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Council reluctantly approves compromise school budget

by Pat DiMaggio

Clark's Municipal Council finally approved reductions in the Board of Education's budget after two meetings and accusations of improper preparation. Representatives of the council met with board members on May 9 to discuss reductions in the board's budget. The council originally approved \$145,000 in cuts, but the board voted against accepting the reductions. After meeting with County Superintendent Dr. Vito Gagliardi, the council reduced the original amount to \$110,000.

At a special council meeting held May 11, Councilman William Caruso made a motion to withdraw the proposal and asked for an agreement to board five percent reduction in the budget. "They are not bargaining in good faith," said Caruso. "The taxpayers should be outraged."

Township Attorney Stanley Fink said that the council could not approve a "blanket cut" because, by law, they must set an amount with a detailed explanation of reductions. Fink advised the council that if they voted against the resolution reducing the budget by \$110,000 and had to appear at an appeal process in Trenton, they would not go in there with a great case.

Fink explained that a state statute demands that when a resolution is prepared cutting the budget it must contain an explanation of those cuts. The first proposal by the council to reduce the budget by \$145,000 did not include these explanations because council members were assured by members of the board that "there would be no problem in accepting them."

Fink was directed to draft the original resolution without explanations of the cuts by Councilman Robert Ellenport and Council President Fred Eckel, said Fink.

When the Board of Education met later, they decided to reject the proposed \$145,000 in reductions. "We had a gentlemen's agreement," said Eckel. "Obviously, some of the board members are not gentlemen."

In spite of Fink's advice, the resolution reducing the board's budget by \$110,000 was defeated with a vote of three in favor and Council Members William Caruso, Carol Pluta and Joseph Pozniak opposed. Councilman Ellenport was ill and did not attend the meeting.

"This is a pathetic situation," said Caruso. "The taxpayers at this town voted the budget down and the Board of Education is literally thumbing their noses at us."

"I am willing to go all the way," said Pluta. "If we lose it, we lose it."

"This council is at fault because this resolution was not presented in the correct manner," said Councilman Bernard Hayden in voting to accept the reduction.

"The taxpayers have to pay the price of Ellenport's error. We should accept the \$110,000 cut and not go to Trenton. I'd rather accept three-quarters of the pie than lose the whole thing."

At another special meeting held May 13, the council again discussed the

resolution reducing the budget by \$110,000.

"I will vote yes only because of the mistake that was made on the resolution," said Councilwoman Pluta.

"After conducting my own investigation I am not convinced that this resolu-

tion is flawed," said Councilman Ellenport. "But I don't want to risk \$110,000 of taxpayers' money to find out if we're wrong."

The resolution was then approved by a vote of six in favor with Councilman Caruso absent.

Parents claim students 'short changed' at Valley Road

by Pat DiMaggio

More than 50 parents and teachers attended Clark's Board of Education meeting held on May 10, some to voice displeasure over art and physical education classes at Valley Road School and others to defend the programs.

Andrea Twombly, a parent, said the students at Valley Road School were being "short changed in their education" especially in the area of art. She said that a 1986 supply list showed items not used in the classroom and also said there were health and safety violations in the art room. She asked the board to investigate the art program by reviewing requisition orders for the past five years, to monitor lesson plans, to evaluate health and safety measures and to evaluate the curriculum.

Sue Lordi, also a parent, read a statement recognizing the contributions of the art teacher at Valley Road School to art education. "The art program gives our children an aspect to a well rounded education," said Lordi. "My child's interest in art was sparked at Valley Road School."

Another parent questioned the curriculum of the health and physical education program at Valley Road School saying there was poor supervision in the gymnasium and ineffective safety standards and asked the board to look into the problem.

At the meeting, the board also approved the appointment of a new Director of Special Services to fill the position vacated by Dr. Shirley Tieda. Eric Golden will begin in the position on July 1 at a salary of \$54,500. Ms. Golden is a Supervisor of Special Education in Perth Amboy

and is a graduate of City College in New York. She has been employed as a learning disabilities teacher and consultant.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Ortenzio also changed the time of the Kumpf School promotion exercises from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. on June 23 after requests by parents in attendance at the meeting.

In other business the board: —Appointed the Five Year Education Plan and the District Objectives for the Clark Public School System. —Approved the calendar

for 12 month employees. —Approved Donna Sykes and Barbara Notchey as home instructors.

—Approved Matthew Barbosa, Barbara Helfman, Paul Friedberg and Frances Russo as substitute teachers.

—Accepted, with regret, the resignation of Robert Recho, a custodian at Valley Road School. —Reappointed Megan Fitzgerald, a non-tenured art teacher. —Directed Business Administrator H. Edward Flanagan to bid for roof repairs at the Valley Road School.

Clark Senior Center schedules speakers

Members of the Clark Senior Center have scheduled a guest speaker for their next meeting, today, 1 p.m. at the Brewer Senior Center, 450 Westfield Ave., Clark.

Karen Mondrone, Extension Home Economist of the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Service of Union County, will speak on "In-

terrelationships," addressing the causes underlying some of our social, psychological, and emotional problems or conflicts and how to best cope with them. She will encourage audience participation.

On Wednesday, May 25, Dr. Robert A. Newell, Optometrist, will host a complimentary lunch for senior citizens at the Eye Center of Clark, at which he will describe his free screening for sharpness of vision and eye pressure.

Regular meetings of the Clark Senior Center are held on the third Thursday of each month at 1 p.m., except during July and August. Refreshments are always served.

Membership is free and open to Clark residents 55 years and over. Call 388-3600, Ext. 20, or 381-3823, for information.

Spring concert tonight at ALJ

The students from the Vocal and Instrumental programs at the Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School in Clark will present their annual Spring Concert tonight (May 19), at 8 p.m. in the school's Hough Auditorium. All students, parents and residents are cordially invited to attend. Admission is free.

This concert will feature performances by the Johnson Regional Choral Music groups and by the school's Jazz and Concert Bands. The Johnson Crusader Band is coming off an outstanding showing recently at the Quebec Music Festival in Quebec, Canada, where the group earned two Superior ratings and three Excellent ratings from judges at this event.

Al Pendleton is the Director of the Vocal Music Program at Johnson Regional, and Richard Charwin is the school's Instrumental Music Director.



OUTSTANDING SENIOR... Angela DeNevo (right), a senior at the Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School in Clark, is congratulated by Johnson Regional Principal David Carl (left) upon her designation as the recipient of the Good Citizenship Medal and Certificate from the Elizabethtown Chapter No. 1 — New Jersey Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Angela was chosen for this honor based on her status as the outstanding senior American History student at the Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School. The Clark resident was formally presented with this award during a ceremony on Sunday, May 15, at the Abraham Clark House, 101 West Ninth Avenue, Roselle.

Graduation day set at ALJ

by Pat DiMaggio

Arthur L. Johnson High School in Clark will hold graduation ceremonies on Thursday, June 16, at 7 p.m. at Nolan Field, adjacent to the school. In case of rain, ceremonies will be held inside the school in the main gymnasium.

The Regional Board of Education, meeting last week, approved the sale of discount athletic tickets to be sold for the 1988-89 school year. The tickets, \$10 for adults and \$5 for students, are transferable and may be used for all home football, basketball and wrestling activities.

In other business the board: —Accepted the retirement resignation of Irving

Taylor, a member of the mathematics department, effective October 1.

—Accepted the resignation of Steve Cicconelli, an assistant lacrosse coach, effective April 19.

—Approved the following transfers: Catherine Hascher, Special Education, from Johnson to Jonathan Dayton; John Mattson, Science, from Governor Livingston to Johnson; Russell Clarke, Social Studies/Aviation, from Governor Livingston to Johnson; Inez Grosse, English, from Governor Livingston to Johnson; Patricia Waldvogel, Mathematics, from Jonathan Dayton to Johnson; Arthur Balaban, Business Education, from Johnson to David Brearley; Jacqueline Rezza, Home Economics,

from Johnson to Governor Livingston; Richard Shoults, TV Broadcasting, from Governor Livingston to Johnson.

—Approved the re-employment of Mildred MacLehose as a teacher of mathematics.

—Approved Edward Cumming as a student teacher in Physical Education.

—Adjusted the salary of Benjamin Quattbaum who completed ten consecutive days as a substitute teacher in the Special Education Department to \$105 per day.

—Adjusted the salary of Nancy Nelson who completed ten consecutive days as a substitute teacher in the Guidance Department to \$105 per day.

Grandparents Day at Valley Road

On Thursday, May 26, the PTA will sponsor Grandparents Day at the Valley Road School in Clark. All grandparents are invited to visit the school and partake of refreshments. Children without grandparents are urged to "adopt" a grandparent-type relative or other senior citizen for the day.

Register for summer programs

Registration will be held today, Thursday, May 19, for the Clark Recreation summer programs. Children in grades 1-5 can register at the Brewer School cafeteria 6-9 p.m., or call Rich Donofrio at 574-9452.

Correction

Due to a printing error in last week's story about the adoption of Clark's municipal budget, the amount of reductions suggested by Councilman Bernard Hayden was incorrectly stated. Mr. Hayden proposed additional cuts in the budget totaling \$80,000.



Airman Christine Procopio

Procopio graduates Air Force training

Airman Christine M. Procopio, daughter of Diane M. Procopio of Brookside Terrace, Clark, and Richard D. Procopio of Chatham, N.J., has graduated from Air Force basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

During the six weeks of training the airman studied the Air Force mission,

organization and customs and received special training in human relations.

In addition, airman who complete basic training earn credits toward an associate degree through the community college of the Air Force.

She is a 1986 graduate of Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School, Clark.

Board of Ed accepts compromise budget cuts

by Pat DiMaggio

Clark's Board of Education voted to accept the Municipal Council's reductions in their 1988-89 school year budget at a meeting held on May 10.

The board's \$7.5 million budget was defeated by voters on April 5. The budget then went before Clark's Municipal Council for cuts. The council approved \$145,000 in reductions, which were later rejected by the board.

On May 9, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Paul Ortenzio and Board Members Michael Dudek, James Pressman, Lori Kazanowski and Business Administrator H. Edward Flanagan met with council representatives and County Superintendent Dr. Vito Gagliardi to negotiate reductions. Board Members decided to accept a reduction of \$110,000 in the current expense portion of the budget which will reduce the tax burden by that amount.

"These cuts will not in any way hamper the educational process," said Ortenzio.

The budget is \$433,000 under cap, the allowed increase by the state, said Ortenzio. The capital outlay portion of the budget remains at \$70,600.



STUDENT AWARDED... Lynda Ariyan (left), a senior at the Arthur L. Johnson Regional High School in Clark, and Mrs. Maureen Toth (right), a teacher at Johnson Regional, proudly display the award which signifies Lynda's Second Place performance statewide in the Contemporary Living with Design competition during the recent Future Homemakers of America/Home Economics Related Occupations (FHA/HERO) State Leadership Conference held in Asbury Park. Given a design problem and a client situation, Lynda designed an addition to a house as well as the decor for the home, complete with samples, floor plans, furniture and accessory schedules and prices. She is a student in the Vocational Interior Decorating and Design course at Johnson Regional, which is taught by Mrs. Toth and Mr. Edward Birnes. Upon her graduation from high school, Lynda plans to study Interior Design at Mount Ida College in Newton Centre, Massachusetts.