

MINUTES OF THE JULY 28, 2025 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, Chairman, Nancy Cotter, Barbara Jo Crea, Richard Dutton, John Edmunds, Rosemarie Martelli, Donna O'Brien and Lisa Stevens.

The minutes of the last meeting of the Board on June 30, 2025 were then approved by motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried.

The first speaker was Little Egg Harbor ("LEH") Police Chief James Hawkins, who began by reporting that, in connection with the retirement of three longtime members of his force, three other officers have been promoted to the rank of sergeant and three young residents of LEH are being hired as new officers. He then said that the annual National Night Out will take place on Tuesday, August 5, from 6:00 to 9:00 PM at the High School. Also, in connection with its ongoing Distracted Driving Campaign, his Department now has an informational card that will be given in lieu of a ticket to individuals stopped while texting, talking on the phone or otherwise driving while noticeably distracted. He then reported that the Department will be conducting an "active shooter drill" on Wednesday, August 6, at the High School, and the George Mitchell School will be used as a staging area; therefore, residents should not be alarmed if they see police, fire and EMS personnel there. He then said that another current concern of his Department is regulating motorized bikes and educating residents about their use, but he noted that if his officers pursue riders of such bikes there could be a risk of serious injury. Finally, he reported that a new scam, which has been successfully worked on seniors in a few cases, involves a call from someone claiming to be an officer from the Ocean County Sheriff's Department claiming that there is a warrant out for the call recipient's arrest and asking that he or she stay on the line while the caller walks him or her through the purchase of Bitcoin at a kiosk to pay a fine that is allegedly due. The amount involved was \$5,000 in one case and \$10,000 in another.

The second speaker was Paul Wnek, a former mayor of Toms River who is now a criminal investigator for the Ocean County Department of Consumer Affairs. He said that his Department employs 12 people in its weights and measures area alone who regularly make inspections and impose fines when necessary with regard to the County's 129 gas stations, 447 scales in butcher shops, supermarkets and similar venues, length measuring devices used in stores that sell material by the yard, 131 pharmacies and 55 supermarkets that sell products with expiration dates (There is a \$200 fine for each item found on the shelf with an expiration date that has passed!), 56 marinas (which also sell fuel), 7 campgrounds (which also use scales) and the County's sole remaining oil company. The inspectors' authority extends even to coin counting machines and the timers in use in coin laundries.

On the subject of scams, Mr. Wnek made the interesting observation that most people talk with their phone at their left ear, which is related to the right side of the brain, the so-called "emotional" as opposed to the "rational" or "business" side, and he urged residents when talking to a stranger in what might be a scam situation to hold the phone to the right ear. He then said that Ocean County is particularly targeted by scammers because of its large senior population and he once again repeated the often-heard advice not to answer the telephone if you do not recognize the caller's name. He also advised never to make a contribution to an unfamiliar charity, especially one claiming to be related to the police; never to use a debit card for payments, whether online purchases or in-person transactions in restaurants or stores; and always to be wary of communications congratulating you for being a winner, saying a relative or friend is in trouble and asking for money, approaching you in a potentially romantic context, or asking you to help the needy. He said that legitimate home improvement contractors know that if they collect over \$500 they need to enter into a contract with you, be licensed and have insurance, and payment to contractors should be coordinated with the amount of work that has been done, typically in thirds with the final one-third not payable until the inspection of the work

is completed, if required. Also, you should shred anything with personal information about you in it, because scammers are known to go through garbage looking for such details; change your passwords frequently; be wary because online banking is not always secure; and do not provide more than the final four digits of your Social Security number when asked for it in, for example, a doctor's office. In one scam, scammers obtain the Social Security numbers of young children assigned to them at birth, obtain credit cards in their names and run up large balances on them. Also, if you do not hang up immediately in a conversation with a scammer, you might be regarded as complicit in the fraudulent transaction and prosecution of the individual will be more difficult. Mr. Wnek closed by distributing copies of an excellent booklet produced by his office. Much of the information in the booklet also appears on his office's website, with web address <https://co.ocean.nj.us/OC/ConsumerAffairs/>.

Kathy Tucker, LEH Recreation Director, then reported that at the National Night Out on August 5 there will be more than 40 vendors as well as a number of food trucks. She also once again said that on August 21, in honor of National Senior Citizens Day, a free social with classic cars, ice cream and now also root beer to make floats will be held at the Community Center from 1:00 to 3:00 PM.

Senior Advisory Board member Barbara Jo Crea then once again urged homeowners to sign up for the Ocean County Clerk's Office's free property alert service to receive an email alert when any document is filed with that Office relating to your property.

There will be no meeting of the Senior Advisory Board in August. The next meeting of the Board will be on Monday, September 29, 2025 at 10:00 AM at the Mystic Shores clubhouse. All seniors are welcome and urged to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:30 AM.

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