

## ***MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 25, 2023 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING***

*Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Sea Oaks Clubhouse.*

*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, Richard Dutton, Donna O'Brien and Lisa Stevens. Dan Maxwell, Liaison to the Little Egg Harbor ("LEH") Township Committee, was also in attendance.*

*The minutes of the last meeting of the Board on June 26, 2023 as well as of the previous meeting of the Board on May 22, 2023 were then approved by motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried. (The minutes of the May 22 meeting had not been approved at the June 26 meeting because there was not a quorum present at the latter meeting).*

*The first speaker was Sgt. Kenneth Schilling of the LEH Police Department, who began by commenting that crime is currently spread out all over LEH and comes mostly from out of town. There have been a number of auto thefts, especially of Hyundais and Kias, which, he said, are easy to steal, and Mercedes, because it is possible to determine whether they are locked by the position of the exterior mirrors. He then turned to the familiar subject of fraud involving seniors and made the general recommendation that if you have caller identification on your phone and a call comes in from a caller whose name or phone number you do not recognize, simply do not pick up the call; if it is a legitimate call, the caller will leave a voicemail message and you can call back. He then described current fraud schemes involving text messages purporting to be from your bank seeking information (If you receive one, call your bank to ascertain whether it is real) and calls from someone claiming to be your grandchild in trouble and in need of cash (Before sending any money, make a separate call to the grandchild or his or her parent). Scammers are increasingly sophisticated and if you answer their calls may try to get you to speak as much as possible to provide a larger sample of your voice that can be used in scams involving voice recognition. If an unfamiliar voice asks whether you are X, rather than answering "Yes" you should reply "I am he [or she]" so that they do not have a recording of your voice saying "Yes" to anything. One woman who received a call about her bank credit card followed up to see whether the number from which the call originated was indeed a number at her bank and, when she ascertained that it was, provided the information the caller had requested, but the caller had somehow obtained and used an actual number at the bank (a practice known as "spoofing") and the woman ended up being defrauded. In situations like this you should instead always check the legitimacy of the call by calling the number on the back of your credit card, which is a number that can only receive calls. In another current scam, the scammer sends a text or email that claims it is from the Anchor Tax Benefit Program seeking personal information; in fact, the administrators of this program never initiate contact by text or email. Similarly, neither the New Jersey tax authorities nor the Internal Revenue Service initiates contact by telephoning a taxpayer. Sgt. Schilling said that it is always all right for an LEH resident to call the non-emergency number at his Department (609-296-3666) to check as to whether something sounds or is legitimate. Danielle Roselli, the Manager of the LEH branch of Manasquan Bank, who was in the audience, then warned that outgoing mail is being stolen from residents' mailboxes and checks in the envelopes are being "washed" and re-completed with different payees and amounts. She accordingly recommended that residents not leave outgoing mail in their mailboxes with the red flag up, which is a tipoff to potential thieves; instead, deposit your mail in a Postal Service mailbox or (even safer) at a Post Office.*

*The next speaker was longtime LEH resident, former LEH Mayor and now Ocean County Commissioner Barbara Jo Crea. She began by quoting the interesting statistics that Ocean County has about 600,000 year-round residents but about 1.3 million residents during the summer, that there are*

71.6 million “baby boomers” (those born from 1946 through 1964) in the United States and that, with the senior population growing, by 2035 seniors will outnumber children under age 18. She then reported that Ocean County now has a Property Alert Service, similar to services advertised on television but free of charge, that will notify a property owner by email if a deed or lien with his or her name is recorded in the County and thereby inform the property owner in a timely way about any possibly fraudulent filing that could result in the theft, by a fake deed, of his or her home. One can register for this service online at [countyclerkpas.co.ocean.nj.us](http://countyclerkpas.co.ocean.nj.us). Commissioner Crea added that Ocean County is seeking a seat, by petition, on the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities and that LEH is involved in litigation with that Board about upgrading streetlights.

The next speaker was Tim Brewin, the Manager of the LEH Walmart store, who began by reporting that fraud is also a problem at his store: for example, fraudulent attempts are sometimes made to get employees to load balances onto customers’ cards and requests are sometimes made at the Service Desk to wire large sums of money in transactions which, when employees question them (as they are instructed to do), turn out to involve fraud. He then noted that the percentage of items in stock at present is about 94%; COVID and flu shots are available at the store; grocery delivery from the store is also available and is free for “Walmart Plus” members (Membership costs \$98 per year and also includes benefits such as earlier access to Black Friday specials); and express delivery service with a two-hour window and the ability to scan items on your phone as you shop to facilitate checkout are also available at the store. Theft is an issue at the store and has increased with the introduction of self-checkouts; to deter theft, monitored cameras are trained on checkouts. There are about 260 “associates” (as employees are called) working at the store and they are paid an average hourly wage of \$18+, with a wage of \$20+ for supervisors. Associates are also provided with mental health resources, free membership in Walmart Plus, full college tuition and books, discounts at the holidays and training in driving trucks and in heating, ventilation and air conditioning. Walmart also gives back to the community in the form of cash grants and contributions to organizations as well as donations of supplies to schools and groceries to food banks. The current store hours of 6 AM to 11 PM will probably continue for the time being.

Township Committee Liaison Dan Maxwell then introduced Kathy Tucker, the new LEH Recreation Director. She reported that a Halloween Bash was scheduled for October 13 and would include music and a drive-in movie at the end. She then said that she plans to initiate events to be held at the Senior Center on Radio Road (or if more space is needed, at the Community Center) including gaming nights, dinners and dance parties. She noted the importance of seniors maintaining up-to-date medical information, including current lists of their medications and details that appear on their Medicare, Medicaid and other insurance cards, and she is accordingly planning to offer a class on this subject for seniors. Audience members suggested that she schedule programs for seniors during the day because many of them do not drive at night, and that she hold an event in which seniors are able to participate in choral singing. She invited anyone with any other suggestions to email her at [ktucker@leht.com](mailto:ktucker@leht.com).

Board Member Lisa Stevens then reported that Pulaski Day events would be held at the Pulaski Monument behind Mystic Pizza on Radio Road on October 14 beginning at 10:00 AM.

The next meeting of the Board will be on Monday, October 30, 2023 at 10:00 AM at the Cranberry Creek Clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12 noon.

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