

# THE TIMES

ONLY NEWSPAPER WITH COMPLETE SCOTCH PLAINS - FANWOOD NEWS

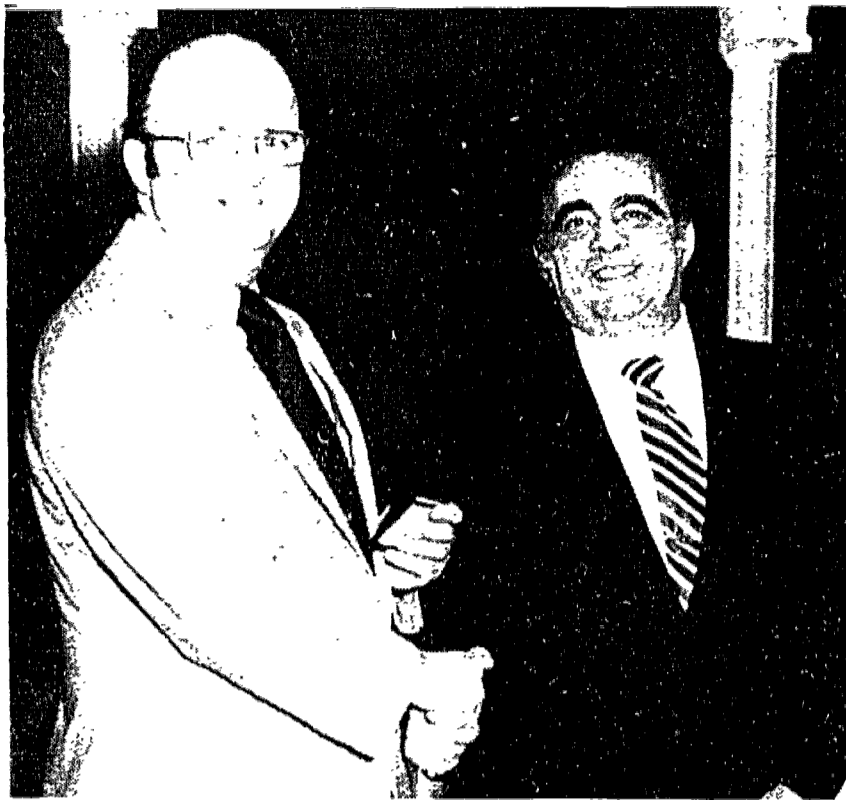
VOLUME 16, NO. 8

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD, N.J.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1975

15 CENTS

## Halpin Honored



Union County Clerk Walter G. Halpin, left, has been presented with a Gold Life Membership Card in the Union County Police Chiefs' Association. The presentation was made by Linden Chief Domenic D. Lello, President of the Chiefs' Association, at the Sulphur Springs Inn, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey.

Halpin was cited for his continued cooperation with and assistance to all police departments in the county relating to various responsibilities placed upon Police Chiefs for court related matters, pistol permits and the resolution of problems referred to him by Chiefs of Police from citizens in their jurisdiction.

In accepting the award Halpin promised the continued cooperation of himself personally and of his staff to the Chiefs of Police and other members of their respective departments.

## Vote On School Board Candidates, Budget Set For Next Tuesday

Voters will go to the polls next Tuesday, March 4, to select four candidates for the Board of Education and to cast a "yea" or "nay" vote on a \$13,604,444 budget for the 1975-76 school year.

Although there has been some limited advertising and flyer-distribution campaigning, a large slate of candidates appear to have concentrated their campaigning efforts primarily upon personal home coffees, meeting with voters in neighborhoods during the afternoon and/or evening.

Of the four seats to be vacated, only one incumbent, Mrs. Leonia Reilly of Fanwood, seeks reelection. Hers is a three-year term. Board president Charles Ferguson, who earlier had declared his intention to run, is no longer in the race. His three-year seat and another, that was held by Peter Britton, who will not run again, are in contention, as is the two-year term remaining when Walter Boright resigned last fall after being elected to a county freeholder slot. Earl Chamberlin has been filling Boright's seat temporarily, but will not seek election.

The list of candidates is the longest in the history of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood school district. In Fanwood, three challengers vie with Mrs. Reilly for her seat. One is Richard Bard, who has already served on the board in the past. Another is Donald Dugan, who runs with a slate of three other candidates from Scotch Plains. The fourth is Ben Kuklo.

In Scotch Plains, the candidates for the two three-year terms include John Corcoran, Thomas Fallon, Vincent Shanni, Charles Mason, Norman Ross,

James Loudon, Robert Lariviere. The two-year seat is sought by Frank Festa and Thomas Van Vliet. Originally, Ferguson had filed to run for a three and a two-year term, but has dropped from the race. Corcoran, for a time, planned to similarly seek two seats but has eliminated his name from competition for the two-year position. George Larkin, once an announced candidate for a three-year slot, has also dropped out.

The slate includes Dugan from Fanwood, Fallon and Shanni for three-year seats, and Van Vliet for the two-year post.

The new budget is up for consideration following a year of intense conflict within the two communities - a situation which remains unresolved a year after last year's stunning budget defeat. Taxpayers have still not paid the \$714,000 restored to the budget by the New Jersey Commissioner of Education, after the councils of Scotch Plains and Fanwood trimmed \$969,000 from it. At the present time, the councils have applied for a stay regarding collection of taxes for the \$714,000, since the communities plan to continue their appeal further - first to the state Board of Education, then, from all indications registered so far, to the final step - the courts.

The new budget registers a 6.4 percent increase over last year's

## Council Sets Town's Budget At \$4,058,629, Up \$214,259 Over '74

### Civic Leaders Urge Turnout For Election

"Next Tuesday is probably the most important election to take place here in many a year," according to former Mayor Walter Grote of Scotch Plains. He said he felt it appropriate that he speak out with the voting reminder since he was mayor during the period of recent conflict over the 1974-75 budget. "I think each and every resident has an obligation to call, talk to and encourage every friend and neighbor to get out to vote. This more than any other election should have a turnout representative of this community. Anything short of 80 percent turnout figure can be used in any way the user sees fit, so only a turnout of this scope can be considered meaningful by all segments of the community," Grote said.

As Mayor last year, Grote and his fellow council members joined Fanwood council members in trimming \$969,000 from the budget, \$714,000 of which was restored by the state - a move which the councils are in process of fighting. Ted Trumpp, Mayor of Fanwood last year and this, echoed Grote's concern over turnout. "The two councils acted last year following an action by a relatively small percentage of the electorate at the polls. Concerned citizens should find their way to the voting booths this year by the thousands, for the more citizen input we have into budgetary concerns, the better barometer the council has for its actions. Urge all neighbors to vote. The election is important to those who are parents and to those who are not," Trumpp said.

budget, if one is talking about the restored budget. The impact on taxes have not yet been determined fully in Scotch Plains, since the municipal budget hasn't been introduced there. In Fanwood, taxes would go up by different percentages, depending upon the final result of the budget battle of 1974-75. If the restoration is upheld, the budget would be up 23.1 percent. If the councils win on the budget issue, taxes would increase by 14.1 percent.

### Remember Your Doggie!

Dog licenses for 1975 were due in the month of January. Believe it or not, there are still a few canines going unregistered! Get your license at the Township Clerk's office, Municipal Building - Scotch Plains, during daytime hours.

### Represents 33 Point Tax Hike For Municipal Purposes

The Township Council of Scotch Plains, in a special meeting on Tuesday night, introduced a 1975 municipal budget of \$4,058,629 for municipal purposes. To support it, \$1,558,629 will have to be raised by taxation, up from the 1974 figure of \$1,372,253 from taxation. The new budget will have a 33 point impact upon local taxpayers for support of the municipal budget. However, further tax increases will be figured in at a later date for county and school purposes.

The budget shows an increase of \$54,000 in anticipated revenues - up from \$2,442,117 in 1974 to \$2,500,000 this year. The reserve for uncollected taxes is set at \$688,221 this year, based upon an estimated 93.60 percent collection rate.

The surplus balance at the end of December, 1974 was \$884,680. The current surplus anticipated in 1975 is \$775,000. The township uses these surplus monies for municipal purposes, Mayor Robert Griffin pointed out. The anticipated surplus for 1975 is shown within the budget within the revenue columns. Griffin said that if the township were to use its surplus funds to pay the \$714,000 still uncollected for the 1974-75 school budget, as Board of Education President Charles Ferguson has suggested, the township taxpayers would only have to turn around to pay

additional taxes for municipal operations now covered by the surplus funds.

The total cost of municipal operations this year will be \$3,370,407. Most increases are found in the salary accounts. For example, administrative and executive salaries jumped from \$99,062 to \$105,270, the police salary account is budgeted at \$626,487 from \$584,646 last year, the road department salary account increased from \$195,747 to \$239,607.

In contrast, Mayor Griffin pointed out that the Council had reduced capital expenditures by \$95,952 to hold the line on taxes. Further efforts were made by increasing municipal debt service by \$42,105, and by reducing deferred charges and statutory expenses by \$55,146. He noted

Continued On Page 14

## Police Seek Mediator In Contract Negotiations

Detective Carl Sicola, President of Scotch Plains Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, Local Number 87, announced today that the Police Organization had requested intervention of a mediator representative from the Public Employment Relations Commission following breakdown of contract negotiations between police and the township of Scotch Plains. Sicola said he was extremely disappointed in the manner in which the Township Council had conducted itself in rejecting proposals for settlement of the contract terms.

On two separate occasions, Sicola noted, police agreed to compromise their original demands and to accept terms recommended in the negotiating sessions by Municipal Manager Michael B. Blacker. However, in both instances, despite favorable recommendations of Blacker, the Council rejected the proposals. Mayor Robert Griffin said Tuesday night that Blacker's role is not that of recommending settlements. Blacker informs the Council on where negotiations stand and which items remain open for further negotiation, Griffin indicated.

The Township Council introduced its 1975 municipal budget on Tuesday night, with the budget including \$626,487 for police salaries, up from \$548,646 last year. Other expenses under the police department account are up from \$90,915 last year to \$101,990 this year. It is not known which areas are in contention in the negotiation sessions. Generally, township employees are receiving seven percent raises this year, the Mayor indicated in his budget message.

At this point, Sicola said, po-

lice are being asked to bid themselves into a financially disastrous year. The police felt that they were entitled to at least a cost of living raise, their spokesman said, yet they agreed to forego such an increase in consideration of the overburdened municipal taxpayer. Now, however, the Township Council has offered terms which will place the greatest burden in the municipality upon the Police Officers, most of whom are already working two jobs to make ends meet and some of whom are eligible for supplementary food stamps from the Federal Government.

### Listening Post

The regular monthly Listening Post session conducted by Scotch Plains Councilmen has been set for Saturday, from 10 to 12 noon. The public is invited to the informal meeting, which is held on the first Saturday morning of each month in the Committee Chambers, Municipal Building, Park Avenue, Scotch Plains.