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Presentations Made Regarding a Loading Zone & Improvements to the Jefferson Street Parking Deck, Improvements to the Water System Among Topics Discussed

10/14/20 Caucus

By: Carolyn Maxwell

PERTH AMBOY – Amit Vedawala, owner of the Tu Drink Liquor Store, located on New Brunswick Avenue came before the council to plead his case for a 60-foot Loading Zone for his store. He stated that parking on Oak Street for delivery trucks was not possible because of too many residents parking on that street.

Council President Petrick asked if the delivery trucks can come in earlier.

Vedawala explained, “I open my store at 11 a.m. and deliveries are made (at the driver’s discretion).”

Councilman Joel Pabon spoke up, “There is a lot of businesses on the same block as the liquor store. There’s hardly any parking there anyway. The loading zone would be taking up a lot of parking from corner to corner.”

Vedawala explained, “I am asking for a 60-foot space because there was a 60-foot loading zone space before I opened up my store, but it was blocked off. Two of the businesses on that block have either their own parking lot or a garage to put their vehicles in.”

Petrick then asked, “What about any customers coming into your store? Is the loading zone only for deliveries?”

Vedawala answered, “We are going to need at least one spot for our customers.”

Petrick was then concerned, “If you have a customer coming in, and they park in that loading zone, they might get ticketed.”

Vedawala explained, “My store is 60 feet long, and I’m only looking for a 60-foot loading zone. Our customers come in and come out quickly.”

Councilman Helmin Caba questioned, “Will there be space behind and in front of the 60-foot space requested for public parking?”

Vedawala answered, “Yes.”

Council President William Petrick concluded, “We will look at your request.”

The next discussion was regarding the Bond Ordinance providing for renovations for the Jefferson Street Parking Deck – Authorizing the issuance of \$115,000 bonds or notes of the city to finance the cost thereof.

Celestina Ramos, Director of the Parking Utility came for-

ward to shed some light on the details regarding this ordinance. “The deck was renovated after Superstorm Sandy, but we have to do some reparations also to the garage.” She then introduced one of the consultants that will be working on these projects. Consultant Jim Zullo from the firm of Timothy Haahs and Associates stated that the deck was built in 1974. “Weather conditions will cause wear and tear over the years. There has been leaks that have been going into the parking utility office. Work needs to be done in the stairwell.

Celestina Ramos said, “The lighting work was completed, and we are aware of the urine in the stairwell. The stairwell is closed from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. Give us a chance to power wash them. There are cameras installed throughout the parking deck, but there are only cameras installed at the top and the bottom of the stairwell. We are waiting for a quote to install the security cameras at the deck.”

Luis Perez-Jimenez Director of Operations USAPA came up to speak about Ordinance No. 2 & 3. – Providing for various water/wastewater utility improvements. He explained “For Ordinance No. 2 – The issuance of \$1,970 in bonds or notes for the City to finance part of the cost thereof.

“For Ordinance No. 2, it is under the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank State Loans.” Perez-Jimenez continued, “For Ordinance No. 3 (Appropriating \$3,790,000 and authorizing the issuance of \$2,930,000 bonds or notes of the city to finance part of the cost thereof.) This is part of a city bond for the construction of a new water company building, a feasibility study, and an improvement to the Runyan System.”

Councilman Joel Pabon spoke up, “I want people to know that this a yearly upkeep of our water. I know our water is not the best in the world, but it is not as bad as people make it out to be. Our water is always being monitored.”

Perez-Jimenez continued, “We have to make sure that we meet the EPA and the DPA requirements. My license is on the line. We take water samples every 15 minutes and keep improving our water treatment. There are always new MCL (Maximum

Contaminant Levels) regulations ongoing. We have to meet the requirements of the EPA and DPA. It can take anywhere from 6 months to 1 year after we get approval for a process. I have been working at the USA-PA for the last 22 years and before that, I worked for the city in the same capacity. Our system is over 100 years old and we have to be careful what we do not to damage it because of its age.”

The next items to be discussed had to do with tax overpayments at various Landings at Harborside Properties (Resolutions R-372-10/20 thru R-374-10/20). Councilman Joel Pabon was concerned because the Landings have not done any repairs (to their properties which in turn is doing nothing for the city).

Council President Petrick then wondered, “What are these properties worth?” He asked Interim Business Administrator Patricia Perkins to get the information for him.

Petrick then questioned R-376-10/20 – Refund of tax overpayment on various properties owned by ZHARBOR, LLC.

Petrick wanted to know, “Who are they?”

No one answered.

R-383-10/20 was questioned next. – Authorizing the insertion of revenue into the CY2020 Budget for the Buckeye Partners Rudyk Park Easement in the amount of \$855,000.

Pabon questioned, “What are they doing?”

Petrick answered, “Installing a pickline”.

Kenny Ortiz, Director of Human Services/Recreation came up to give a more detailed explanation. “This is compensation from Green Acres for easement of properties. I talked to the owners of some of the smaller parcels. They are willing to give their properties over to the city for a \$1.00. Conrail is the holdup. They are not willing partners and believe that the track on their property are on an active line, but there are trees growing on the middle of those tracks. Rutgers University did a study, and they thought the area we were talking about would be great for recreation.”

Petrick spoke up, “We (the council) would be glad to help you with any projects we have



PERTH AMBOY - A Resolution of Gratitude was given to Rosemary Oarsley (center) for her commitment of over 20 years to the prevention of drug and alcohol abuse in the city of Perth Amboy. She was also recognized by the Department of Human Resources (L to R) Councilwoman Milady Tejada, Councilman Joel Pabon, Council President Bill Petrick, Rosemary Oarsley, Councilman Helmin Caba, Municipal Alliance Coordinator Isamar Payano, Department Director of Human Services Ken Ortiz.
*Photo by Carolyn Maxwell

for that area.”

Ortiz also wanted to explain that sometimes the city can do a land swap (in the case of Lucey Center which is owned by the Board of Education). The Board of Education doesn’t have much land left. We have talked to the Board of Education to try to purchase property to be used for parks.”

Pabon then spoke up and stated, “At one time, no one wanted to touch the Flynn School Park. Even when I was on the Board of Education, then the city decided to do something (at the Flynn School Park).”

Petrick reminisced, “I played at Flynn School Park when I was a kid.”

The next topic to be discussed was R-392-10/20 – Extending the agreement between the City of Perth Amboy and the Board of Education for the State of New Jersey 2020 summer food service program (breakfast and lunch) to December 31, 2020.

Ortiz explained that the city already had a contract with the Board of Education. “This resolution is in case we have to open additional sites. The Board of Ed is distributing meals at the school and the Board of Ed will supply the meals. We will be reimbursed by the state. 160,000 meals were distributed this summer, and anyone could have gotten one. We would do breakfast and lunch meals only at our sites and anyone can get one.”

R-394-10/20 was next to be discussed. Increase the con-

tract with Norris, McLaughlin & Marcus to provide legal services in connection with the renovation of the Perth Amboy Public Library in an amount not to exceed \$9,000.

B.A. Perkins explained, “They are trying to finish up the work in a timely manner.”

Maria Rivera from the Purchasing Department came up to speak next, “We are reviewing all the contracts moving forward making sure that the language has not changed.”

R-403-10/20 – Authorizing the 2020-2021 renewal of a certain plenary retail consumption licensed to the Heat Sports Bar & Lounge at 1096 Convery Blvd. effective October 15, 2020.

Councilwoman Milady Tejada asked, “What is going on with this bar (referring to complaints lodged by residents close to that area)?”

When no one responded, Resident Ken Balut shouted out, “That business is for sale!”

City Clerk Victoria Kupsch spoke up, “If the council wants to place conditions on this business, now is the time to do it.”

Law Director Peter King then remarked, “You can put an off-duty officer there or patrol car. You can also put down the operating town of the location of the business.”

Pabon spoke up and said, “I haven’t heard anything (complaints) about this place for a

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Presentations Made Regarding a Loading Zone & Improvements to the Jefferson Street Parking Deck, Improvements to the Water System Among Topics Discussed 10/14/20 Caucus

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while.”

City Clerk Kupsch then said, “The bar has been closed to the public because of the pandemic.”

Petrack then added, “That’s why I asked if anyone wanted restrictions.”

Pabon finished up his remark, “There is no noise, so why even bother?”

Police Chief Roman McKeon came up to speak, “That bar has been quiet as a mouse and there has been no recent activity. They may have had one or two small gatherings, but that is about it. They wanted to have a nightclub, but we said no. The business is for sale.”

Petrack then closed the discussion by saying, “There is no reason to put restrictions on the property.”

Petrack then asked if anyone had any questions on any other communications.

Pabon said Communication No.7 – Residents from Washington Street between Amboy Avenue and Cornell Street submitted a letter of complaint regarding the lack of parking in that area.

Pabon stated, “There’s a business in that area and they park a lot of cars even though that business has a parking lot. The residents have signed a large petition.”

Petrack said, “We can create an ordinance for permit parking. Have people come to the meeting to talk about this.”

Police Chief McKeon came

up and stated, “We have received no complaints. I’ll send a traffic officer to talk to the business owner about being a good neighbor.”

Pabon added, “Some cars are parked there for a week and sometimes up to a month.” Pabon then handed the police chief a copy of the petition of complaints from the residents in that area.

Public Comments:

Resident Ken Balut asked if the council had gotten the forensic report on the YMCA. “The pool is hosting events.” He then questioned if the city has gotten its \$34,000 that the Landings owes the city.

Law Director Peter King responded, “Not yet.”

Balut continued, “We are giving out settlements of \$900,000 to Landings Properties even though Kushner owes us money. What’s going on? This has to stop! The taxpayers are subsidizing the Y.”

Pabon then questioned, “Is the city taking back some of the money that is owed us?”

Law Director King then explained, “We can’t just move money around. I had meetings on Friday with the PARA attorney. There will be litigation regarding the \$34,000. You can file complaints in the court.”

Pabon concluded his statement, “I heard there are pending violations (for the Landings).”

Resident and Businessman Jeremy Baratta came up next. “I own several businesses as a veteran, and I applied for Covid Grants. I submitted (law)

suites against the BID. It’s almost 6 weeks to the day that I turned in the paperwork and still no response (regarding the grants I applied for). If I am being discriminated against, there will be another lawsuit filed. If my paperwork has been sat on due to my political affiliation, it will be dealt with. I am putting the council on notice. The last email I sent to Tashi Vazquez. I did not include the BID. I have sent more paperwork than was needed. There has been no response, and nothing is being processed. I am the only veteran owned business (in Perth Amboy) and I should be on top of the list (for grants).”

Resident Alan Silber came up next and reminded the council that in 2018, they discussed when the Resolution for a close session, when it comes to certain litigation, you have to put more information regarding the case. “I see that a lot of businesses have reopened, but why are the exercise stations on Sadowski Parkway fenced off?”

Department of Public Works Director Frank Hoffman came forward. “the OEM said they are highly infectious areas that should be closed off.”

Tashi Vazquez came up to comment about this item also, “The state has approved for installation of sanitary stations for the downtown areas only.”

Petrack concluded the Caucus by stating, “It’s up to the administration to decide what is to be opened.

The Council went into closed session at 6:11 p.m.

The Private Law Practice of George M. Boyd, ESQ.

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PERTH AMBOY BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT PUBLIC NOTICE

RE: Open Public Meetings Act
Perth Amboy Business Improvement Special Board Meeting/Public Hearing
Please be advised that the Perth Amboy Business Improvement District public hearing will be held at the **Raritan Bay Area YMCA theater room of the Public Safety Complex located at 357 New Brunswick Avenue, Perth Amboy on Tuesday, November 17th at 5:00 p.m.** to discuss the following item:
1. Approval of the Perth Amboy Business Improvement District 2021 Proposed Budget
Note: The proposed 2021 BID Budget will be posted on the City’s website for review by October 28th at www.perthamboy-nj.org.
Members of the BID and property owners are encouraged to attend to share comments and suggestions.

Residents Question Contracts 10/14/20 Council Meeting

By: Carolyn Maxwell

PERTH AMBOY – The Council Meeting started at 6:43 p.m. The first person to talk regarding Ordinance No. 1 – Renovations to the Parking Deck was Ken Balut.

Balut wanted to know if any items pertaining to this ordinance were bid out. “There’s a contract in the past that was cancelled because it was an illegal bid.”

Interim Business Administrator Perkins responded, “Nothing has been solidified yet regarding this ordinance. There are a lot of little things to be worked on and it’s not going to one person.”

Law Director Peter King then added, “This is for the financing of this project. The engineers and architects usually go in for higher costs in the bid for unexpected costs.”

Public Comments on Agenda Items Only:

Resident Jeremy Baratta asked about a late-starter resolution R-406-10/20 – a \$200,000 Covid relief funds from the Department of Community Affairs.

Tashi Vazquez, Assistant Director of City's Office of Economic & Community Development came up to respond. “The Department of Community Affairs put out a Neighborhood

Program Grant which is to support the business district from the corner of Smith and High Streets to the Train Station to help them out due to the Covid. This is to help businesses with rental issues and to help restaurants put their menus online and help with the QR Scanning. 90% of the grant money will come to us. \$25,000 of that money will be used to hire a consultant to help these businesses. This will be a public contract.”

Baratta continued, “I’ve been to several restaurants in other towns. \$25,000 is too much money to have someone develop menus with QR Codes.” Baratta was also concerned because the rental assistance (business) only applied to people who have storefronts.

Vazquez came back up, “The boundaries are set by the state. This was approved by the council. The state listed what we could spend the money on, and it’s outlined on the application. It’s also supposed to create an online presence and support the restaurants which would be part of the job of the consultant.”

Balut came up, “\$25,000 to give to someone to help businesses put a QR code on their menus? And you can’t help businesses on the other side of

town? This is ridiculous!” Balut then questioned Resolution R-regarding the Landings property. “How much did we (the city) give to Kushner on these settlements? This is ridiculous! She (Diaz) signed an agreement to put this property on the market. Real Estate is high now. People are always giving me information about selling my house. Kushner deserves nothing! Sue him! If you can’t win a case against Kushner, then you can’t win anything. This has been going on since 2010.”

Law Director King responded, “We can send Kushner a letter regarding his property and he has 30 days to respond. I would move to avoid the contract they have, but there will also be litigation.”

Petrack then spoke up and said, “Mayor Diaz let the contracts fly.”

King retorted, “It was PARA.”

Petrack said, “Wilda was the head of PARA at the time.”

King ended the conversation by saying, “You know the ramifications.”

Ordinances No.1,2,3,6 was moved Pabon and seconded by Tejada. Ordinance No. 4 was moved by Pabon and seconded by Caba. Ordinance No. 5 – Restricted parking spot for a handicapped person regarding an ad-

dition (the applicant had passed away) was removed.

Consent Agenda – R-372 thru R-397, R-399 thru R-406 was moved by Pabon and seconded by Tejada. R-398 – Authorizing a professional service agreement with qualified appraisers who have submitted responses to request the qualifications for CY2021 - was voted on separately. The resolution was moved by Pabon and seconded by Tejada. Council President Bill Petrack abstained.

Public Portion:

Jeremy Baratta came up to speak first. He questioned, “Why have a BID when everything has to go through other departments?”

B.A. Perkins answered, “They are needed to stimulate the businesses.”

Baratta continued, “There is no business. Look at the way BID functions. You (the council) are not involved in the process. They make up their own rules. Everything ends up in litigation. Laws to help her (Mayor Diaz) politically. In about two weeks, the 90 days expires for the Interim B.A. What does that mean? That she can’t work anymore?”

Law Director King responded, “After 90 days, the mayor said that with the council approval,

the appointment can be extended for an additional 60 days.”

Resident Ken Balut came up next and drew laughs when he said, “Maybe we can rehire Walensky to help the restaurants update their menus with the QR codes for their menus.” Balut continued, “The mayor signed a contract with Kushner without anyone knowing anything about it. The resident that bought a Kushner unit was charged without having a firewall. He didn’t build it. Litigations are good if done properly. The city makes big mistakes when it comes to litigating. Have smart litigation. When Pelissier was here, he said that the negotiations for the Kushner contract would be complete in a short period of time. Then he was gone. Cruz had to leave because of inappropriate behavior and is gone. The insurance company writes up manuals with rules that do not pertain to people who are in higherup positions.”

Resident Stephanie Márquez-Villafañe came up speaking as a businessowner in the BID district. She specifically spoke about the grant money. “I am for business revitalization and I applaud Ms. Vazquez for what

Joseph B. Vas
for Mayor

**Vanessa Bermudez &
Angel Mota Ramirez**
for City Council



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Vas is the only candidate for mayor who has a record of cutting taxes! As a tax-cutting attorney in private practice, Vas helped nearly 1,000 homeowners appeal unfair high property assessments, which led to lower tax bills. Armed with advanced education in management, Vas will streamline government to get our money's worth.

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WATER POLLUTION



Vas will invest in superior transmission lines, raise drinking water quality standards, & more vigorously enforce pollution prevention laws. A Vas administration will begin work to separate stormwater from wastewater treatment lines, to stop the millions of gallons of raw sewage that flow each year into the Raritan River and Arthur Kill.

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Vas is the only candidate for mayor standing up for the 70 percent of Perth Amboy residents who rely on Rent Control. Over the last 12 years, incompetence and neglect in City Hall essentially invalidated the ordinance adopted in 1983 to prevent high rent increases. As mayor, Vas will restore rent control & support state laws to protect tenants from unfair evictions and insure affordable housing for all.

**As a lawyer in private practice, Joseph B. Vas
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Imagine what he can do as mayor!

TOGETHER PERTH AMBOY CAN DO BETTER



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Residents Question Contracts 10/14/20 Council Meeting

**Continued from Page 2*

she does, but you need to look at the businesses beyond the train station which is part of our revitalization. Promote tourism and our history to expand business opportunities. \$25,000 is not out of line for a consultant. Let's work with the BID. Have them work with the businesses. Reallocate the \$25,000 and ask for volunteers to help businesses with placing their menus online. We have to be fiscally responsible."

Vazquez came up to speak again. "The money that I spoke about earlier to help businesses can be used for different projects but not to different areas in the city and it has to be expended by December 31, 2020."

Mayoral Candidate JB Vas came up to speak next. "I have attended many council meetings in the last decade. I'm concerned about the multiple shootings around town by McDonalds and on Hall Avenue. There were stabbings. I'm a father of two boys and a lifetime resident. I penned a letter to Council President Petrick about having a special meeting regarding these violent crimes." Vas then addressed Petrick and said, "You said my motivation is political and the council is standing in the way of Diaz. How you can now turn this around to say it's political – it's sad. Even Ken Balut said the crime was pathetic. Balut is a former police officer and said there should be checks and balances in place. An unqualified person is heading Code Enforcement and the council voted 5-0 (to place that person in Code Enforcement). You talked about the water and the firing the last Business Administrator. There was a promotion of a former Councilman's son. The Rent Leveling Board didn't exist, and violent crime is on the uptake, yet the council did nothing."

Resident Wilfredo Soto came up to thank everyone who

helped during the pandemic which included the doctors, nurses, fire department and the council members. "There has been an increase in crime everywhere and many people have become even more depressed because of the Covid. You can't blame the mayor or council for everything. A lot of outsiders came here to commit crimes. When they had the protests in town due to the George Floyd incident, no one damaged property from the city. A lot of times parents are not around to supervise their children. We have to fight this together. Call the cops and you'll see crime happening. God bless everyone!"

A representative from the PBA Local#13 was the next to speak. He asked for an update at what was discussed during the closed session regarding the PBA contract. Ms. Perkins (B.A.) did the negotiations in good faith. It's been two years, and it still can't be discussed out in the open."

Maria Vera who lives on Madison Avenue towards the waterfront and stated, "We are not going forward in this town. Keep the politics out of this and do what's best for the people. This is a disgrace. You guys can't do the job. South Amboy recently recognized their illegal housing problem. There are unqualified people working in Code Enforcement. Kushner owes us money. I want my money back!"

Council Comments:

Councilman Helmin Caba thanked everyone who came to the meeting and all those who watched in TV-Land. This is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and I also have family members suffering with this. My thoughts and prayers to everyone suffering with the Covid-19.

Councilman Joel Pabon said, "The city needs to return the benches, especially for the seniors. The only time people come out to speak is during election time. Crime is always on top of the list. It's happening

all over. I wish the police chief had stayed here for the whole meeting to answer questions about crime. I am all for having a police blotter. Nixle stopped with reporting crime. No one wants to hear or want crime to happen, but residents want to know about it. I see that the mayor approved people to serve on the Rent Leveling Board. I want to thank Steve Jobin from the YMCA to let us have a meeting here and open up the building to close later, but we need to have a bigger place."

Councilwoman Milady Tejada thanked all who came to the meeting. She stated, "You don't understand how government works. It hurts when people disrespect me, but let's work together. Communication is a two-way street, and we are lacking it. Look who is running (for office) and see their positions and what power they have. Sometimes we are blocked (in our decisions). Take care of yourselves."

Council President Bill Petrick thanked everyone in TV-Land and all who participated tonight. "A lot has been said and an individual came here to publicly attack me. He should have represented his clients (that came to complain about the rent increase) in a better manner. He asked for a special meeting to discuss crime instead of asking the police chief for a meeting. He tried to have a public meeting for his political gain. The council can't appoint themselves to the Rent Leveling Board. We established ordinances and passed resolutions. Maybe we need to change the form of government. In the past, we had commissioners instead. Stay safe and healthy. I also want to thank Steve Jobin for opening up the facility for our use."

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m. Councilman Fernando Irizarry was absent from both meetings.

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Pallone Applauds House Passage of Bill that Improves the Safety and Integrity of Horseracing

Press Release 9/29/20

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr. (NJ-06), the Chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, today applauded House passage of a bill that will create safer racing conditions for Thoroughbred horses. The Horseracing Integrity and Safety Act establishes uniform standards for anti-doping and medication control and race-track safety for Thoroughbred horseracing. It also applies stronger safeguards and enforcement against performance enhancing drugs (PEDs). The legislation was approved by Pallone's Energy and Com-

merce Committee earlier this month.

"Horseracing at Monmouth Park in my district and across the country is more than just sport – it is a tradition that we look forward to year after year. Unfortunately, accidents that endanger both the horses and their riders ruin the joy of the races far too often. This bill sets standards that will help ensure we can maintain a safe, thriving horseracing industry," Congressman Pallone said. "Racehorses need appropriate time to recover after intense physical activity. Under no circumstances should racehorses train or race if suffering from soreness,

swelling, or pain nor should they race or train on unsuitable, treacherous tracks. This bill provides the guidelines necessary to protect Thoroughbred racehorses and establish trust in the authenticity of Thoroughbred races."

According to the American Horse Council, the horseracing sector generates \$15.6 billion of economic activity nationally every year that helps support almost 250,000 jobs. A 2007 Rutgers Equine Science Center study found that the horse industry in New Jersey was responsible for \$1.1 billion dollars in economic impact and generated about 13,000 jobs.

Obituary: Aaron Adam Jackson, Sr.

PERTH AMBOY - Aaron Adam Jackson, Sr. of Perth Amboy, NJ departed this life on Friday, October 9, 2020. After a long fight with cancer and having spent time with family members and friends, he succumbed peacefully at Center of Hope Hospice. He leaves to mourn his family and many life-long friends. Funeral arrangements are as follows:

Monday, October 26, 2020 – 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Memorial Service
Flynn & Son Funeral Home
23 Ford Avenue

Fords, NJ 08863

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to either the Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation or the American Cancer Society. www.mcsf.org or www.cancer.org



Aaron Adam Jackson Sr.
June 29, 1950 - October 9, 2020

Buckeye Partners Contributes \$10,000 To Perth Amboy's Hunger Relief Effort

Press Release 10/16/20

PERTH AMBOY, N.J. – Buckeye Partners, L.P. (Buckeye), which is a proud corporate citizen in the City of Perth Amboy, has donated \$10,000 to the community's hunger relief program.

Recently, Perth Amboy Mayor Wilda Diaz and Barry Rosengarten, chairman of the not-for-profit Perth Amboy COVID Help (PACH) organization, alerted Buckeye of an acute need developing within the community due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, Buckeye made its generous donation to the PACH fund to feed and support vulnerable, local families.

"Buckeye is grateful to be part of the Perth Amboy family," said David McGuire, Director of Operations for Buckeye's Perth Amboy and Northeast facilities. "Like any family, when one is in need, other family members pitch in. Buckeye is honored to be able to step up and help feed Perth Amboy households.

The donation is the latest in a series of charitable giving by Buckeye to the city. "Buckeye has assisted Perth Amboy in the past, is honored to have this opportunity to help now, and looks forward to working to meet the needs of the community in the future," McGuire concluded.

Mayor Diaz said: "We are extremely grateful to Buckeye Partners for its generous and timely donation to our emergency food program. Thanks to Buckeye Partners and local corporations, we're able to continue our community's long-term effort to assist households still struggling to feed their families. We're asking the city's corporate citizens to join with us in this time of crisis by making additional donations to help reduce the food insecurities among our neighbors."

Perth Amboy's Department of Human Services (DHS) applied Buckeye's \$10,000 contribution toward the purchase of 200 ShopRite Supermarket gift cards valued at \$50 apiece, which may be redeemed for groceries and essential household



David McGuire
Director of Operations for
Buckeye Partners'
Perth Amboy and
Northeast Facilities

items. DHS recently distributed the cards to local families at the city's Olive Street Community Center which has been serving as the food distribution center.

Since early March, the center has served more than 12,000 families as well as food pantries, feeding programs and local foodbanks. DHS packs 50 cartons of food each day for delivery to local households.

Perth Amboy COVID Help Chairman Barry Rosengarten also expressed thanks to Buckeye Partners and called for continued donations. Rosengarten said PACH expects to provide groceries and basic supplies into December and beyond.

Perth Amboy's large-scale food relief efforts are funded by private donations, and the nonprofit organization's goal is to gather \$100,000 in cash donations to purchase groceries and basic supplies for the city's neediest households. The campaign has received significant donations of groceries from the Supremo Food Market (valued at \$50,000) and Tropical Cheese Industries (worth \$100,000).

Companies and families are urged to donate online to help reduce the community's ongoing food insecurity issues. Contribute today by visiting: Perth Amboy COVID Help website (<http://www.perthamboycovid-help.org>) and clicking on the donate button.

Please Submit Your Events to AmboyGuardian@gmail.com

2020 Perth Amboy Mayoral Candidates Answer the Tough Questions



I - Fernando Irizarry



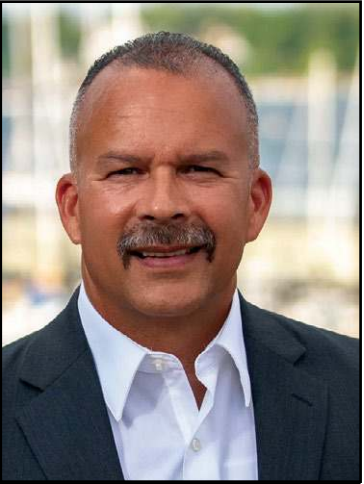
J - Joseph B. Vas



K - Wilda Diaz



L - Helmin Caba



M - Joel Pabon

1.) ILLEGAL HOUSING - Perth Amboy has a huge problem with illegal housing. What is your solution?

Fernando Irizarry - The issue is not about illegal converted housing, referred to as illegal housing. Perth Amboy has housing units that are crowded because of a lack of affordable housing options. A solution is a town wide housing evaluation to insure we have safe, affordable, and livable housing for all residents.

Joseph B. Vas - We need a qualified code enforcement official instead of Mayor Wilda Diaz's political pal who lacks all qualification. Someone who was unqualified for a secretarial position in City Hall is surely not ready to run a major department. While we must address such past problems as illegal conversions and code violations, the city's mandate to provide affordable housing requires that we move carefully.

Wilda Diaz - As an urban city, we enjoy the perks of being a close-knit family. We enjoy our shopping district, great restaurants, walkability, it's a HUB for businesses, we're multi-lingual and we have the convenience of traveling practically anywhere within minutes. However, by definition an urban city has a dense population in one area. These perks also come with realities, like many other urban cities, such as concerns with congestion, parking, housing and overcrowding.

I initiated a Housing Study to gather true data and gather best practices from other urban cities throughout the State on how they were managing their growth.

This comprehensive study will also try to provide a response to aid renters, while supporting the City's management goals. The plan includes:

1. Recommendations on providing reasonable housing opportunities for those in need, by revisiting our rent control ordinance, including what is called a "set-aside." This means that when there are residential developments, it would require the developer to set-aside a percentage for under-market value rentals.
2. A Development Fee Ordinance, this would allow for the city to set aside up to 2% of the assessed property value of all new residential/non-residential developments, strictly to be used to respond to housing concerns, specifically rehabilitation.
3. Updating our existing Renter's Registration ordinance, to include our property registration requirements that would implement new procedures, including an annual inspection and a certificate of habitability.
4. Implementing these new registration requirements, would

generate income for the municipality, allowing us to hire more housing inspectors to proactively address all the components of housing concerns brought on by our population growth over the last ten years.

Clean, safe, affordable housing is an ongoing priority of my Administration. COVID-19 have added another dimension to the Housing dilemma for all urban Municipalities in NJ. My Administration is looking to seek the possibility of lowering the current cap of the five percent rental increase to a two and a half percent increase. To ease the financial burden to renters and those looking for safe and affordable housing. My Administration responds proactively to ever concern regarding housing and building issues. Through Education to residents and landlords my Administration seeks to ensure the laws and compliance codes are followed for housing and apartments which is a constant goal that My Administration seeks to achieve.

Helmin Caba - Affordable housing remains in short supply not only in the City of Perth Amboy, but also across the State of New Jersey. As Mayor, I will work to not only address our affordable housing shortage, but to also ensure the safety of residents in their dwellings. The Department of Code Enforcement exists to preserve and protect the various city ordinances to make sure our residents are safe in their homes.

Joel Pabon - Illegal housing jeopardizes the health and safety of our City residents.

Unfortunately, illegal housing has consistently increased in the past 12 years. This may be due to affordability issues, lack of enforcement, and no accountability. First, we need to review our existing ordinances, as it relates to fines, and fees for illegal housing. Residents should have the right to register as tenants, or have landlords register their tenants. This creates a registry for the safety of our residents in the case of fire and rescue. Our code enforcement will need to be evaluated and we need to update our technology and customer service as it relates to anonymous reporting of illegal housing. A tenant's board will be fully appointed under my administration to help address rent increases. Finally, we must revisit and address the issues provided by a Rutgers assessment before visiting any further redevelopment projects.

2.) PARKING - Parking is a major problem in town. What is your solution?

Fernando Irizarry - Parking has always been a challenge in Perth Amboy. Residents need to be encouraged to respect their neighbors and obey the laws of

Perth Amboy. When parking laws are ignored, safety takes a back seat.

Joseph B. Vas - There is a limit to what can be done after over development occurs, but we can make provisions for homeowners to build driveways and backyard parking areas without the ordinary time and expense involved. Creative leadership and a willingness to accept fresh ideas like resident parking stickers are important but the first step in solving a problem is recognizing that it exists. I won't ignore the need for more parking.

Wilda Diaz - For the past 12 years my administration has been addressing this issue with new developers. As we continue to develop the city, we hold the developers accountable to ensure that ever project have sufficient parking for residents and employee parking for business establishments.

This year, for the first time, we are introducing contactless parking payments. The Park Mobile app will be available at more than 700 metered on-street spaces and in off-street municipal lots throughout the city. Last year, the Perth Amboy Parking Utility replaced the use of single meters for smart pay stations throughout the entire length of Smith Street, State Street and the Hospital Zone.

Additionally, we are the only city in the area that offers FREE residential permit parking to accommodate our families that live near the business and hospital district.

We also encourage "green" solutions as alternative means of transportation, last year we installed bike racks in several parks and public spaces to support non-vehicular travel.

Throughout the past several years, the Perth Amboy Parking Utility has improved the Jefferson Street Parking Deck, repaved several municipal parking lots and will continuing allocating funding for future improvements to the downtown district with plans to develop a second parking deck near the train station.

Their efforts continue in capital improvements, convenience and most importantly safety. We have made great efforts to support and promote our small businesses in the shopping areas and these capital improvements, creating safety and convenience, while offering the lowest meter rate in the State of New Jersey.

Helmin Caba - The lack of parking in the City of Perth Amboy has been a long-standing issue facing the city's residents. Not only do our parking concerns cause issues of convenience, but they also hurt local businesses, our economic prospects and de-

crease the overall quality of life for our residents. Addressing parking concerns requires the city to begin ongoing coordination and cooperation among businesses, residents and city departments to address parking needs in a collaborative manner.

If elected, I would address parking concerns with a three-pronged approach. First, I would conduct a comprehensive analysis of Perth Amboy's parking inventory, parking related ordinances and overall traffic study to determine the opportunity for immediate enhancements. Second, I would consider the implementation of mixed-use parking sites, shuttle services to key locations throughout the City and residential parking permit ordinances to make parking spaces more readily available. Finally, in the long-term, I would work to locate new sites for ample parking lots, improve parking information for residents/visitors and promote parking policies that support walking, cycling and public transportation use. Additionally, I believe Perth Amboy should move towards 21st century parking solutions mainly using intelligent parking systems. To continue monitoring our parking concerns, I would also form a Parking/Traffic Management Sub-Committee composed of community members and City Departments such as Police, Public Works and Transportation.

Joel Pabon - Improving Traffic Flow & Parking has always been one of my goals to fix since I ran for Mayor in 2016. My administration would analyze current Traffic Trends throughout the city, enforce existing traffic laws, and implement a Smarter Perth Amboy Transport plan. Part of that plan would also include a reevaluation and extension of Resident Only Parking Zones.

3.) ECONOMIC GROWTH - What are your plans to help the city's economy?

Fernando Irizarry - First, I will encourage developers to invest in the environmental cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields, which, in effect, are abandoned properties. They "diminish the value of neighboring properties and have a negative effect on the quality of life of adjacent property owners. Secondly, I will ensure that investments and reforms that improve the education system are made to make it more attractive to the urban middle class. A healthy middle class will increase the financial resources that the city will need to provide and improve the services it provides. Thirdly, I will partner with federal and state representatives to implement policies that will support low wage earners. Such policies will increase

the resources that these earners could use to strengthen the local economy.

Joseph B. Vas - My economic vision reflects a substantial understanding of the complex issues involved with appropriate development standards. Not only is Perth Amboy at a severe disadvantage due to 12 years of ineptitude and indifference, but the world is facing an economic crisis on par with the Great Depression. America must take a page from the book of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and prime the pump with massive investments in public works that create employment opportunities. Transitioning to clean renewable energy and eliminating environmental hazards will create enough jobs that our people will be able to eat, afford housing, and maintain a decent standard of living but it is going to require national leadership to accomplish that.

Locally, we can clean up the downtown, improve our roads and sidewalks, improve drinking water quality and repair our wastewater disposal systems to make the city more attractive to all investors. From people who buy homes here to those who build factories and warehousing or retail stores, making Perth Amboy safe and clean is a major selling point that has been ignored. A Vas administration will make Perth Amboy's location, highway access, waterfront community even more attractive to investors.

Wilda Diaz - We are working towards a sustainable economy. Economic development creates a balance for our society between social, human and manufactured capital—building an overall better standard of living.

In other words, new businesses generate a cycle of growth—

- beautifying areas in our city that had been vacant for decades,
- adding millions of dollars to our tax base,
- creating hundreds of jobs,
- having their employees reinvest in our small businesses, in our housing
- And FINALLY refueling a stagnant economy!
- Economic Development has been one of my largest platforms and we have executed successful plans in the areas of business promotion, redevelopment, employment, infrastructure improvements, environmental sustainability, creating open space and new park facilities, community and social services and capitalizing on Perth Amboy's industry, geographic location, natural resources. We have developed

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over 500 acres of brownfields into thriving industries that have created hundreds of competitive wage employment opportunities for our residents and equally as important retable’s.

In fact, nearly \$1 billion have been invested in redevelopment projects in the past 12 years.

Trends show a demand for urban markets like Perth Amboy where there is easy accessibility, an available workforce, cultural anchors, and available opportunities for growth.

Helmin Caba - My three-part plan to jump start Perth Amboy’s local economy is based on innovation, education and revitalization.

Innovate - Over the course of twelve years, the City of Perth Amboy has become a community whose commercial identity is limited to warehouses and industrial facilities. While some of these sectors provide jobs to our residents, I believe our local economy would benefit from an approach focused on innovation and 21st century jobs. To further enhance this goal, I will work hard to ensure that future businesses considering Perth Amboy are providing high paying jobs for residents and are engaged in businesses that have a long-term trajectory.

Educate - A strong middle-class is the foundation for economic prosperity and growing the wages of our urban middle-class can only happen through educational initiatives. As Mayor, I will work to identify apprenticeships for our students with manufacturers and unions. Additionally, I will work to build upon the successes our school district has achieved to hold our schools accountable for providing students with opportunities to access college or additional vocational career paths. For parents and adults, I will also work to create programs that provide opportunities to augment the educational attainment of all our residents so they, too, can benefit from these initiatives. Education, in many ways, spells economic success and I believe this strategy will yield incredible results.

Revitalize - For far too long, Perth Amboy has overlooked its best assets, the city’s incredible waterfront and rich historical significance. Communities across the nation have made economic gains by developing niche districts and I believe that Perth Amboy has the same opportunity. Working in concert with local businesses and leveraging State and Federal dollars, I will work to create a historic district, art district and other districts of interest to spur tourism and hopefully increase patronage in businesses throughout the city. These revitalization efforts will change the identity of Perth Amboy to reinvigorate the local economy, attracting new development and investment opportunities.

Joel Pabon - Improving rates will help alleviate the tax burden our home owners carry. Perth Amboy is logistically located in an ideal part of NJ to attract other companies besides developers or warehouses. My administration will Implement and adopt a Sustainable Growth Strategy & Plan in the first 100 days in office. Reducing the "red tape" for Small business to do business in Perth Amboy will help turnaround our small business districts as well as creating

“opportunity” zones to help foster entrepreneurship. We must also start conversations with companies to see which companies would be a “good fit” for Perth Amboy considering we have a lot to offer, especially a robust and diverse labor force.

4.) QUALITY OF LIFE/PUBLIC SAFETY – What do you view are the most serious quality of life and public safety issues? What is your solution?

Fernando Irizarry - Our most serious quality of life issue is overcrowding in rental apartments. Landlords are not invested in the well-being of the community they should be encouraged to make long-term investments in the condition and upkeep of their rental properties. Unsafe properties need to be addressed by the courts.

Joseph B. Vas - Perth Amboy is among the cities hardest hit by COVID-19. The death toll is tragic and there has not been enough done to save lives. The recent surge in violent crime reveals that 64 percent of the offenders here are never brought to justice. Our polluted drinking water is a serious health risk, since there are 25 cancer-causing chemicals coming out of the tap. These are all serious health risks but they share one common cause: neglect. The people running City Hall do not care about residents who live in Perth Amboy. If they did, things would never have gotten so far out of control.

Wilda Diaz - The pandemic is the greatest threat to the health, wellbeing and quality of life of our community, and on a global level in the past 100 years, disproportionately affecting urban cities. As a result, it has been my number public safety concern.

Urban cities are hit the hardest. Perth Amboy has seen over 2,644 positive cases, and 137 deaths, the greatest number of deaths due to a single cause in the history of our City, within a six-month timeframe.

It has also caused economic instability! Most importantly, it has directly impacted the physical, mental and financial wellbeing of our families and children.

My response to COVID-19 is to offer my office and the Administration to secure families within Perth Amboy with information and resources to sustain during the crisis. Our efforts include:

- Office of Emergency Management planning meetings with community leaders,
- PPE distributions,
- Seeking public and private funding for corona response activities,
- Creating a Small Business grants, business support and outreach,
- Daily public communications ensuring the residents are educated on safety and resources,
- Electronic signage throughout town notifying residents that masks are required and to social distance and,
- distributing over 200,000 meals and distributing food resources to our family’s through-out Perth Amboy.

The most pressings issues of My Administration is to provide safety and work to secure a good health during each national and or medical disaster that has and is now hitting Perth Amboy.

Helmin Caba - The prevention of criminal activity and the

cleanliness of our community are the most serious quality of life and public safety issues facing Perth Amboy residents. While Perth Amboy is a relatively safe community and residents are not buying into the politicized statements on crime during this election, I do believe we need to operate a community policing model. An active presence of police monitoring their community and working together with residents has a dramatic impact on crime and increases overall public safety. Moreover, I subscribe to the “broken window theory” suggesting that visible signs of disorder incentivize and encourage further crime and disorder. The cleanliness of our overall community is inconsistent at best and at worst has been completely ignored by this Administration. Across town you will find streets filled with litter, overflowing trash bins and the constant presence of debris. I know our Department of public works employees work hard to address these issues; however, we need to increase maintenance activity to ensure that our community is pristine. A clean and safe community is a quality community and if elected I will work hard to ensure that the quality of all Perth Amboy residents is enhanced.

Joel Pabon - Good Policy, Planning & Enforcement is critical to helping improve the quality of life in our town and public safety. Our administration is committed to the following:

- Review Existing Ordinances for its Effectiveness, Enforcement & Accountability
- Evaluate Police Resources to Strategically Deploy Police Presence in Much Needed Areas.
- Reactivate Walking Beats for Police Presence in the Downtown District and Other Business areas of our Town

5.) ABANDONED PROPERTIES – What is your solution?

Fernando Irizarry - Abandoned properties “diminish the value of neighboring properties and have a negative effect on the quality of life of adjacent residents and property owners. They also discourage neighborhood stability and revitalization.” The City Council adopted an abandoned property list ordinance in April of 2015. The ordinance allows the “city to use the powers granted to local governments under the laws of the State of New Jersey to address the conditions created by these properties.” (City code: Chapter 125) As mayor I will ensure that this ordinance is enforced to its fullest extent and that the list is updated regularly.

Joseph B. Vas - Municipalities have the authority to seize abandoned real estate, under the Abandoned Properties Rehabilitation Act and we should not be afraid to use any tools for transforming abandoned or blighted property from liabilities to assets. We can also utilize the Perth Amboy Redevelopment Agency to maximize the benefits of abandoned properties or underutilized properties.

When it comes to such drastic action, we are talking about measures beyond code enforcement. This has serious implications and the city must be vigilant to work with homeowners as much as possible, to help them get back on their feet before executing eminent domain. However, zom-

bie foreclosures and true abandoned properties will no longer be ignored once I am mayor.

Wilda Diaz - We have made an aggressive effort to redevelop underutilized/abandoned property city-wide. In the past several years we redeveloped over 500 acres of land, beautifying and utilizing what otherwise would have vacant and contaminated.

Furthermore, the City Administration currently have a working committee comprised of city Department Directors and high ranking staff members to address the issues of abandoned and foreclosed properties. This effort has led to a list and a registry of all abandoned and vacant properties throughout the City.

Private property owners included banked owned properties, are required to keep abandoned and boarded up properties clean and secured. Non-compliant property owners will be billed for any and all clean-up efforts conducted by the City. If they are absent or do not adhere to the communication sent to them by the Administration

Helmin Caba - Abandoned properties drive down property values, create opportunities for crime and serve as a source of economic blight in our community. If elected Mayor, I will direct the Business Administrator to work with the Tax Assessor's office to compile a comprehensive list of all abandoned lots throughout the town. Utilizing this list, the Tax Assessor will work to contact all property owners to ascertain the status of the property. Identified property owners will be directed to maintain their properties or face penalties from the Department of Code Enforcement. Should a property owner not be identified, I will direct city personnel to contact the pertinent authorities to declare the property as vacated so it can be purchased to be renovated and restored. I believe that Code Enforcement, the Tax Assessor’s Office and the Business Administrator must work in conjunction to ensure that our abandoned properties do not continue to deteriorate and that property owners understand the consequences of their actions on abandoned properties.

Joel Pabon - Strategically evaluate “Abandoned properties” to see if it meets our strategic open space strategy or other collaborative efforts to help improve and beautify our town.

6.) TERM LIMITS – Should term limits be imposed on every level of government?

Fernando Irizarry - My understanding is that the Supreme Court ruled against term limits for U.S. representatives and senators. The state of New Jersey limits the terms of the governor. I favor a three-term limit to the levels not mentioned above. This would increase voter turnout and allow the office holders to learn about policy and the complexities of government.

Joseph B. Vas - Term limits seem like a simple solution for a complex problem, so it may work out better if voters take more responsibility for holding elected officials accountable. Perth Amboy altered the mechanism for electing a mayor so that successful candidates must earn a majority. This is a smart example of democracy at work because we will no longer have to tolerate leadership imposed by

a minority, such as when Wilda Diaz was re-elected with less than 50 percent on two occasions, including one where she got just 37 percent of the vote.

Moreover, Wilda Diaz promised to amend the city charter to include term limits. She also promised in her first campaign that she would only serve two terms. If a candidate breaks their promises, voters really should not reward that behavior because it invites more lying and dishonesty.

Wilda Diaz - Term limits are determined by state legislation at every level of government. In order to have a harmonious state-wide governmental process, local municipalities serve at the will of the voters. I am extremely humbled that the voters of Perth Amboy accept my desire to see Perth Amboy as a vibrant City and my leadership has not taken the voters for granted.

We are, now, facing the greatest health and humanitarian crisis in at least a century. It is no secret that cities across America have been hit especially hard by the pandemic; first, because people in cites live in greater proximity to each other and second, our people do not have the kind of jobs they can do from their living room on a zoom call. They must go to their place of work and intermingle with numerous others, increasing their risk of exposure.

We have been recognized as having one of the strongest pandemic responses in the state. Additionally, we have distributed of 200,000 meals and food supply packages. I cannot, in good conscience, leave in the middle of such a crisis, disrupting the constant organizing efforts needed to combat the pandemic

Helmin Caba - While term limits have been long argued as an easy way to improve government, they do not guarantee stronger governance. First, I believe in the fundamental right of the voters to choose their representatives and I take issue with a policy that automatically bars competent and effective elected officials from continuing to do good work; should the voters find their leadership effective. Additionally, I have learned as a Councilman that good governance is a learned skill and holding positions allows for opportunities to gain greater expertise and competency. In our Democracy, the voters should ultimately decide on their leaders and term limits interrupt that process. However, I must emphasize that every elected official must prove their leadership and effectiveness to the voters every single day. Complacency has no place in good governance, and I am committed to working hard for the City of Perth Amboy for as long as the voters will have me.

Joel Pabon - I would like to see Term Limits on City elected offices and am committed to forming a committee to investigate and develop a referendum for term limits.

7.) POLICE REPORTS/TRANSPARENCY – Do you believe that a Police Blotter should be instituted as it was in the past? How important is transparency in government?

Fernando Irizarry - Transparency is critical in government to ensure that public trust, the cornerstone of open government, is viable. What I have learned is that a police blotter can be a

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two-edged sword. It can be used to inform the public about what is happening in our community, but it can also be used by political opponents to attack incumbents. It may be good for selling newspapers, but does it address the systemic issues of our communities?

Joseph B. Vas - Perth Amboy has suffered incredible harm as a result of police misconduct and action intended to cover up incompetence, but that is all a function of poor leadership and mismanagement. A police blotter and transparent reporting serves to strengthen journalism enlist the public in the fight against crime and instill more confidence in law enforcement. I will be an advocate who demands open discussion and transparency from all city departments, police being first among them. A city that serves the people should never fear to share with them the truth about what is going on, because citizens can understand and help much more than they are given credit. Elected officials work for the people so we should not keep secrets from the public.

Wilda Diaz - The concept of a police blotter was used years ago before social media when newspapers were the primary form of communication. Today we utilize online platforms such as Nixle and social media, to keep the community informed in real time. get information out at a moment's notice to inform the public of traffic conditions, emergencies, health concerns, current scams, crime advisories public safety, advisories, emergency weather alert, etc.

It is very important to understand that there are regulations and policies that accompany the work of investigations that prevent local police departments from releasing information to the public. The majority of crimes that take place are not random in nature and with that in mind as long as the general public is not in immediate danger to protect the integrity of the investigation the prosecutor's office will recommend it not be release pertinent sensitive information to protect the victim, and the integrity of the investigation until arrest have been made.

Transparency and truth in the facts are critical in running my Office and My Administration. I continue to stress transparency is the only way to solve critical issues that face transforming vibrant urban centers like Perth Amboy.

Helmin Caba - I support the use of a police blotter as a tool to allow citizens to take more active roles in becoming stewards of their community. As a staunch advocate of community policing, I believe it is far better to prevent a crime rather than respond to it. Police blotters increase transparency in law enforcement operations and I also believe that transparency is essential to an effective government. When a government conceals its actions from their citizens, it becomes a breeding ground for corruption, mistrust and the misuse of public funds and taxpayer dollars. Just as community policing is contingent on trust, so is local government and I remain committed to leading a transparent administration so that residents understand fully the policies I implement and promote.

Joel Pabon - Transparency and

communication is important. Official modes of updates are necessary to keep our residents safe. A police blotter would be informative to the residents; however, an experienced Police Director will help coordinate better communication efforts in conjunction with the City.

8.) EMPLOYMENT – What are your plans to attract businesses that will help employ the residents of Perth Amboy?

Fernando Irizarry - The city is in a business competition. We need to model what our competitors (neighboring municipalities) are doing to attract businesses because if they see that their prospects are better somewhere else that is where they will go. The other issue that needs to be addressed is the perception that non-residents have about our city. Non-residents need to know that they will be safe when they come to our town to spend money.

Joseph B. Vas - I have a vision that includes rehabilitating our run down and decaying infrastructure, developing a transit village around the Perth Amboy Train Station (not just announcing that a rehab is coming soon), rebuilding our affordable housing market and using all the resources available to create a healthy employment picture. I also believe that a national effort is needed to transform to a clean energy economy, and I will urge our federal representatives to strive toward that goal. Since education is paramount for economic success, I will endeavor to work with school officials to ensure that every child in Perth Amboy emerges fully prepared for life in a 21st century economy. Too often, tax credits and abatements have been used poorly, but I would employ every tool in our arsenal to help stimulate job creation as long as there is a net gain for our city and instead of more wasteful corporate welfare.

Wilda Diaz - As New Jersey becomes the warehouse state Perth Amboy is becoming the ideal distribution hub for national companies and with that comes the creation of hundreds of employment opportunities for Perth Amboy residents.

While Covid-19 had an immediate impact on our national workforce, my administration has worked tirelessly with economic development projects to help improve the unemployment rate for nearly 12 years—and among its lowest was 4.4 percent in June of 2019.

Rest assure, that though we are now experiencing a high unemployment rate due to the pandemic, we are making every effort to employ our residents with business growth, securing over 1,500 employment opportunities among these project,

- Home Depot Logistics Center
- Gourmet Nut,
- Perth Amboy Self Storage
- Target
- Metropolitan
- North American Aggregates
- The Real Real
- Home Depot
- An Urgent Care Facility

Helmin Caba - Perth Amboy's identity as a commercial warehouse hub was not created overnight and is demonstrative of a haphazard approach to business development and marketing. I believe that in order to attract businesses that offer residents

high paying jobs, you must first begin with an inventory of unique assets including location, available property and proximity to transportation networks. This approach creates a foundation for strategic business marketing and smart economic development rather than impulsive and poorly planned marketing efforts that do a disservice for our residents. I believe Perth Amboy and its residents should be home to 21st century businesses that will stand the test of time and offer our residents the chance at higher wages and an overall improvement to their quality of life. The only way to achieve that goal is to understand what makes Perth Amboy unique and attractive to key business sectors and I am committed to a sensible approach to business development that will benefit the city and its residents for generations.

Joel Pabon - It is important to think outside the box as to which companies will help foster employment in Perth Amboy. While some companies have relocated to Perth Amboy, it is very important that companies see Perth Amboy as an investment and are committed to having the diversity of Perth Amboy as an asset. In addition, it is important to attract a diverse pool of companies. Under my leadership, our administration will work hard to attract other companies to Perth Amboy, whether it is a hotel, a bottling company, or a technology company. The key to helping attract such companies is rebranding and remarketing the historic strength of our town, the central location, and the diverse and able workforce.

9.) REDEVELOPMENT – What kind of redevelopment does Perth Amboy need to thrive?

Fernando Irizarry - The city needs to redevelop brownfields and attract information and technology companies. This type of redevelopment and companies would provide higher wage jobs that would strengthen the local economy.

Joseph B. Vas - First I believe redevelopment is an excellent tool to maximize the potential of a community, unlike the city council members who recently attempted to abolish PARA.

A Transit village would be a good use of our downtown area, and results in neighboring communities' show that this approach works. A number of fundamental problems exist because problems have been allowed to pile up for 12 years, but if we address those impediments, the city can achieve massive redevelopment in areas such as the waterfront and 100-acre tract along the Raritan River, which was once a steel mill. Perth Amboy's Office of Economic and Community Development, the Business Improvement District and the Perth Amboy Redevelopment Agency were once vital and effective instruments but in the last 12 years they have crippled by incompetence and neglect. I will put city government to work putting people back to work in our city.

Wilda Diaz - Perth Amboy is working towards building a sustainable community and an overall better standard of living for all of its residents. One of the greatest outcomes of redevelopment is the economic impact that it has on a community and this is a driving force when

it comes to our quality of life! Economic growth that reinvigorates our downtowns, addressing the needs of our residents, while supplementing our limited government resources.

Helmin Caba - For the city to thrive, I believe we must focus on redevelopment that spurs economic growth and revitalization. Meaningful redevelopment would focus on developing the waterfront to become a premiere destination point in New Jersey; capitalize on Perth Amboy's historic significance and vibrant downtown to develop a historic and arts district to attract a larger consumer market; promote open space development leveraging Perth Amboy's beautiful parks and environment/marine habitat and establishing a framework to attract the strong industry that will provide high paying jobs for residents. Perth Amboy has all of the building blocks to be a premiere community in New Jersey and redevelopment must align with the economic future this community needs to achieve.

Joel Pabon - Our Downtown, Gateway & Waterfront needs enhancement. Under my leadership, our administration will Create Strategic Open Space Initiatives that Preserves the Character of our Town while also creating a Historic District, such as an "Old Perth Amboy" which would help preserve the skyline of our Waterfront and would help curb high- density housing in designated historic districts. We will Adopt a new focus plan which incorporates Revitalization of our Downtown District and Our Gateways, and strict parking plans would help our City move in a positive direction.

10.) PILOTS - Many companies/developers come here requesting PILOTS (Payment In Lieu Of Taxes) for their projects. What is your position on this?

Fernando Irizarry - Many feel that PILOTS are unneeded. Before I ruled out a PILOT I looked at the math. If it made good economic sense for the citizens of Perth Amboy, then I voted for it. We must remember that government is a business, and we are competing with numerous other municipalities.

Joseph B. Vas - Too many concessions, corporate bailouts and payoffs have been given out without demanding sufficient returns for taxpayers. PILOT programs are a tool that should be used in situations when they create opportunities that would not exist without them. Our incumbent Mayor and the current City Council members seem entirely unaware about how and when to use these tools for maximum effect. They have allowed taxpayers to be robbed and I will seek to claw back bad deals as well as make sure only wise agreements are made going forward.

Wilda Diaz - Equally as important, the redevelopment and financial agreements provide for best efforts by the redeveloper and their tenants to hire local individuals and union workers. This was one of our most awaited commitments. The agreement mutually benefits the residents our local economy and provides an economic engine familiar to most urban centers through-out New Jersey.

Helmin Caba - Attracting commercial, residential and indus-

trial development are priority areas for me. However, development efforts must not be realized on the backs of taxpayers. I understand the role of PILOTS in redevelopment efforts however, I believe that PILOTS must be used sparingly and if enacted, it must be negotiated so that the needs of the municipality are met and not sacrificed to accommodate the requests of the developer. In my opinion, PILOTS have been used as a crutch by this administration, resulting in the increased requests of developers and companies to seek tax abatement in Perth Amboy. Smart and incremental development does not have to rely on PILOTS, and I believe every strategy must be explored before a PILOT is considered for development and redevelopment opportunities.

Joel Pabon - PILOTS have in the past attracted developers who were able to clean up certain areas of Perth Amboy. However, at the same time it has negatively impacted our Rateables, and does not produce revenue to offset the tax burden of paying for our school district. Under my leadership, our administration, we would look at PILOTS on a case by case basis.

11.) CITY EMPLOYEES – How important is a city residency requirement for supervisory positions? When it comes to promotions, should in-house employees or city residents be considered first if qualified before everyone else?

Fernando Irizarry - Residents that are qualified for a position should always be considered first, but in the event, we don't have a qualified candidate, we should look beyond our borders in the best interests of the City.

Joseph B. Vas - I support residency requirements for most public sector occupations, and I would lobby our state representatives to allow municipal governments to once again require residency for police and firefighters. People who are part of the community will work harder for the community.

Wilda Diaz - I am a strong advocate for Perth Amboy residents first when it comes to hiring the Municipal workforce. I am also a strong advocate for providing the best and the sharpest, the most experienced and determined governmental professional workforce that truly understands the needs of our city. The commitment to get the job done and most of all, a professional that understands the governmental process. Civil Service allows for such appointments knowing the need to diversify the work place with talent and know how to allow municipalities to secure what it needs to provide optimal and quality service to its workforce, residents and business interests.

Helmin Caba - I believe an administration is only as strong as its cabinet and I am committed to hiring qualified talented individuals to help Perth Amboy realize its potential. While I believe that city employees should know their city, a residency requirement limits the overall talent pool available. Therefore, I believe that we must place a premium on qualifications over residency to hire the best individuals possible. When it comes



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2020 Perth Amboy Mayoral Candidates Answer the Tough Questions - Continued From Page 9

to promotions, I must reiterate my belief in qualifications over other factors. Should in-house employees and city residents have the best possible credentials, then they would be strong contenders for advancement. However, their residency or time spent on the job are not factors that would trump their qualifications and ability to perform the duties of the role they are applying for.

Joel Pabon - Our City Employees need an administration that knows how to work with a variety of departments, and can help shape and improve morale. Having a stable Business Administrator who lives in our town is a key component. In areas of upper management, it is very important to have the person accessible in an instant, which is why having a residency requirement in certain departments may be necessary. Civil Service jobs have ordinances and a process to help secure qualified individuals.

12.) PERTH AMBOY'S HISTORY/HISTORIC PRESERVATION - An expert in historic preservation once quoted Perth Amboy as being one of the most ten historic cities in the United States. How would you promote Perth Amboy's history?

Fernando Irizarry - I would use the tools and programs that the National Park Service has developed for this purpose. These tools and programs provide a model for the city to create its own local lists of important places, travel itineraries, or special initiatives centered around a theme.

Joseph B. Vas - Perth Amboy is one of the state's oldest towns and colonial capital of New Jersey, which means it's full of fascinating historic sites that often get overlooked but there are severe limits to the economic impact of looking backward. We should certainly preserve historic landmarks and celebrate our pride in consequential events that took place here. For example, Perth Amboy is the place where Thomas Mundy Peterson voted March 31, 1870, becoming the first African American person in the United States to use his rights under the 15th Amendment. We also have the oldest operating municipal building in the USA. These great democratic institutions are critical reminders about our national values, but we need to cultivate resources so there is enough excess to sustain historic treasures after our primary needs are met.

Wilda Diaz - I take great pride in promoting our city for its historic value, in fact, I coined the phrase City of Firsts and have made many strides in historic preservation. While the previous administration neglected the City's history I have embraced it. During my tenure we have created a network of museums and invested nearly \$2 million dollars in the historic renovation of our Carnegie Library. We nurture and support our historical organizations the Kearny Cottage, City Hall, the Proprietary House, the Ferry Slip Council Museum, and the historic train station. Most recently, we restored the Surveyor Generals Building next to City Hall and erected a plaque, posthumously-honorary naming City Hall Council Chambers, Thomas Mundy Peterson.

We created a Historic Preservation Commission to ensure that

we honor and promote our City's rich history. In fact, this year the HPC will be working with my team to submit a nomination to the national registration of historic places for our terra-cotta district. Benefits of doing so include, more access to grants, tax incentives, assistance with preservation, education, increased tourism, and pride. Historic districts can be centers of heritage tourism that help spur economic vitality.

Recognizing that our City is full of human encyclopedias, who combined have centuries of historical knowledge, I named the late and great Mr. Anton Massopust the city historian who kept our history alive through education, re-enactments and documentaries. John Dyke was named his successor, an individual who has made numerous videos that recollects our City's history and its significance nationally.

Helmin Caba - Few cities in the nation rival the historic significance of Perth Amboy and our rich historic identity is one of our most underutilized assets. In order to promote Perth Amboy's history, I would partner with our Historic Commission to create a historic district and engage in a historic marketing campaign. As a part of this campaign, I would leverage the expertise of the New Jersey Historical Commission to create visitor attractions and town-wide tours of our many historical assets such as City Hall, the Surveyor's General Office, Market Square, the Raritan Yacht Club, Kearny Cottage and our newly restored Proprietary House. Moreover, I would create a dedicated landing page on the city's electronic assets specifically highlighting Perth Amboy's history for visitors to easily access and navigate. As a part of promoting our history, I would also remain committed to preserving these sites so they can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Joel Pabon - Perth Amboy is in need of re-branding and creating a historic district such as an "Old Perth Amboy" or similar efforts as showcased by other historic towns would enable our town to attract a wider recognition.

13.) TAXES – How would you alleviate the increasing burden on taxpayers?

Fernando Irizarry - We need to work smarter and harder to provide efficient and effective public service to our citizens. They need to see value for their tax dollars in Perth Amboy and throughout the State of NJ.

Joseph B. Vas - I do not see tax hikes as the first line of defense in municipal budgeting and my experience in public finance will enable me to find better ways to close any gaps. Instead of doling out overly generous tax abatements, we should harvest increased tax revenue from new development instead of adopting corporate dependents.

Wilda Diaz - Among their tactics were, (1) a revaluation that over assessed both commercial and residential properties creating litigation and thousands of tax appeal claims that exasperated the fragile financial condition of our City, (2) A trend of one-shot gimmicks, including the misappropriate of \$5 million of water utility funds, used to offset the operating budget, leaving a \$5M debt to the taxpayers. (3) Inaccurate reporting of finan-

cials, which resulted in \$250M of debt with on-the-books and off-the-books transactions (4) And most alarming were the findings of corruption, highlighting the previous administration's intent to deceive the public into believing that we were financially stable, when in reality, we were hundreds of millions of dollars in debt.

These were the compounded actions of nearly 20 years that brought us to the economic demise of 2008. And for the past 12 years, it has taken strategy, time, vision and most importantly -- it took money to resolve the dire deficit and save our near bankrupt city, but here we are today!

We created a management plan, paid down \$50M of inherited debt, increased our capital improvement fund and most notably we created a multimillion-dollar surplus.

We have been recognized by S&P credit agency for our aggressive efforts in honest, and responsible management of our tax dollars. Additionally, we attained and maintained two credit upgrades, allowing us to refinance with significantly lower interest rates.

The financial condition of our City is no secret to the public nor to any of the running mayoral candidates. Inclusive, our annual budget, financial statements and audits have all been voted on and approved by the City Council. For a total of five years, we had no tax increase.

As much as we treasure our prized history that helped shape this nation, I want us to remember the history we're making now, together. Perth Amboy has made a remarkable comeback, while being fiscally responsible, expanding services and providing a greater quality of life for each and every household.

We are taking this City to new heights and, though the work ahead of us may seem overwhelming— we are working smart to ensure that the benefits are mutual, civically and corporately.

Helmin Caba - We cannot rely on empty campaign promises and one-shot gimmicks to alleviate the burden on taxpayers. While long-term smart economic growth strategies will provide benefits for taxpayers, I believe in the short-term. Hiring a qualified grant writing team will produce immediate benefits for our city and the taxpayers. Hundreds of millions of dollars in state and federal funding are available to municipalities and accessing this money allows the city to minimize its reliance on taxpayers for important projects. I believe a strong grant writing department is the key to success for many strong communities and it is an easy way for Perth Amboy to serve both taxpayers and the economic growth of the city.

Joel Pabon - We must evaluate the current fiscal stability of our city and conduct a forensic audit of our city's finances, Conduct desk audits of departments and restructure debt to improve the city's cash flow. Improving the municipal finances would also include implementing ideas of non-taxable revenues. Such an initiative would be rolled out in our sustainable growth initiatives.

14.) HOMELESS – Perth Amboy and New Brunswick are the only cities in Middlesex County that participate in the

Code Red/Blue program. Because of this, other Middlesex County municipalities send their homeless to us which puts a strain on our resources. What solution do you have for this problem?

Fernando Irizarry - Continue to encourage cooperation with the County to help pay these costs.

Joseph B. Vas - Municipalities should be forbidden from exporting homeless residents to neighboring cities, because that is morally wrong. The problem of homelessness exploded in America when residential mental health programs were terminated, so state and federal officials need to take more responsibility for the plight of homeless veterans and institutional care needs to be made available for those who need it.

Wilda Diaz - We have been working tirelessly to provide not just code blue emergency assistance for the homeless but to also provide a permanent solution through county resources. We participate with MCHC3, a coalition to ending homelessness and they too have the same concerns as we do. Together we are inviting stakeholders throughout the county and holding them accountable for sharing in the costs that are affecting cities like New Brunswick and Perth Amboy. This is one of the reasons I have invited Pastor Berny to join me and my administration in this fight against homelessness through both placement and prevention initiatives.

Helmin Caba - First and foremost, I believe that addressing the issue of homelessness is of extreme importance and my heart and prayers are with any individuals or families experiencing or on the brink of homelessness. While it is laudable that Perth Amboy continues to do amazing and transformative work for the homeless, it should not be our sole burden to bear in Middlesex County. If elected, I will begin active dialogue with the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Middlesex County Department of Human Services, non-profit organizations and neighboring communities to find a collaborative approach to addressing homelessness in our region. This approach would be centered on identifying ways to maximize existing resources and forming key partnerships to ensure that Perth Amboy's resources are not continuously strained to help vulnerable populations. Addressing homelessness is a shared county and state-wide responsibility and we cannot continue to lead these efforts on our own.

Joel Pabon - I would spearhead the creation of a Mayors coalition or a collaboration or forum with other towns in Middlesex County to come up with a viable and consensus project to help alleviate our homeless problem. Partnerships with other non-profit organizations will also help contribute to a viable solution.

15.) DRINKING WATER - Should residents be concerned about the quality of our drinking water?

Fernando Irizarry - No. I have no personal concerns and drink the water. Water purification and distributions systems are complex organizations overseen by a myriad of Federal and State Laws. Occasional issues like

TTHM spikes are worry some but are alleviated by proactive management actions to protect public health.

Joseph B. Vas - At least 25 cancer-causing chemicals have been identified in Perth Amboy drinking water and I am the only candidate who has addressed this problem. I propose a new agreement with the water company to improve filtration, new investment to upgrade delivery systems and enhanced anti-pollution enforcement to prevent worsened problems. My detailed response is here: <https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/jbvas/pages/17/attachments/WildaDiaz>

Wilda Diaz - • The water provided to Perth Amboy residents is safe to drink and complies with all current state and federal drinking water regulations.

• USA-PA adheres to regulations established by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and standards set by United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the agencies entrusted to safeguard drinking water based on peer reviewed and generally accepted science.

• Drinking water provided by USA-PA is routinely tested at the treatment plant and throughout the distribution system. All parameters are monitored according to schedules established by the NJDEP.

• We freely share information about the City's water quality through our annual water quality reports, which are readily available on the City website.

Helmin Caba - The safety and health of Perth Amboy residents will always be my top priority. During this campaign, the condition of our drinking water has been politicized and residents have been fed misleading statements. Perth Amboy's drinking water did reach maximum contamination levels of a chlorine by product, however, our water provider acted swiftly to address the problem well to provide remediation for the water system. As Mayor, I will be committed to remaining vigilant on our water quality and more importantly will address the underlying water infrastructure issues that are causing concern in the first place. Perth Amboy's current water system is one of the oldest and most outdated in the state. My administration will seek to invest in necessary infrastructure upgrades to improve our water system.

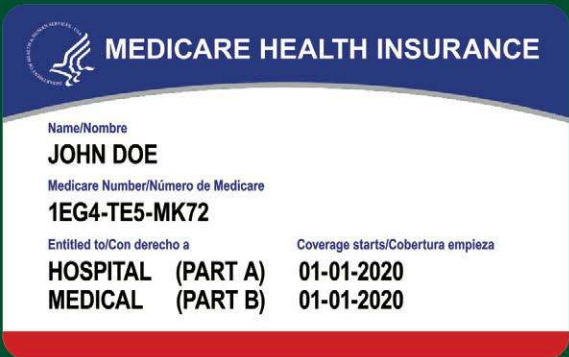
Joel Pabon - Over the past two administrations, water quality can always be improved. Although our City incurred a sinking debt of over \$250 million to address water infrastructure, the desired improvement to our water infrastructure and the transparency of our water has fallen by the wayside by both the prior Vas and current Diaz administration. Under my administration I would establish a Perth Amboy Water Authority to provide oversight, transparency, and accountability regarding our Water. The Authority will have Commissioners, and Monthly meetings to approve all activity regarding our Water System and infrastructure.

16.) BUSINESS PROMOTION - What activities would attract people to Perth Amboy to visit and spend money?

Fernando Irizarry - See the an-

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OUR “2020 VISION” FOR PERTH AMBOY

ENHANCE OUR CITY’S ECONOMY

- We can LOWER YOUR TAXES as we:
 - Market Perth Amboy to new businesses, corporations, retail stores & light industries
 - Add those businesses to our city’s tax base
 - Attract new better-paying jobs for residents
- Market Perth Amboy as a tourist destination:
 - Establish a city “Historic District”
 - Attract hotel chains; more bed-&-breakfasts
 - Launch a “Visit Perth Amboy” campaign to highlight our waterfront, restaurants, cuisine; history & recreation

IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

- Prioritize and resurface major roads & more neighborhood streets
- Launch a citywide “Green Initiative”
- Enhance city parks, playgrounds
- Create new public parking facilities.
- Strictly enforce ordinances for noise, trash removal, maintenance
- Improve water quality in partnership with environmental agencies and state legislative representatives

STRENGTHEN PUBLIC SAFETY

- Increase police visibility on city streets
- Use proactive “community police” techniques
- Rebuild our “Neighborhood Watch” program
- Use social media as a crime-fighting tool
- Redesign traffic flow & truck routes to:
 - alleviate traffic congestion
 - make pedestrians & cyclists safer
 - make deliveries more efficient
 - reduce noise in residential areas
- Install speed bumps on select streets
- Strictly enforce traffic & parking laws

IMPROVE OUR CITY’S INFRASTRUCTURE



- Get NJ Transit to renovate our Train Station
- Upgrade our city’s aging water system
- Separate our sanitary and storm sewers
- Prioritize city capital improvement projects
- Require public utilities to make safety upgrades
- Practice “Smart Growth” development to reduce impact on our infrastructure

IMPROVE CITY HALL’S FINANCES

- Request a complete state audit of city finances
- Use businesslike “zero-based budget” methods
- Pursue federal, state & private grants to offset taxes.

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NOV. 3

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OFFICE TITLE	Nomination by Petition L
Mayor 4 Year Term Vote for One Término de 4 Años Vote por Uno	Helmin CABA <i>2020 Vision For Perth Amboy</i>
Members of City Council 4 Year Term Vote for Two Término de 4 Años Vote por Dos	Rose B. MORALES <i>2020 Vision for Perth Amboy</i> Bienvenido “BJ” TORRES <i>2020 Vision For Perth Amboy</i>

PAID FOR BY: EFO HELMIN J. CABA, 139 HIGH STREET, PERTH AMBOY, NJ 08861

2020 Vision For Education



Nomination by Petition 4
Marisol M. GONZALEZ <i>2020 Vision Education</i>
Stacey PERALTA <i>2020 Vision Education</i>
Willie DE JESUS <i>2020 Vision Education</i>
Michael D. GEORGE <i>2020 Vision Education</i>

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2020 Perth Amboy Mayoral Candidates Answer the Tough Questions - Continued From Page 11

swers to the employment question above.

Joseph B. Vas - We have to create a viable market for business, starting with clean streets, paved roads and so on. After the fundamentals are in place, it makes sense to promote our businesses and commercial opportunities using innovating outreach methods. This city had a model economic engine that has been dismantled and neglected, I will bring new energy to the task of making a new image for Perth Amboy, because advertising and marketing our assets will produce a great return on our investment.

Wilda Diaz - My mission is to make our City a premier destination where residents and visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a transit district with thriving businesses and a walkable downtown area, that effortlessly connects you to both mass transit and the quiet, scenic view of our waterfront and our great historical past, makes Perth Amboy an enjoyable destination for outside cultural events, families enjoying our vast waterfront and historians enjoying a weekend of history and culture all in our city.

The City is on the threshold of welcoming changes to its downtown environment. Downtown and waterfront rezoning has been proposed, which will enable tremendous opportunities to arise in our great City. We want our business and property owners to have more options for growth, reinvestment and access.

While there may be misconceptions of rezoning, I want to assure our property owners that our goal is to strengthen and expand your business investment, by promoting and encouraging market rate and affordable residential properties above store fronts, creating a pedestrian friendly environment and to provide more options of mobility to urban dwellers.

The Transit Village is what unites all of these spectacular features to the comprehensive future plans of our downtown area.

In 2008, as one of my first projects was my advocacy for a new train station with complete accessibility. And while these projects take years to complete because of lobbying, design, funding allocation and potential remediation, we have already secured \$7M of NJ Transit funding and we anticipate construction of this historic site in the upcoming year.

Additionally, we hold over 50 public events annually, including; parades, Small Business Saturday, Arts, historic preservation initiatives, our Shop & Dine in Perth Amboy campaign, Commercials and radio ads and our annual Fireworks Spectacular.

It goes without mention that we are working toward diversifying our business pool to attract more popular retail businesses. We will also be launching a visitor's page and business directory, with additional plans to create a visitor's center.

Helmin Caba - The only way to incentivize tourist dollars is to maximize all the resources of our Business Improvement District, local arts and historic community, performance venues, beautiful waterfront/marina and the many diverse restaurants that call Perth Amboy home. These unique assets have remained hidden for far too long and as Mayor I will employ a new ro-

bust media strategy to highlight the many activities present in Perth Amboy. Additionally, we need to be consistent in keeping our Business District clean and attractive for visitors. This Administration has not made promoting Perth Amboy a priority and I will work hard to make our community a tourist destination of choice.

Joel Pabon - Towns flourish when the surrounding areas see that it is safe and offers value. Our town must look clean and inviting. Having a Vision that will bring Perth Amboy forward to the 21st century and the implementation of the solutions proposed will help position our town towards a positive direction.

17.) ARTS & CULTURE - What would you do to support the Arts in Perth Amboy?

Fernando Irizarry - I would endeavor to establish an arts district in the downtown area of the city. I would also partner with the Business Improvement District (BID) to provide business-education programs that meet the professional needs of artist to produce prosperity for them and their communities.

Joseph B. Vas - Our arts and cultural treasures are world class attractions but just as I mentioned with historic values, people are not going to visit Perth Amboy unless we make the city safe and clean.

Wilda Diaz - Perth Amboy is rich in arts and culture; our waterfront and bustling downtown district make for perfect backdrops for artistic expression. During my administration numerous initiatives were born including the City's first Arts Festival in May of 2014. The annual festival, has become a city trademark, showcasing some of New Jersey's finest live musicians while artisans from all over the state vend their artwork and sell their tasty food.

Guided by the 2015 Perth Amboy Creative Place Making Plan and my love for the arts, I converted an abandoned municipal building to a thriving art's gallery where we showcase local artist and offer intergenerational fine arts and performing arts classes including, painting, drawing, photography, acting, pottery, music lessons and much more. My team made changes to existing ordinance and instituted new ones to include street performers, lending to an opportunity for our talented residents to be compensated for their skills, while attracting people to shop and din in our downtown district. Additionally, we have partnered with the Business Improvement District to bring cultural and artistic life to the City's downtown though an initiative dubbed "Art and Flow" where live musical performances and visual artist are contracted to perform. This initiative also bred the idea of murals and artists' incubators in the downtown area.

Recognizing that the arts can be a catalyst for economic growth I enacted an Arts Council.

Each of these initiatives has been met with praise from our residents and visitors alike. My ultimate art goal is to become Middlesex County's arts and culture hub. Perth Amboy has incredibly rich history.

Helmin Caba - Arts and culture are not only positive aspects of a thriving community, but also serve as powerful eco-

nomie drivers. If elected Mayor, I will revisit Perth Amboy's Arts Master Plan and Creative Place-making Plan to implement the strategies that were highlighted in these comprehensive documents. Additionally, I would continue working with the Perth Amboy Arts Council to increase outdoor arts events in addition to hosting pop-up museums and other innovative arts and cultural programming. I would also work to dedicate areas for murals and sculptures to highlight the significance and importance of art throughout the entire city. In the long-term, I also hope to explore the possibility and viability of creating a state of the art performing arts center for Perth Amboy.

Joel Pabon - While other candidates vying for the office of Perth Amboy Mayor are focused on the negative aspects of what is wrong with Perth Amboy, I'm setting high goals on what will help bring a transformational change to Perth Amboy—A Twenty First Century New Library. Don't get me wrong, I love our historic Carnegie Mellon library, and it should be a historical site in my opinion, however, our growing City needs an additional outlet for more educational programs and a place that can be a cultural center with open space, meeting rooms, and modern digital access. Libraries are like community hubs that can help transform our town, and at the same time provide much needed essential services like college and work ready skills. There are towns that have multiple libraries to service their growing population, and because our town has grown a lot over the past 12 years, we must start thinking how can we help position our town competitively. New Libraries oftentimes become cultural centers, and literacy programs are very important. Having meeting spaces available for studying or for having a space where book clubs, arts clubs or other social groups can meet is valuable to our community.

18.) IDENTITY POLITICS - What is your view on Identity politics?

Fernando Irizarry - I will focus on what is best for the city, not what is best for any group. Focusing on what is best for the city will in the long run be a win-win for all the residents that make up the groups that exist within it.

Joseph B. Vas - Identity politics is a way to divide people and obtain unearned political support. I am proud of my Puerto Rican & Portuguese heritage but as Mayor, I will have the same obligation to residents of Dominican or Polish ancestry or anyone else. Using ethnicity or race, age, sex, and other arbitrary traits to curry support is as bad as discriminating against people for those same qualities and we can see the resentment that grows when politicians substitute characteristics for character.

Wilda Diaz - Identity Politics is a code word for race baiting and ethnicity. At the end of the day everyone wants a good quality of life; clean air to breathe, safe water to drink, quality jobs paying a livable wage. I have consistently delivered for all the People of Perth Amboy. We are one city united with many voices. However, we all want our children to grow up healthy with real opportunities and that is what my

administration is about...a better life for all residents of Perth Amboy. The process of the vote makes us all equal on election day. For all voters that is when America is on equal footing. Ever culture and ethnic groups are important however, the whole of casted votes makes us one makes us all the same - voting Americans - and that is the beauty of Democracy and the true power of the Vote.

Helmin Caba - The job of an elected official is to represent the needs of every resident in their city regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, political party etc. And the job of a voter is to identify the candidate that best aligns with their values and priorities for their community. These two duties collide in an election and through a democratic process, a leader is elected. I support the role of the voters in choosing the candidate they best feel represents them, and for whatever reason they feel is most important. If elected Mayor, I will serve every resident in the City of Perth Amboy to the best of my ability and for the betterment of the community.

Joel Pabon - In the past year, we have seen a lot of identity politics in the current political climate. Sometimes it may be viewed as being divisive and others may view it as an agenda. Perth Amboy is in a state where a lot can be achieved through collaboration versus division. We learn from the past, but do our best to strive to move forward.

19.) LEADERSHIP - What do you feel is the most important quality of an effective leader?

Fernando Irizarry - Leadership. Citizens look to their Mayor to be the pillar and representative of the community, the outspoken champion of their needs and wellbeing. Anything short of this is a failure of moral courage.

Joseph B. Vas - A leader needs to understand that public service is about other people, and not himself or herself. The concept of selfless service has been eroded, and it is important that people learn to recognize those who are prepared to do what is right more than what benefits themselves because we are all in this together.

Wilda Diaz - Servant Leadership Most Important quality of any leader is to remain humble, serve with humility and you will never fail the people. Even when you need to re think your actions, position and or vision the people you are leading will see your humility and work with you and believe that you are doing what is best for the greater good. The people before self always.

Helmin Caba - The most important quality of an effective leader is accountability. As a Councilman and throughout my campaign for Mayor, I have repeatedly heard the voter's concerns for the lack of accountability in City Hall. The most essential functions of a thriving city are the responsibilities of the administration and because of a lack of accountability, our city has been and continues to be in a state of complete disarray. Real leaders are accountable for their actions and as Mayor, I will be accountable to Perth Amboy's residents and will be a responsible leader dedicated to rebuilding the public's trust and respect for City Hall.

Joel Pabon - One of the most

important qualities of being a good and effective leader, is to be a good Listener. A good leader never stops learning and embraces and welcomes various points of view. Knowing that you are being listened to, and producing results or solutions means good governance.

20.) RESPONSIBILITY - What phrase best describes you: "Action speaks louder than words" or "The buck stops here." Give an example.

Fernando Irizarry - The phrase that best describes me is "actions speak louder than words." Sadly, as voters we often are looking for which candidate or office holder has the biggest mouth or is making the most noise because we think that someone like that will make the changes that we want. What happens is that we end up being very disappointed.

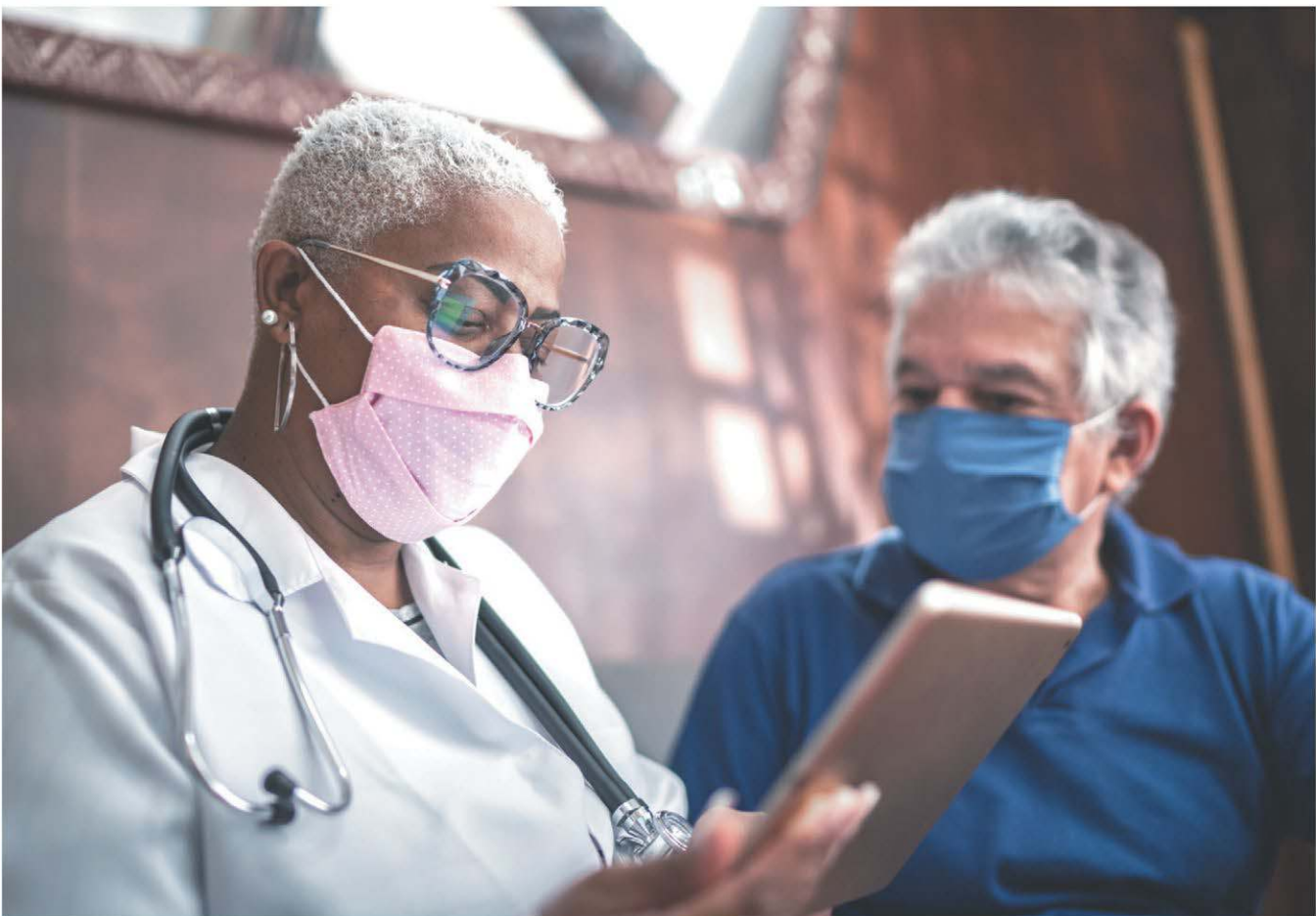
Joseph B. Vas - *Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.* John F. Kennedy

Wilda Diaz - I am a person of action, when there are and were crisis in Perth Amboy, whether floods as destructive as Sandy or the current pandemic we find ourselves in, it is my actions that the residents see and understand. Whether inheriting a staggering fiscal fiasco from the previous mayor to dealing with the constant challenges of governing this great city ... It is what I have done and will continue to do to set my apart from my opponents. I have worked with every group in Perth Amboy, I have taken action on the big businesses, county government and unwilling party bosses that have not understood, I am here to work and move Perth Amboy forward and I am hoping if the residents elect me to another term as Mayor of this great City, I will continue let my actions speak for me.

Helmin Caba - "When people talk, listen completely. Most people never listen." At a young age we are taught about the importance of listening, but I have found in politics that most politicians do not listen to understand, they listen to respond. I have always believed that the most successful leaders listen more and talk less. In order to understand the needs of the community, you must listen to the concerns of residents; not to immediately respond but, to digest the information and think about the best strategy to address their needs. Ineffective listeners promote empty policies and bank-on campaign promises that are never fulfilled and designed to keep the status quo. As a Councilman, father and in general as a person, I try my best to listen with intention and as a Mayor, I will commit myself to listening to the residents of this great city to create policies that are truly based on public input because an active public is good for governance.

Joel Pabon - Accountability is very important and when I think of the Mayor's office, I weigh the responsibility as the "buck stopping here, at the Mayor's office." The structure of our City Government under Faulkner is a "strong" mayor and "weak" council government. The responsibility to help shape up Perth Amboy and move our town in a positive direction will always fall under the Mayor's office, no where else.

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World War II - 75 Years Ago

By Phil Kohn. Dedicated to the memory of his father, GM3 Walter Kohn, U.S. Navy Armed Guard, USNR, and all men and women who have answered the country’s call in time of need. Phil can be contacted at ww2remembered@yahoo.com.

Forces of the Chinese Communist Eighth Route Army near Tsingtao, China, on October 19, 1945, attack vehicles and outposts of the U.S. 6th Marine Division. Nearby, aircraft of the U.S. 1st Marine Division are fired upon by Communist Chinese small arms. The two Marine divisions are in northern China to assist the Nationalist government re-establish control of areas that had been taken by the Japanese. (Some Japanese units are still fighting against the Chinese and the Americans.)

On October 20, the Egyptian, Iraqi, Lebanese and Syrian governments warn the Truman administration that growing Jewish immigration and creation of a Jewish state in Palestine would lead to war in the region. Indonesian separatist leader Sukarno appeals to the U.S. to stop providing aid to colonial forces in the islands.

The former U-boat pens in Hamburg, Germany, are blown up on October 21 by British military engineers, ironically using German explosives. In France, women are permitted to vote for the first time.

Rómulo Betancourt Bello is elected provisional president of Venezuela on October 22. His administration: declares universal suffrage, institutes widespread social reforms, secures half of the profits made by foreign oil companies for Venezuela and takes responsibility for the legal protection and resettlement of tens of thousands of European refugees who fled from World War II and who cannot or will not return home. Many scholars consider Betancourt the founding father of modern Venezuela.

All-star UCLA athlete Jackie Robinson signs a professional baseball contract on October 23 with the Brooklyn Dodgers’ minor-league team, the Montreal Royals of the International League. Robinson is the first black athlete to win varsity letters in four sports at UCLA: baseball, basketball, football and track.

The United Nations formally and officially comes into being on October 24, when the 29th nation — the U.S.S.R. — ratifies the UN Charter. In Norway, traitor and Nazi collaborator Vidkun Quisling is executed by a firing squad. In Czechoslovakia, President Edvard Beneš signs a decree nationalizing commercial banks, insurance companies and 27 other industries that employ 64% of the country’s workers.

On October 25, Gen. Rikichi Andō, commander of all Japanese troops on Taiwan, surrenders at Taipei to Gen. Chen Yi of the Nationalist Chinese Army, ending 50 years of Japanese rule on the island. In Tokyo, Gen. of the Army Douglas MacArthur orders the Japanese government to break diplomatic relations with all other countries, recall all its diplomats and turn over all diplomatic materials and records to the Allies. Japanese troops at Thaton, Burma, about 85 miles east of Rangoon, surrender to the British. The Soviet Union demands \$79 million in reparations from Finland rather than the \$50 million earlier agreed upon.

As Soviet and Japanese troops depart northeastern China, Chiang Kai-shek’s Nationalist forces rush in to occupy the area to prevent the Communists from taking over the region. Lt. Gen. Du Yum-ing, on October 26, 1945, is named commander of the Northeastern Provinces Security Command for the Chinese Nationalist Army. In Europe, communists and anti-communists battle in the streets of Sofia, Bulgaria.

In the Netherlands East Indies or Indonesia, depending on which side one favors, separatists riot and fight British security forces on October 27, beginning the Battle of Surabaya.

In Manila, the Philippines, the trial of Japanese Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita by a U.S. military tribunal begins on October 28. Yamashita, accused of permitting atrocities, had been the commanding officer of the Philippines region since October 1944. In northwestern France, an explosives magazine at Asnières-en-Bessin blows up, killing 41 people, including 30 German prisoners of war. The Czechoslovakian government orders the confiscation of all German and Hungarian property in the country.

At Gimbel’s department store in New York City on October 29, the first ball-point pens — Reynolds Rockets, manufactured by the Reynolds International Pen Company — go on sale, for \$12.50 each. The first U.S. patent for the pen had been granted to its inventor, leather tanner John J. Loud, 57 years previously, in 1888. Indonesian leaders Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta arrive in Surabaya, Java, and negotiate a truce with the British military.

On October 30, the U.S. government announces the end of shoe rationing. *SS Albert M. Boe* — the last of 2,710 Liberty ships built in the U.S. between 1941 and 1945 — is delivered to the War Shipping Administration, at South Portland, Maine. Only hours after signing a cease-fire agreement with Indonesian leaders Sukarno and Hatta, British Brig. Gen. Aubertin Mallaby is attacked in his car and killed in a confused firefight between British and Indonesian troops. In retaliation, British planes bomb and strafe Surabaya and surrounding areas, causing many casualties.

German church representatives on October 31 are the first group of people given permission to travel freely within Germany’s four occupation zones. The film *Spellbound*, a psychological thriller directed by Alfred Hitchcock and starring Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck, premieres in New York City.

On November 1, over 1,000 operatives of the fledgling Jewish Resistance Organization sabotage 153 separate locations along the British railway system in Palestine, 50 alone between Acre and Gaza, a distance of about 105 miles. The coordinated attacks are synchronized to hinder a British response. Twenty-one German bankers are arrested on suspicion of committing war crimes. The Telechron Co. introduces its Model 8H59 “Musalarm,” the world’s first clock radio.



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Poll Workers Needed

Press Release
MIDDLESEX COUNTY - John Anagnostis Regional Vice Chair of the Middlesex County Republican Organization has announced there are openings for Poll Workers for the 2020 General Elections to be held on November 3, 2020.

You can be a poll worker if you are 18 years old, a registered voter and live in Middlesex County. The following communities need poll workers: Carteret, Perth Amboy, Woodbridge, Sayreville and South Amboy.

A poll worker attends a training class, reports to the polling places 45 minutes prior to the polls opening on election day, prepares the polling place, verifies voters are registered in the district, assists the voter if there are questions, maintains order at the polls, closes polling places at the designated times. The pay for the Election Day is \$200.00

This is a chance for residents to participate in our democracy. If you are interested please -contact John’s office at 732-371-9967 Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. if no answer leave a message.

**Temporary Employment
Opportunity with Middlesex
County Board of Elections**

MIDDLESEX COUNTY - The Middlesex County Board of Elections is looking for persons to assist in the counting of mail in ballots. The temporary workers will be needed from the end of September until the end of November and will have to be able to travel to Middlesex County College. Hours are flexible, there will be three shifts and the wage is \$15 per hour. If interested you may contact Maria at 732-745-3471.

Hackensack Meridian Raritan Bay Medical Center Old Bridge Opens New Inpatient Diagnostic Imaging Suite

Press Release 10/6/20
OLD BRIDGE N.J. – Hackensack Meridian Raritan Bay Medical Center Old Bridge unveils a new inpatient diagnostic imaging suite. The new suite features larger rooms and a brand new state-of-the-art Computed Tomography (CT) scanner and X-ray machine. The new, self-contained suite is part of the hospital’s new Emergency Department.
“Patients will be able to receive faster diagnostic imaging care in a new advanced environment designed to provide a more comfortable experience,” said Thomas Shanahan, chief hospital executive, Raritan Bay Medical Center.

The new inpatient diagnostic imaging suite at Raritan Bay Medical Center Old Bridge provides the most advanced care for all radiology needs. The new CT scanner is a multi-detector scanner, which provides vivid, three-dimensional imaging for diagnosing numerous medical conditions. The technology is especially helpful for angiography, or vascular studies, allowing many patients to avoid more



New inpatient CT scanner at Raritan Bay Medical Center Old Bridge Emergency Department *Photo Submitted

invasive diagnostic procedures. In addition, the new X-ray machine is a digital, low-radiation machine that provides imaging of the head, neck, chest, spine, pelvis, extremities and abdomen.
The new diagnostic imaging suite’s advanced equipment and efficient layout offer an ideal setting in which to provide the highest quality of patient-centered care,” said Philip Lakritz,

M.D., chair, Diagnostic Imaging, Raritan Bay Medical Center.
Raritan Bay Medical Center Old Bridge is currently undergoing a major revitalization with a \$39 million investment expanding its Emergency Department. The new diagnostic imaging suite is part of that transformation.

Legislation Expediting Temporary Licensure of Out-of-State Mental Health Graduates During Emergency Advances

Verrelli, Benson & Vainieri Huttle Bill in Response to Mental Health Crisis Caused by COVID-19 Pandemic Heads to Assembly Speaker

Press Release 10/13/20
TRENTON – In an effort to ensure the state is prepared to handle surging mental health challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, three Assembly Democrats sponsor a bill that would allow out-of-state mental health graduates to receive an expedited license to temporarily practice in New Jersey. The legislation was advanced by the Assembly Regulated Professions Committee on Thursday.
Under the bill (A-4246), recent out-of-state graduates of a mental health program who have a master’s degree or higher, but are not yet licensed to practice, would be eligible to receive a temporary license or certification to practice in New Jersey during a state of emergency or public health emergency.

The temporary licensee would be under the supervision of a fully licensed New Jersey professional, and their license/certificate would only be valid until either its expiration date or the date in which the emergency is lifted – whichever comes first.
In order to expedite these licenses, the bill would temporarily waive some of the usual fees and requirements of an

applicant. Once the temporary license expired, the individual could apply for full licensure in New Jersey using the experience they gained while providing services during the emergency.
Upon the bill advancing, Assembly sponsors Anthony Verrelli (D-Mercer, Hunterdon), Daniel Benson (D-Mercer, Middlesex) and Valerie Vainieri Huttle (D-Bergen) issued the following joint statement:
“According to the United Nations, the current pandemic ‘has the seeds of a major mental health crisis.’ Between mass unemployment, isolation from loved ones, fear over losing someone or dying because of a deadly new virus, and so much more, is it any wonder countless residents are struggling with their mental health right now?
“Our state was already facing a mental health crisis before this pandemic, which has now been exacerbated by the unprecedented stress and trauma New Jerseyans continue to face. One study found that nearly 40 percent of the adults in our state were experiencing depression or anxiety back in May – a number that was second only to one other state.



Three Voter Information Centers to Open in Three Middlesex County Municipalities In Addition, the Middlesex County Clerk’s Office will Open to the Public and Extend Hours

Press Release 10/15/20
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NJ – Voter Information Centers (VIC) in three Middlesex County Municipalities – **Highland Park, Monroe, and Sayreville** – will open to the public on Monday, October 19, and remain open until Election Day, November 3. The VIC will serve the public as information centers, providing voting services including replacement ballots, signature verification, and instructions on how to participate in the 2020 General Election.
The centers are located at the following locations:
Highland Park Borough Hall
221 South Fifth Ave, Highland Park
The Monroe Township Library
4 Municipal Plaza, Monroe Township
Sayreville Borough Hall
167 Main Street, Sayreville
All three locations will be open from **11 am to 7 pm Monday through Saturday until November 2 and open 6 am to 8 pm on Election Day, November 3.** Members of the public will be subject to a temperature screening upon entrance to the Voter Information Center and will be required to wear a face covering at all times.
Representatives from the Board of Elections will also be available to contact virtually at the Voter Information Center to answer questions residents may have regarding registration up-

dates and how to ensure their ballot is properly cast.
“Once again, Middlesex County is going above and beyond for its residents. Not only did Middlesex County commit to providing Vote By Mail ballots to residents with postage included and far surpassed the number of ballot drop-box locations required by the state – 32 locations compared to the state’s mandated 10 -- but the County is now offering unique Voter Information Centers throughout the County to assist our residents in casting their ballot,” said **Freeholder Director Ronald G. Rios**. “The opening of these Voter Information Centers will be a tremendous asset to our residents.”
Voter Information Centers will be staffed by County Clerk Election Officials that can immediately access voter registration data and determine if the voter has been issued a Vote by Mail ballot, and whether or not a ballot has been received by the election officials. If the voter has not been issued a Vote by Mail ballot, they can apply at the center. Voters will also be able to apply for and receive a replacement ballot – these duplicate ballots are issued in the event a ballot has been lost, damaged, or the voter does not receive it.
Voter Information Centers are not polling locations and ballots cannot be cast inside a VIC. Each VIC is located within the immediate vicinity of a Middle-

sex County Drop Box at which a voter may drop-off a completed Vote By Mail ballot. The County will operate 97 polling locations on Election Day throughout the County at which residents may complete a paper provisional ballot. Provisional ballots will not be available at the Voter Information Centers.
COUNTY CLERK’S OFFICE OPENS TO PUBLIC AND EXTENDS HOURS
The County Clerk – Division of Elections Office located in the County Administration Building in New Brunswick will be open to the public Monday to Saturday from 11 am to 7 pm starting on October 19 for residents looking for information and assistance on how to participate in the 2020 General Election, offering signature verification and providing duplicate ballots.
“While the COVID-19 pandemic has required us to restrict public access to the County Clerk’s Office for the sake of the health and safety of our staff, we welcome the opportunity to bring the public back into our office, practicing all necessary safety measures, to assist them in exercising their right to vote,” said **Middlesex County Clerk Elaine Flynn**. “This election cycle may be unique in the way our residents vote, but what is not unique is our commitment to ensuring they have all the necessary information and tools to do so!”
HOW VOTERS CAN VOTE

Most voters have several ways to vote in this election, all via paper ballots, which include:
• **Voters may mail the ballots via the United States Postal Service** at any time before November 3 (ballots must be postmarked on or before November 3). Postage is included at no cost to residents.
• **Voters may place the ballot in one of the secure drop boxes** located throughout the County until Tuesday, November 3 at 8 pm. For a list of secure drop box locations, please visit www.middlesexcountynj.gov/vote2020.
• **Voters may drop the ballot off at the Middlesex County Board of Elections** located at 11 Kennedy Blvd, East Brunswick until Tuesday, November 3 at 8 pm. If someone other than you (the voter) is delivering your ballot to the Board of Elections, make sure that they fill out and sign the Bearer Section on the left-front side of the green return envelope and review the guidelines on the back of the green envelope.
• **Voters may vote in person on November 3 via a provisional, paper ballot only.** A limited number of machines will be available only for voters with a disability.
• **Accommodations will be made for voters with a disability** at their polling location. If you are a disabled voter and need access to an ADA accessible ballot marking device to vote on November 3, please call

the Middlesex County Board of Elections at 732-745-3471.
• Voters may submit their own completed and sealed Vote By Mail ballot at their assigned polling location in-person on Election Day, November 3. For a list of polling locations, please visit www.middlesexcountynj.gov/vote2020.
• Bearers will be prohibited from submitting another individual’s ballot at polling locations
If your Vote By Mail ballot is lost, damaged or you do not believe you received it, you may request a duplicate. Please fill out the replacement ballot form on the www.middlesexcountynj.gov/vote2020 website and submit it to the County Clerk’s Office. The deadline to request a replacement ballot to be sent to you via the mail is October 23, though voters may request a replacement ballot in-person at a Voter Information Center or the County Clerk’s Office through election day.
For election information and general questions, please visit www.middlesexcountynj.gov/vote2020. If you have any questions regarding applications or the sending of mail-in ballots for the November 3 General Election, please call the Elections Division of the County Clerk’s Office at 732-745-4202. For all other questions, please call the Board of Elections at 732-745-3471.

Woodbridge Public Library Events

Free Virtual Events
All are Welcome to Attend

Hispanic Heritage Month
WOODBIDGE - Continue our celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month with a virtual tour lead by the NJ Hispanic Research & Information Center (NJHRIC). A representative will guide us through a digital exhibit on the history of US Latinx civil rights movements. Wed. Oct. 21, 2020 at 7 p.m. at the Woodbridge Public Library, George Frederick Plaza, Woodbridge. For more information call 732-634-4450. Registration Required. *More information to come regarding this event. Please check our calendar for updates.

Medicare Workshop
WOODBIDGE - Michael Salum of Medicare Planning Services will fill you in on everything you need to know about the changes to Medicare for upcoming enrollment period. Thurs. Oct. 22, 2020 at 7 p.m. at the Woodbridge Public Library, George Frederick Plaza, Woodbridge. For more information, call 732-634-4450. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/2FwOlrs>

WPL Virtual Book & Movie Club
WOODBIDGE - Join us for an informal chat about the movies, books or TV shows you have seen or watched (binged watched) recently that you loved. Or, tell us what and why you strongly disliked something. Mon. Oct. 26, 2020 at 7 p.m. via Zoom at the Woodbridge Public Library, For more information call 732-634-4450. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/33CfNf9>

Consumer Fraud
WOODBIDGE - Presented by Melanie Hazim, Director of Community Outreach - NJ Division of Consumer Affairs. You will learn about current scams and how to stay alert and safe during these trying times. Wednesday, November 4 at 6:30 p.m. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/3nBuDM7>.

DIY Pens and Pendants
WOODBIDGE - Pick up the supplies for crafting activity from a location of your choice. Monday, November 9. Pick Up Available All Day Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/3iX7YXg>

Sweet Treats: Desserts & Delicacies from the Garden State
WOODBIDGE - Explore a variety of “sweet” culinary traditions from the 18th and 19th centuries and consider how the treats we enjoy have changed. Presented by Hilary May of Museum of Early Trades and Crafts in Madison, NJ. Tuesday, November 10 at 7 p.m. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/3dbCGKO>.

NJ Estate Tax Law, Wills, & Probate Seminar
WOODBIDGE - Join guest speaker Kenneth Vercammen, Managing Attorney from Kenneth Vercammen & Associates, for this comprehensive seminar. Monday, November 16 at 7 p.m. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/2SGYaG8>.

Book Talk : Afia Atakora
WOODBIDGE - Meet Colonia native, Afia Atakora, virtually over Zoom as she discusses her debut novel Conjure Women. . Get a look into how she researched the book, hear an excerpt, and ask her the questions you've been dying to ask about her riveting book. Tuesday, November 17 at 7 p.m. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/3d5mPNR>

WPL Virtual Book & Movie Club
WOODBIDGE - Join us for a new, different kind of book club. Instead of reading one specific book - join us for an informal chat about the movies, books or tv shows you have seen or watched (binged watched) recently that you loved. Monday, November 30 at 7 p.m. Registration Required - <https://bit.ly/34PqdJ4>.

The Woodbridge Public Library is located at George Frederick Plaza, Woodbridge, NJ 07095. For more information, call 732-634-4450 ext.7117

WWW.AMBOYGUARDIAN.COM

**Votes for Women:
A Portrait of Persistence**
Exhibition at the Sadie Pope Dowdell Library
SOUTH AMBOY – Celebrate the centennial of women’s suffrage with commemorative posters on exhibition at the Sadie Pope Dowdell Library. Organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in collaboration with the National Portrait Gallery. The project received support from the Smithsonian American Women’s History Initiative. [sites.si.edu](https://si.edu) For more information including library hours, call 732-721-6060 or go to www.dowdell.org. The Dowdell Library is located at 100 Harold G. Hoffman Plaza adjacent to South Amboy Middle High School.

Halloween Festival
SOUTH AMBOY - The YMCA will be hosting an Outdoor Halloween Festival on Friday, October 30, 2020 at the South Amboy YMCA, 200 John T O’Leary Blvd., from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. There will be pumpkin painting, games, an obstacle course and much more. The costume parade begins at 5:30 p.m., and a movie screening of “Scared Shrekless” will start at 6 p.m.

Annual Cemetery Tour
SOUTH AMBOY - The Historical Society of South Amboy is hosting the Annual Cemetery Tour on October 24, 2020 at Christ Church Cemetery, located at S. Pine Ave., from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Donation of \$5 for admission. Masks will be required. Follow us on Facebook for more information and updates regarding COVID-19.

St. John’s Fall Pirohi Sale
PERTH AMBOY -. Orders may be called in on October 19&20 to 732-826-7067 between 9:00 a.m. and 12 Noon. The Pirohi are Potato /Cheese and Jalapeno Cheddar they are \$9.00 a dozen and are Frozen. Pick up will be on October 21 from 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m. at 404 Division Street, Perth Amboy.

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- Professional development

Sayreville Wills & Power of Attorney Seminar
SAYREVILLE – There will be a Wills & Power of Attorney Seminar at the Sayreville Public Library via zoom on Tuesday October 20 @ 6:00 p.m. Open to the public. You do not need to be a resident.
Speaker: Kenneth Vercammen, Esq. Edison, (Author- ABA’s “Wills and Estate Administration book”)
Main Topics:
1. NJ Estate Tax eliminated
2. Wills and problems if no Will
3. Power of Attorneys recommendations
4. Living Will & Advance Directive
5. Administering the Estate/Probate /Surrogate
6. Avoiding unnecessary expenses and saving your family money
Wills & Estate Administration-Protect Your Family and Make Planning - This event is free & open to the public. Registration at sayrevillelibrary.org or 732.727.0212 is suggested. Sayreville Public Library
Complimentary Material: Brochures on Wills, “Answers to Questions about Probate” and Administration of an Estate, Power of Attorney, Living Wills, Real Estate Sales for Seniors, and Trusts. <https://www.facebook.com/events/950851175326327/>
Can’t attend? We can email you materials. Send email to VercammenLaw@Njlaws.com




Virtual Halloween Parade

SOUTH AMBOY – South Amboy wants to feature you or your family in our parade! Take pictures your little ones, family and pets in your costumes and email them to southamboyartsalliance@gmail.com (please include your name, address, phone number and email when submitting.)
Scariest Costume: \$50 Delio’s Gift Certificate; Most Creative Costume: \$50 Amano’s Gift Certificate; Best Themed Family Costumes: \$50 Don Giovanni Gift Certificate
All photos must be submitted by November 1, 2020. Your entry gives permission for your photo submission to be used in our virtual parade to be shown on South Amboy Arts outlets. One photo per child. Open to South Amboy Residents only.



L2B> Library to Business
SOUTH AMBOY – L2B seeks to connect job seekers, businesses, and nonprofits of New Jersey with organizations and experts who are actively engaging in business and workforce development webinars. View the CALENDAR for FREE webinars and online training. Click on eRESOURCES for businesses, nonprofit organizations, and economic information. <https://libs2b.com/>
For more information contact the Sadie Pope Dowdell Library: email: comments@dowdell.org or go to www.dowdell.org



Friends of the Perth Amboy Library Book Sale

PERTH AMBOY - The Friends of the Perth Amboy Free Public Library are once again having a book sale October 24, Saturday from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. at the Brighton Avenue Community Center at the corner of Brighton Avenue and Sadowski Parkway in Perth Amboy. We are delighted to be back after being sidelined by the pandemic for 7 months. I know many people have been starving for reading material for these long months we were at home. We will be wearing masks and providing hand sanitizer and bags if needed. We also insist that anyone coming to peruse our collection also wear a mask as mandated by the State of NJ. Paperbacks are \$.50, hardcovers are \$1, \$5 for a bag full, no limit to size of bag except no lawn or garbage bags. We have best sellers by popular authors that are like new. The money we raise goes to support the library with providing programs, promoting literacy or to provide funds to the library with their needs beyond their budget. We look forward to your visit.
For more information email us at friendsofperthamboylibrary@gmail.com, or call us at 201-381-1903 and like us on Facebook. Dealers are welcome.

Novena to St. Rita

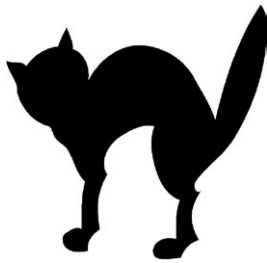
O holy protectress of those who art in greatest need, thou who shineth as a star of hope in the midst of darkness, blessed Saint Rita, bright mirror of God's grace, in patience and fortitude thou art a model of all the states in life. I unite my will with the will of God through the merits of my Savior Jesus Christ, and in particular through his patient wearing of the crown of thorns, which with tender devotion thou didst daily contemplate. Through the merits of the holy Virgin Mary and thine own graces and virtues, I ask thee to obtain my earnest petition, provided it be for the greater glory of God and my own sanctification. Guide and purify my intention, O holy protectress and advocate, so that I may obtain the pardon of all my sins and the grace to persevere daily, as thou didst in walking with courage, generosity, and fidelity down the path of life. *(Mention your request.)*
Saint Rita, advocate of the impossible, pray for us.
Saint Rita, advocate of the helpless, pray for us.
Recite the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be three times each. K.M. & C.M.

Miraculous Invocation to St. Therese

O Glorious St. Therese, whom Almighty God has raised up to aid and inspire the human family. I implore your Miraculous Intercession. You are so powerful in obtaining every need of body and spirit from the Heart of God. Holy Mother Church proclaims you “Prodigy of Miracles . . . the Greatest Saint of Modern Times.” Now I fervently beseech you to answer my petition *(mention here)* to carry out your promises of spending Heaven doing good upon earth . . . of letting fall from Heaven a Shower of Roses. Little Flower, give me your childlike faith, to see the Face of God in the people and experiences of my life, and to love God with full confidence. Saint Therese, my Carmelite Sister, I will fulfill your plea “to be made known everywhere” and I will continue to lead others to Jesus through you. Amen.
“I will let fall from Heaven . . . a Shower of Roses” – St. Therese
Say this prayer for nine consecutive days. After the ninth day your prayer request will be granted. This prayer must be published after the favor is granted. K.M. & C.M.

South Amboy 2020 Halloween Guidelines

SOUTH AMBOY - Halloween is fast approaching. For your safety in these uncertain times we are providing the guidance shared by the NJ Department of Health outlining the best practices for Halloween Celebrations this year. Please take the time to look over this safety information. In addition, please be mindful that South Amboy does have a curfew for unaccompanied minors on both Halloween and Halloween Eve beginning at 7 p.m. **For information on 2020 Halloween Guidelines, please visit: southamboynj.gov**



Spooky House Decorating Contest

SOUTH AMBOY - The South Amboy Recreation Department will be hosting a "Spooky House Decorating Contest". Contestants wanting to enter - please email a photo(s) of your decorated house along with your name, address and phone number to Jaclyn at kellyj@southamboynj.gov. Last day to enter the contest is Friday, October 23rd.

Voting will start October 26th and end on October 31st. Voters will receive a list of houses and able to submit their vote for best decorated house until October 31st.

For more information, please call (732) 525-5965 or email kellyj@southamboynj.gov

Pet of the Week

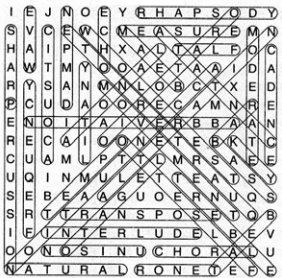


Let us make the bed Cleo!

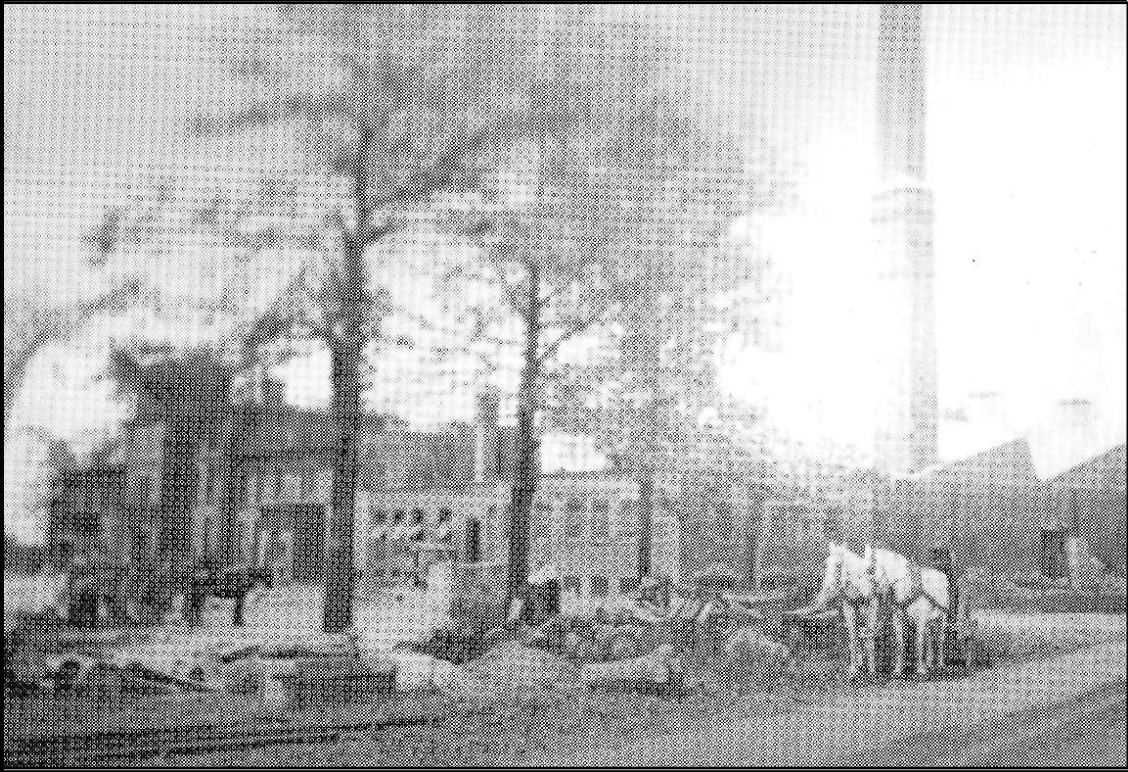
PERTH AMBOY- Cleopatra is no ordinary cat. We knew when we adopted her, she was special. She quickly got use to her new home. Cleopatra is a female tuxedo cat. She is all black except for her chest, underbelly, and feet which are white. Her eyes are a gleaming yellow. At night, Cleo goes crazy! Knocking over pictures and jumping on chairs. She loves to sleep with any family member. But be willing to give up your pillow. Cleo's also a traveling cat. She's been to Myrtle Beach, The Poconos, Maryland, and Atlanta Georgia. Cat food? What's that?! Yes, she eats normal cat (wet food). But this cat has eaten anything eatable. Between sneaking mashed potatoes and chicken. She even licked ice cream (when we didn't look). Cleo had it all!. Sometimes Cleo will run outside. But now at one word she walks inside. Cleo is a lovable, friendly, mischievous cat. Love, Jacquelyn
A thought: *Arguing with reality is as crazy as if we tried to teach a cat to bark and at the end of all our efforts, we were upset when the cat still said, "Meow".* - Lent 2020

Remember to Say Your Novenas!

Answers From Puzzle On Page 21



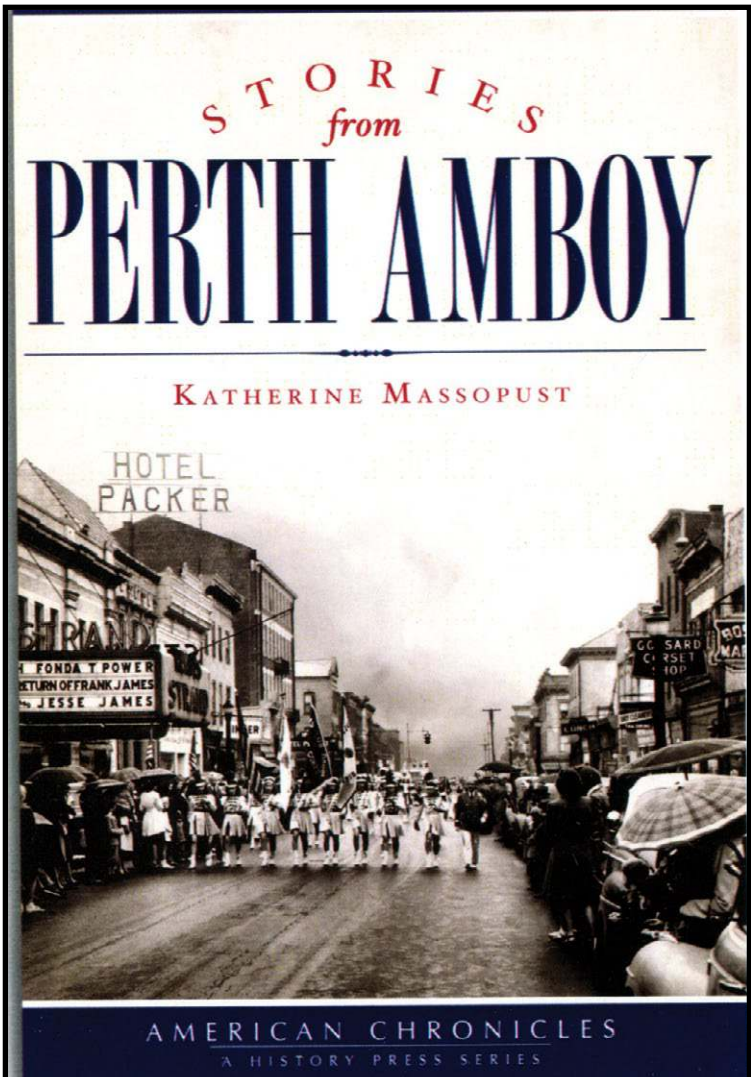
LOOKING BACK



PERTH AMBOY – The Pardee Tile Works circa 1900. The Middlesex County "Clay Belt" was well-known for tile, terra-cotta, and brick.

**Photo Courtesy of the Perth Amboy Free Public Library
This photo was restored under a grant from the Middlesex County Cultural and Heritage Commission to the Kearny Cottage Historical Association.*

Have a Special Pet?
E-mail us your Pet Photos to AmboyGuardian@gmail.com with Pet of the Week in the Subject line and explain why your pet is special. Please include Name and Phone# for verification.



Stories From Perth Amboy
PERTH AMBOY - Stories From Perth Amboy by Katherine Massopust is available from Katherine at 732-261-2610 or on Amazon.com. A Great Gift! Get it now along with Then & Now: Perth Amboy!

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1. ABBREVI-
TION

2. ACCENTUA-
TION

3. ACOUSTIC

4. ALTERATION

5. ATONAL

6. BAR

7. BASS

8. BEAM

9. BEAT

10. CADENCE

11. CANTATA

12. CHORAL

13. DAMPEN

14. ECHO

15. FALSETTO

16. FLAT

17. FREQUENCY

18. INTERLUDE

19. KEY

20. LEGATO

21. LITANY

22. MEASURE

23. MODERATE

24. MOVEMENT

25. NATURAL

I E J N O E Y R H A P S O D Y

S V C E W C M E A S U R E M N

H A I P T H X A L T A L F O C

A W T M Y O O A E T A A I D A

R Y S A N M N L O B C T X E D

P C U D A O O R E C A M N R E

E N O I T A I V E R B B A A N

R E C A I O O N E T E B K T C

C U A M L P T T L M R S A E E

U Q I N M U L E T T E A T S Y

S E B E A A G U O E R N U Q S

S R T T R A N S P O S E T Q B

I F I N T E R L U D E L B E V

O O N O S I N U C H O R A L U

N A T U R A L R O N E T E F E

26. ORATORIO

27. PERCUSSION

28. QUARTER

NOTE

29. RHAPSODY

30. SHARP

31. TEMPO

32. TENOR

33. TRANSPOSE

34. TREBLE

35. UNISON

36. WAVE

37. WHOLE REST

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A.C. Bus Trip

San Salvador Seniors

PERTH AMBOY – The San Salvador Seniors are having a bus trip to Caesars Casino, Atlantic City on Thursday, November 5, 2020. Cost: \$30 per person, \$30 back in slot play. Everyone must bring a mask to board the bus. Bus leaves 12 Noon. Bus will depart from behind St. Stephens Church parking lot on Mechanic Street, Perth Amboy. For more info call Joe at 732-826-0819.

A.C. TRIP

Holy Rosary Seniors

HOPELAWN - Holy Rosary Seniors is sponsoring a bus trip to Harrah's Atlantic City, Tuesday, November 10. Cost is \$40 and \$10 back in play. Seating is limited. Bus leaves Church (625 Florida Grove Rd., Hopelawn) parking lot at 10:00 am. Any questions please call Connie at 732-442-4978.

VOTE BY MAIL BEFORE NOVEMBER 3RD

Vote Por Correo Antes de 3 de Noviembre

Column



Joel

PABON

For MAYOR Para Alcade

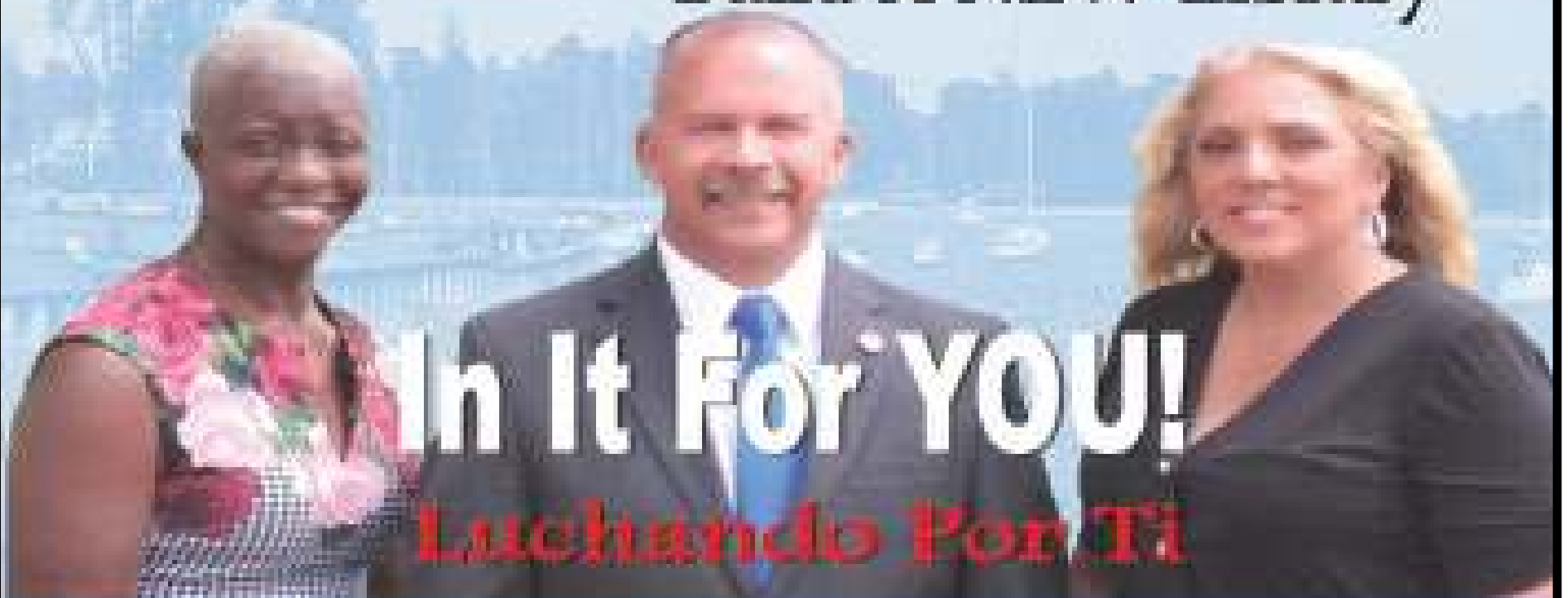
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PERTH AMBOY - Great business opportunity, very busy restaurant, great location. Owner offering 5-year lease \$1,800 monthly rent, this is a turnkey operation. Be your own Boss. **\$60,000**



PERTH AMBOY - Located in downtown business district. **\$100,000**



PERTH AMBOY - Large three family with lots of potential needs some TLC, apartment A has 2 brs, apartment B has 3 brs and apartment C has 2 brs. Apartments B & C entrance is around the back. large attic space for storage. A must see. **\$439,000**



PERTH AMBOY - Beautiful & spacious 4 bedroom apartment located off of State Street. This updated apartment offers brand new stainless steel appliances, fresh paint and floors. Central A/C and forced heat a plus!! **\$2,500 Mo/Rent**



OLD BRIDGE - Pride of ownership is evident in this home. Fully renovated, new bathroom with designer ceramic, new kitchen with stainless steel appliances, granite counter tops and wood cabinets. New roof, new water heater tank, hard wood floors and much more! Shed storage Sold As Is. **\$379,000**



NEWARK - Why rent when you can own this 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home in a gated community. off street parking, close proximity to shopping, highways and train stations. Priced to sell. **\$209,000**



EDISON - Located across the street from Middlesex County College, close to all major highways, hospitals, and Rutgers University. **\$169,000**



PERTH AMBOY - Back on Market! Buyer couldn't get loan. Welcome to this large 3 level Townhouse, with 3 bedrooms, 3 full baths, family/office room, Master bedroom has a full master bath with double sink, tub, and shower stall. This unit also has a private front Paver Patio yard before you enter the Townhouse. Two parking spots in covered garage/parking deck included. Seller just got a reduction in property taxes via tax appeal! **\$269,000**



PERTH AMBOY - Very charming cozy two family in the hospital section. 1st floor 1 bedroom, 2nd floor 2 bedrooms very clean property, great tenants, separated utilities. A must see. **\$274,000**