

ADVERTISING CHANGES FOR OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND



The council members for Ocean City are expected to gather together and discuss options on whether or not they should continue to sign with the advertising firm that created the whole Rodney the Lifeguard scenario or if they should switch and go on with another advertising agency, taking on different approaches for advertising and new, fresh ideas. Margaret Pillas, a councilwoman for Ocean City, has been very upfront about the support she has for looking into new advertising agencies and switching firms. Pillas says, "When you get into the business of the town, which is tourism, you have to get competitive." She continued by saying, "Sometimes it takes a fresh look, and I want to see what other ideas are out there." In the meantime, another councilwoman begs to differ. Mary Knight believes it is in the areas best interest to renew the contract with the MGH advertising agency. Knight has said, "I think that MGH has done an amazing job, as evidenced by our increased numbers in room tax and food tax." She also says, "I think it should be a very easy decision. I would hope that the council would agree 7-0 to extend." Many of the business leaders in the area are also interested in seeing the new mascot for yet another summer in the future, which means that they currently feel it is in the best interest to stick with MGH advertising. The Board Secretary for Tourism, Susan Jones, has even said, "The repetition and consistency of Rodney are worth using him as part of the campaign for one more year." She feels as though the people of Ocean City will connect with the "mascot" and that it would be ideal to continue to use him, at least for another time. The current contract with MGH is worth \$22,958 each month. The contract will renew on its own, staying intact for another year, unless the contract is terminated at least 120 days prior to its expiration date, which is on the 31st of December. The President of MGH, Andy Malis, has said, "I don't think there's reasonable case that could be made that we don't deserve a renewal." He has also said, "We believe it's a great partnership and the work is working... Unless there's some compelling reason for change, I think you keep going." Malis feels as though the character Rodney is exciting to the people of Ocean City, stating that at an Orioles home game, there will tons of people who wanted to take a picture with the character, who is actually an actor named Blake Adams. MGH feels as though he has become a symbol for the county and believes Ocean City should stick with it.