

# THE TIMES

ONLY NEWSPAPER WITH COMPLETE SCOTCH PLAINS - FANWOOD NEWS

VOLUME 15, NO. 52

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD, N.J.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1974

15 CENTS

## Both Local Councils Plan Reorganizations On New Year's Day

By early afternoon of January 1, both Scotch Plains and Fanwood will have seated three Council members and will have reorganized for another year of operation. There the similarity ends, for the Fanwood annual meeting promises to be a fairly predictable gathering, while the Scotch Plains reorganization is fraught with possibilities of change and/or surprise.

In Fanwood, three incumbent Republicans will be re-seated. Councilmen Charles Coronella and John Coulter were re-elected to a full second term. Councilman Robert McCarthy was elected to a full term after having served a year of the unexpired term of Tony McCall.

In Fanwood, the mayoralty is an elected three-year term, so there are no surprises there, as Ted Trumpp continues in the post. Republicans continue to dominate the Council, with a five-two split. The Republicans include Trumpp, Coronella, Coulter, McCarthy and Van Dyke Pollitt. Democratic representation includes Councilman John Swindlehurst and Councilwoman Carol Whittington.

Trumpp said he anticipated few changes in appointments. He expected to assign Councilman McCarthy to Recreation Commission liaison instead of to the Board of Health, where he had served this past year. Councilwoman Whittington, who has been liaison to Recreation, would take the Board of Health position. Trumpp said last year he had sought a preference from Mrs. Whittington first, and this year gave McCarthy an opportunity to choose.

In Scotch Plains, the municipal building was a buzz with rumors of change as New Year's

approached, for this year represents a landmark in Scotch Plains political history. A switch in party domination occurs for the first time in Scotch Plains, as three Democrats are seated on the five-man governing body. In contrast to Fanwood, where the mayor is elected by the people, the Scotch Plains Mayor is chosen for a year from amidst the five Council members, so it is highly likely that the Mayoralty could be assumed by one of the Democrats. They are Robert Griffin, who has already served a term in the 1960's, Anne Wodjenski, and Noel Musial. The two GOP representatives remaining on the Council are Walter Grote and Larry Newcomb.

The election of the Democrats follows close on the heels of another particularly significant year in Scotch Plains, for the government changed from a Township Committee to a Council-Manager form just recently. An important aspect of the new form of government was a Township Manager. That post was filled, then vacated in late November when the township's first manager, Daniel Allen, resigned to assume a mid-Western position. When Allen resigned, the then wholly Republican Council named Mrs. Shirley Capone to the managerial post,

## Continuation Appears Likely In Battle Of Local School Budget

### Board Of Education Delays Presentation Of '75-'76 Budget

Eleven months after a resounding defeat at the polls, the 1974-75 school budget apparently will still not be settled, for Mayor Ted Trumpp of Fanwood and outgoing Mayor Walter Grote of Scotch Plains both indicated support of their Councils for continuation of the fight to cut funds. The joint Councils had trimmed \$969,000 from the \$13 million budget after its February, 1974 defeat. The Board of Education appealed that decision, and the resultant evaluation on the part of state education officials was not resolved until very recently, when State Commissioner of Education Fred Burke restored \$724,000.

The Councils now have the option of choosing to live with the restoration or continue the battle. Next level would be the state Board of Education, with only a single avenue left after that - the courts. Mayor Walter Grote said this week that he had discussed the issue with the incoming new Democratic Council members and received strong indications that they were in tune with the thinking of the outgoing Councilmen and the two Republicans remaining on Council, himself and Larry Newcomb, in pressing further. Grote said that no formal vote has yet been taken, but he is certain the vote from Scotch Plains will ultimately favor continuation.

From the Fanwood side of things, Mayor Ted Trumpp voiced the same opinion. Trumpp said he anticipated total Council sup-

port for his New Year's Day comments urging further appeal.

"I'm sure we'll get together as soon as Scotch Plains has its reorganization meeting," Trumpp said.

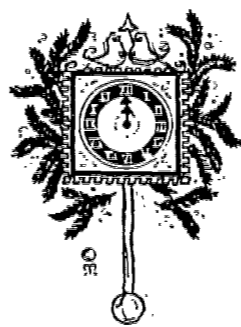
The two Councils have a 30-day period in which to file an appeal on the December 13 ruling by Burke.

Mayor Grote said public reaction received by him to date has been overwhelmingly in favor of further appeal.

Because of the holdup in determination of the final budget figure for this year, Councils in both communities collected only the amount to cover the portions of the budget they had not suggested for cutting. Therefore, the \$969,000 area has not been collected and whatever portions would be restored would have to

Continued On Page 11

HAPPY  
NEW YEAR



From the Staff  
of  
THE TIMES

stating that she was willing to serve, as she had while the search for Allen was initially made. It was generally assumed that Mrs. Capone would again serve only temporarily, but no search for a second manager was initiated. Mayor Walter Grote said at the time that he would await the involvement of the incoming Council members. There have been rumors of a replacement for Mrs. Capone in recent weeks.

Among other possible changes which could be made by the incoming Democratic majority would be a township attorney, and assessors.

an average of fourteen have been in attendance at the six meetings held to date.

Dozens of considerations have been weighed by the committee, including the many possible uses of the home and its location on the property. Even moving the home to another site on the property to provide more undeveloped land elsewhere on the lot has been discussed, as have a municipal swimming pool, a new municipal building, sale of the home for private occupancy, and razing the building to utilize the full acreage. The committee has had the benefit of the feasibility study, with its indications of approximately how much it would cost to construct a new municipal building, and this figure must be weighed in relation to costs involved in making the Slocum home operable. The committee is also expected to consider the pros and cons of new versus old construction.

## Outlook Gloomy For Use Of Slocum House By Boro Of Fanwood

Approximately two and a half months ago, Mayor Ted Trumpp of Fanwood named a 15-man committee to study possibilities for future municipal use of the Slocum House, a large home on over five acres, acquired by the Borough of Fanwood last summer. The committee, which was given a year to come up with recommendations, expects to be forwarding a final recommendation to the Fanwood Council within weeks.

Only two possibilities now remain under consideration by the committee. Three weeks ago, that same committee was tossing around 16 different options for the elderly white homestead which was once a hotel. Structural studies of the homestead have resulted in information which has strongly limited the possibilities for the future.

The first study of the foundations and structure indicated that the first floor could be used for municipal purposes, such as functioning of government and administrative offices, but that without shoring up of the foundations, the main floor would not safely accommodate meetings and large gatherings. The reports on the second floor were even more discouraging.

Since that time, core samples taken from the foundations have been analyzed and the news is even gloomier. Initially, it was

assumed that the supporting materials for the two floors were Douglas fir. Analysis indicated that Cedar had been used instead. That wood is 50 percent less strong, meaning far less potential for use of the building as it now stands.

The Slocum home, which had been owned by former Mayor Clarence Slocum occupied the last remaining large piece of undeveloped land in Fanwood. The Council had earlier acknowledged the need for new municipal facilities in Fanwood and had, two years ago, commissioned a feasibility study for a new municipal building. When the Slocum property was acquired, there was some speculation that the building might house some portions of the municipal operation.

According to James Russell, who heads the citizens' committee, cooperation has been outstanding. Of the fifteen delegates and five alternates named,

## Fourteen Names In Hat For Four Board Seats, Filing Date Extended

The campaign for four seats on the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education promises to be a particularly active one this year, as fourteen citizens have tossed their hats into the ring for the March 4 election. In fact, two of these fourteen have tossed in two hats for the time being, filing in two different slots. Whether that's the end of the long line of candidates is still not clear, since Governor Brendan Byrne has ruled that elections and budget votes be postponed a month, due to the indecision at the state level regarding funding of public education.

The final filing date has now been set for January 23. However, Byrne's ruling on the month's delay was not known here until some time after the final deadline of 4 p.m. on December 26, so that it is generally assumed by many people locally that the 14 people who have filed may be the final number.

In Scotch Plains, two full three-year terms and one unexpired two-year term are up for grabs. For the two three-year terms now held by Charles Ferguson and Peter Britton, the following have filed to run: John Corcoran, Thomas Fallon, Charles Ferguson, Robert Lariviere, James Loudon, Charles H. Mason, and Norman Ross.

Peter Britton has announced he will not seek reelection.

An additional five names are on the roster for the two-year Scotch Plains seat which had been held by Walter E. Boright, who

resigned when elected a county freeholder in November elections. Ferguson's name and Lariviere's are in the hat for the two-year seat as well as three year terms. In addition, Frank J. Festa, Jr., George T. Larkin, and Thomas A. VanVliet have filed.

Fanwood has one seat open - that of current board member Mrs. Leonia Reilly. She will seek reelection, challenged by Richard Bard and Donald Dugan.

## New Year's Day Reorganization

The Fanwood Borough Council has scheduled its annual reorganization meeting for 12 noon on January 1, 1975. Scotch Plains will follow, an hour later, with a 1 p.m. reorganization.