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IN NEW POSITION... Fanwood Mayor, Mrs. Linda d. Stender, second from the right, is sworn-in as a Union County Freeholder on January 1 by Judge, Mrs. Katherine DuPuis, as her family holds the Bible at the Board of Chosen Freeholders 1994 reorganization meeting.

## LOCAL BODY MEMBERS UNSURE OF GROUP'S BENEFITS TO TOWNSHIP, BOROUGH

# Scotch Plains-Fanwood School Board Urged to Join the Garden State Coalition

Dr. Smith Emphasizes the Organization's Ability to Lobby for State Funding; Combined Efforts Stressed; Total of 77 Proposals Submitted for the Mini Grants Amounting to \$105,000 from Desegregation Aid

By TUCKER TRIMBLE  
Specialty Writer for The Times

Westfield Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Mark C. Smith, visited the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education Thursday in his capacity as the President of the Garden State Coalition of schools in the hopes the township-based board would become a member district.

The coalition, he said, is unique among school organizations, notably the New Jersey School Boards Association and the New Jersey Association

of School Administrators, in that it combines professional educators and lay leadership, specifically superintendents and school board presidents.

Each member district is represented by both its superintendent and board president, he noted.

Since formally organizing in June 1992, continued the Superintendent, the coalition's main effort has been directed at the important issues of school finance.

Already the coalition has met with members of the transition team of Governor, Mrs. Christine Whitman, Dr. Smith pointed out.

The Westfield Superintendent said the coalition has worked closely with the Education Law Center in Newark and other education organizations on the funding compromise for 1993-1994 and is continuing, particularly through regular participation in the New Jersey Association of Public Schools Coalition, to work with these groups on a long-term solution to the school-funding issues which confront New Jersey and its children.

The Garden State Coalition of Schools supports all reasonable efforts toward more equitable educational opportunities for all school children, Dr. Smith said.

"Wise public policy includes a permanent commitment to both quality and equity," he continued. "We believe equity should be achieved by improving education and not by diminishing quality and eliminating school programs which have led to high student achievement."

Why do we need you? asked board member Mark W. Koster, and Dr. Smith replied that the school board association and the administrators' associations are umbrella groups, and, as such, it is very hard to get them to focus on one issue.

Board member August Ruggiero commented when the coalition was forming he was board President, and did not join the coalition because of his concern with the possibility of paid lobbyists, "using public monies," being used by the coalition.

"You must rely on the prestige of the individuals to draw others," he said.

Dr. Smith told him any "lobbying," meaning testifying before

groups or meeting with legislators, is all done by board presidents and superintendents.

"Our interests are the same," said the Superintendent. "It's important to have Scotch Plains-Fanwood with us. Dr. Choye is important to us with her prestige throughout the state."

"Our board will reconsider our position," board President, Dr. Donald E. Sheldon, told Dr. Smith.

In other business, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Dr. Faith Spitz gave an update on the status of the mini-grants, to be funded by the desegregation grant.

She said she was "overjoyed" to receive 77 requests from teachers for the funds, \$105,000 of which has been earmarked for the mini-grants from the total amount of the fund, which has not yet been received.

A committee of nine people spent a very long and tiring day, into the evening, Dr. Spitz said, choosing which ones would receive the funding.

Specific criteria formed an elaborate basis for determining those who would receive the funding, she continued, but they all had to have the overriding initiative of "closing the gap."

"We partially funded some, and fully funded some," Dr. Spitz commented, and announced 22 grants were awarded to the elementary schools, 16 to the intermediate schools and nine to the high school.

"I think it might be in the best interests of the district to hold off on these," Mr. Ruggiero said. "We don't know what our state aid will be."

"We can't tell the teachers to hold off on the \$105,000," Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Carol B. Choye told him.

Efficacy training, as part of the grant, is scheduled in the summer that she could put off, she said, but some of the computers contained in the mini-grants already have been ordered, and other purchase orders have gone out.

Board member, Mrs. Jessica L. Simpson, expressed concern over the high school program of studies for 1994-1995.

"It really hasn't changed much in the past few years," she said.

As an example, she cited a course

called creative writing in level Nos. 0 and 1. Creative writing, she said, should not be a level class. She asked why a level No. 1 course should be designated for "good writers?"

Mrs. Simpson told the board that she would like to see creative writing as a mandatory class.

Board Vice President, Mrs. Lillian M. Dettmar, told her she didn't think "creativity is being stifled by levels."

Mrs. Simpson also told the board she thinks summer reading should be mandatory for all English courses, not just the advanced ones.

"Our children have too much time to waste, and reading is never a waste of time," she said.

Dr. Choye told them she would look into the matter.

The board also looked at five samples of a calendar for the 1994-1995 school year. Dr. Choye will make her recommendations at a later date.

The board discussed the pros and cons of the starting date, the vacation time in February and the final day. Conference times also were a topic for discussion.

"My main concern is instructional time," said Dr. Choye. "We really looked at all kinds of options," adding the Westfield School District just had approved a calendar policy.

Board Secretary Richard J. Marshall told the board there have been no preliminary budget meetings because, "Nobody knows what's going to happen. There's no Commission."

"There are four or five plans floating around," he said, "none of which will be very beneficial to us."

"I'll tell you in all honesty," he continued, "we're not going to see any increase" in funding, and went on to point out some areas that must have increases such as salaries and electricity.

"Assuming our contributions to pension funds will increase," Mr. Koster said, "it might be a good idea to have preliminary discussions now when there's no pressure."

Mr. Koster said he was thinking the board will have to make "dramatic decisions," such as class size and delivery of service.

"That's the fear in all our minds," Dr. Sheldon told him.

## Several Scotch Plains Residents Express Concern About Deer Hunt

Council to Vote on Tuesday on Resolution Urging No Such Events Take Place in Future

By GLENN R. KAPLINSKY  
Specialty Writer for The Times

Prior to Tuesday's conference meeting of the Scotch Plains Township Council, Mayor William F. McClintock, Jr. met with 11 concerned residents of Skytop Drive

and Crest Lane regarding the deer hunt at the Union County Reservation.

Those in attendance were Mrs. Lois Russell, Tex Brooks, Charles Meise, Mrs. Alice Schiller, Victor Koopp, Mrs. Nancy Glynn, Mrs. Joy Jurgens, Mr. and Mrs. William O'Shea and

Mr. and Mrs. Jules Nagy.

The residents wanted the Mayor and council to take a public stand against the deer hunt.

Mayor McClintock said it was his opinion the hunt should never have been held; the deer problem is a statewide problem and the Freeholders took it upon themselves to order the hunt without prior consultation with the surrounding municipalities.

Mrs. Russell said the herd will increase despite the hunt as new deer will wander into the reservation.

Mr. O'Shea stated, "This is no long-term solution. For 72 years hunting has been prohibited at the Watchung Reservation."

The Mayor replied the hunt did not constitute "real sport" since the population of the deer herd has been listed as 300.

He said it has been estimated a costs taxpayers \$10,000 for each deer that is shot due mostly to increased security costs in sealing off the reservation.

Mrs. Nagy wondered why there are ordinances forbidding the cutting of grass early in the morning, but non-regulating shots from being fired in a public park prior to 8 a.m.

"I have no rights," she claimed. She and the others offered to feed the deer in preference to killing them.

Mayor McClintock noted the hunt has caused traffic tie-ups in downtown Scotch Plains and along Route No. 22.

In response to a question from another resident, the Mayor conceded the township has no jurisdiction over the small portion of the Watchung Reservation which is in Scotch Plains since the land is county land.

Mrs. Glynn speculated, "Maybe they will open Echo Lake Park for hunting due to the bird droppings problem."

The residents are fearful the hunt will become an annual event.

The council will vote on a resolution at its next public meeting urging the Union County Freeholders to have no further deer hunts at the reservation and to look for a long-term solution.

Other business discussed at the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

## Adjustment Board Delays Christian Association Action

Organization May Submit Revised Application Later

By SUZETTE STALKER  
Specialty Writer for The Times

The Scotch Plains Zoning Board of Adjustment, in its first regular meeting of the new year last Thursday, passed two resolutions regarding board action, which were taken last year and also held one public hearing on a new matter.

The board's annual reorganization meeting was held on January 6.

Board members adopted a resolution approving the body's 1993 annual report, highlighting board business from the previous year, which had been briefly reviewed and discussed earlier at the reorganization meeting.

The board also memorialized a resolution confirming its approval December 2 of an application by Mr. and Mrs. Adam Pollack of 1684 Ramapo Way, granting the couple permission to replace their deteriorating split-level fence with an enclosed stockade fence around their backyard.

The proposed renovation, Mr. Pollack told the board during last month's public hearing, was planned as a safety precaution for the couple's two small children and their pet—a measure which received support from their neighbors and was commended by Zoning Board members.

A second resolution, concerning the board's December 2 decision on a variance application by the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Young Men's Christian Association of 1340 Martine Avenue, was postponed by board Attorney Anthony D. Rinaldo.

Board members, following a

The board, after hearing testimony from neighbors of the facility who opposed the sign and the cube, concurred these additions would create a negative impact on the quality of life for area residents.

Even opponents of the cube, however, had complimented organization officials during the hearing on its architectural uniqueness.

Mr. Rinaldo called for the board to postpone its adoption of the resolution on the organization after an attorney for the organization submitted materials to him concerning the possibility organization officials may possibly bring a revised application before the Zoning Board at a later date.

Finally, the board approved renewal of a temporary operating permit allowing Mrs. Eula Andrews of 441 Hunter Avenue to continue to provide living quarters for several veterans in her home.

Mrs. Andrews, who renews her operating permit on a yearly basis, confirmed to the board she maintains separate accommodations for two to three people through a state-funded program and under the authorization of the Veterans Administration.

lengthy public hearing, had approved a request by Young Men's Christian Association officials to maintain a tree-lined buffer at the rear of the complex but rejected an exterior sign on one wall of the gymnasium, as well as a bright yellow signature cube bearing the letters of the organization's logo at the entrance to its nursery facility.



Courtesy of the Scotch Plains Public Library

THE TIME OF THE WEATHER... Seely's Dam in Scotch Plains was washed away by the flood of July, 1889. The Willcox Mill, built around 1763, also is shown in the photograph.

## Borough Councilmen in Fanwood Vote to Double Insurance Coverage

Fear of Expensive Suit Settlements Given as Motivation; Two Call It Unneeded

By TUCKER TRIMBLE  
Specialty Writer for The Times

At a special meeting on Wednesday, the Fanwood Mayor and Borough Council decided to increase their insurance coverage by the Suburban Insurance Fund from \$10 million to \$20 million for general liability.

Councilmen Andrew J. MacDonald and Bruce Walsh voted against the increase.

Councilman Donald J. Kolterjahn was absent from the meeting, and all others voted in favor of the increase.

"I think we should get this coverage," Council President, Mrs. Maryanne Connelly, said. "This is such a litigious society."

The Council President pointed out the cost for the additional \$10 million in coverage, which is \$8,500, comes out to about \$3 per household, given the 2,500 households in the borough.

Councilman Walsh noted, "There is a certain limit under which it would be imprudent to go, but no one could say this is imprudent," speaking of the original \$10 million in coverage.

"\$10 million is not an insufficient amount," he said. "We have only a few ways we can decrease costs. Some things we have no choice in," adding insurance costs present one way in which the borough can save money.

"Our coverage is either silver or gold, depending on how you look at it, but the additional coverage is platinum," Councilman MacDonald said.

He suggested the council save money by not adding the additional coverage, and perhaps "lighting candles" to prevent a situation in Fanwood similar to what happened in Kenilworth, where the borough was successfully sued for \$16 million when the municipality was covered for only half a million dollars in liability, as Fanwood Borough Attorney Dennis Estis previously stated.

"Lighting candles is not good public policy," replied Mayor, Mrs. Linda d. Stender, and endorsed the additional coverage.

Councilman Louis C. Jung also endorsed it, saying "legal suits out there are unbelievable."

The Council President suggested the council postpone voting on the possibility of \$2 million in coverage for borough public officials liability until the Wednesday, February 9, meeting, and the council agreed.

In the regular meeting following, which the Mayor referred to as "the first official council meeting of the year," it was suggested by Councilman Jung a new award, called the Proud of Fanwood Award, be formalized to recognize exceptional volunteers.

Presently, a person is recognized by the Mayor and Council if they complete their second term on a board or commission.

"That's a good idea," said the Mayor in response to the Councilman's suggestion. "The volunteers of this community are our lifeblood."

The Mayor appointed Gregory Cummings to the Downtown Redevelopment Committee and Mrs. Patricia Planteto to the Centennial Committee.

Premier Oil and Gasoline of Rahway was awarded the borough's gasoline contract with a price of 4642 cents per gallon for gasoline and also 4865 cents per gallon for diesel fuel.

After the council approved on first reading an ordinance concerning an interlocal agreement with Scotch Plains for a court administrator, Mr. Estis raised the question of why the interlocal agreements must be done by ordinance.

Interagreements between counties, he said, only need a resolution, and since the publication of ordinances costs money, a savings could be made, especially, as he pointed out, since there are many municipalities spending money.

The savings, he felt, could run to "tens of thousands of dollars" in the state.

The Mayor requested the suggestion be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Police Commissioner, Mrs. Connelly, announced the approval of a grant for law-enforcement equipment in the amount of \$17,282.

It will be used mainly for computer equipment for police vehicles, she said, to expedite the processing of cases as they are handled. Presently the police officer must telephone the station and the desk officer runs the checks.

"This was a very substantial amount for Fanwood," she said.

Councilman Jung pointed out there is supervised ice-skating at the rink in LaGrande Park, from 3 to 6 p.m. during the week and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends.

The Council also approved a resolution allowing for a temporary budget for 1994, "so we can continue to pay our bills," the Mayor said.

### DEADLINES HELP PAPERS SERVE YOU

Those preparing press releases for submission to *The Westfield Leader or The Times* are reminded all copy should be in the hands of the Editor at 50 Elm Street, Westfield, by 4 p.m. on the Friday before the Thursday on which they wish it to appear.

Leader releases also may be mailed to Post Office Box 250, Westfield, 07091, and Times releases to Post Office Box 368, Scotch Plains, 07076, to meet the above requirements.

For events which happen the week-end prior to publication, press releases should reach the Editor by Monday of the week of publication at 10 a.m.

Obituaries will be taken until Tuesday at 5 p.m.

For events which are planned weeks or months in advance, we encourage submission of stories as early as possible prior to the event.

The above deadlines are meant to enable us to prepare your copy carefully.