



The Avalon Home and Land Owners Association

COUNTY AND STATE GOVERNMENT REPORTS

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS NOT A REPORT GIVEN EACH MONTH

May-June 2010 - Ed Grant, Treasurer from Cape May County, was guest speaker at COCA [The Coalition of Community Associations] and indicated that County tax rate will increase in 2010 by 7% over 2009; this equates to an additional cost of \$12.00, for a \$1 million assessed value property, for the County component of property taxes. The value of all properties in the County decreased by an average of 3% during the assessment period. The County is using \$1.4 million of last year's surplus and decreasing planned capital improvements by 21% to mitigate increases. All planning is in compliance with the current limit of 4% maximum increase in planned expenditures.

March 2010 - At the March COCA meeting there was a discussion on the transparency of the budget processes employed by Cape May County municipalities. There was a consensus that the budget process in most communities fails to provide information which would permit the public to know of, and to participate in the deliberations. COCA has drafted and sent a letter to the local legislators in Trenton urging them to support pending legislation aimed at improving transparency in the budget process throughout New Jersey.

February 2010 - A tape was presented from Frank McCall on preparing for emergencies. The same speaker will make a presentation at the Annual Meeting in August.

Jan 2010 - The January COCA meeting had a presentation by Jack Sparks, a former Mayor of Lower Township. He was talking as a concerned citizen about certain public contracts that had salary and benefit packages that were out of line, especially given the spending caps that have been placed on municipal budgets. He espoused the idea that Public Sector Negotiations needed significant reform.

Oct 2009 - The September COCA meeting focused on Identity Theft in a program presented by the County Department of Consumer Affairs. Information is available at www.capemaycountygov.net or by phone at (609) 463-6581. At the federal level information is available at www.ftc.gov/idtheft.

The October meeting focused on the H1N1 flu virus, vaccination opportunities, illness characteristics and precautions. More information is available at www.cmchealth.net or (609) 463-6581.

May 2009 - At the April meeting, Ed Grant (Director, County Treasurer's Office) explained the 2009 County budget. County ratable have increased little in the last year. The county budget was increased by 2.7%, an increase that was achieved by obtaining a union agreement to restructure health related benefits; a 10% reduction in operating expenses; a hiring freeze; and by dropping grants to municipalities. It is expected that the 2010 budget situation will be much grimmer.

In May Pierre Lacombe, a hydrologist with the USGS discussed future water supplies for Cape May County. He discussed his efforts to generate a computer model of the aquifers underlying the County and how the current wells will affect the health of these aquifers. He advocates pumping reclaimed water into the water table to minimize salt water intrusion on the west side of the peninsula. He feels that future wells should be drilled in the center of the peninsula. He also feels that the 800ft. aquifer under seven Mile Island should withstand salt water intrusion at least for the next forty years.

March 2009 - Brad Rosenthal, County Shared Services, has 14 projects within the program, all being pursued with the objective of saving money and increasing efficiency through sharing services.



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The County has asked each community for members to serve on a committee to investigate Hazard Mitigation Planning for the County. The project was initiated by FEMA and the county is the lead agency. The county is charged with coming up with a plan for the county within 16 months. If FEMA likes the plan, major FEMA funds could be available for its implementation