MAYOR'S MESSAGE *July 24, 2025*

There have been recent news articles which have mentioned New Jersey towns with underfunded lifeguard pension liabilities, including Sea Isle City. The Office of the State Comptroller audited many towns that are required by law to maintain a lifeguard pension program, and Sea Isle was one of the towns audited. What is important to note is that Sea Isle City's pension program is NOT underfunded. Our city has over $1.2 million in the lifeguard pension trust fund, with an annual outlay of only about $20,000. Based on this, the fact is that Sea Isle City does not need to put more than it currently does into the fund annually. The Comptroller's report noted that towns can adopt a resolution that authorizes lesser annual contributions than are mandated by the lifeguard pension law. That action will take place in Sea Isle City in the near future, satisfying the needs of the State Comptroller. While there are towns with pension liability issues, Sea Isle is not one of them; and it's unfortunate that we were lumped into an article that painted all the towns with one broad stroke as opposed to including all the details, which are different for each municipality.

On a more upbeat topic… Words cannot express how excited I am about our future Community Center! Yesterday, I once again had the opportunity to tour the construction site inside and out, and this time I was honored to have representatives from VFW Post 1963's Auxiliary join me as we explored the building's many wonderful features. If you have driven by the site in recent weeks, you probably noticed that work on the outside of the building is coming along very nicely – however, the inside of the facility is even more impressive than its exterior!

As I walked through the Community Center with my friends from the Auxiliary, it was very easy to envision the many events and community gatherings that will soon be taking place there once construction is completed – and I was visualizing the day when we host a Grand Opening Ceremony and begin a new era of recreation, entertainment and community activities in Sea Isle City. While I am not one who wishes time away, I am extremely eager for construction to be completed so we can begin to enjoy our new Community Center in grand style. In the meantime, however, I hope everyone will continue to review our "Project Updates" so you can follow the construction process and keep track of the amazing amount of work that's taking place in what I am confident will be a facility that will benefit our community for generations to come.

Prior to walking through the Community Center with the good folks from the VFW Auxiliary, I met them on the second floor of City Hall, where we officially dedicated Sea Isle's newest POW-MIA Chair of Honor – which is now adorned with a new American Flag, gold stanchions and fancy velvet roping. I want to thank the Auxiliary for donating the chair and reminding our City Hall visitors of the countless U.S. military members who served as prisoners of war as well as those who went missing while serving our nation in uniform – and I hope everyone will take a moment to visit the new chair the next time they are in City Hall.

In other news, I am very happy to report that the Summer of 2025 is going extremely well, and families all over town are enjoying the good weather we have been experiencing and the many events and activities that make Sea Isle City so special. Also, along with the many wonderful visitors we look forward to seeing year after year, I have also heard about several "celebrity sightings" that have taken place in recent weeks. In addition to our "resident celebrity," Jason Kelce, I was also told that Actress Maria Bello, Philadelphia Eagles Cornerback Cooper DeJean, and Major League Baseball's 2025 All Star Game MVP Kyle Schwarber were all spotted in town this summer.

In retrospect, it's no wonder that even famous people want to visit Sea Isle City, because we have beautiful beaches, plenty of natural beauty, a wide variety of entertainment options, and the nicest homeowners you could hope to meet – so who can blame them?

The month of July may be drawing to a close, but don't forget that there's still plenty of summer left in the season – and plenty of fun events coming our way before Labor Day arrives. For example, if your family has young baseball fans, perhaps your children or grandchildren will want to participate in the Phillies Home Run Derby on Sunday at Dealy Field – or you can take the entire family to the Phillies' "Down the Shore" community outreach event on August 12 at Excursion Park. Also, the Sea Isle City Historical Society will offer a very interesting presentation titled "Our Perfect Storm" this Friday evening at the Band Shell, the Sea Isle City Police Department will host their annual National Night Out celebration on August 5, and there are also many other events planned that you won't want to miss, including charity fundraisers, and several exciting athletic competitions, such as the Beach Patrol's annual 10-Mile Island Run on Saturday, August 2 – not to mention our weekly Family Fun Nights, Beachcomber Guided Tours, Open Mic Nights, Farmers Market, Movies Under the Stars, and Saturday night concerts.

To learn more about these and the many entertainment options we have planned for you for this summer in Sea Isle City, please go to www.VisitSICNJ.com, stop-by the Welcome Center, or phone our Tourism Office at 609-263-8687.

Before closing, I would like to once again thank the many people who have told me how much they are enjoying our new electronic sign on the corner of JFK Boulevard and Central Avenue. It's a pleasure to know that the sign is making a positive impact on our community, and that it is successfully sharing timely information with our residents and visitors – and I appreciate the many kind comments I have received.

This week's "Shout Out" goes to everyone's favorite North Pole resident, Santa Claus. On Wednesday, Saint Nick made a special trip to Excursion Park, where he greeted dozens of families and cheerfully posed for photos during the Tourism Office's "Christmas in July" celebration – and everyone was very happy to see him! Thank you for coming to town, Santa Claus!

I hope everyone enjoys the final week of July – and the many sunny days that are yet to come our way!

Smile…You're in Sea Isle!



Mayor Leonard C. Desiderio

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