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# CAPE MAY COUNTY HERALD

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## Analysis

# 27% of Wildwood's Budget Goes to Police

By VINCE CONTI

This is the first in a series that will analyze and compare how much county municipalities spend on local police departments.

WILDWOOD - Following an article on police chief salaries in the county, Herald readers and spouters called for an accounting of what county municipalities spend on local police departments.

What sounds like an easy question to answer is more difficult than it might appear.

Many of the spouts came from Wildwood residents and the Herald decided to consider the available data on expenses for the city's police

Wildwood Police Department has 40 officers, including senior officers. The base pay for these officers is shown as \$3.75 million, with an additional \$737,300 for overtime and other compensation.

department as a part of the city's general fund budget. This analysis does not include capital funding for long-term equipment purchases. The analysis concentrates on the fiscal 2021 budget.

The problem is that budget documents provide broad levels of information while obscuring detail. Two sources of budget information are available, but they provide a different set of categories making the synchronization of their data a challenge.

Wildwood Police Department Expense  
The formal budget document shows salaries

and wages for regular employees of the department at \$5.7 million. There is another \$715,000 budgeted for seasonal employees and \$312,000 in non-salary operating funds. That total of \$6.7 million misses the funds needed for pension payments, employer health insurance expense and other employment taxes. The user-friendly budget can help provide some insight into those costs.

According to the user-friendly budget document for the same 2021 fiscal year, the department has 40 officers, including senior officers. The base pay for these officers is shown as \$3.75 million, with

an additional \$737,300 for overtime and other compensation.

The base pay is used for pension contribution calculations. According to the user-friendly document, the overtime and other category is for all payments not included in base pay.

What the user-friendly budget does provide is a look at the pension payments specific to the police officers. It also shows the expense associated with those officers for health insurance and other employment taxes. These added numbers are related only to the 40 sworn officers, which is why the salary and wages in the user-friendly document

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### SPOUT OFF!



## CMCo Commissioner Actions

# Board Appoints 2 to Top Posts; Another 96th Street Bridge Repair Looms

By AL CAMPBELL

CREST HAVEN - Appointments were made for three top county posts for three years each by the Board of County Commissioners Nov. 23.

**Administrator, Clerk of the Board Named**  
Effective Jan. 1, 2022, Acting Administrator Kevin Lare will assume new titles as county administrator and clerk of the Board of County Commissioners. As such, he will act as the chief administrative official for the five-member all-Republican board.

According to a resolution passed the same day, his salary will be \$136,780 (rounded up) annually. That document, posted under "Public Info, Government Salaries" on the Herald's website, includes many American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) members and non-union employees' 2022 salaries.

There had been debate in the past regarding having one person be both administrator and clerk of the board. There was no similar discussion at the passage of the current resolution.

**County Counsel Named**  
In the absence of Board Director Gerald Thornton in the meeting conducted by Vice Director Leonard Desiderio, commissioners unanimously appointed Jeffrey R. Lindsay as county counsel. As such, Lindsay, Thornton's stepson, will head the county Department of Law for three years, effective from Dec. 11, 2021.

According to the salary resolution passed at the meeting, his annual salary will be \$168,546, the same as that of the county prosecutor's first assistant prosecutor.

Another 96th Street Bridge Fix  
The 96th Street Bridge linking Middle Town-

ship and Stone Harbor over the Great Channel will get a \$2.98 million rehabilitation due to a resolution passed Nov. 23.

Proposals for engineering services were sought in August. Five firms submitted proposals. County Engineer Robert Church said that WSP USA Inc. was deemed most qualified to provide those services.

The New York City firm was contracted for two years starting Nov. 24, with three one-year options. Funding is from a 2018 bond ordinance.

**Rescue Plan Funds**  
A \$115,600 advertising and promotion package was approved Nov. 23 by commissioners to aid the county's tourism industry. The contract with EffectTV, a Comcast entity, started Sept. 6 and will run through June 18, 2022.

Nov. 20 - 26, 2021

CAPE MAY COUNTY COVID-19

New reported cases: **184**

Active cases:	Hospitalizations as of Nov. 29:	Deaths this week:
<b>267</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>

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# B.L. England Plant Site Sold

By CAMILLE SAILER

PETERSBURG - "I have some really, especially good news," said Mayor Richard Palombo, during Upper Township Committee's Nov. 22 meeting. The news - the B.L. England plant site has been sold.

Since its closing in May 2019, the former power plant, located on the bay shores of Beesley's Point, has been dormant and considered obsolete and in need of redevelopment.

Palombo explained that the buyers, Beesleys Point Development LLC, plan to raze existing structures at the site.

While Palombo was cautious with details as to actual components of the development, he did emphasize that the sale is final.

According to Palombo, plans "could include a new hotel, restaurant, boardwalk, retail and marina at the site."

Palombo indicated that the remediation cost, which the new owners have agreed to assume,



File Photo

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The former B.L. England plant site has been sold to a developer.