

MINUTES OF THE JULY 29, 2024 SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Chairman Ken Miller called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM at the Harbor Bay 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, Chairman, Linda Cicco, Nancy Cotter, Richard Dutton, Jack Edmunds, Rosemarie Martelli, Donna O'Brien and Lisa Stevens. Township Committee Liaison Dan Maxwell was also in attendance.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Board on June 24, 2024 were then approved by motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried.

The first speaker was Chief James Hawkins of the Little Egg Harbor ("LEH") Police Department. He began by reporting that there had been two promotions in his Department, Jeff Martin to the rank of Captain and Joel Mahr to the rank of Lieutenant, and that three new officers had been hired. Also, Det. Sgt. Ken Schilling recently gave an excellent presentation on fraud attended by 50-60 people which he hopes to repeat at LEH senior communities and the LEH branch of the Ocean County Library. The Chief then said that there had been some burglaries of unlocked vehicles in the Harbortown/Mystic Island area and he once again urged residents always to lock their cars. He then reported that the County Sheriff's Department had become involved, with some success, in responding to speeding by all-terrain vehicles in off-road rights of way and a drone was now also being used to identify their drivers. Also, the individuals with their faces covered and wearing backpacks who recently rang doorbells and ran in Sea Oaks were apparently just pranksters. The Chief then reported that the LEH National Night Out would take place on August 6 from 6:00 until 9:00 PM at the Sports Complex. A Mystic Shores resident then said that homeless people were living in tents in the woods between the Hackensack Meridian building on Mathistown Road and Walgreens's and the Chief once again explained that his Department could not remove them unless the owner of the land on which they are camping wants them removed. He then said that LEH residents should not hesitate to call his Department with regard to scam calls they receive or, indeed, any other issue; do not assume that anything is too minor to merit a call. He then mentioned the "Blue Envelope Program" developed by a young officer in which a driver with autism or another issue that would make it difficult to respond to an officer in the normal way if stopped has his or her driver's license, registration and other relevant paperwork kept in a blue envelope which is prominently displayed inside the car and can be easily accessed by the officer. Finally, he said that the County-wide Special Needs Registry has also been helpful with respect to similar issues.

The next speaker was Joe Martucci, who was formerly a weatherman with the Press of Atlantic City. He said that the 2024 hurricane season started on June 1 but 90% of it takes place after August 1; that there have been only three named storms so far this year, which is typical to this point, but meteorologists at Colorado State have predicted the very high number of 25 for the season, much more than the average of 14, and the probability of a landfall in New Jersey of 32% compared to the usual probability of 23% (He added, however, that there has been no landfall of a hurricane in the state since 1903); that water temperatures have been at a record high and land temperatures, to date, have been the third highest on record; that the next storm name will be Debbie and if by any chance storm names this year go up to the letter W further names would then be taken from an English list; and that he predicts a slight lean toward a hotter than average month of August with a dry spell in the late part of the month.

The third speaker was Tim Brewin, the Manager of the Little Egg Harbor Walmart. He reported that about 94-95% of items carried by the store are in stock, which is at their goal; since replacement of purchased items is done using an automated system there are sometimes problems because the volume of customers in the area changes seasonally; COVID and flu vaccines will be available at the store; online grocery purchases are increasing; membership in "Walmart Plus" for payment of a fee entitles customers to free deliveries and

delivery hours have been expanded to 7:00 AM through 10:00 PM daily; and there are now more than 260 associates, as they are called, working at the store and they are provided with multiple benefits including free mental health services, a free college program, discounts on purchases, a training program to become truck drivers and an annual bonus if the company hits its profit goals. He then reported that the store has made a number of cash grants in the community as well as 19,000 pounds in food bank donations and major contributions to combat hunger and breast cancer. In summary, he said, the store is very community-minded and will have a table at the National Night Out.

The next speakers were Ron Heinzman, the Director, and Paul Wnek, an investigator, of the Ocean County Department of Consumer Affairs, both of whom have an extensive prior background in law enforcement. Ron began by enumerating many of the areas in which the Department is active, which include fraud involving contractors and auto dealers and inspecting weighing and measuring devices regularly to guarantee that consumers receive correct quantities at, for example, supermarkets, jewelry stores and marinas. He reported how skimming devices are sometimes attached to gasoline pumps to steal credit card information and how in one scam a caller who first told an elderly widow he reached by phone that he had mistakenly dialed the wrong number, called back later to apologize for disturbing her and said that she sounded like a nice person, befriended her in this way so that, over time, they had a series of pleasant telephone conversations, and ultimately convinced her to make several loans to him totaling \$30,000 which could not be recovered because investigators found that the money had left the country. Paul Wnek then talked about and distributed copies of an excellent booklet with 63 pages of detailed information published by his Department which every senior should have to use as a reference guide. He also advised not answering the telephone unless you recognize the caller's name and number, as any legitimate caller will leave a voicemail message to which you can respond later if you wish, and if you speak to strangers they may be able to record your voice and subsequently use the recording for some nefarious purpose. The Department has an office at the Southern Resource Center at the intersection of Routes 9 and 72 in Manahawkin as well as an office in Toms River, and the Department's telephone number is 732-929-2105.

Township Committee Liaison Dan Maxwell then reported that, in addition to the National Night Out, there will be a free Mental Health and Wellness Fair on Thursday, September 26 at the LEH Community Center from 2:00 to 5:00 PM, not only for people affected by mental health issues but also for their caregivers. There will also be a free Rabies Clinic on Saturday, November 16 from 9:00 AM until noon at the LEH Senior Center on Radio Road.

There will be no meeting of the Senior Advisory Board in August. The next meeting of the Board will be on Monday, September 30, 2024 at 10:00 AM at the Sea Oaks Clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:45 AM.

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