

School budget hike likely

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amounts, particularly in fuel and transportation, while in other areas such as staff the expenditures are under budget.

Why the jump, in light of a projected decrease of 4-1/2 percent in enrollment, or 210 students lost through "rollover" (subtracting the graduating class and adding incoming kindergarten) and another 50 to 60 students lost through "outward migration" (families moving out of town replaced by homeowners with no or fewer children) and high school dropouts. Dr. Robert Rader, Assistant Superintendent for Business, showed the figures.

Significant increases are budgeted in teaching supplies, up \$55,000 or 48 percent; salaries; transportation, up \$121,000; special education; and utilities and heat. As backup, Rader and Howlett noted that fuel was budgeted at 51 cents per gallon for the current year and is now costing \$1.00. The district is currently \$60,000 in the red for transportation, due primarily to the fact that a transportation firm which served the district for many years with little or no annual increases has discontinued business. All contracts had to be re-bid, at drastically higher costs. Rader noted that in some cases it costs the district \$12,000 to transport a single special education student by van - a must under state mandates.

Insurance costs are up dramatically, and the budget includes a \$58,000 hike in tuition at state facilities for special education students.

Howlett lauded the recent improvements in relationships between Councils and the school community, and expressed a hope that the gatherings would give Council members a new perception of priorities and values in school budgets, hopefully to prevent divisive attitudes in the future, in the event the budget is defeated. Council members expressed a strong desire for more backup information to explain the numbers they received. Several felt they needed far more material in order to understand the budget.

The Council members were active in questioning the Board's potential budget figures. How much of the budget would be raised by taxation? That figure could not be provided until a determination is made of anticipated revenues. However, Rader pointed out that the local district is receiving significantly less in state funds than many others under equalization approaches.

Councilman James Flinn of Scotch Plains urged capital expenditures for heat conservation, i.e., storm windows, etc. Such an expenditure now would save money later, he felt. Board President Leonia Reilly said the major thrust for next year is toward efficient operation of heating units, not in storm windows, etc. The boiler at Terrill needs controls, since it now burns 100 gallons of oil per hour. Included in capital outlay is \$59,999 for an energy management system for the high school, to allow better control of heat levels at different hours of day and night and in different areas of the building.

Howlett outlines some of the problems school district face in declining enrollment situations. Today, 92 percent of the teaching staff is tenured. When teachers are eliminated, they are generally the non-tenured, and also the lower-paid teachers. Therefore, as staff declines, it is on the average a higher paid staff which remains.

Similarly, even though enrollments decline, as long as all schools remain open, savings are not realized in support staff such as guidance, nurses, etc.

Much more information on the budget will be provided in forthcoming weeks, as finalization begins. The tax impact will also be more clear. During the current year, taxes have funded 82 percent of the total annual budget. If that percentage should apply with the working draft outlined this week, Mayor Ted Trumpp of Fanwood estimated that it could have a tax impact of 29 points in Fanwood, and an impact in the low 30's in Scotch Plains.

Jersey Lyric Opera Co. to cast chorus and orchestra

Plans for the spring production are already in progress for a full production of Verdi's "Masked Ball" which will include chorus and orchestra.

Choral Director Clair Salher is casting chorus members. All singers, Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Baritone are welcome to join in this exciting upcoming event. Ms. Salher may be

contacted at: 3 Central Ave., Cranford, or by calling 276-6011.

Maestro is: Kramer, conductor of the H.O. Orchestra

still has some openings for some young instrumentalists, interested in gaining experience in a professional opera orchestra. Telephone 574-0549 or write Maestro Kramer at Jersey Lyric Opera Company, 3 Colonial Drive, Scotch Plains.

The forthcoming winter production will be an Opera Gala at Gran Centurions, Madison Hill Road in Clark, Sunday, February 17, 1980, at 7 P.M. For tickets and information call 754-0549.

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Comparative Statement of Condition

	December 31, 1979	December 31, 1978
ASSETS		
Cash and Due from Banks	\$ 16,796,088	\$ 17,917,415
Investment Securities:		
U. S. Treasury Securities	17,356,492	17,428,779
Obligations of Other U. S. Government Agencies and Corporations	7,631,365	9,702,713
Obligations of States and Political Subdivisions	37,007,383	38,740,283
Other Securities	649,846	619,446
Federal Funds Sold	6,500,000	-
Mortgage Loans	51,529,859	52,298,960
Other Loans	55,549,392	49,694,482
Bank Premises and Equipment	2,924,488	3,056,136
Accrued Interest Receivable	1,751,338	1,687,528
Other Assets	569,626	1,026,275
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 198,265,877	\$ 192,172,017
LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Demand Deposits	\$ 64,517,591	\$ 64,642,736
Savings Deposits	82,013,094	89,366,144
Time Deposits	18,130,282	17,566,658
Total Deposits	164,660,967	171,575,538
Federal Funds Purchased and Securities Sold Under		
Agreements to Repurchase	12,002,245	2,000,000
Demand Notes-U.S. Treasury	1,553,479	-
Dividend Payable	185,433	176,603
Reserves for Taxes and Expenses	847,174	637,892
Total Liabilities	\$ 179,249,298	\$ 174,390,033
Stockholders' Equity		
Common Stock - \$5 Par	\$ 3,090,545	\$ 2,943,380
Surplus	12,500,000	11,400,000
Undivided Profits	2,102,471	2,066,714
Capital Reserves	1,323,563	1,371,890
Total Stockholders' Equity	\$ 19,016,579	\$ 17,781,984
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY	\$ 198,265,877	\$ 192,172,017

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