

MINUTES OF THE MARCH 27, 2023 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Little Egg Harbor (“LEH”) Community Center.

There was a Flag salute and a moment of silence for our military and world peace.

Roll call was taken. Board members in attendance were: Ken Miller, Maryann O’Neill, Linda Cicco, Nancy Cotter, Diane Coyle, Donna O’Brien and Lisa Stevens. Dan Maxwell, Liaison to the Township Committee, was also in attendance.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Board on February 27, 2023 were then approved by motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried.

The first speaker was Chief James Hawkins of the LEH Police Department, who gave the customary update on police-related matters affecting the community. He began by reporting that, as a result of the retirement of Capt. Troy Bezak, there had been three promotions in his Department: Michael Hart was promoted to Captain, John Kelly was promoted to Lieutenant and Chris Myers was promoted to Sergeant. He also noted that Kristin Story, who had been injured while making an arrest in October 2021 and had had several subsequent knee surgeries, was also retiring. He then provided some statistics about calls made to his Department during the first quarter of 2023: there had been about 3,200 calls, 71 involving motor vehicle accidents (many of them parking lot incidents), 65 domestic violence calls, 96 general alarm calls, 30 fire alarm calls, about 350 medical calls, 47 calls involving juvenile problems and 38 mental health related calls. There had also been 590 motor vehicle stops and 13 all terrain vehicle (“ATV”) complaints, and as to the latter he reported that his Department was still following up regarding Harbor Bay’s concern about the use of ATVs on the utilities right of way adjoining that community. He then noted that the numbers for more serious crimes were low, with only 13 assaults and 3 burglaries (which, in LEH, are usually car burglaries); that there has been a reduction in applications for permits to carry a firearm but not in permits to purchase one; and that the causes of the recent forest fire on Route 539 and brush fires off Otis Bog Extension were still under investigation. He also said that he anticipated that new Class 1 police officers (who do not carry firearms but can write citations) would be useful at LEH’s beaches, Community Center (with its new skateboard park and pickleball and basketball courts) and senior communities. Finally, he said that surveillance cameras were being installed at all Township buildings and at the Veterans Park.

The second speaker was Carol Evans, LEH’s Recycling Coordinator, who once again reviewed the classes of items that can be recycled: items bearing a number in a triangle of 1, 2 or 5 are recyclable while plastic bags, plastic tablecloths, light bulbs, glassware, mirrors, hoses, batteries, shredded paper, and cardboard with shiny paper on the outside (such as cereal boxes and beer cartons) are not. Plastic caps may be left on recyclable plastic bottles. If you are in doubt as to whether an item is recyclable, just put it out with your trash: in one case someone put a saw blade in with recycling and it caused about \$25,000 worth of damage to the recycling equipment. Ocean County is again giving LEH money based on the quantity of recycled material it receives from us and this provides a greater incentive for us to recycle as much as possible.

The third speakers were Dorothy Uhl, the Branch Manager, and Heidi Jannsch, the Adult Services Librarian, at the LEH Branch of the Ocean County Library. They began by describing

databases that are available through the Library (online resources that enable you to access information in sources such as encyclopedias, scholarly publications and even, for example, manuals for small engine repairs). These are free to library card holders although they would otherwise involve a charge. The www.ancestry.com database, for example, may be accessed in person at the Library and the similar *Heritage Quest* and *Heritage Help* databases can be used even at home. The Library also provides free access to newspapers such as the *New York Times* (including its archive and its crosswords and other games and puzzles), the *Asbury Park Press* and the *Tuckerton Beacon*. Also available are the Access Video database, which enables free viewing of a wide variety of videos, and a computer skills database. Library personnel can also assist users who come into the library with the use of computers and it is expected that group classes in computer skills will be held there in the future. A book sale will be held during the week of June 17-24 and an organization called Friends of the Library, which assists with fundraising to support the Library, meets on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 6 P.M. Artists' works are displayed in the meeting room at the Library and there will be a reception there next month to meet artists. Other upcoming events include a program with master gardeners on hummingbirds and butterflies, and book discussions. In response to a question from the audience, it was noted that if you do not use your library card for two years it typically expires, but if you find it is not being accepted on line you can call and it will be reinstated.

Board member Maryann O'Neill then reported that AARP-sponsored tax preparation will still be available at St. Theresa's Church on Wednesdays through April 18. It was further noted that the annual LEH Senior Expo will be held this year on May 4 from 9 AM until noon at the Community Center, and that a "Shredder Day" will be held on May 14.

LEH Township Committee Liaison Dan Maxwell then commented that the promoted LEH police officers are of the highest quality, and that the recent "Cops and Crayons" event in which police officers volunteered their time to interact with youths and their families had had almost 200 participants and was a great success. He added that there would be a Community Cleanup event on April 22 and participants should meet at 9 AM at the Township Building; that the Graveling Point Beach is being replenished and will be "amazing" when completed; that progress was being made with the skateboard park and pickleball and basketball courts at the Community Center and on May 27, the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend, there would be a "grand reopening" there including a community barbeque with free food; and that on May 29, Memorial Day, there would be a parade from St. Theresa's Church to Veterans Park culminating in a ceremony there run by the American Legion. He also reported that a committee was working with Congressman Jeff Van Drew to obtain federal funding of a sidewalk on Radio Road that would run all the way from Oak Lane to Graveling Point; that there was a "Meet the Mayor" event planned for June; and that after riding with Meals on Wheels to deliver meals recently the Mayor felt that the homebound in LEH should have more than just one meal delivered each day and he is therefore working with the St. Theresa's and Calvary Baptist food pantries to see what further may be done to supplement Meals on Wheels' excellent efforts.

The next meeting of the Board will be on Monday, April 24, 2023 at 10:00 AM at the Cranberry Creek Clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:05 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Richard Dutton, Acting Secretary, LEH Senior Citizens' Advisory Board