

Kathleen Mathias appointed next City Clerk; longtime City Clerk Carol Jacobs to retire

Assistant to the City Manager Kathleen Mathias will become the next City Clerk for the Town of Ocean City. She will replace longtime City Clerk Carol Jacobs, who recently announced she would retire May 31, 2010.

The Mayor and Council have unanimously approved the appointment of Mathias to the City Clerk's position. As the Town continues its cost-saving measures, Mathias will retain many of her present duties while assuming the Clerk's position. The assistant to the city manager position will not be filled.

"Carol Jacobs has served the Town of Ocean City with distinction and we wish her all the best," said Mayor Rick Meehan. "And while we are all sad to see Carol leave, we are pleased to have Kathy promoted to the City Clerk's post. She has the knowledge and experience to make this a smooth transition."

Mathias has been employed by the Town since 1983, when she became executive assistant to the city manager. From 1985 to 1989, she served as the administrative aide to Mayor Roland E. "Fish" Powell, before assuming her present duties in the City Manager's Office in 1989.

Prior to joining the Town of Ocean City, Mathias was the assistant to the President and Dean of the then newly established Wor-Wic Community College, and currently serves on the Program Advisory Committee for Office Technology at Wor-Wic.

She holds a bachelors degree in political science from Salisbury State University, where she graduated magna cum laude in 1998.

During her tenure with the Town, Mathias developed and continues to maintain the Town's Policy and Procedure Manual. She served as the first editor of the Ocean City Newsletter. She developed and continues to coordinate the Ocean City University program. She completed the National Citizen Survey for the Town in 2007. Mathias has also worked to accomplish a nearly paperless agenda for the Mayor and Council.



Assistant to the City Manager Kathy Mathias has been named City Clerk.

Mathias also chaired the committee for the Town in the All America City competition. The Town was a finalist in the competition in 2000 and received the All America City Award in 2001.

"I am very honored to accept the appointment as City Clerk," Mathias said. "I have been fortunate to work with Carol over the years. She will be a tough act to follow, but I am pleased to follow in her footsteps."

City Manager Dennis Dare said the move of Mathias from his office to the City Clerk's office just across the

Town of Ocean City municipal election Oct. 19, 2010

The office of the mayor and three council positions will be voted during this regular election to be held Oct. 19, 2010, in the Roland E. Powell Convention Center.

The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Filing deadline for candidates is Sept. 21, 2010. You must be a resident and registered to vote for Ocean City's municipal elections to be eligible to run for office.

Voter registration deadline is Oct. 1. Absentee ballots will be available after filing deadline and must be requested by Oct. 12, 2010.

Contact the City Clerk's Office, Room 220, City Hall, 410-289-8824 or 8842 for more information.



hallway at City Hall is part of the Town's continuing steps to reduce costs.

"I am pleased to see Kathy accept the position," Dare said. "Carol has brought a very high level of professionalism to the clerk's office and Kathy will carry that forward in every way."

Spring cleaning can improve fire safety in your home

A good spring housecleaning can significantly help promote fire safety in your home. Here are a few key areas to address to help protect your home and family.

Garages

The garage is a good place to start. Make sure oily rags and painting materials are properly stored in airtight metal containers with self-closing lids so they can't spontaneously ignite.

Store gasoline only in UL-listed gas containers, always making sure it's stored so you won't run over it with your vehicle and your children won't knock it over. Properly dispose of clutter, like piles of old papers and magazines. Check the area around your water heater and furnace to be certain all combustibles and flammables are a safe distance from heaters.

Clothes dryers

Checking your clothes dryer to make sure it is clean can also prevent a mishap. Recent studies indicate that dryers can be a major fire hazard. By keeping the dryer exhaust duct and housing free of lint, and by using metal ducts instead of plastic ones, you can help minimize the risk involved. Lastly, don't leave home or go to bed while your dryer is on.

Kitchens

When cleaning the kitchen, check the exhaust fan/motor/duct and the stove and oven, making sure they are free from grease build-up. Remove all combustibles from

the area of the stove. To prevent overheating, don't plug more than one major appliance into an outlet. Keep heating elements of appliances clean and don't leave cooking unattended. Turn handles inward so kids can't reach them. Don't wear loose clothing while cooking because clothes ignite easily.

Check for cracking, fraying or wear on cords and plugs, as with all electrical appliances. Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen near an exit door and on each floor of your home, always making sure to check the expiration date.

Grilling requirements

The Town does not allow grills or other outdoor cooking equipment to be used within 20 feet of multi-family dwellings. Multi-family dwellings are those buildings that contain three or more dwelling units, which may include townhouse complexes.

In 2002, according to the National Fire Protection Association, gas and charcoal grills resulted in property loss of close to \$30 million. Almost half of all outdoor cooking-related fires begin on an attached deck or balcony.

Keep grills a safe distance away from any building, and at least 20 feet away from multi-family dwellings. Always maintain a safe zone around the grill to prevent children or pets from getting injured.

Lastly, never use outdoor cooking equipment inside, as this creates a significant fire and carbon monoxide hazard.

Smoke alarm requirements

The fire department reminds property owners to check their smoke alarms. It is important to understand the safety that smoke alarms provide, as well as knowing that providing them is the law.

The Town requires all owners of dwelling units located within multi-family dwellings to provide hard-wired smoke alarms outside of all sleeping areas and on each level of the dwelling unit. Alarms mounted on the wall should be positioned 4 to 12 inches from the ceiling, while ceiling-mounted alarms should be positioned 4 inches or more away from the nearest wall.

Working smoke alarms are vital in notification of a fire, allowing you and your family adequate time to escape. A report published by the National Fire Protection Association stated that the most common reason for smoke detector failure in the United States was missing or dead batteries. It is estimated that approximately 900 lives could be saved annually if all homes had working smoke detectors.

Smoke detectors should be tested at least monthly and should have batteries replaced twice a year. A simple way to remember to change your smoke detector battery is to change the battery when you change your clocks.

Carbon monoxide detector requirements

In 2007, the Town passed legislation to

require the installation of carbon monoxide (CO) detectors in new and existing one- and two-family dwellings as well as new and existing multi-family dwellings where fuel-burning equipment is installed or operated. Fuel-burning equipment could be gas water heaters, furnaces, dryers, fireplaces, wood stoves or engine exhaust.

For specific installation locations, visit the Ocean City Fire Department, Office of the Fire Marshal website and review the code at www.oceancitymd.gov, or call 410-289-8780 (e-mail jsexauer@oceancitymd.gov).

Those affected by the code should install listed CO detectors in a central location outside of all sleeping areas and have a minimum of one on each level of the home. Test CO alarms monthly and replace the batteries according to the manufacturer's recommendation, which is typically twice a year. CO detectors are not a substitute for smoke detectors.

It is also important to have all fuel-burning equipment serviced annually by a professional. Always make sure new heating and cooking equipment is listed by an independent testing laboratory (i.e. Underwriters Laboratories) and installed per the manufacturer's recommendations.

When warming up vehicles in the wintertime, remove them from the garage after starting. Do not run any fuel engines indoors.