

# Clark Patriot

'A Voice for All, an Echo for None'

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## Board accepts suggested budget cut; recreation, summer school to stop

By R. R. Faszczewski  
"Unfortunately, due to much misinformation generated by the Township Council concerning the Board of Education's unappropriated funds, I find it necessary to explain the Board's position concerning this matter."

"Unlike Township Council, the Board does not have the luxury to deficit spend. For instance, if Council overextends its budget because of some emergency, it has merely to float a bond to cover the deficit. Hence, Council has little need to carry surplus funds in its budget. On the other hand, it is imperative the Board carry surplus funds because all unforeseen emergency expenditures must be drawn from this surplus, since the Board does not have bonding authority."

"Indeed, the Board's 1983-1984 budget does reflect a larger-than-usual surplus. However, the increase was brought about by the final sale of the Abraham Clark School. It was the Board's intention to return this excess surplus, \$325,000, to the taxpayers over a three-year period so the school budget's impact on the tax rate would not fluctuate sharply from year to year. For example, in the 1983-1984 school budget the Board did appropriate \$177,000 from free balances to offset taxes."

"Of course, in view of Council's reduction of the Board's budget of \$425,000 the Board's plan has now been frustrated. Reluctantly, the Board has acceded to Council's irresponsible action. However, future sharp variations of the tax rate can now be anticipated."

The Board had requested another meeting with Council to discuss the appropriation of these funds over a period of time, but the Council saw no need for further deliberations."

With the above statement, made by Board of Education president, Mrs. Eileen Mezzo, a discussion of the school body's action over its defeated budget was launched, which ultimately led to a May 10 vote to do away with salaries for the staff members in both the school recreation and summer school programs, in effect doing away with the programs themselves.

Although the education body had reportedly been considering appealing the \$425,000 cut to the state commissioner of education, the May 10 action precluded that move.

The deletion of summer school and recreation items in the 1983-1984 tab brought the budget down by \$31,668, and \$393,332 was appropriated from surplus to come up with the \$425,000 figure.

Board member, Thelma Purdy, objected to the deletion of the recreation funds.

Mrs. Purdy, although agreeing recreation should be the township's, not the Board's responsibility, said the township had been reluctant to take over the responsibility.

However, Board member, James E. Kehoe, said the township has a recreation director and he should be the one responsible for recreation programs.

Asked to explain the effect of the cut in the 1983-1984 budget on next year's tab, Business Administrator Philip A. Miller said the cut would bring this year's budget about \$700,000 under the state "CAP" limit on spending increases, thus making it harder to get state approval to spend over the cut in this year's budget next year.

Mrs. Mezzo noted this would probably force the school officials to seek an appeal of the "CAP" limit for 1984-1985.

Calling the recreation program a goodwill gesture from the schools, Board member, Edward Dreyfus, pointed out both the recreation and summer school programs had been leading other programs in terms of getting the most value for the Board's dollars.

Mr. Kehoe replied the Board was not in the recreation business, and he was afraid if the cuts were not made in the above two areas the school system would not have the money it needed in 1983-1984 for educational programs.

Mrs. Mezzo added it would be hard for the Board to win a "CAP" appeal next

year if the cuts were not made in recreation and summer school.

However, school body member, F. Donald Paris, replied the schools should provide the two programs until suitable alternatives

could be provided. He urged the Board to talk to the township again about providing the recreation program, and asked his fellow Board members to provide for the cuts needed for an appeal at the time the appeal was to be initiated, not now.

The Board president said one of the reasons the budget he, Joech defeated in the first place was the parents of the community's 1,250 school children had

not shown up at the polls to support it.

She added since there had been little community attendance at meetings concerning the proposed budget cuts there didn't seem to be enough interest in the

Board continuing the programs.

Replying to Mr. Paris' comments, Board member, Marie Soyka, said two years ago when she was on a committee to approach the mayor and the township ad-

ministration about the township taking over the recreation program the Board had told it the school system does a better job with recreation than the community, and therefore, should keep responsibility for it.

Citing the problems with the "CAPS" appeal, she said she would have to go along with the cuts in the two programs reluctantly.

Saying the action being taken should not be construed as being punitive because of the Governing Body's action on the cut, Board vice president, Thomas Faria, said the district has serious dollar problems and would have to set priorities in order to spend prudently and better the educational program.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. John T. Farinella said eventually even transportation provided by the Board for those living more than two miles from schools might have to be eliminated. He added the Board might explore the possibility of setting recreation up in a different way.

A motion by Mr. Dreyfus to re-instate the summer school program was defeated by a 5-4 vote, and one by Mrs. Purdy to bring back the recreation program went down by a 3-6 margin.

When the overall motion, calling for the cutting out of both programs, came up for another vote it passed, with only Mr. Paris voting against it.

A proposal to re-locate the school district's Child Study Team to the Charles

H. Brewer School, which will be closed for classroom use at the end of this school year, was tabled so Board members would have more time to look into the facts behind the move.

Dr. Farinella explained as presently envisioned the Union County Educational Services Commission, which will be renting the school building from the Board, would use the older wing, thus leaving the newer wing free and allowing for the computerization of the Child Study Team's operation, more privacy and the installation of telephones and more electrical outlets.

Mrs. Soyka said there had been no cost analysis of the change made yet, and there would be three free classrooms even with the plan for the Child Study Team to occupy the new wing.

Thus, she added, perhaps provision should be made for seeking another tenant or moving the Board of Education offices from the administration building on Schindler Rd. to the school site.

Mr. Kehoe noted it would not be good to take the Child Study Team away from its resources at the Schindler Rd. building, where it is presently located, and to use up the whole Brewer building would mean a \$120,000 loss to the township.

Mr. Faria pointed out the Board had been considering setting up a facilities planning committee to study the feasibility of moving from the Schindler Rd. building, and this should be done to give the school body flexibility in coming to a decision.

Without the acceptance of the Brewer plan, however, according to the superintendent, the Child Study Team would probably have to stay in the Schindler Rd. building, using the library as a conference room with little privacy.

Asked if other tenants had been asking about the use of Brewer, Dr. Farinella replied most of the others were from private industry and this would present variance problems because private industry would create a new use for the property.

**Small business to be topic of seminar**

The "How to Start a Successful Small Business" seminar will be held this Saturday, May 21, at the Holiday Inn on Rte. No. 1, S., North Brunswick. The seminar will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Additional seminars are scheduled for Saturday, June 11, in Fairfield and Saturday, June 25, in Cranford.

Further information about the seminar and registration may be obtained by telephoning 746-9132.

**Senators offers college information**

Guides spelling out the many types of undergraduate institutions of higher education in New Jersey along with a description of each and their location are available at the 22nd District Legislative Office of Sen. Donald T. DiFrancesco, who represents Clark.

Also available are brochures and applications concerning grants and scholarships for the college year

1983-1984 and state and federal financial aid program grant information leaflets.

Men and women aged 55 and older may be interested in entering the Senior Olympics '83 event, to take place Sunday and Monday, May 29 and 30, at Newark Academy in Livingston. This event will be sponsored by the Young Men's-Young

Women's Hebrew Assn. of Metropolitan New Jersey, and is in no way affiliated with the United States Olympic Committee or the International Olympic Committee. Information and official entry forms may be obtained from Sen. DiFrancesco's legislative office or by contacting the state division on aging or the Essex County Division on Aging.

Information may be picked up at the legislative office at 1906 Westfield Ave., Scotch Plains, between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

**BEYOND CALL OF DUTY** - Rep. Matthew J. Rinaldi, whose district includes Clark, left, receives the Nathan Hale Award from Lt. Col. Richard DeMarco, president of the New Jersey Department of the United States Reserve Officers Assn. in recognition of his support of veterans and military programs. The presentation was made at the state association's convention at McGuire Air Force Base.

**DOING THEIR PART** - A Certificate Award was received by Sister Regina Martin, the principal of Mother Seton Regional High School in Clark, third from right, at the Fourth Annual Blood Drive held at the school. Mary Meier, third from left, the director of Blood Services for the American Red Cross, Eastern County Division, made the award presentation to all those students and faculty members for their volunteer support in helping to meet the blood needs of the community. The blood drive is under the direction of Miss Maureen Serzan, left, clinical specialist in school health at Mother Seton. Students, looking on, left to right, are: Janice Livolsi, Lisa Heron and Carolyn Buck of Rahway.

**OUR FOREFATHERS** - Harold Sherman, second from right, the organizer of the Clark Junior Bowling Leagues, in 1957, receives a plaque from Wenzel R. Doua, president. Looking on, left to right, are: Marvin Veverka, Mrs. Alberta Volpe and Tony Volpe, three of the original coaches of the leagues.

**CURTAIN TIME** - Tonight at Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School the Bel Canto Choir, shown above, will present the high school's Annual Spring Concert along with 35 members of the Concert Choir and Vocal Workshop. Selections, from "Bach to rock," will be performed in the auditorium. Donations of \$1 will be accepted at the door.

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