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THE TIMES

ONLY NEWSPAPER WITH COMPLETE SCOTCH PLAINS - FANWOOD NEWS

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Teachers In Legal "Job Actions" Protest Lack Of Contract

The teachers in the Scotch Plains-Fanwood district are very upset at having to return to school this September without a signed contract, according to Miss Sonya Koomjian, President of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Education Association. They are engaging in several legal job actions to protest the lack of contracts and the local teacher group has requested the Public Employees Relations Commission to either send back the mediator who had come in last spring or to send a fact finder.

Miss Koomjian said the job action decision had been made at an 8 a.m. meeting on September 4, the day before the official opening of school. She said the membership of SPFEA had overwhelmingly and resoundingly approved the initiation of the job actions because, in their view, the Board of Education has reneged on verbal agreements made with the teacher group in July. She claimed that contracts presented to the teacher group in late August were unacceptable because the language in the contracts was not that agreed upon in mediation on July 2.

At that time, the teacher negotiating team had agreed upon salary increases of 4.3 percent, the salary settlement contingent on other areas of the contracts, and "as far as we're concerned, there is now no agreement," the teachers' official stated. She noted that in light of the existing economic picture,

inflation and the cost of living, working under last year's contract is particularly distressing to the staff.

The legal job actions underway include daily picketing at Board of Education offices and at schools before and after the school day. The teachers will arrive for school and leave in the afternoon exactly at the required time, putting in no extra time in the classrooms. They will not volunteer for any additional assignments, such as chaperoning of dances, unpaid advisory tasks, etc. Finally, Miss Koomjian said the SPFEA plans a mass attendance at Thursday night's meeting of the Board of Education.

She said the issues include fair dismissal, review of the calendar, and conferences with a principal. It is the view of the SPFEA negotiating team that,

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Flooding, Weeds, Child Safety Are Listening Post Highlights

Saturday morning saw a long and lively Listening Post at Scotch Plains Town Hall. While most of the citizens in attendance came with problems or questions related to drainage, flood control and the August 2nd storm, those were by no means the only problems brought to the attention of Councilmen Alan Augustine, Walter Grote and Lawrence Newcomb and to Township Manager Daniel Allan.

A petition from a group of residents on New York Avenue was presented citing the overgrown conditions and lack of proper property maintenance for certain locations on New York Avenue and Algonquin Drive in the vicinity of South Avenue. Other citizens mentioned similar problems of overgrown weeds at the corner of Hunter Avenue and Front Street, and on Martine Avenue, Raritan Road, Cooper Road and Terrill Road. Noting that Scotch Plains has a property maintenance code, Councilman Augustine asked Manager Allan to have the Building Inspector check these locations and the proper action be taken. Councilman Newcomb said that in the past when a property owner failed to comply with a request of the Building Inspector, the Township had cut weeds and cleaned up the yards and then added the costs to the property owner's tax bill. However, he added this involved a complicated court process, thus it is hoped the property owners involved would respond to persuasion.

A second petition was presented by the Committee of Concerned Elementary School Parents regarding Scotch Plains-

Fanwood Board of Education's new school lunch program. These parents were especially concerned with the problems the school lunch program could generate in the area of safety of the children. Also concerned with child safety was one resident of Willow Avenue who suggested closing Willow Avenue from Midway to East 2nd street during school hours when the new school opens. The Councilmen noted sidewalks are being installed on Willow Avenue as a safety measure, but they also asked Manager Allan to have the Police Safety Officer check the practicality of closing the block of Willow Avenue in question or making it a one way street during school hours. Other citizens brought up the question of added crossing guards at different locations. These suggestions will also be referred to the Police for investigation.

Drainage, flooding and flood control occupied a major portion of the session as well as being the subject of discussion at an earlier meeting between the three councilmen, Manager Allan and the Concerned Citizens Committee formed after the August 2nd storm. In addition to discussing

Opposition To School Lunch Policy Grows

To Select Chamber Chairman

Selection of a permanent chairman will be among the top priority items to be discussed at the next meeting of the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Chamber of Commerce Division.

The chairman, who will also sit as a Vice President and Board member of the Plainfield Area Chamber of Commerce, will be selected from the present membership of the Division at a luncheon meeting scheduled for 12 noon, Tuesday, September 18th at the East Winds Restaurant, Route #22 in Scotch Plains.

All Scotch Plains and Fanwood business people are invited to attend. Reservations can be made by calling the Plainfield Area Chamber of Commerce at 754-7250.

the August 2nd storm and the Township's response, and possible improvements in the event of future storms, such things as a building moratorium, increased citizen participation in Civil Defense, and storm related road repairs were covered. In discussing several citizens' thoughts regarding Seeley's Pond and Seeley's Pond Dams, Councilman Grote suggested the citizens join Council in making our thoughts known to the Union County Freeholders at their next meeting. Councilman Newcomb and Manager Allan reported on the Wednesday night meeting of the Green Brook Flood Control Commission they had attended. Of particular interest was the resolution introduced by Scotch Plains Civil Defense Director, Mrs. Messemer, proposing changes in the New Jersey weather alerting system which the Green Brook Commission adopted. While most of the citizens present to discuss flooding were from the hard-hit Cecilia Place and Myrtle Avenue neighborhoods, other areas discussed were Princeton Avenue, Raritan Road, Byrd Avenue, Katherine Street, Hunter Avenue and Mountain Avenue.

Other problems presented Saturday included the condition of White Oak Road, lighting along Maple View Court, possible zoning problems in the Maple Hill area and questions regarding operation of the parks. The latter brought on a heated exchange with Councilman Newcomb when the complaining citizen accused the Recreation Department of lying, without, as the citizen acknowledged to those present, having any facts to substantiate his very serious charge.

Group Releases Statement Following Board Listening Post

Opposition to the elementary school lunch policy which was adopted by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education last month continues to grow, with evidence of an increasing organized protest to the new ruling. A group which calls itself Concerned Elementary School Parents of Scotch Plains-Fanwood attended the Board of Education "Listening Post" meeting on Saturday, September 8. According to Mrs. Robert Anderson, spokesman for the group, the attendees totalled close to 300.

Mrs. Anderson said there were representatives from every elementary school in the district, and a Concerned Parents chairman at each school as well. The majority of opponents are from Evergreen and Shackamaxon Schools, she indicated. She said the Listening Post session was extended two hours beyond the regular 10 to 12 time slot.

The group seeks a number of changes in the new policy. The policy, as adopted last month, states that any child in grades one through three who lives within one-half mile and any child in grades four through six who lives within a mile of an elementary school must go home for lunch. The policy was adopted following an informal hearing in August, and was considered by the Board because of a need for many more teacher aides to supervise lunch periods if all elementary children were to be permitted to remain for lunch whenever they desired.

The Concerned Elementary School Parents seek to bring the Board's attention to their proposed amendment to the lunch policy and "to make the Board aware of the many physical and emotional hardships imposed upon the young children of the communities," according to Mrs. Anderson. The group is opposed to what she called the Board's "inflexible" stand on the lunch policy.

In the view of the Concerned Elementary School Parents Committee, the policy discriminates against the portion of the community where both parents must work.

"We were shocked by the insensitivity of Mr. Parry, Board President, to the mother of an asthmatic child who questioned why her child could not stay for lunch. Also, several accidents involving children going to and from school during the lunch hour were reported since the new policy went into effect," the statement said.

The Concerned Parents seek a four-part amendment. They want children of working mothers to remain for lunch. They want exemptions for "extenuating circumstances," described by their spokesman as emergencies where a parent could not arrange for home lunch supervision on a given day. The third point

sought is an "inclement weather" exemption, wherein all children may remain in bad weather.

The fourth point the Committee hopes to stress is what it feels is a discriminatory policy directed against the children of working mothers and the two-thirds of each student body who go home. The Committee spokesman said when the children who lunch at home return, they are "segregated." The Board had earlier requested that children not return before ten minutes before the bell, since teacher aides are only adequate for the number of children who remain at school, and not for safe supervision of the entire student body.

Anyone wishing further information is asked to telephone Dee Krumm, 889-4435.

Correction - We Recount Grandchildren

Sgt. Frank Barone of the Scotch Plains Police Department retires this year after serving for 31 years on the force. In last week's announcement of the retirement in these pages, it was noted that Sgt. Barone has two grandchildren. It has since been pointed out to this newspaper that the Barones are grandparents of four, not two! Correction noted.

Have You Registered To Vote?

Voter registration hours are as follows:
FANWOOD
Daily Monday through Friday,
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sept. 13, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27 -
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Registration books close
Thursday, Sept. 27, 1973
SCOTCH PLAINS
Daily Monday through Friday,
9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Sept. 13, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27 -
9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Registration books close
Thursday, Sept. 27, 1973.