Great Day Gazette

The crown jewel of the Jersey Shore

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FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Atlantic City Residents and Guests,

If you've ever been to Historic Gardner's Basin, you know it's a jewel here in Atlantic City. You have the incredible views, the peacefulness, it really is one of Atlantic City's true gems. That's why I was so proud to have a press conference there, recently, to announce all of the improvements the Small administration was able to make to the basin, some new projects that will make a difference for years to come, and yes, give an update on the Atlantic City Aquarium.

Could we have reopened the Atlantic City Aquarium when the interior renovations were complete? Yes, we could have. But we set standards for ourselves, and this building was not going to reopen under my watch looking beautiful on the inside, and like the same old aquarium on the outside. So, I secured the funding to do the necessary exterior work, and let me tell you, this looks a brand-new place. We hit a few delays early on in the exterior work, and didn't hit our Summer reopening goal, but it would have been a huge disservice to our taxpayers to expedite something as important as this just to be able to say we got it done. We are working to make this the best aquarium it can be; and, after the press conference, I'm hoping you all can see that now too.

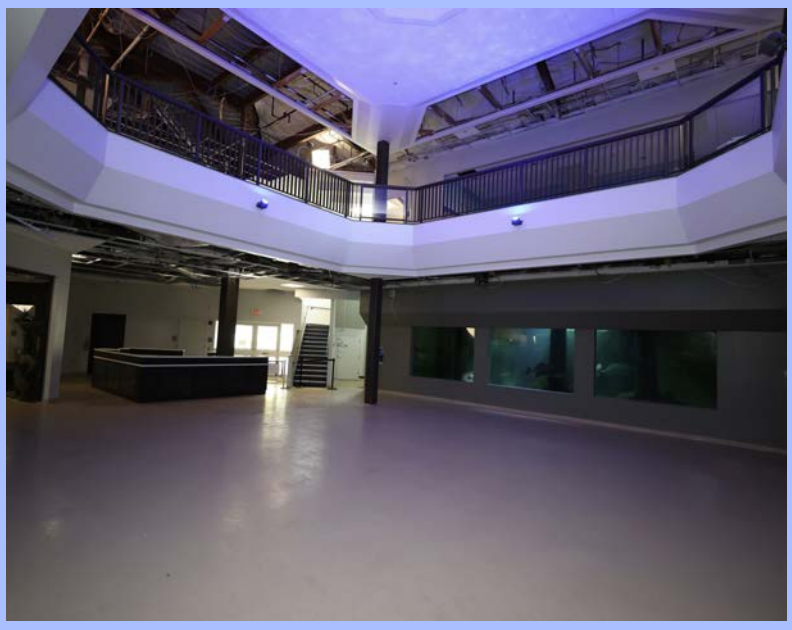
They say time flies, and boy does it ever. As you are reading this, I can say that I have been mayor of the Great City of Atlantic City for a full five years now! In those five years, I never once shied away from the fact that Atlantic City has its share of problems. But my administration has been built on tackling those problems head on, making this city clean and safe, and building strong relationships. The rumors of Atlantic City's demise are greatly exaggerated, and as for myself, I'll remind anybody who needs to hear this again, I remain more committed than ever to this City and being your mayor.

Thanks for reading our newsletter, and remember, It's a Great Day Here in the City of Atlantic City!

- Mayor Marty Small, Sr.

(Mayor Small observing the renovations at the Atlantic City Aquarium)

IMPROVING THE BASIN



The public got its first look at the interior and exterior work that's been done at the Atlantic City Aquarium as part of a news conference highlighting improvements to Historic Gardner's Basin. To date, rehabilitation to the Aquarium's interior, window and roof replacements, and Phase I of HVAC replacement have been completed while work on the building's exterior (siding, trim, decks, railings, front entry doors and the addition of a mural), through various funding sources, including American Rescue Plan funds, is just wrapping up. Visitors to the Aquarium can expect new, thrilling exhibits upon its reopening. The City hoped to reopen the Atlantic City Aquarium this Summer after a four-year closure due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and much needed repair work. Unfortunately, supply chain and funding issues delayed the start of the exterior work and final stages of interior repair, including Phase II of HVAC replacement. While the reopening has been pushed back, we promise once all is said and done, this will all be worth the wait, as the City will have a state-of-the-art aquarium that will be able to compete with any aquarium in the country!

Mayor Small also announced the City received $1.4-million in grant funding to demolish the seawall bathroom attached to the Atlantic City Aquarium, where a brand-new bathroom facility will be constructed for public use. The seawall bathroom has not been open for several years. Reconstruction is expected to begin in the coming months with plans to fully reopen in time for the 2025 Summer season.

Other recent completed projects at Gardner's Basin include pier and piling replacement, dredging; new lighting and signage throughout the basin; improvements to the parking areas and sidewalks; and new EV charging stations. Future projects include improvements to the maintenance building (new roof and painting); security camera improvements, and trash enclosure construction adjacent to the maintenance building to centralize trash and recycle collection for the entire basin. These projects are all anticipated to get underway no later than Spring 2025.

CLEAN SAFE

The City of Atlantic City Department of Public Works will now more efficiently be able to serve the taxpayers of Atlantic City through the addition of six, brand-new Madvac cleaning vehicles to its fleet, along with a new street sweeper, all of which are currently being used throughout the City. Each new Madvac is dedicated to one of Atlantic City's six Wards. Madvacs allow Public Works crews to clean areas the sweepers cannot get to such as curbs, sidewalks, gutters and drains. The department's previous Madvac and sweeper equipment date back to 2005-2011, making repair work more difficult due to obsolete parts.

For the first time, a police officer is now assigned to every public school in Atlantic City. The City of Atlantic City, Atlantic City Police Department and Atlantic City Board of Education agreed to add a police officer in every K-8 school and two officers in Atlantic City High School throughout the entire academic school year. The new assignments were made possible through a $3.75M Community Oriented Policing Services (C.O.P.S) Hiring Grant the City was awarded earlier this year. The officers, all of whom have been with the department and volunteered for this critical position, are eager to build relationships with the students, teachers, and staff.

The CRDA honored 24 First Responders in Atlantic City for their exceptional service during the annual 'First Serve to our First Responders' dinner at Park Place Prime in Bally's Atlantic City, including members of the Atlantic City Fire Department, Atlantic City Police Department, Communications Buraeu, Atlantic City Beach Patrol and Atlantic City Public Works. Congratulations to all of the honorees (full list is available at www.acnj.gov), and don't forget to experience Atlantic City Restaurant Week October 6-11 (www.acrestaurantweek.com).

Hundreds of individuals from all across Atlantic County gathered at the Saracini-O'Neill Atlantic City 9/11 Memorial to remember the victims of the September 11th attacks and honor all the heroes that emerged that day. Mayor Small, ACPD Chief Sarkos and ACFD Chief Evans were among the City and County leaders present for this beautiful ceremony full of patriotic pride.

TAKING CARE OF OUR RESIDENTS

Emotions ran high at City Hall Council Chambers as four Atlantic City residents got to realize their dream to become homeowners for the first time, as their names were randomly selected during Atlantic City's First-Time Homebuyer Lottery drawing on September 12, 2024. Out of the 400 plus residents who applied for the First-Time Homebuyer Lottery, 29 residents met the residency, job and credit requirements to have their names entered into the lottery, which was run by New Jersey Community Capital, one of the City's partnering organizations in this program. Through a $100,000 subsidy from NJCC and a $100,000 per property investment from the City, including other first-time homebuyer assistance programs from the City's CDBG Office and the Atlantic County Improvement Authority, these $400,000 homes are available to buy for $175,000 or less. Congratulations to our new homeowners! The City plans to organize another First-Time Homebuyer Lottery drawing this Winter for six additional properties, stay tuned for that announcement.

In an effort to give back to the residents of the City of Atlantic City, Mayor Small and Golden Nugget Atlantic City partnered for a free furniture and mattress giveaway. Golden Nugget Atlantic City is in the process of renovating its rooms and suites as part of a multimillion dollar hotel renovation, and as a result, has excess mattresses, box springs, pillows, couches, sectionals, lamps, tables, chairs, clocks and more available for residents. The giveaway was expected to last days, but demand was so high in the early going, the giveaway ended in a matter of hours. The City thanks Golden Nugget for thinking of our residents, and if you didn't get any items this time around, keep you eye open for the announcement of similar opportunities in the near future.

Congratulations to Mayor Small and all the honorees at this year's Atlantic City Community Fund Reception at Hard Rock Hotel and Casino Atlantic City! Each year, this event honors individuals who have gone above and beyond to support nonprofits in Atlantic City, while celebrating these entities and fundraising for them.

Hispanic Heritage Month

The City of Atlantic City, along with our Multicultural Services division, proudly celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month, honoring the history, culture and contributions of our Hispanic and Latino communities. The public was invited to explore our Hispanic Heritage resource table currently set up in the City Hall lobby. And to kick off Hispanic Heritage Month, Multicultural Services hosted a free Cooking Class open to all Atlantic City residents, who were guided by a professional chef to prepare Arroz Chaufa, a Peruvian dish similar to fried rice in Asian culture. Upon completion, participants packed their dishes to take home for later, because as part of the event, they then got to sample Dominican salmon, Columbian steak and Puerto Rican chicken.

Atlantic City Senior Services partnered with CROPS Nonprofit for a 'Bees and Bathsalts' Gardening Program. Our Seniors got to participate in an art project, made bathsalts, learned about the importance of Bees to the ecosystem, and some won un-BEE-lievable prizes (sorry, we had to!). One of the more memorable trips organized for our seniors recently was to the Hindu Temple in Robbinsville, New Jersey for a Magical Mystery Tour!

Ocean Saddle Academy is one of the brand-new programs Atlantic City Youth Services has available this Fall, where kids in grades 6-12 enjoy horseback riding, while learning proper care for the horses and other fun horse-related activities. Additional ACYS Fall programs starting soon include free drum lessons, nail studio, ballet classes, and so much more! ACYS is also bringing back its College Tour series for the Fall, with the next one scheduled for October 9th (Lincoln University).

Atlantic City Recreation's M-F programs are back for the Fall, and so are fun and exciting new programs like the Jr. MLS Soccer Clinic, which recently took over Pete Pallitto Field!

Can We Say Great Day?!

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