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Residents urge takeover of Brewer this year

By R. R. Faszczewski
Although residents and township officials alike seem to approve of the township use of the Charles H. Brewer School for municipal facilities starting this year, they differ considerably on how that aim can be accomplished.

Mayor Bernard G. Yarusavage announced at the Township Council's Feb. 21 session he had written a letter to the Board of Education asking the 20-year lease at \$1 a year be delayed until next year while the school body continued to maintain the building and the township worked out severe financial problems in its 1984 budget.

In the mayor's letter he suggested the Board continue to maintain the building for another year while the township prepares to establish its offices at the school.

He said all expenses for maintaining the building: heating, lighting, insurance, maintenance and janitorial services must, by law, be included in the state-mandated "CAP" limit on municipal spending, and thus, the Brewer

takeover would add to other township financial problems.

However, he told the audience, he was only suggesting the township not have to take care of the above expenses at the building this year, not that it delays the use of the school by the municipality.

In other words, the expenses would be borne by the School Board for one year before the township assumed the responsibility for them.

However, Second Ward Councilman George Nucera, who is a member of the Council's liaison committee on Brewer, pointed out the township has been offered \$40,000 from the federal Community Development Program for the Brewer expenses and because the mayor did not put the \$40,000 requested of him as a line item in the 1984 budget the Brewer deal might fall through.

Mayor Yarusavage replied there was no place in the budget for the Brewer takeover because the lease has not been signed. He said he had informed the councilmen they had the option

of going to a 6.5% instead of a 5% "CAP" this year—to give them about \$57,000 for the Brewer costs—but they had not taken that option.

First Ward Councilman Raymond Krov noted he had requested \$30,000 in cuts in the proposed municipal budget for this year which would have brought it under the "CAP," but the cuts had not been made.

Councilman Krov added if the school body maintained the Brewer facility for another year township taxpayers would still have to foot the bill and they would risk losing the school for a municipal complex because the Board might sell or lease it to another group.

Pointing out any delay in executing the lease would put the Community Development grant in jeopardy, Councilman Nucera said even though former Business Administrator Thomas Connell had worked on preparation of the grant application, only himself and Council President Fred Ruzicki had signed before the Union County Com-

munity Development Committee to see the grant was finally approved.

The Second Ward representative added the Board already has one tenant in the facility and would possibly get another one soon. He complimented Third Ward Councilwoman Ruth DeLuca for originally negotiating with the education body for the building and pointed out the township had been able to get the rental price reduced to \$1 a year for 20 years.

He urged his fellow councilmen to find the approximately \$30,000 for expenses needed this year to make the move because Green Acres funds could be used to make the gymnasium and fields available for youth activities and the senior citizens would benefit because they would have a facility for their meetings.

The finance committee chairman of the Board, James E. Kehoe of 41 Wendell Pl., told the Governing Body the school body would probably view the mayor's letter with consternation, since the members thought the lease was scheduled to go into effect on

Sunday, July 1, and Board members would probably ignore the letter.

Mr. Kehoe added the Board had already included the maintenance expenses for Brewer from its budget, which, as of now would mean a 27-point tax increase for residents without even considering the Brewer expenses.

He pointed out the tenants would bring in \$40,000 in rental fees and the Community Development funding and the use of the building by senior citizens would bring in more money.

A resident, Lissi Krehan of 107 Tudor Dr., said, as a person, who works closely with both the Girl Scouts and the Clark Soccer Club, she would very much like to see the township acquire the Brewer facility in the future. However, she asked, where would the future be if the township "outspat itself in taxes?" She urged the township to wait for the takeover for another year as residents wouldn't be "sated" too much.

Mrs. Krehan also noted the soccer club would be sponsoring an indoor soccer tournament at Brewer this Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, and next weekend, March 11 and 12.

When another resident, Liz Hudak of 82 Grand St., asked how the township would be able to get the money for the Brewer expenses in another year if it couldn't get the funds now, the mayor replied 1984 was particularly hard on the budget because the township had to pay off a \$250,000 tax rebate to Hyatt-Clark Industries, the Terminal Ave. pumping station needed emergency repairs last year which this year's budget had to pay for and re-evaluation was causing a strain on the budget.

He said these problems hopefully would not be present next year.

Fourth Ward Councilman John Bodnar added the township government was facing a 45-point tax increase for its own services, there would be a decrease in revenue this year and instead of taking \$350,000

from surplus as they did in 1982 to meet expenses the councilmen would have to take \$850,000 from the 1983 surplus to meet this year's expenses.

Another resident, Mel Altman of 11 Rutgers Rd., asked if it would not be feasible for a private, third party to purchase the school and run it for the township and then sell it back to the municipality when it was more economically feasible.

Director of Law Joseph Triani replied the proposal would probably not be feasible since the Board of Education would have to agree to it and the school body would not accept a township guarantee to take on the debts of the third-party organization should it not live up to its obligations.

Councilman Nucera added the county and state boards of education would have to approve such an agreement and from his discussions with those two boards he knew they would not approve it.

Pd. Kevin White pleaded for more space for the police department since, he

said, the Clark police were the only ones he knew of in the county who had their lockers out in a hallway, cells which could be easily seen by the public and evidence and drugs in areas accessible to the public.

Councilman-at-Large George Sanguliano said at this time he was not convinced the township could assume the costs of Brewer because there was no plan for the takeover.

He added the Community Development grant would not come in until this October and the township would have one year to spend it. He asked how some councilmen could talk about putting \$20,000 in the budget for the takeover when the cost would be closer to \$100,000 the roads were falling apart and the public works department was having its budget cut again.

Councilman Nucera explained the mayor could not be for and against the proposal at the same time, the township could look at financing the project for half a year instead of the full year

and it could be undertaken one step at a time with the income the school was generating now and by putting only \$24,000 in the budget.

Councilman Nucera's comments supporting the proposal were echoed by Councilman-at-Large Joseph B. Pozniak and Councilmen Eckel and Krov.

Stencil animals at Trailside

March Country Crafts will begin at the Trailside Nature and Science Center at Coles Ave. and New Providence Rd., Mountainside, tomorrow from 9:30 a.m. to noon with "Stenciled Country Animals."

For a \$12 fee participants will learn techniques then stencil a wooden decoration for their homes. Registration is required.



LET US ADD YOUR NAME TO THE LIST... PHONE YOUR PLEDGE NOW

The following people have responded to our plea and our hopes for the Union County Arts Center are now becoming a reality. We'd also like to thank those people whose donations were received long before our plea effort was made. The list below does not include prior donations, without which this project would not exist.

We're on our way...but we're not there yet...so please...call now or mail the coupon with your pledge because time is running out.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TOWARD A UNION COUNTY ARTS CENTER THAT WILL ENHANCE ALL OUR LIVES.

CALL NOW... 574-1200 MARCH 1 FROM 5 TO 8 P.M. ... AND MAKE YOUR PLEDGE. NO MATTER HOW SMALL YOU THINK IT IS... WE NEED TO MAKE OUR GOAL... LET'S FIGHT AND WIN...

American Legion James E. Mackie Post No. 499, Sis and Freddy Bechtold, John and Mrs. Behnke, Margaret Bennett, Louise Bergmuller, Brian R. Cahill, Columbianettes, James Duffy, Jean Frazar, Elm Baptist Church, Margaret Gallagher, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Garcia, Helen G. Gering, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Givens, The Wood Robert Heinke,

Gary M. Hertz, Holy Comforter Church, Mr. and Mrs. John Jordan, Julius L. Kish, Mary Kishner, Mrs. David Markoff, Helen Marzillier, Mr. and Mrs. Chester Miller, Miss Philomena Miele, Lucia and Viola Pascale, Mary M. Peter, Edward R. Peterson, Harold and Doris Presser, Mr. and Mrs. S. F. Tavor, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Ulrich, Mrs. James J. Quinn, Robert and Verna Wendling, Joan Wright, Anne and George Klutowski, Tom and Joan Crago, Dorothy Ruddy, Susan Samanack, Jean Parker, Ruth Parker, Dorothy Russell, Marian Hoeft, Holy Comforter Episcopal Churchwomen, Alex and Virginia Medvitz, Philip R. Frowery, Beverly Pray, Ted Bartz, Frank and Isabel Kroner, Wm. and Marie Fee, Charles and Pat Schmitt, Ruth A. Gaydos, Helen C. Taylor, John A. Susas, Dick and Rena Wiederhorn, Anna Smith, Irene Schwenitzer, Mrs. Mary Toth, Robert McArthur, Catherine E. Golinski, Ruth E. Reddy, Marvin and Margaret Spetol, Mr. and Mrs. L. H. Claus, Mr. and Mrs. Frank J. Dierkes and Frank and Ruth Remo.

OUR GOAL \$150,000

Keep it Rising



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