

THE TIMES

ONLY NEWSPAPER WITH COMPLETE SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD

VOLUME 16, NO. 46

SCOTCH PLAINS-FANWOOD, N.J. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1975

1975

Teachers And School Board Reach Impasse On '76-'77 Contract

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Education Association has released the following information on the status of negotiations:

Negotiations between the Teachers' Contract Unit of the SPFEA and the Board of Education for the 1976-77 contract are at impasse. A mediator has been assigned to the district by the Public Employment Relations Commission. In accordance with PERC rules, the mediator will meet with both parties in an attempt to settle the issues between them. Should his efforts fail, and a contract agreement not be negotiated by December 3, a fact-finder will be appointed.

There are numerous issues at impasse. The SPFEA is especially distressed over the following Board proposals:

1. The Board proposal in sports will result in a cut-back in the existing athletic program, cuts in coaching positions, and less coaching and supervision time for boys and girls.
2. Cutbacks in the elementary school extra-curricular activities programs.
3. Curtailment and/or elimination of staff involvement in professional development, instruction, and curriculum at a time when the district is being asked to increase such professional staff input.
4. Elimination of long-standing contractual benefits at a time when staff morale is already low.
5. Unwillingness to negotiate on proposals that represent serious staff concerns, specifically grievance procedure, transfers, promotions, and resignments.
6. Refusal to offer any raise to the teaching staff, the coaches, or to extra-curricular activities advisors.

"The SPFEA believes that such proposals will have a serious negative impact on the

school district. The Association is dissatisfied with the progress of negotiations to date, and is especially disturbed with many proposals that are indicative of the erosion of the spirit that generally prevailed in the past in contract negotiations. For example, one of the Board's proposals is the elimination of the preamble to our contract, which defines the common purpose of the Board and the Association as "committed to serve the common indivisible interest of all persons in the district in the best possible education for their children. This requires the establishment of a climate favorable to education within the community to the end that the public is favorably disposed to support the schools' needs."

"The Association is registering its concerns, but will continue to meet with the Board of Education in an attempt to settle as many of the differences that exist as possible before mediation begins. Other unresolved items in negotiations are sabbatical leave, health insurance, workload, summer school, format of the contract."

Scotch Plains Council Rezones Municipal Annex Building On Split Vote

The Scotch Plains Township Council voted to change the zoning designation of the Municipal Annex Building on Second Street from P-Public to B-2, Business on Tuesday. The decision was reached on a split vote which cut across party lines. Councilman Larry Newcomb, a Republican, and Councilwoman Ann Wodjenski, a Democrat, opposed the move.

Both argued that Council had recently authorized the Jaycees to survey municipal recreational facilities and needs, and that no results had yet been received. In light of the fact that the Recreation Commission had recommended the Annex for a teen center, the two favored waiting on rezoning.

The Annex was used for several municipal offices before construction of the new municipal building. It is now empty and is among several municipally owned properties which Council has decided to sell.

In other actions, Council approved an assessment report for installation of sanitary sewers in Union Avenue, Rahway Road and Cooper, and on Gamble Road. Residents had objected to assessments, and the Council remanded the assessment report

back to the assessment commission. The Commission was asked to insure that policy and formula used in arriving at the assessments were similar to those applied in the past, and to determine if there were any extenuating circumstances to change the assessments establishments.

Mayor Robert Griffin said he had read over the minutes and considered carefully the points made by those who had addressed Council, and was satisfied that amounts set were in line with past procedure. "I cannot find these amounts reasonable," he said.

Council approved final payment on Section 3 of the Route 22 storm sewer, paid for jointly by state and township. Recommendations for acceptance was made by township consulting engineering firm, township engineer

Broad Support For Police Position On Legislative Controls

Local, State And National Groups To Meet On Push For Motorbike Controls

Fanwood Police Chief Anthony Parenti has been receiving extensive comment from both private citizens and groups concerning his recent stand favoring controls on operations of motorized bicycles. Parenti planned to meet November 19 with representatives of several state and national groups to discuss a concerted approach to a push for legislative controls. He expected representation from the American Automobile Association, New Jersey State Safety Council, New Jersey State PTA Congress, Union County Police Chiefs Association, New Jersey State Police Chiefs Association, and other local and area groups at the meeting, held at the Squires Inn in Greenbrook.

Last week, the Fanwood Borough Council acted upon a recommendation from Parenti, amending the Fanwood bicycle ordinance to include motorized bicycles. The ordinance calls for registration and examination for proper riding skills. Removing a hand from handlebars while riding is banned, helmets, and goggles or shield are required, and batteries must be encased.

What is a motorized bicycle? They are bicycles, not motorcycles. They can be purchased readymade, at about \$400 or \$500, or they can be homemade, by converting a regular bicycle by attaching a motor.

Parenti and other members of the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association, a group leading the push for legislation, first became concerned in January of 1975, when a bill was introduced in the New Jersey Assembly which permitted such bikes to be operated on streets in the state, with relatively few controls. Before introduction of the bill, state law called for licensing and registration, helmets, goggles and face shields, identical to motorcycle requirements. The bill passed the New Jersey Assembly unanimously, and the Traffic Officers asked that the Senate hold off on a decision pending input from their group. The Traffic Officers never heard anything until July. At that time, when the state was plagued with fiscal problems and the state legislators were meeting into the wee hours, the bill suddenly appeared on the Senate floor one night, when attendance was very limited. It was passed. Next, the officers wrote the Governor asking that he not sign the bill into law until all aspects of safety were thoroughly investigated. He responded that he would seek safety advice. On October 31, Governor Byrne signed the bill into law at a senior citizens' village in Gloucester County.

Byrne feels the bill will help senior citizens get around, that the motor bikes are vehicles they can use beneficially. The user pedals to start, then the motor takes over.

Parenti disagrees. A man or woman of advanced years would have more trouble balancing on two wheels on a bicycle than on four, in an automobile, he says. The motorized bikes need quick reactions, good balance, and a great deal of pedaling and turning, he said.

Parenti said there are 10-speed bikes which can attain up to 40 mph, but the operator would need "plenty of muscle and endurance" to maintain such speeds, and therefore not many

The bill signed by Byrne says that anyone 15 years or older can operate a motorized bicycle on state streets without a license except on primary, interstate or railroad rights of way, and the motorized bicycle will now be classified as a bicycle. The same laws that apply to bicycles now apply to motorized bikes, providing the wheel diameter is 20 inches or more, the motor cubic displacement is 50 ccs or less, with 1.5 brake horsepower or less, and the vehicle is not capable of attaining a speed of more than 25 mph.

There are numerous safety considerations raised. The New Jersey Insurance Department officials are among questioners. They have warned that parents not allow children to have the bikes until they are certain they are covered by insurance - and officials are unsure now whether they can provide such coverage under existing liability policies. Operators of these vehicles would not be covered by homeowners, auto or motorcycle liability insurance.

Parenti feels that the speeds attainable by these bikes (which can be souped up to do speeds better than 25 mph, in contrast to 10 to 12 miles attainable on a regular 10-speed bike) will result in dangerous accidents. "Without proper protection, we feel kids will take a lot of spills of a severe nature."

Parenti said there are 10-speed bikes which can attain up to 40 mph, but the operator would need "plenty of muscle and endurance" to maintain such speeds, and therefore not many

Continued On Page 11

EARLY CLOSING For Next Week's Issue

Because of the Thanksgiving Day holiday on Thursday, all advertising and news copy must be in our office by Noon, Friday, November 21, 1975.

Carpenter Offers To Meet With Groups

Superintendent of Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools, Dr. Reigh W. Carpenter, announced today his availability to meet with small groups to discuss the district's progress and problems.

Carpenter stated that "only through direct, face-to-face communication can the public get a honest picture of our school system." The new Superintendent said he "realizes the concern of the community over finances, philosophy, and curriculum and would like to develop a meaningful two-way communication with the community we serve."

Termed by Carpenter as "rap sessions," he said he would be available at 10 a.m. or 3:30 p.m. if appointments are scheduled with his office at 2630 Plainfield Avenue. Residents or groups may call 232-6161 ask Mrs. Gumpert for an appointment or write to Dr. Carpenter.

He said that he envisions a free and open meeting where people would feel free to discuss informally problems or suggestions.

Carpenter also stated that he will be available at all future Board Meetings from 7-8 p.m. beginning with the December meeting to meet with members of the public who would prefer the one to one communication.

and state consultants, and totaled \$57,047.

The sewer offers some relief for the flood prone north side, Griffin said. He will ask the Governor to assist in establishing state priorities for completing their portion of remaining sewer work in the Scotch Plains portion of Route 22.

Council gave final approval to an ordinance amendment setting fees for site plan review, to cover some of the expenses incurred by the township in reviewing the plans.