Great Day Gazette

The crown jewel of the Jersey Shore

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BUSINESS AS USUAL

FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Atlantic City Residents and Guests,

On April 1st I called a news conference, along with my attorney, Ed Jacobs, a few days after search warrants were executed upon my home. The entire news conference is available on the City of Atlantic City website, along with the full statement from my attorney, which I will share part of here:

"This entire investigation arose from nothing more than a personal and emotional family matter. Mayor Small and his wife La'Quetta indeed have high public profiles, deservedly so; but they have the same private family lives and challenges as every other ordinary parent. There have been absolutely no lapse in Mayor Small's faithful discharge of his duties as Mayor of Atlantic City. More specifically, there have been no thefts, no extortions, no payoffs and no acts of dishonesty such as may have unfortunately tainted some prior administrations here in Atlantic City and elsewhere. The City of Atlantic City remains in good hands under the administration of Mayor Marty Small. It is unfortunate that personal family matters have drawn the attention of the County Prosecutor, but that investigation has no effect whatever upon the integrity of Mayor Small's administration."

Immediately following the news conference, I held my weekly director's meeting, because it is business as usual for me. And the rest of this newsletter will focus on all the positives that have happened in the great City of Atlantic City over the course of the last month that I don't want to detract from, like my announcement of another tax decrease to the groundbreaking of Lt. Governor Sheila Y. Oliver Plaza; from the start of major Boardwalk reconstruction to much-needed additions and promotions within the Atlantic City Police Department and Atlantic City Fire Department.

Thanks for reading our newsletter and remember, It's STILL a Great Day Here in the City of Atlantic City, that hasn't changed.

- Mayor Marty Small, Sr.

ANOTHER TAX DECREASE

During a news conference providing an overview of his proposed 2024 budget, Mayor Small announced a 10.2-cent decrease in the Tax Rate for Atlantic City residents in 2024, marking a 5th straight tax decrease under the Small administration. Once the Atlantic City School Tax Rate is announced, Atlantic City residents can expect an even larger decrease in their Tax Rate. The proposed budget calls for sustained increases for non-uniformed city employees, totaling $4,500 effective July 1, 2024. For the first time in ten years, there is an increase in Atlantic City's ratable base. The proposed budget has no one-time revenues and a sustainable use of surplus. It provides $14,657,000 in funded capital projects with no debt to be issued. Mayor Small's proposed budget next goes to City Council.

The $20-million awarded to Atlantic City as part of New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy's $100-million Boardwalk Preservation Fund will be used to improve the Atlantic City Boardwalk from New Jersey to Tennessee Avenues. Atlantic City is receiving the largest grant in the State under this fund, along with Asbury Park. This work is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2026.

This announcement came as the start of a $6-million Boardwalk reconstruction project from Bellevue Avenue to Columbia Place got underway, with plans to extend improvements to Arkansas Avenue, utilizing the grant money awarded to the city from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (USEDA). This section is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024.

The City celebrated the start of construction on the new and improved City Hall Courtyard with an official groundbreaking ceremony outside City Hall. The courtyard improvement project, which is in partnership between the City, Atlantic County and the State of New Jersey, will be called "Lieutenant Governor Sheila Y. Oliver Plaza" in honor of the late New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver. The project, which incorporates environmentally responsible renewable energy concepts and enhanced security and safety features, is expected to be completed this Fall.

It started with a phone call by Mayor Small, and now the Visit Atlantic City Airshow is a full go this year! The City would like to thank the South Jersey Transportation Authority for contributing the money needed to get the show going in 2024, and we look forward to another fantastic few days. The Airshow is scheduled for Tuesday, August 13th and Wednesday, August 14th and is once again being run by the Greater Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce.

The Atlantic City Police Department promoted the following five Lieutenants to Captain: Mark Benjamin, Dean Dooley, Donnell Holland. Kevin Fair and Henry White III. The new Captains are assigned to various command level positions within the department. The ACPD also announced the hiring of 30 new police officers, made possible by an award for $3,750,000 from the Community Oriented Policing Services (C.O.P.S.) Hiring Grant. This grant allows the department to assign officers to positions such as School Resource Officers and Traffic Safety Enforcement Officers. During their swearing-in ceremony, the City also announced the promotion of John Walsh to Sergeant while, for the first time, swore-in two retired law enforcement officers to Special Law Enforcement Officer, Class III.

The ACPD also welcomed its newest four-legged additions: K9 Carlo, K9 Zeus, and K9 Raider. All three, along with their human partners, graduated from the Atlantic County John “Sonny” Burke Police K-9 Academy. K9 Carlo is one of two K9s donated to the ACPD by Philadelphia Eagles legend Fletcher Cox. K9 Carlo's partner, Officer Robert Reynolds's police car has been renumbered to K9-91 which is Mr. Cox's jersey number. In addition, four individuals graduated from the department's eight-week Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) training class.

Twenty-five Atlantic City residents were among the 33 recruits who graduated from the Atlantic County Fire Academy after twelve weeks of intense training. As part of a graduation ceremony at Boardwalk Hall, the Recruit Class of 2024 were presented their badges, certificates and assignments. Mayor Small and other City officials also visited the recruits at the Training Center ahead of graduation to offer words of support and encouragement.

The North 2 Shore Festival returns to Atlantic City this June! Mayor Small joined Governor Phil Murphy, festival organizers and the mayors of the other two hosting cities, Newark and Asbury Park, during a news conference in Asbury Park to officially welcome back the festival, and announce some of the performers. Two Atlantic City events already making waves are the Mayor's 'White Party' at Showboat's Island Waterpark on June 20th and a Beach Bonfire on June 22nd, in coordination with Jon Henderson's Good Time Tricycle Productions.

Mayor Small was joined by developer Keith Groff to officially introduce residential project Lighthouse Row during a news conference on site. These 4-5 bedroom homes on New Hampshire Avenue, just steps away from the iconic Absecon Lighthouse, are expected to completely transform Atlantic City's Southeast Inlet neighborhood. This is a fully solar powered residential development that will light up from sunset to sunrise each and every day. Construction is expected to be complete by the Fall.

Damp, dreary weather wasn't enough to stop tens of thousands of people from attending the 36th annual Atlantic City St. Patrick's Day Parade! With more than 120 participants from all throughout the community, the parade didn't disappoint.

Great work by the parade committee and everyone else who sponsored the event who helped make it a success.

WHAT'S COMING UP IN APRIL?

The Mayor's Office of Special Events presents 'Lunch with the Bunny' on April 6th at All Wars Memorial Building from 12:00 to 3:00 PM. Call 609-347-5823 to register for this post-Easter treat.

The City of Atlantic City Engineering Office will host a Public Information Center on April 10th at the ACCC Worthington Campus (1535 Bacharach Boulevard) between 5:00 P.M. and 7:00 PM., detailing the MLK Boulevard Improvement Project and the Safe Street for All (SS4A) action plan. This is an open house, where residents and local business owners are welcome to stop by at their convenience during the two-hour window to review the plans. A SS4A survey can be taken in advance at acnj.gov.

Atlantic City Re-Entry is hosting a Re-Entry Services Fair on April 16th at All Wars Memorial Building from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The purpose is to connect formerly incarcerated individuals with vital community resources. Call 609-343-2136 with questions.

There's still time to register for the Howard University Cheer Camp, presented by Atlantic City Recreation on April 20th and 21st from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM at Atlantic City High School. This is for Grades 6-12, sign up at acnj.gov or call AC Rec at 609-347-5643.

The next Atlantic City Job Readiness Forum, organized by the City's CDBG Office's Job Readiness and Employment Resources Program, will be Thursday, April 25th from 1:00 to 3:30 PM at Carnegie Library. The forum prepares residents to seek, secure and sustain jobs.

Philadelphia Eagles star wide receiver A.J. Brown was among the participants in Atlantic City Recreation's '3-Point Showcase' at MLK Complex, which was won by local sharpshooter Nazim Derry. During this free event, Brown interacted with the community, taking photos and signing autographs for the packed house.

Students at Seashore Learning Academy have been enjoying Barbering and Nail Studio Programs throughout March courtesy of the Atlantic City Youth Services division. April programs open to all Atlantic City youth include Lego Club and Young Basquiat's Art Program, with more announced soon! And all are welcome to Field Day on April 5th from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Dew Park and ACYS for Autism Family Fun Day on April 20th at Pete Pallitto Field from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

Atlantic City Senior Services brought Atlantic City residents 55+ on two separate trips to Philadelphia recently, one to experience the Flower Show and the other to Reading Terminal Market. This was on top of regularly scheduled, free monthly programming for seniors. Call 609-347-5458 to learn about all of April's event, here's a taste:

April 9th - Citywide Bowling
April 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th - Fun & Fitness Class
April 16th - Bingo

Congratulations to...

... the second cohort of 20 Atlantic City residents that completed the 16-week Atlantic City Infrastructure Program (ACIP)!

...Atlantic City's 8th grade boys County League Team, coached by AC Rec's Emerson Kidd and Ray Bethea, on their championship season!

Bill Wray, who retired from the Atlantic City Communications Bureau after 44 years of service!

Can We Say Great Day?!

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