



Monthly News & Updates

January 1, 2024 007



Mayor's State of City Address



Looking back and moving forward

Looking back, 2023 was a great year for Egg Harbor City in many ways. Most notably, we made history by being the first municipality in the state of New Jersey to use the WIPA process to sell our water treatment plant. Selling the plant to New Jersey American Water

relieved the taxpayers of having to do expensive and expensive infrastructure repairs that would have dramatically increased the cost of water services.

Proceeds of the \$21.8 million transaction will be dedicated to paying off all municipal debt, which will serve to reduce the municipal tax rate. Further, as required by law, a significant amount will be set aside for capital improvements. Some projects include a new ladder truck for the Volunteer Fire Department, various recreational improvements at Key Rec, City Lake Park, and the addition of pickleball courts at the playground on Buffalo Avenue. The remainder of the money will be deposited in an interest bearing account to be used for discretionary purposes if deemed necessary by the City Council. You can read more about the sale process at <https://www.njlm.org/DocumentCenter/View/10911/Egg-Harbor-18-20-NJ-Municipalities-December-2023>

As usual, we enjoyed many community events made even bigger and better with grant funding from the Neighborhood Preservation Program and the outstanding efforts of the Egg Harbor City Economic Development Corp. The Winter Bazaar and ice skating on Philadelphia Avenue were fantastic additions to the annual Lloyd Wimberg Memorial Tree Lighting Ceremony. The Egg Harbor City Police Department and Public Works Department were very instrumental in organizing all the events.

The Egg Harbor City Lake had its best sales year ever this past summer season. Revenue exceeded expectations by nearly \$70,000 dollars. The annual Municipal Alliance Olympics and annual Fireworks Display were very well attended and enjoyed by all. Fortunately, this year we received a \$400,000 grant to make the lake more handicapped accessible. Work should begin soon.

Also, this year the City Council voted to reduce the municipal tax rate by 10 cents per \$100 of assessed value using residual COVID-19 aid and operating surplus from the Utility budget. Tax revenue coming online from new ratables and cannabis sales are expected to stabilize the tax rate in the future.

Moving forward, the NPP Committee will continue to spruce up Philadelphia Avenue with grant funded projects. A new park, called Archway Green, will be built in the vacant lot next to Crossroads Bar and Grill. The park will include a replica of the original "Welcome to Egg Harbor City" arch that once donned Agassiz Street, (aka White Horse Pike/Rt. 30) at 7th Terrace. The park will be used for recreational activities such as outdoor concerts, exercise classes, movies, farmers markets and much more. That addition, along with numerous streetscape improvement grants given to business owners to upgrade their store fronts will make our main street more attractive to visitors and inviting to potential entrepreneurs.

Redevelopment-wise, we will be welcoming a film studio at the Tower Site on Moss Mill Road across from the Egg Harbor City Cemetery very soon. This project will add a significant ratable, new tax revenue, create jobs, and draw new complementary businesses to the main street. At the Industrial Park, High Grass Farms broke ground on a cannabis manufacturing plant that will also add a substantial ratable, create jobs, and provide a new source of tax revenue for the city.

On a final note, much needed street tree maintenance will begin in 2024. This was made possible by a \$1 million grant award from the USDA Forest Service. More information on the project will be forthcoming after the new year.

Overall, if all of the anticipated projects go through, the city will finally be in a great position to soar ahead in 2024 and beyond.

Finances are looking brighter, our housing stock has improved considerably, established businesses are doing well, new businesses are opening, the main street is improving, recreation opportunities are increasing, our schools and sports teams are excelling, and community pride and spirit are at an all-time high.

We still have much work to do in the White Horse Pike business district. As current redevelopment efforts continue, I am confident that we will see it improve, but more targeted efforts are needed.

Lastly, City Council and I have begun a strategic planning effort that will help to better direct resources and land use for future projects. I hope you, our valuable stakeholders, will assist us in our efforts by being involved in the planning process.

Mayor Lisa Jiampetti, Ed.D.

Mayor recognizes two individuals at City Council meeting



Mayor Lisa Jiampetti recognized two individuals at the Dec. 14 City Council meeting.

First up was Jackson Senn, who was awarded Eagle Scout designation during a Scouting ceremony on Nov. 6.

Senn, a senior at Cedar Creek High School who plans to study automotive technology, manufactured and installed several types of bird houses at Peace Pilgrim Park. Since becoming a Boy Scout in the first grade, he has earned 21 merit badges, eight of which were required to receive the coveted Eagle Scout badge, the highest rank in Scouting. He is the son of Scott and Jessica Senn.

Jiampetti said the project not only helps provide housing for various species of birds, but it also provides residents and visitors to Peace Pilgrim Park with the opportunity to do some

bird watching.

She declared Nov. 6, 2023 as Jackson Senn Day in Egg Harbor City and commended him for his leadership and citizenship.



The mayor also publicly swore-in Police Officer Lucia Dudo, who was promoted to full-time officer after serving as a special officer for several months. Dudo's parents held the Bible while she recited the oath of office, pledging to uphold the Constitution of the U.S. and the State of New Jersey.

Dudo came to Egg Harbor City from another jurisdiction and was assigned to City Lake Park last summer where she worked to ensure the safety of park visitors.

Police Chief Marcella Aylwin called Dudo a “firecracker” who will do well as an officer in Egg Harbor City.

Council adopts draft Community Energy Plan



The City Council held a special meeting Thursday, Dec. 14 to hear a presentation by city engineer Ryan McGowan of Remington & Vernick regarding a multi-year plan on strategies that will reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions over the coming years.

The plan includes adopting supportive zoning and regulations for electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, improving the city’s fleet efficiency, supporting mass transit,

adopting regulations that encourage solar installations, upgrading efficiency in municipal buildings, and encouraging energy efficiency measures at new developments. SustainableEHC, the city's green team, will continue its efforts to educate the public about all the incentives available to reduce the cost of energy consumption in the home and in businesses.

The city is currently considering a ground-mount solar installation next to Peace Pilgrim Park through a power purchase agreement. Also being considered is the outright purchase of a canopy solar field at the rear of Lincoln Park, which would provide the most beneficial cost savings for taxpayers and residents.

With the support of SustainableEHC, the city funded the Community Energy Plan with a \$25,000 grant from the NJ Board of Public Utilities. Egg Harbor City was one of 46 New Jersey communities to receive the grant during the BPU's first round of funding 18 months ago. The plan was based on a template provided by the Sustainable Jersey program, which provided technical assistance during 11 online monthly meetings attended by members of the administration and the green team.

The plan will be forwarded to the BPU in preparation for an implementation grant opportunity that was announced last week. If awarded, the grant would provide funding to complete initiatives outlined in the plan.

To view the presentation, see SustainableEHC.org.

Klondike Derby returns to City Lake Park



As many as 200 Boy and Girl Scouts from across Atlantic County will descend upon City Lake Park Jan. 12-14 to participate in the annual Klondike Derby, which is more than just a big slumber party in the woods.

Based on the Iditarod sled race in Canada, patrols of between 6-8 Scouts not only learn survival skills, but also teamwork and cooperation as they complete tasks at more than a dozen stations named after cities in Canada, such as Chilkoot Pass, Anchorage and Fort Yukon.

The Scouts are presented with all types of challenges during the timed competitions. They will depend on each other to successfully traverse a creek walking a tightrope without getting wet, learn what it's like to survive with a disability, and simulate administering first aid as they pull their handmade sled through the course. Scouts are required to be self-

sufficient throughout the weekend, including providing all their own food, gear and equipment. They will try their hand at archery and target shooting, use a two-man saw to cut a log, and learn how a compass can be their best friend when orienteering.

The Scouts compete regardless of the weather, which parents hope will be warm, as they sleep in tents. Nothing stops them from competing though, including frigid temperatures. Ideally, a little bit of snow would be welcomed.

It's easy being green in 2024



Why not add these actions to your New Year's resolutions?

- Recycle every two weeks according to the ACUA pick up schedule - recycle cereal boxes and all cans, bottles, junk mail, newspapers. Break down boxes. Remove caps from bottles and do not place plastic bags in your recycling bin.
 - Make sure you have lids for your trash receptacles to prevent turkey vultures and squirrels from having a feast and littering the terraces.
 - Reduce waste by purchasing products with less plastic packaging.
 - Remember to put your reusable bags in your car when you go shopping.
 - Switch out your plastic food containers for those made of glass.
 - Recycle old electronics at the Highway Garage, Esslair and Chicago avenues.
 - Switch to LED lightbulbs to save energy and money - they last 10 times as long as CFLs and use a lot less energy.
 - Purchase a setback thermostat to save money on your heating bill. Better yet, get a free Google Nest thermostat from SJ Gas Marketplace.
 - Don't put anything down the storm drains, except rainwater.
 - Avoid using products with microbeads that cannot be filtered out during the wastewater treatment process. Microplastic particles enter our food chain when they are mistaken for plankton and ingested by fish in the ocean.
 - Pick up after your pets. It's the law. Dispose of pet waste properly, especially when visiting the city's public parks.
 - Eat locally sourced food products and support local farmers to save money and energy on transporting products to market.
 - Plant native plant species and those that attract butterflies, bees and wildlife.
 - Plant trees for shade, to clean the air and beautify your neighborhood. Plant native species.
 - Join our green team to learn more about how you can become part of the solution. Learn more at SustainableEHC.org or like SustainableEHC on Facebook.
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Stay warm this winter with LIHEAP



Low-income families can get help meeting their home heating bills this winter through the LIHEAP (Low-income Home Energy Assistance Program).

Residents with a gross income of at or less than 60% of the state median income may qualify for assistance. Those with gas or electric heat may have funds sent directly to their utility company.

Income limits are \$3,676 monthly for an individual, \$4,807 for two people in a household, and \$7,069 for a family of four.

For additional information or to apply, call 1-800-510-3102 or see www.energyassistance.nj.gov.

Winter coat drive continues through Jan. 3



The Egg Harbor City/Mays Landing Rotary Club is collecting new and gently-used winter coats, hats and gloves for the folks at the Atlantic City Rescue Mission. Monetary donations will also be accepted.

The coat drive will continue through the holiday season until Jan. 3, 2024.

Drop coats off in the collection bin at Egg Harbor City Hall, 500 London Ave.

For information, call or text Ron Smith at 609-226-2798.



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