

- Leadership
- Expectations
- Transparency
- Stability

CITY OF ATLANTIC CITY
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

- Accountability
- Credibility
- Excellence in Execution

L.E.T.S. A.C.E. IT!



MAYOR MARTY SMALL, SR.

City Hall
1301 Bacharach Boulevard • Suite 706
Atlantic City, New Jersey 08401
Telephone 609-347-5400

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Andrew Kramer (Public Information Officer) – 609-226-3470; AKramer@acnj.gov

Adele Polk (Assistant Public Information Officer) – 640-888-3003; Apolk@acnj.gov

Atlantic City Aquarium Reopens to the Public with New Look, New Attractions

Atlantic City, N.J. (March 24, 2025) – With renovations and repair work to the inside and outside of the building now complete, the Atlantic City Aquarium at Historic Garnder’s Basin reopened its doors, today, for the first time in five years. City of Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, Sr. was joined by Aquarium staff and city leaders to officially cut the ribbon outside the building before city partners and stakeholders, along with Aquarium guests enjoyed their first look inside since March of 2020.

The Atlantic City Aquarium showcases more than 100 species highlighted by Groman – a 225-pound Loggerhead Sea Turtle, plus diamondback turtles, southern and cow nose rays, sea horses, pipe fish, lionfish, horseshoe crabs and much more. New exhibits as of the reopening include the “Under the Sea” coloring area, hurricane simulator and photo booth. By early summer, the Aquarium will also open six hands-on touch tanks on the second floor with daily touch tank feeding shows. The Aquarium is open year-round, seven days a week from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Admission prices and additional information can be found at www.acnj.gov/pages/acaquarium. The public may also contact the Aquarium at 609-348-2880.

“The Atlantic City Aquarium has always been one of our city’s most precious gems in one of most beautiful areas of Atlantic City, so the Small administration is thrilled to be able to reopen this building looking and feeling like the first-class attraction it is, our taxpayers deserve that,” said Mayor Small. “From our Aquarium staff to our Public Works Department and Engineering Office

to our contractors and consultants, there are many individuals that deserve credit for this reopening. Our residents and visitors can now once again enjoy the unique experience that is the Atlantic City Aquarium.”

The Atlantic City Aquarium first opened in May of 1999. The building closed in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to that closing, grant funding was secured through the NJ Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA) for much needed capital improvements. Due to the pandemic, the normal process for moving such a project forward was slower than originally anticipated. Once construction began, it became apparent that repairs were greater than expected. That, combined with the pandemic's impact on supply chains, created delays in the renovation schedule. The scope of interior work that has been completed since includes new roofing, windows and flooring throughout the building, new decking and ceiling at the top level look out, complete bathroom renovation, HVAC replacement, lighting replacement, interior drywall replacement and painting, new doors at various locations, and duct work, electrical and plumbing repairs. No exterior building siding aesthetic improvements were included in this project, so Mayor Small made the determination that when the Atlantic City Aquarium reopens, the building needs to look brand-new both inside and out, so the city was able to secure the money for exterior improvements using American Rescue Plan funds. Rutala Associates, LLC helped secure the grant funding.

The Atlantic City Aquarium is managed by the City of Atlantic City Department of Public Works. During the last five years, city staff, led by Gardner’s Basin Nautical Park Manager Lisa Schall and Aquarist Sarita DuCote-Stroud continued maintenance of the building. Gardner’s Basin Management handles everything exhibit-related and property management. Shore Aquarium Services cared for the fish all throughout the closing. Under the direction of the City of Atlantic City Engineer Uzo Ahirakwe, Arthur Ponzio Co & Associates served as the project manager, SOSH Architects and Remington and Vernick Engineers (RVE) served as consultants, Weatherby Construction Corporation was contracted for interior renovation, Shore Building Contractors, Inc was contracted for the exterior work and front decking, and Falasca Mechanical was contracted for the HVAC repair work. Through funding from the city’s Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) office, the city’s Youth Services division coordinated the painting of murals on the building’s second floor with children from the area, and local artist Kelly Prevard painted the new murals on the building’s exterior walls. The Atlantic City Arts Foundation administered the planters leading up to the entrance, sponsored by the Inlet CDC. The planter paintings feature work from local artist Tabitha Brown. Volunteers with the Atlantic City Hydrangea Trail worked to beautify the entire park.

###