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GOVERNING BODIES REPORTS GREEN BROOK FLOOD PROJECT

Scotch Plains Council Grants Animal Control Services Pact To Garden State Kennels Spinoff

By JEANNE WHITNEY
Specially Written for The Times

The Scotch Plains Township Council agreed Tuesday night to grant a three-year contract to Garden State Animal Rescue, Inc., of Stirling for animal control services. Officials said services for the remainder of 1997 will be prorated at \$1,500 per month and, after that, \$1,600 per month through December of 1999.

The total annual bill is nearly \$20,000. After-hour emergency services will be billed at \$50, officials added. Last year the township reportedly spent about \$2,500 on extra charges.

Councilwoman Joan Papen insisted that the contract with the animal rescue service include an agreement with the Scotch Plains Police Department to keep a daily log in order to track requests for services and additional fees.

The township had taken two rounds of bids for animal control services earlier this year and since January was temporarily using Garden State Kennels' services. The not-for-profit Garden State Animal Rescue, Inc. is a one-year-old spin-off organization from Garden State Kennels. Earlier, the council considered a bid from Associated Humane Societies in Newark — the service used by the Town of Westfield and other neighboring communities — but decided against it.

Officials added that the use of a not-for-profit organization eliminates yearly bidding for services since a town legally may enter into a longer agreement with a not-for-profit group. An animal rescue service emphasizes placement or adoption of animals left in its care.

In other business, the township's legal department said it would be necessary to re-bid the sale of township property located on Route No. 22. Attorneys said lawyers for possible purchasers missed the deadline for bidding so the council must adopt a second ordinance in order to put the 600-square-foot irregular-shaped property on the block. Only contiguous property owners are eligible to buy, officials added.

On a different matter, the council said it was waiting for a description of a proposed enclosed staircase tower in an agreement with property owners Paul DiFrancesco and Silvano DiMonte that would allow construction 15 feet into an easement area at the rear of 419 Park Avenue. A "conceptual plan" of the site indicates the addition of four apartments to the second story over existing businesses, officials said.

The Scotch Plains Planning Board has waived site plan approval and parking requirements for the project. The Police Department has "expressed concern" over the parking situation, according to a Planning Board resolution, however the board said applicant testimony indicated there was sufficient parking space in a municipal lot for the proposed apartments. Attorneys said the council would have additional information on the plan by its next regular meet-

ing, this Tuesday, April 8.

In a separate action, the council said it supported the massive Green Brook Flood Control project as an important measure in protecting township residents and property against thousands of dollars worth of damage from potential flooding. The council said it would urge the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders to "resist any attempts to delay or abandon the plan of protection." The three-pronged plan to enlarge existing streams, build levees and two detention basins would take 12 years to complete, according to the United States Army Corps of Engineers.

The \$362 million plan also has the support of state officials. The Corps will now be looking to get funding from the United States Congress for the first stage of construction in Somerset County. The Corps delayed a decision for one year on whether to proceed with 11 acres of detention basins in the Watchung Reservation after some Union County residents objected.

The council also heard from Municipal Welfare Director Maria Santo over what impact the state "Work First" welfare reform package will have on local services. The measures went into effect April 1. Ms. Santo said major changes included a 60-day drug treatment program for welfare recipients convicted of a drug felony during which the recipients do not receive funds. Ms. Santo said there is a new five-year residence requirement for legal immigrants to be eligible for assistance with a limit of six months within which to become a citizen.

Enrollment in a food stamp program will now require 20 hours per month of community service in addition to 28 hours of service for a welfare grant, Ms. Santo added. She indicated that more changes will take effect after Tuesday, July 1. The council agreed to meet further with the Local Assistance Board.

In other action, the council said it would alert the Freeholders that it objected to the board's recent move to allow blocks of time on weekend mornings to be reserved for golf clubs at county owned golf courses. Councilman Dr. Martin Marks said he had received calls from residents objecting to the Freeholders' decision, say-

ing that weekend mornings were prime time for golfers and should not be booked exclusively for clubs. The county recently implemented a telephone call-in reservation system for tee-times at the golf courses. (A related story appears on Page 3.)

In other business, the council said it would look into potential funding for proposed improvements to the Hetfield Avenue bridge. Also, officials noted that Scotch Plains Day will be held Saturday, October 25, with a rain date for the following day.

The council said it was looking for an alternate representative to the Union County Regional Environmental Health Commission (UCREHC). Township Sanitary Inspector Andrew Snyder, who is township representative to the group, was recently named Chairman of UCREHC.



'EGG' HUNTING WE WILL GO...Youngsters line up for last Saturday's annual Easter Egg Party. The children are shown here getting their bags ready to fill them with the colored Easter eggs. The event, held behind the Fanwood Municipal Building, was sponsored by the Fanwood Recreation Commission.

Political Parties Pick Freeholder Candidates

The Union County Democratic and Republican Committees have selected their candidate slates to run for the county's Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Democrats have selected Chester Holmes of Rahway, Alexander Mirabella of Roselle Park and Deborah Scanlon of Union to run for three seats on the board that are up this year.

Those seats are currently held by the only three Republicans on the board, Frank H. Lehr of Summit, Edwin H. Force of Cranford and Henry W. Kurz of Roselle Park. The Republican Committee recently selected the three incumbents to run on the county Republican ticket.

At the local level, the Fanwood seats of Dr. Chester R. Lindsey and William E. Populas, Jr. are up this year. The Democrats hold a 4-3 (including the Mayor) edge on the governing body. The deadline for filing nominating petitions for the June primary race is next Thursday, April 10.

No seats are up this year on the Scotch Plains Township Council. The Republicans hold a 5-0 majority on the council.

The Democrats have a 6-3 majority on the Freeholder board at present by virtue of their sweep over the Republican ticket this past November. The GOP had held control of the board the previous five years.

Board Chairwoman Linda d. Stender of Fanwood and her runningmates, Nicholas P. Scutari of Linden and Donald Goncalves of Elizabeth, defeated Republicans Linda Di Giovanni, Linda Lee Kelly, and their runningmate, Robert Vigilanti, the three-term incumbent Mayor of Mountainside.

The Republicans have been swept the past two elections by the Democrats. This year the Democrats are seeking to gain a 9-0 majority for the first time since 1990. Meanwhile GOP leaders have said they hope to sweep this year and regain the majority by 1999.

Mr. Holmes, who has served on the Union County Utilities Authority, is a retired Rahway City police detective. He served six years on the UCUA.

Mr. Mirabella, employed as a manager for the Insurance Group, is a former two-term Rahway City Councilman. He chose not to seek reelection in 1996.

Meanwhile, Ms. Scanlon is a paralegal with a Summit-based law firm. She was elected to the Union Township Board of Education last year.

Currently, Freeholder Vice Chairman Daniel P. Sullivan and Freeholder Scutari serve on the school boards in their respective communities. Freeholder Sullivan did not seek reelection to the board this spring.

Freeholder Kurz, a former Roselle Park Councilman, was first elected to the Freeholder board in 1994. He is the President of Nittany Group, Inc., a pharmaceutical marketing and consulting company.

Freeholder Lehr, who has served on the board since 1992, is a former Summit Mayor and City Councilman. A civil engineer, he founded Frank H. Lehr Associates, Consulting Civil Engineers, in 1957.

Mr. Lehr also served a term on the Freeholder board in the early 1980s. He served two stints as board Chairman.

Freeholder Force, a former Cranford Mayor and Township Committeeman, was named to the Freeholder board in the summer of 1994 upon the appointment of James F. Keefe to the post of Union County Counsel. Freeholder Force was elected to a full three-year term that November.

Lions Club to Sponsor Benefit Flea Market

The first flea market of the season at the Fanwood railroad station will be sponsored by the Scotch Plains Lions Club on Saturday, April 5. More than 100 vendors will display a variety of items.

The sponsors will operate the food stand and the miscellaneous items table. Hot dogs, hamburgers, donuts, coffee, tea and soda will be for sale. There also will be a baked goods table.

Hours will be from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., with all profits from vendor rentals and food sales going to the club's Sight Prevention, Blind and Community Betterment Funds.

Business Association Plans Downtown Event

The Scotch Plains Business and Professional Association (SPBPA) is planning a day of fun, food and entertainment for the whole family in downtown Scotch Plains on Sunday, June 8, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The day's events will include an Antique and Classic Car Show in the parking lots behind Park Avenue, a Craft Fair on the Village Green to benefit the Emmanuel Cancer Foundation, a disc jockey, prizes, raffles, food, sidewalk sales and more.

The SPBPA expressed its appreciation to Union County Buick and other members for their contribution to this year's event.

In the event of rain, the show will be held two weeks later on Sunday, June 22. Given the response to the show the past two years, the SPBPA expects at least 160 participants this year, according to a spokesman.

This year, in addition to the car show and craft fair, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Arts Association is planning to have its annual Art Show and Sale included in the day's activities as well. Please call Bob Hahn at 233-7458 for more information on the art show.

Anyone interested in registering for the car show may call Steve Hoeckele of BeCu Manufacturing at 233-3344 or pick up a registration form at Nuts n' Plenty, 1906 Bartle Avenue. Pre-registration by Saturday, May 31, is \$8 and registration the day of the show is \$10. Those interested in registering for the craft fair should contact Kelly Deegan of Emmanuel Cancer Foundation at 322-4323.



GET READY, GET SET...These youngsters are anxious to start Fanwood's Easter egg hunt. By the look on their faces they do not appear to be camera shy either.

Driveway Plan Tabled After Borough Applicant Fails to Attend Meeting

By BRIAN CAROVILLANO
Specially Written for The Times

At last Wednesday's Planning Board session, residents of Fifth Street, La Grande Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood once again turned out to contribute to the discussion concerning a subdivision of a property located on Fifth Street. They did not have an opportunity to voice their collective opinions, however, as the applicant, Ernest Fantini, an Edison-based builder, failed to appear at the hearing.

Mr. Fantini's proposal, outlined at a February 26 meeting, was tabled by the board pending revision of plans to construct a driveway on to Fifth Street. The plan would utilize public land to lengthen the dead-end street by 28 feet — a plan which was rejected by the board in February. Several residents of the area had shown up at that meeting to protest.

Although Mr. Fantini failed to appear before the board last Wednesday, he did fax a revised plan that instead had the driveway open on to La Grande, thus solving the problem of the lengthening of Fifth Street. By all accounts, however, the faxed proposal was unacceptable to the board for a number of reasons, not the least of which being the fact that La Grande is a county road, and thus easements would have to be granted.

According to board member Karl Eschle, county requirements stipulate that there be at least 50 feet between a driveway entrance and the nearest street corner. In this case, the corner of Fifth and La Grande would be less than 50 feet from the proposed driveway.

Board Chairman Gregory Cummings echoed the sentiments of the other board members, "This is not acceptable as far as I'm concerned," he said, referring to Mr. Fantini's revised plan.

"This board made it quite clear (to Mr. Fantini) at the last meeting what was expected of him," continued Mr. Cummings. "I'm not sure that we have to lead him by the hand through every stage of this process."

With the failure of Mr. Fantini to show up or provide legal counsel, the board voted unanimously to table the hearing until its Wednesday, April 23, meeting, at which time the matter will be discussed and voted on regardless of whether or not Mr.

Fantini's is present. A letter will be drafted by the board to advise him of this.

With the postponement of this application, the neighbors in attendance departed without having voiced their concerns and trepidations over the potential impact of the application on their neighborhood.

The Planning Board will next convene on Monday, April 14, for an agenda meeting, and again on April 23 for the public hearing. The Planning Board meets at 8 p.m. in the Borough Council Chambers, located at Fanwood Borough Hall.

Deadlines Told For Submittals To The Times

Those persons preparing press releases for submission to The Times are reminded that copy should be E-mailed or faxed by 4 p.m. on the Friday prior to publication. The Times' E-mail address is goleader@aol.com. The fax number is 232-0473.

Releases, pictures, and letters to the editor can also be dropped off at our office located at 50 Elm Street or through our mail slot. To ensure that submittals reach our office prior to deadline we encourage E-mail or faxed material.

Sports stories which occur prior to the weekend should be in by the Friday deadline. Weekend sports events must be submitted by noon on the Monday prior to the publication date. Obituaries will be accepted up to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays.

All copy must be typed, double-spaced, no more than 500 words in length, and include a daytime telephone number where the submitter can be reached. For events which are planned months in advance, we encourage submission of stories as early as possible prior to the event.

Please note that in addition to making our deadlines, the publication of submittals may be delayed due to space considerations. All submittals are subject to being cut due to length, edited for style and clarification at the discretion of the editor.



OUT OF THE PAST...The Osborn Cannonball House, a circa 1760 saltbox farmhouse, located at 1840 Front Street in Scotch Plains, will be open to visitors on Sunday, April 6, from 2 to 4 p.m. Frederick Ross, a descendant of John Ross, Chief of the Cherokee Indian Nation, will give a demonstration and display of mid-1700s fur trading and trapping. Mr. Ross will be dressed in period costume and display animal furs and Indian trading goods. Docents will give tours of the house museum. There is no admission charge.