAFTS

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 4:30 p.m. Create your own quill pen and explore the traditional technique of tin punching. Learn how everyday items were made in the 1700s. For ages 6-11 years. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

INTRODUCTION TO ACUPUNCTURE

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 5:30 p.m. Dr. Brooke Bochinski LAc., DOM, from Sea Wellness Acupuncture, teaches this introductory class. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

THE DELMARVA CHORUS OPEN HOUSE/GUEST NIGHT

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 6-8 p.m. All ladies are invited to attend and spend an evening learning all about the chorus. Fun, smiles, laughter and goodies are guaranteed. Elissa, 410-641-8050, www.delmarvachorus.org

AMERICA'S BOATING COURSE

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 6-9 p.m. Class held Sept. 29, 30 and Oct. 1. Cost is \$28. Free to high and middle school students. Meets all state requirements. Register: Michael Alpaugh, 302-218-9474, alpaughmt@gmail.com.

T.O.P.S. OF BERLIN - GROUP #169

Mondays - 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

RRIDGE

Mondays - Ocean City 50plus Center, 104 41st Street, Ocean City, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Reserve a spot: Tish, 410-804-3971. www.Worcoa.org/oceancity

DELMARVA WOMEN'S A CAPELLA CHORUS

Mondays - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 6:00-8:00 p.m. All ladies who love to sing invited. Elissa, 410-641-8050; on social media; or delmarvachorus.org.

OVEREATER'S ANONYMOUS

Mondays - Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 7-8 p.m. No dues or fees. 410-459-9100

Tues., Sept. 30

STORY TIME: APPLES

Worcester County Library - Pocomoke Branch, 401 Fifth St., 10:30 a.m. Crafts, songs and stories. For ages 0-5 years. 410-957-0878, www.worcesterlibrary.org

SENSORY STORY TIME

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 10:30 a.m. September 25, 2025 Bayside Gazette Page 27

Calendar

Story time geared for ages 0-5 years featuring seasonal themes designed to support early literacy skills with stories, songs and finger plays. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

BABY TIME

Worcester County Library - Snow Hill Branch, 307 N. Washington St., 10:30 a.m. Songs, rhymes and stories. Stay after to socialize with other families. For ages 0-2 years. 410-632-3495, www.worcesterlibrary.org

OC KNITTING GROUP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m. Do you love to knit or crochet? Bring whatever project you happen to be working on. 410-524-1818, www.worcesterlibrary.org

AROMATHERAPY WORKSHOP

Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 2 p.m. Learn how essential oils have been used for a variety of health issues. Create your own custom fragrances and use them to create three personal aromatherapy items. Registration required: 410-524-1818.

TEEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE INTEREST MEETING

Worcester County Library - Ocean Pines Branch, 11107 Cathell Road, 4:30 p.m. Need service learning hours? Enjoy some pizza as the group talks about teen programs at the library. For ages 12-18 years. 410-208-4014, www.worcesterlibrary.org

THE ART OF STORYTELLING

Art League of Ocean City Center for the Arts, 502 94th St., 6-8 p.m. Featuring author Stephanie Fowler, dancer Fiona O'Brien and musician Will Fothermel and writer Gwendolyn Lehman. Free event with refreshments provided. https://artleagueofoceancity.org, 410-524-9433

CROSS FARMS POP-UP FARMERS MARKET

Tuesdays - Flower Street Field across from Henry Park, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Accepting Maryland Department of Agriculture FMNP (WIC & Seniors) Checks and Maryland WIC Fruit & Vegetable Checks. Also offering a "Produce Bucks" program, which doubles purchases for eligible residents. https://www.facebook.com/theberlinfarmersmarket.

BEACH HEROES-OC

Tuesdays - Volunteer beach clean-up group meets from 9-10 a.m., year-round. Trash bags, grippers and gloves provided. Check the Facebook page "Beach Heroes-OC" for weekly meeting locations. All are welcome.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES MEETING

Tuesdays - Berlin Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, 212 West St., Berlin, 7 p.m. www.jw.org

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

Tuesdays - Worcester County Health Department, 9730 Healthway Drive, Berlin, 3:30-4:30 p.m. TOPS is a weekly support and education group promoting weight loss and a healthy lifestyle. 410-289-4725

OC KNITTING CLUB

Tuesdays - Worcester County Library - Ocean City Branch, 10003 Coastal Highway, 10:30 a.m.

ARGENTINE TANGO PRACTICE

Tuesdays - Experienced dancers and others interested in watching or learning more are welcome, 7-9:30 p.m. No partner required. Info: TangobytheBeach.com.

ZUMBA TONING TUESDAYS

Tuesdays - Northside Park, 200 125th St., Ocean City, 5:30 p.m. Zumba with optional light weights. zumbajoyceoc@gmail.com

WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND WELLNESS GROUP

Tuesdays - Holy Trinity Cathedral, 11021 Worcester Highway, 2-2:45 p.m. Use the weight loss program/app/plan of your choice. Free and open to everyone. 410-641-4882, www.htcanglican.org/activities.

Wed., Oct. 1

REGISTRATION DEADLINES FOR COUNTRY LINE DANCE LUNCH

Held on Oct. 3 at Northside Park in Ocean City from 11:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Dancing, pizza and drinks. Cost is \$8 for Ocean City residents and \$10 for nonresidents. Register by Oct. 1. 410-250-0125

BLESSING OF THE PETS CEREMONY

Church of the Holy Spirit Episcopal, 10001 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, 1 p.m. Pets should be on leashes or otherwise under their owner's control. Any size, shape or type of pet is welcome. You may also bring a picture of a departed pet, or a stuffed animal. 410-723-1973

PUZZLE SWAP

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 1-7 p.m. Bring your gently used puzzles and leave with new-to-you puzzles. Don't have a puzzle to exchange but still want one? That's OK too. All puzzles must be complete in their original boxes. 410-641-0650

DELMARVA LEATHERNECKS MEETING

Residence Inn by Marriott Ocean City, 300 Seabay Lane, Ocean City, 5:30 p.m. The foundation was formed by local veterans and patriots committed to raising funds and providing services to local veterans and worthy charities. www.delmarvaleathernecks.org

AN EVENING OF SONGS AND STORIES

Worcester County Library - Berlin Branch, 13 Harrison Ave., 6 p.m. Local



SUBMITTED PHOTO/BAYSIDE GAZET

NEW ROTARY MEMBERS

The Ocean City-Berlin Rotary Club installed two new members recently. Pictured, from left, are Cliff Berg, co-president, and new members Lou Ann Danner and Jim Loveless.

singer-songwriters Bryan Scar and Cathy Jane take the stage for a special duo performance. Each sharing their unique journey through music. 410-641-0650, www.worcesterlibrary.org

FREE SQUARE DANCE LESSONS

Ocean Pines Community Center, 235 Ocean Parkway, 7-8:30 p.m. Adult singles and couples welcome. RSVP: 908-229-8799.

FAMILY FUN NIGHTS

Wednesdays (through Aug. 20) - Ocean Pines Yacht Club Pool, 1 Mumford's Landing Road, 6-8 p.m. DJ, games and prizes. Food available for purchase. Admission is \$3 for OP swim members, \$5 for OP residents, \$7 for non-residents and free for non-swimmers. Cash only. 410-641-7052, oceanpines.org

KIWANIS CLUB MEETING

Wednesdays - Ocean Pines Community Center, 239 Ocean Parkway, 8 a.m. Doors open at 7:30 a.m. Last Wednesday of the month meetings are offsite and information can be found on the website and Facebook. www.kiwanisofopoc.org.

CASH BINGO

Wednesdays - Ocean City Elks Lodge 2645, 13708 Sinepuxent Ave. Door open at 5 p.m., bingo starts at 6:30 p.m. Food available before bingo and at intermission. Open to the public. 443-605-5028

ONGOING EVENTS

YOUNG HISTORIANS ESSAY CONTEST

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St. Open to middle and high school students. All entries that meet requirements will earn one hour of service larning. Winners in each age group will receive an extra prize. Reach out to history@worcesterlibrary.org for any local history research assistance. Stop in or call for full details. 410-632-3495 Due

by Nov. 15.

THE BOO-K BAG

Pocomoke library, 401 5th Street, throughout October. Check out a mystery BOO-k bag. Each pack contains a surprise seasonal title, a sweet treat and a cozy cup of hot chocolate. Return the rating slip for a chance to win a prize. 410-957-0878

CREATIVITY CORNER

Berlin library, 13 Harrison Ave., throughout October. Students are invited to visit the library's Creativity Corner to engage in STEAM-related projects and crafts. Activities change monthly. For ages 12-18 years. 410-641-0650

HISTORY-TO-GO: CROSS STITCHING

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., throughout October. Includes info sheets, recommended activities, supplies and more. Pick up from the Snow Hill library. 410-632-3495

LEAF IDENTIFICATION GAME

Pocomoke library, 401 5th Street, throughout October. Find the falling leaves throughout the library and match them with their description to property identify the leaf. Complete the game and enter for a chance to win a new Peterson's Tree Identification Guide book. For families. 410-957-0878

PUMPKIN SCAVENGER HUNT

Ocean Pines library, 11107 Cathell Road, throughout October. Find all of the pumpkins and solve the riddle, then choose a pumpkin recipe and a prize from the treasure chest. For families. 410-208-4014

PURNELL MUSEUM AT THE LIBRARY: TOYS

Snow Hill library, 307 N. Washington St., throughout October. In partnership with the Purnell Museum, come see the history displays that will feature toys from the colonial era to the 20th century. 410-632-3495

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o de worcesterprep.org/about/employment

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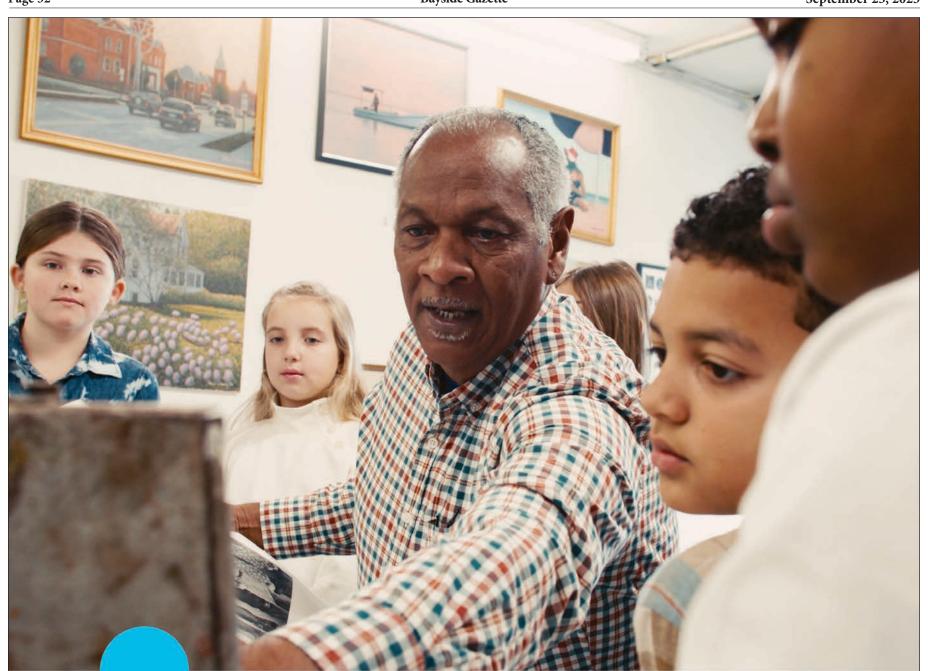
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