

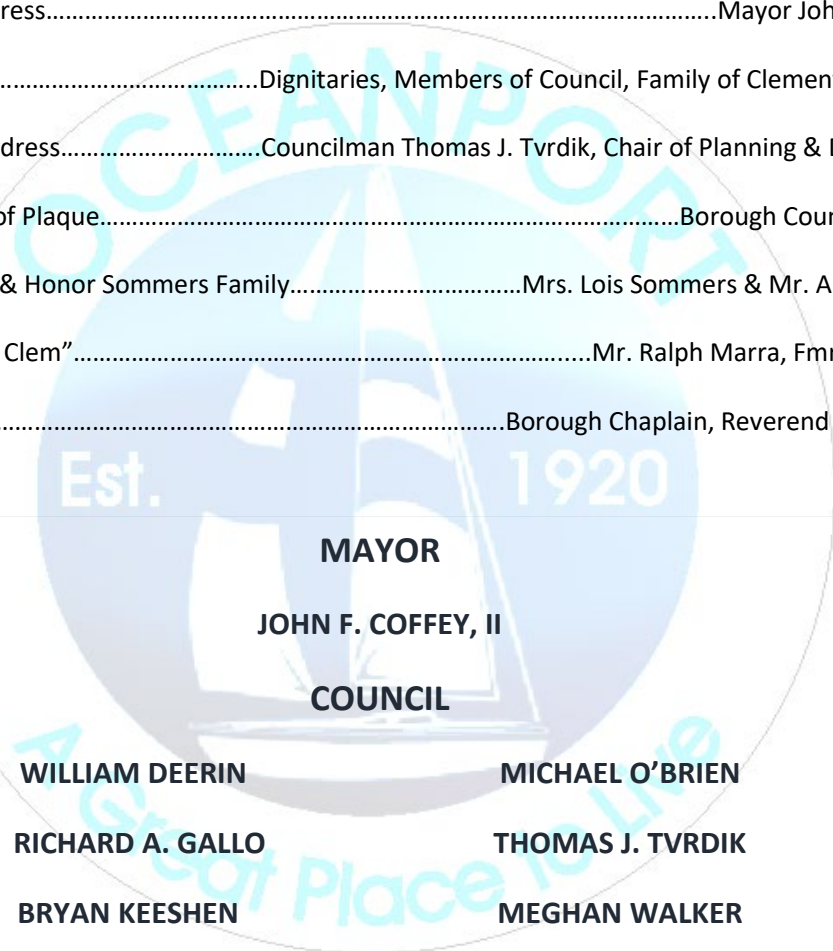


DEDICATION DAY
Oceanport Municipal Complex

July 31, 2021

PROGRAM

- ❖ Raising of Colors.....Boy Scout Troop #58
- ❖ Pledge of Allegiance.....Mr. Edward Ryan & Eagle Scout Jack Donohue
- ❖ Invocation.....Borough Chaplain, Reverend Stacy Deerin
- ❖ Welcome Address.....Mayor John F. Coffey, II
- ❖ Introductions.....Dignitaries, Members of Council, Family of Clement V. Sommers
- ❖ Dedication Address.....Councilman Thomas J. Tvrdik, Chair of Planning & Development
- ❖ Presentation of Plaque.....Borough Council Members
- ❖ Acknowledge & Honor Sommers Family.....Mrs. Lois Sommers & Mr. Al DeSantis, Sr.
- ❖ “Memories of Clem”.....Mr. Ralph Marra, Fmr. Councilman
- ❖ Benediction.....Borough Chaplain, Reverend Stacy Deerin



MAYOR

JOHN F. COFFEY, II

COUNCIL

WILLIAM DEERIN

MICHAEL O'BRIEN

RICHARD A. GALLO

THOMAS J. TVRDIK

BRYAN KEESHEN

MEGHAN WALKER

DEDICATION DAY COMMITTEE

Al DeSantis Sr., Chairman Emeritus

Jay Coffey

Thomas Tvrdik

Steven Briskey

Jeanne Smith

Frank Barricelli

Mark Patterson

Kim Parent

HISTORY - 1920 to 2021

On June 14, 1920, the first official meeting of the Oceanport Borough municipal government was held in the upstairs meeting room of the Hook & Ladder firehouse on Main Street. That upstairs meeting room would serve as the borough's municipal office for the next 30 years. It was not large enough for all of the borough's departments, so some were housed in private homes. For example, the tax records were kept in the home of the Tax Assessor and Municipal Court was held in the garage of the Court Recorder. The borough's road equipment was stored in a private garage.



In 1950, the Oceanport Hook & Ladder Fire Company opened its new firehouse on Main Street. The Borough Clerk, Tax Collector, and Police offices were located on the second floor, along with the Borough Council's meeting room. Other departments were still housed in private homes. As Oceanport's population continued to grow, it became obvious new, larger quarters for the borough's offices had to be built.

On October 24, 1965, the Borough of Oceanport celebrated the opening of its new municipal buildings at the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Monmouth Boulevard. The new site finally provided space for all of the borough's offices in one building, as well as the Department of Public Works' garage. The borough was in the midst of rapid population growth in the Port Au Peck neighborhood and in the subdivisions of the

old farms making up much of the western part of town during this period. The growing population increased the demands for municipal services, staff, and space. Eventually, the building department moved to rented office space and the Oceanport Police moved some of its operation to trailers parked behind the municipal building. This patchwork of office space in a growing community was a good indication that something had to be done.



Mother Nature decided to force a solution. Superstorm Sandy, which hit the New Jersey coast on October 30, 2012, pushed water up the South Shrewsbury causing severe damage to many of Oceanport's homes and the Oceanport Municipal Buildings. The Borough made repairs to the municipal building and it was re-opened several months later.

However, there was unseen structural damage, and the needed repairs or replacement of the building at that site was cost prohibitive for the Borough. Additionally, due to the fact the property was in a flood zone, the Federal Emergency Management Agency refused to fund the rebuild.



Because of the storm damage the municipal offices moved to the Senior Citizens' Center at the Old Wharf House in February 2014, the municipal court was moved to Shrewsbury, and the police moved into trailers. Two years after the storm, in October of 2014, the Oceanport Police renovated and temporarily moved into

the former Fort Monmouth Main Post Firehouse after leasing it from the fort's redevelopment authority. After exploring various options and locations, it was decided to acquire several of the fort's buildings and renovate those for use as a municipal complex. While the initial plans had to be scaled back due to unforeseen problems, work proceeded on the complex. On July 31, 2017, the Borough of Oceanport purchased 13.25 acres and 25,000 sq. ft. of office space from the Fort Monmouth Economic Revitalization Authority.



In January of 2021, the Borough's offices and the Police Department moved into the renovated buildings located on Oceanport Way, formerly named Murphy Drive. The new complex is now ready for its dedication.

- Oceanport Historical Committee

TRIBUTE TO CLEMENT V. SOMMERS

Former Mayor and Past Fire Chief Clement V. Sommers, a member of our Oceanport Community, was born on January 5, 1929, and spent most of his 91 years volunteering and serving his community. Clem was raised in Oceanport, attended Oceanport's Wolf Hill School, was the first Eagle Scout of Boy Scout Troop #58, and upon reaching adulthood, entered military service in the United States Navy. While in Naval Service, he was permanently injured as a result of a tragic accident. Placed in a body cast and hospitalized for a year, he was never expected to walk again. He married his wife Lois and raised his daughter Linda in Oceanport spending many years living on Seneca Place. Clem served his friends and family, community, county, state, and country in so many ways that volumes could be written. In 2009, he was recognized by Mayor Michael Mahon with the Mayor's Lifetime Achievement Award. He served Oceanport more than 25 years as Mayor, Councilman, and Council President. He was responsible for relocating the business section and replacing it with Old Wharf Park, developing

Blackberry Bay, Charles, Trinity and Evergreen Parks and construction of the Senior Citizens Building, the Port-au-Peck Chemical Hose Co. Fire House, the old Borough Hall (including the memorial monuments honoring Oceanport residents killed in action) and acquiring the land for the First Aid Building. In 2015 the Oceanport Lions Club (of which he was a member) honored him as an "Oceanport Legend" for his service.

He also served as Captain and Life Member of the Oceanport Hook and Ladder Fire Co., Fire Chief, and Life Member of the NJ State Fireman's Association, serving over 50 years as Treasurer of the Oceanport Local Fireman's Relief Association. Clem was a member of the OFAS and was named First Aider of the Year in 1973. As a testament to his character, he is one of the few people who have been chosen for Honorary Membership of the Port-Au-Peck Fire Company in 2011.

Clem would also serve as a Monmouth County Freeholder, Deputy Director, and Member of the Monmouth County Vocational School District, Chair of Building & Grounds, Education, Planning Boards and

several other committees with accomplishments including the building of the Police Academy, the Vocational District School's Career Center, the Library Headquarters in Manalapan, and major additions to the John L. Montgomery Nursing Home, the Juvenile Detention Center, the County Court House, and county jail. The Monmouth County Republican Organization honored him as the first "Monmouth County Legend" with a "Hall of Fame" Award in 2015 for his service.

His ability to relate and work with all generations, and everyone who came across his path was remarkable.

In recognition of Clement V. Sommers, impact on our community, on April 23, 2020, The Oceanport Mayor and Council dedicated the soon to be completed Borough Hall in his name.

Today, the Mayor and Council along with the Oceanport community are honored and privileged to dedicate the Oceanport Municipal Building as The Clement V. Sommers Municipal Building and have declared **July 31, 2021** as

"Clement V. Sommers Day"

In closing, "Keep Smiling" - Clem Sommers

