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## Says Fanwood Tax Rate Hike Could Be As Much As 16%

Fanwood Councilman Charles Coronella sounded the alarm last week, warning that the municipal portion of the Fanwood tax dollar could jump as much as 16 percent next year if no additional income is found and salaries jump 10 percent. Reserve funds are at a premium, Coronella said, and there will, therefore, not be much available to offset rising costs.

Coronella's estimate did not include the \$969,000 chopped from the current year's school budget by combined councils of Scotch Plains and Fanwood. If some or all of that cut is restored by state education officials (as happened this week) and Councils decide to accept the Trenton restoration, those restored funds which were not collected this year will be added to next year's taxes. Mayor Ted Trumpp noted that the taxpayer will also be facing another school budget for 1975-'76, and its impact upon taxes.

A citizen, Norman Geuder, had high praise for the efforts of the borough Public Works department and asked Council to try to insure that these people make enough money to stay in borough service. Council members agreed with the evaluation of the Public Works.

Coronella said the Council will have to weigh the needs of the employees against the fact that there are many people in Fanwood on middle and fixed incomes, and attempt to arrive at a compromise.

Employees of Scotchwood Pharmacy approached Council on parking problems they encounter daily upon arrival for work. The municipal lot behind the pharmacy is limited to two-hour parking, and the street along Martine Avenue also has hourly limitations. When they park in the residential side streets they are given warnings, they said.

## Plains Acquires Site For Recycling Center

After four years of very quiet operations, the township government of Scotch Plains has managed to acquire the parcels of land necessary for establishment of a municipal conservation center. Sometime in the future, the township plans to begin a permanent conservation program, which will include recycling and leaf disposal at the new location, which is off Jerusalem Road on Fanwood Avenue.

"There is a great deal of work to be done. We have to study it long and hard," Mayor Walter Grote said. The location was chosen some time ago as a site which would not disturb neighbors and a neighborhood. It is in an area of Scotch Plains which abuts the Westfield border. Mayor Grote said, in an obvious jab at Westfield, which established its conservation center in a location which caused irritation to Scotch Plains neighborhoods far more than Westfield ones.

Although the location was chosen some time ago and was acquired from an estate, the acquisition was a sensitive one, to avoid speculation. Council Albert Theurer was singled out for praise for his efforts in this area.

Coincidentally, the Environmental Committee released its year-end report on a study of recycling. The Environmental Committee has suggested that Scotch Plains begin with the re-

One employee said she has purchased a ticket to the commuter parking lot at the station but was unable to find a place there, arriving as she did around 9 a.m.

Mayor Trumpp said the Council would consider the problem. There are seven pharmacy employees who work there consistently throughout the year.

Carl Anderson of 175 Herbert Avenue questioned the recodification of the traffic ordinance, as it applies to parking on his street, Herbert Avenue, and several other streets in the vicinity of the center of town and the railroad station, have two-hour parking bans to discourage commuter parking. Anderson was told this ban has existed for many years, and the new ordinance only represents a recoding and gathering together of existing traffic ordinances for efficiency. The only change from any previously existing law is the reduction of the speed limit on Midway Avenue.

Anderson felt the ban unnecessary, at which point a Council member quipped that Scotchwood employees may now know where to go to park during their working day.

Anderson was told that if changes are made, such as elimination of the parking ban, the law cannot be reinstated in six months or so if problems arise. The ordinance itself took a year and a half for preparation, requiring agreement from the county, state

cycling of paper products only, with implementation of glass at a later date. The Committee suggested creation of an administration group, who would compile lists of volunteer groups and schedule them, supervise the site, contract for sale of paper, collect and disperse funds, and handle promotion and publicity.

In conversations with the Jaycees, who have been manning a recycling effort at the Fanwood Railroad Station once a month, Jaycees indicated an interest in continuation of that program.

The Scotch Plains Environmental Committee gave special recognition to Arlene McKenna, who served as secretary and liaison for the committee.

In other actions, Council approved two ordinances, one which would establish no parking and no standing zones at certain locations in the township, another to

## Councils May Appeal Budget Decision

### Republicans End Control In Scotch Plains

For the first time in its history, the Scotch Plains governing body will operate with a Democratic majority beginning with January 1, 1975. Three outgoing Republican Council members bid their farewells and received praise for their efforts as they sat for their final meeting on Tuesday. Mayor Walter Grote had high praise for the many years of service being completed by former Mayors Albert Theurer and William Kitz, and for the contributions of Alan Augustine during his term of office.

Grote cited particularly the addition of a new municipal building, economic stability within the Scotch Plains municipal budget, the recently announced recycling center, and the difficulties of operating under a new form of government. In turn, all three outgoing Council members indicated that their effectiveness as legislators would have been limping and efficiency of township employees.

In a farewell statement, Augustine urged particular economics this year. "If ever there was a time when the taxpayers needed all the help they can get in the form of tax relief, now is the time," he said.

and motor vehicle department, and therefore residents should use caution in insuring the changes they request are actually de-

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correct an error in an ordinance for the funding of the Master Plan revision.

Council voted, on a split vote, to approve a roof sign for Coastal Group Management Corporation, 2510 Route 22, trading as Burger King. Mayor Grote said he had studied the notes of the Board of Adjustment hearing on the variance, and felt that, although he would like to control such roof lights, the request was within the rights of the property owner and to deny would be to incur the cost of litigation. Councilmen Larry Newcomb and Albert Theurer, who voted nay, felt zoning laws now ban rooftop signs, except where hardship exists, that the sign would not contribute to better business since it is not visible until the motorist is at the site, and that similar operations on the highway do not now have such signs, and therefore they are not necessary for competitive reasons.

### Christmas Week Issue

The TIMES will publish on Tuesday, December 24 instead of Thursday December 26. Deadline for all copy will be Friday, December 20.

### '74-'75 Budget Defeated By Voters Still Not Finalized

As the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education prepares the final touches on a 1975-76 school budget which will be disclosed to the public within two weeks, word has just been received on the fate of the contentious 1974-75 budget, which has yet to be finally determined. The State Commissioner of Education, Fred G. Burke, has determined that the school budget for the current year should be \$13,554,070, a figure \$254,740 lower than the \$13,809,000 budget which was soundly defeated by voters in February, 1974.

No word had been received from state education officials since October, when a state education department hearing officer rendered an opinion on the budget - which had then been trimmed by the governing bodies of Scotch Plains and Fanwood. The two councils had taken \$969,000 from the budget, and have not collected taxes for that \$969,000. The Board of Education declined to accept the \$969,000 cut and appealed the case at the state level.

In arriving at his decision, the state commissioner not only upheld the views of the hearing examiner, who had recommended \$254,740 to be removed, but went further and called for an additional cut of \$24,667. Burke's further cuts represent elimination of an administrative intern, some teaching supplies, some building expenses for material and supplies, and some handicapped and vocational tuition. Burke said he felt the Board of Education had overestimated in the area of the tuitions.

The cuts upheld by the examiner in October had included a third child study team, lunchroom aides, four additional special education aides, some new equipment, and some salaries in superintendent's office and administration.

The Councils of the two communities have 30 days in which to file an appeal if they disagree with the latest determination from Trenton. If the Councils should decide to challenge the Commissioner's decision, the first avenue of recourse would be through the state Board of Education. If such an effort should be unsuccessful, the Councils could continue the challenge through the courts.

As of Tuesday night, there had not yet been a date set for a meeting of the two Councils to begin discussions regarding their reactions. As the Scotch Plains Council met for its regular December mid-month meeting on Tuesday, Mayor Grote indicated that he could not speak for the Council, but speaking only for himself, felt inclined toward further protest. "In view of the reactions I have received from the community, my inclination would be to protest the decision from Dr. Burke," Grote said.

Grote said he objected to Burke's statement that the Council cuts, if upheld entirely at the state level, would usurp the powers of the Board of Education. Grote said he would question why the community should bother to vote if this is the case. "The reaction that has come back to me continuously from the public

over the past months is overwhelmingly in favor of appealing the decision," the Mayor concluded.

In Fanwood, Councilman Charles Coronella, who last week had estimated a possible 16-point increase in Fanwood taxes just due to jumps in the municipal portion of the tax dollar, analyzed the potential impact of the restoration. "If we get hit with \$714,260 jointly, Fanwood's share would be 26 percent, or about \$185,700," Coronella said. That would translate into approximately 21 tax points on top of a tax base of 4.06. It would represent roughly a five percent increase to cover only the cut in the school budget for the current year," Coronella said. (Since the Councils cut the budget by \$969,000, this amount

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## Fanwood To Light Up For Christmas

How do you manage a festive and attractive street for the holidays, while saving your conscience regarding the need to save energy? Several local neighborhoods have come up with a beautiful Christmas Eve solution which features the increasingly popular luminaria which have been a Mexican holiday custom for many years.

Small lighted candles, placed in sand-weighted paper bags, are placed at intervals along the property line. Used at several homes in a row, the luminaria provide a beautiful panorama of soft Christmas lighting.

Several years ago, homeowners in the Homestead Terrace Association began the use of luminaria in their neighborhood on Christmas Eve. Each home in this neighborhood, just off Westfield Road, used the small candles in bags, and the display drew crowds of viewers during the evening hours.

Last year, Forest Road in Fanwood joined the luminaria-lighters, and this year, the Forest Road people will be joined by neighbors on adjacent streets.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on Martine Avenue was a lovely sight on Christmas Eve last year, as worshippers were welcomed by the tiny candle display.

One homeowner advises that a 15-mile an hour speed be observed for most favorable viewing of the luminaria.