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School Budget Defeated 3 to 1 Two Independent Candidates Win Seats on Board

In a turnout unprecedented for school elections in recent years, the \$7,317,600 proposed 1968-69 school budget submitted to voters of Scotch Plains and Fanwood was defeated by a 3 to 1 margin. Two independent candidates, Charles Ferguson in Scotch Plains and Benjamin Serra in Fanwood, defeated two Joint Civic Committee sponsored candidates, Herbert Samenfeld seeking reelection and Mrs. John Miller from Fanwood for two seats on the Board of Education. Another candidate endorsed by the joint committee, William Mason of Scotch Plains, was elected.

Total voter turnout of 4567 represented 32 percent of the registered voters. For the current expense portion of the budget, 3222 negative votes were cast, 1179 positive. Under capital outlay, 3041 voted against, with 1325 for.

Charles A. Ferguson, 1700 Cooper Road, Scotch Plains won a three year term on the board, with a total vote of 1718. Ferguson is employed by Western Electric Company, and is the father of three children in the local school system. He served a 3-year term previously, about six years ago.

William Mason of 14 Oxford Road, Scotch Plains, received 1256 votes. A graduate of Col-

gate, Mason is Vice President of Mason-Vliet Agency. He has been active in local Jaycees, and is a past president, Man of the Year, National Director and State Vice President in that organization.

Benjamin Serra, a NYU graduate, is employed by Brooklyn Union Gas Company. He resides at 99 Madison Avenue in Fanwood, and has one child in local schools. He defeated Mrs. Miller by a vote of 865 to 620.

Incumbent Herbert Samenfeld running for another term, was defeated. His total vote was 1119.

A new budget will be prepared and will be submitted for voter approval within two weeks.

The Subjects Were - Taxes, Salaries! The Discussion - Hot!

Township Committee Meeting Plays to Standing Room Only

Municipal Appointments

New Jersey State Division of Public Welfare has approved the appointment of Paul Schiatarella as Welfare Director for the Township of Scotch Plains. The appointment is retroactive to October 1967.

A resolution adopted by the Township Committee on February 6 named Roy Currie and Joseph Sweeney as Deputy Building Inspectors to serve in the absence of Building Inspector McCann.

A local patrolman, William Bedson, was commended in a letter sent to the Township Committee by Harry C. Swenson. Swenson's wife was on her way to work as a nurse at Runnells Hospital, he said, when she encountered flooding conditions in Bonnie Burn Road. He said Bedson took the initiative in providing assistance and praised him for his assistance.

At a public hearing on Scotch Plains proposed municipal salaries Tuesday night, several residents questioned both the general maximum salary stipulations in the budget and the salaries listed for twelve possible library positions.

The proposed salary list shows ranges of salaries, i.e. from \$1100 to \$1250, which apparently caused confusion for some who questioned the top figures for positions. The "from-to" figures represent the minimum salary paid for a specific position, and the maximum salary for same, not the amount of increase from last year to this. When residents figures out the budget, many arrived at percentage increases of up to 20%, miscalculating the figures. Mayor Santo Salvo explained that, with the exception of the policeman, the general salary increase for municipal employees was a 5% one. This 5% figure, he said, will not necessarily set a trend for the future, but levels off local salaries to a degree comparable with other communities.

Residents then questioned the advisability of placing high "tops" on job classifications. Even though employees are not earning the top salaries for their classifications, one resident stated that he felt there would be a tendency to hire new employees at a higher salary in an emergency. He urged an increase of 5% in the top earnings, in line with President Johnson's urge to hold down salaries.

Questions were raised concerning the twelve different library positions listed in the salary guide. Several said the salaries seemed high, and the need for so many different categories of personnel seemed questionable. Committeewoman Powers explained that, although there are many classifications within the framework of the library employee scale, the library must still adhere to the amount of money provided for its operation in the general township budget, slated for public hearing on Feb. 20. The job titles are specified, and the salaries established, she said, but this does not guarantee that these various posts will be filled.

The Township Committee was urged by several in attendance to attempt in every way possible to hold down local taxes. Paul Ferrara of Henry Street, stated that he requested "the resignation of every member of the Board of Education who gave his stamp of approval on the latest budgetThe members of the board must be made to realize that they are serving Scotch Plains and Fanwood and not Westchester

County, or Beverly Hills, or New Canaan." he proposed a watchdog committee of businessmen to watch over the board and school system.

Ferrara predicted an exodus of residents if tax spiral continues. Calling the Township Committee the New Frontier, he asked paring of budgets, and cited "three bad acts of planning" in the past; the "Scotch Hills Folly" as he labeled the Scotch Hills Country Club, and stated that the property could be developed for light industry, bringing tax rates; the development north of 22 and east of Glenside Avenue, bringing, he said, 1/2 to 3/4 of a grammar school, and asked for a new system of assignment for Planning Board and Board of Adjustment members; the public library, stating that a "decent functional building could have been erectedfor 1.2 the cost".

John Cirioli, speaking on costs of library operation, asked that the Committee obtain figures on the number of books withdrawn each month. He also asked for estimates on how many people use the library.

Legislative Priorities Could Avert Added Taxes

Members of the New Jersey Legislature are anxiously awaiting the annual budget message of Governor Hughes. Our concern is two-fold. It is generally acknowledged that the budget will increase by about \$100 million from its present total of approximately \$1 billion. We are also deeply concerned about how the governor intends to meet his program costs over the next decade.

Pending is a \$100 million-a-year item, which will represent the amount New Jersey must provide in order to institute the Medicaid program and receive matching funds from Washington.

Of even more significance to New Jersey's fiscal future is a report by a group headed by Dr. Robert Goheen, president of Princeton University. The report indicated that a total of three billion dollars will be needed for capital improvements over the next decade.

Nearly \$500 million will be required for higher education, including \$60 million for the state's share of New Jersey medical school costs, according to the Goheen Report. It also pointed out that the State Transportation Department Commissioner David J. Goldberg has estimated the total costs of highway construction over the next decade at one billion dollars. A price tag of \$150 million has been put on the state's share of a railroad modernization program. Additional water resources are expected to cost \$200 million. Water pollution controls could cost between \$150 and \$450 million. Department requests for institutions and agencies total \$130 million. Also mentioned has been the need for another Green Acres

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Mrs. Susan Burns of 177 N. Martine Ave., Fanwood, widow of Capt. Charles S. Burns, III, 25, an Army pilot who died in Vietnam, is presented her husband's posthumous decorations during a special awards ceremony at Fort Monmouth. Above, Brig. Gen. Kenneth M. Gonseth, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Electronics Command, pins the Bronze Star and Air Medal on Mrs. Burns. He later presented her with the Republic of Vietnam National Order Medal, Fifth Class.

They'll Foot Bill for Name Change

Homeowners on the former Rita Terrace now list their address as Stony Brook Circle, Scotch Plains. In a unanimous application, the residents of the street, a single block running east off Martine Avenue on the South side of Scotch Plains, petitioned the retitling. They will absorb all expenses involved, including new street signs, the printing of ordinances announcing the name change, etc.

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