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Hartnett, Williams picked to head UCAC Hartnett, citing past controversies, scandal: 'Those days are over'

Rahway City Administrator Joseph M. Hartnett and former 4th ward Councilman Harvey Williams were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, of the Union County Utilities Authority at its annual organization meeting on February 8.

In a special statement to the News-Record, Hartnett said that "the people of Rahway can be assured that Mr. Williams and I will represent their interests to the utmost." He stated that "this will be the most important year ever for the resource recovery project and it is fitting that the two Rahway representatives hold the two highest positions on the Authority to make sure Rahway's interests are protected."

Hartnett explained that the reason this year is so important is that the construction contracts for resource recovery will be finalized, all the public hearings will be held, building and environmental permits will be finalized, the financing will be issued, and actual construction will start.

"Mr. Williams and I will continue to do the best job possible for the citizens of Rahway," Mr. Hartnett said, adding "although this Authority has a good record of accomplishment in terms of getting its work done, we cannot ignore the fact that it was borne in controversy, and has, until now, lived under a cloud that has never enabled it to enjoy a full measure of public confidence and trust."

"Those days are over," Hartnett exclaimed. "I intend to see to it that the Union County Utilities Authority becomes a governmental entity that the public looks upon with pride, respect and confidence. To this end, I have three major announcements to make:

— "First, we are going to completely restructure the legal affairs of this Authority. The long, sad story of how a Freeholder abused his office to become General Counsel to this Authority is over. The outcries of the public and the newspapers of this County over this ethical scandal are over. The unprecedented action of the State Commission on Ethical Standards in issuing a public written release to counter claims of this individual that it had exonerated him will never have to be repeated.

"For the past several months, we have been working diligently on drafting a new structure for the Authority's legal affairs. That job is now done. I guarantee the people of this County will have a General Counsel appointment beyond reproach, in the public interest, and at substantially less cost to the public.

— "The second major announcement concerns the broadening of standards of integrity over everything the Authority does. I am creating an Ethics Committee for this Authority and charging it with two responsibilities: first, to draft a

code of ethics for the Authority; and, second, to work as a standing committee to provide answers to any ethical questions which arise concerning Authority business.

— "The third major announcement does not deal directly with ethics, but in a related way to the issue of earning the public trust. This Authority in the past has chosen to handle its relations with the outside world by utilizing a professional public relations firm. I have voted against this and I am recommending to my fellow Commissioners that we restructure the public affairs operations of this Authority also.

"Make no mistake that the public relations firm hired by the Authority has performed excellently what has been asked of them. But I do not believe we need to ask any public relations firm to be our representative in public affairs.

"I am calling on my fellow Commissioners to eliminate the \$75,000 — \$80,000 we spend per year on public relations contract services and establish a position at about half that cost, to be filled by someone of the utmost integrity and professional reputation to establish and maintain the relationships with local and County officials that are critically important to the

work of this Authority, and to handle our public affairs on a full time basis.

"I would be remiss if I did not say that these actions should not be taken as criticism of Authority staff. The staff of this Authority has done a good job. But in all candor it must be stated that many of them learned about government from working for Union County at a time when the County was not exactly renowned as a model of professionalism. Among the commissioners are many years of experience in the public arena. We have the political experience and savvy to make sure that the job gets

done right, and that the public interest always comes first. The number one issue in this County — indeed in this State — to the taxpayers is the solid waste crisis. That makes this Authority a very important public body, one whose business is of prime public concern.

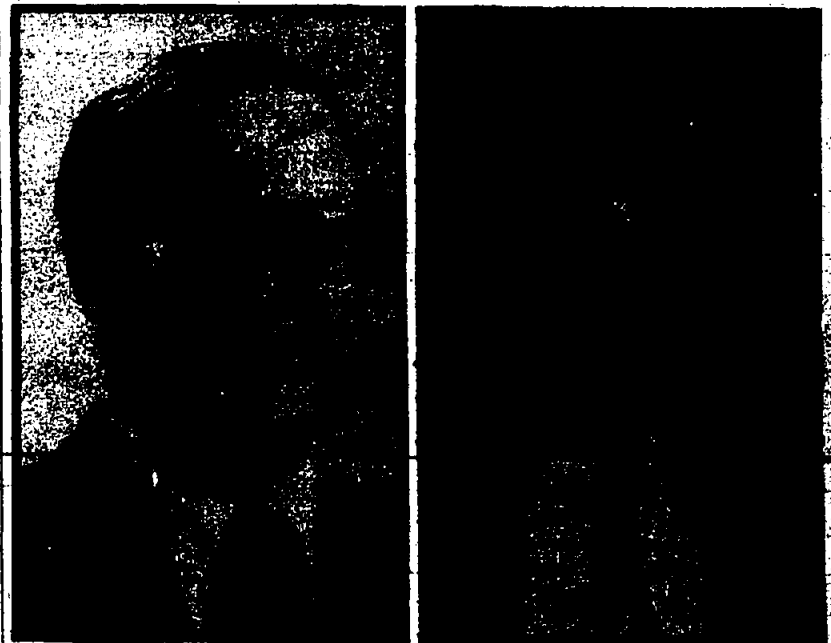
"The outstanding issues on resource recovery alone are a massive agenda: determining the final price for the construction contract, conducting the public hearing process, obtaining final permits, providing \$200 million in financing, and getting the shovel in the ground. We must, and we

will meet these challenges head on.

"That is enough work for anyone, but we have much more to do — landfill and recycling issues, plan amendments, transfer station administration, and major contracts, such as energy sales, to negotiate, and even more. We must and we will, keep focused on getting these jobs done for the public.

"As I look back on our major task, resource recovery, I note there are only three officials left who have been with it from the beginning — Joe Kazar, mayor Dan Martin of Rahway, and myself. I ask my fellow Commissioners to give us your help, your support, your cooperation, and your dedication to getting this job finished.

"I also thank my fellow Commissioners for their expression of confidence. I shall do everything in my power to be a good Chairman, a fair Chairman, and one who gives each Com-



Joseph M. Hartnett

Harvey Williams

missioner every consideration and courtesy possible to enable you to realize your fullest potential in

fulfilling your sworn duty. "Finally, I would like to quote Thomas Jefferson's famous statement of two

centuries ago, 'The whole art of government consists of being honest.' Let this be our guiding principle."

Study states: Recycle ... Don't incinerate! Institute study lists reasons

by Pat DiMaggio
A study just released states that the answer to the solid waste crisis should be recycling, not incineration, proposed with the construction of a resource recovery facility on Route 1 in Rahway.

A study compiled by the Institute for Local Self Reliance was instituted by Rahway's Citizen Action Organization and was released at a press conference held at the J.F.K. Community Center on Hazelwood Avenue last Thursday. The Institute is a non-profit scientific research organization formed 15 years ago, according to Neil Seldman, Director of Waste Utilization for the Institute.

The Institute has completed a report studying the economic and environmental impact of planned garbage incineration. The study was compiled by the Institute's scientists, engineers and solid waste analysts and was financed by a grant from the Rockefeller-Dodge Foundation, Morristown, said Seldman.

The study reported on two basic categories of conclusion, said Seldman, economic and environmental. "The most important economic conclusion from this analysis is that incineration and recycling cost about the same amount of money," noted Seldman.

The Institute concludes that recycling should be adopted for the following five reasons:

1. Recycling will reduce the amount of ash residue going to a landfill site;
2. Recycling has a longer term advantage because landfill costs will rise, recycling fades collection costs down the road as new equipment is gradually integrated;
3. Recycling reduces pollution immediately;
4. Recycling reduces our national need for raw materials and lowers long term costs for materials;
5. Recycling is more labor intensive, more jobs will be created in the Rahway/Union County area and a larger percentage of the money invested will stay in the local economy.

"Based on our review of the Environmental Impact Statement issued by the county, we feel there was not enough scientific rigor, and, as a result, mistakes in methodology and calculations were made," said Seldman explaining the environmental conclusions reached by the Institute. "We think the Environmental Impact

Statement is inadequate and underestimates the amount of pollution that will be emitted into the air through ash residue."

Evaluations will be presented to the state Department of Environmental Protection during hearings for the resource recovery facility to be held in March, according to Seldman.

"There is a minority community here," noted Seldman. "They are planning to put the plant in the middle of the community, next to the J.F.K. Center. The citizens have not been told of the impact and were not told of any possible alternatives to the plant."

Board of Ed candidates up for vote

by Pat DiMaggio
Voters will be asked to choose from among six candidates running for three, three-year positions on Rahway's Board of Education when they go to the polls for the schools election on April 4.

Also available is one unexpired, one year term, due to the resignation of former Board Member Rick Proctor late last year. Former Board Member Ronald Matusaitis was appointed to fill the seat until the election process selects a candidate to continue the one year left in the term. Eugene Moran has announced his candidacy for this seat and he will run unopposed.

Those seeking the three, three-year positions include incumbent Robert Munsey, Clarence Herbert, Mario Kurylak, John C. Ludington II, incumbent Lori Kennedy

and incumbent Peter Kowal. Munsey, Kennedy and Kowal are running for a 2nd term on the board, which governs policy in Rahway's schools.

Rahway Bd of Ed Special Meeting

Special Meetings of the Rahway Board of Education will be held at 7 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 27, and Tuesday, Feb. 28, in the Louis R. Rizzo Board Meeting Room in the Intermediate School.

The purpose of each meeting is as follows: Private Meeting and possible public action at the Special Meeting on student discipline matter.

Proposed Ed budget calls for \$2M hike Board of Ed adopts tentative \$21.2M budget 18 current and proposed positions excluded

by Pat DiMaggio
Rahway's Board of Education adopted a tentative 1989-90 gross school budget totaling \$21.2 million at a special meeting held Monday night.

The spending plan includes \$20,060,280 in current expense, \$772,000 for capital outlay and a debt service of \$436,511 for a total gross budget of \$21,268,791.

The amount to be raised by taxes includes \$15,339,888 in current expense, \$737,530 for capital outlay and \$345,222 for debt service for a total of \$16,422,640.

The tentative budget adopted by the board Monday night differs from the budget recommended by administrators in the district

in that it does not include 18 current and proposed positions, according to Robert Munsey, Chair of the Finance Committee.

Eliminated from the budget were the following current positions: one position each at Grover Cleveland, Roosevelt and Madison Schools and one at the High School, one special studies teacher at the Intermediate School, one elementary pre-school position, one kindergarten position, one speech teacher, one perceptually-impaired teacher and one elementary physical education position.

Proposed positions not included in the budget are one new librarian, three new school aides, mainten-

ance person at the High School, one teacher and one aide for emotionally disturbed classes, one resource room teacher.

The proposed 1989-90 budget shows an increase of more than \$2 million over last year's budget.

"The issue we face is Governor Kean's recommendation not to fully fund education," said Business Administrator/Board Secretary Anthony Rocco, Jr. "By cutting state aid, he has imposed a state property tax. If he doesn't give us the money, we will have to get it through our property taxes."

Rocco said the full funding difference to Rahway totals \$1.4 million. "Rah-

way is one of the hardest hit districts in the state in reference to state aid," noted Rocco.

One of the options discussed by the board to reduce the budget included the possibility of eliminating courtesy busing. Rahway could save \$70,000 per year by discontinuing their policy of offering courtesy busing to students who live less than two miles from school. State law requires busing students in grades K-8 who live more than two miles from the school and busing students in grades 9-12 who live more than 2½ miles from the school. Anything less is considered courtesy busing, said Rocco.

The tentative budget was approved on a vote of seven in favor, with Board Members Raymond Grimes and Roy Valentine opposed.

"Tonight our objective is to pass a budget by dollar amount," said Munsey. "But the finance committee has a lot more work to do."

"Our record on passing budgets is very bad," said Board Member Lori Kennedy. "We are trying to make this as attractive as possible to all the voters. This is a very challenging and difficult year. If the budget is defeated, it goes to the City Council and we have no idea where they will cut. I strongly suggest we get as many people as possible to support the budget."

"We don't want to see any cuts," said Board Member John C. Ludington. "The public attitude is to generate additional income." He added:

Freeholder probe reaps 100G's for county

Freeholder Neil M. Cohen (D-Union) announced recently that as a result of his investigation into the failure of the Board of Social Services to invest nearly \$1.3 million on account each month, the County of Union will earn in excess of \$100,000 in interest on these funds.

In early 1988, Cohen, as a Member of the Fiscal Affairs Committee, determined that the then autonomous Board of Social Services had seven bank accounts with an average monthly balance totalling \$1.3 million, and that the funds were not being invested in order to gain interest.

Freeholder Cohen directed officials to contact all financial institutions in

Union County, and to immediately deposit the funds in interest-bearing accounts. Cohen said "over the 12-month period following my inquiries, the County will earn in excess of \$100,000 on these funds." This money will now be available to support important programs without the necessity of raising additional revenue, Cohen noted.

This investigation was "my proudest accomplishment in 1988 since it resulted in an actual realization of additional county revenue without cost to the taxpayers." It shows that "with a little hard work, and a careful review process of all aspects of County government, taxpayers' money can

be saved, and better utilized."

Cohen stated that it was a sad commentary that millions of county, state and federal dollars each month had not gained interest for county government for the past 20 years, but the financial future is brighter with the new investment mechanisms now being used to bring \$100,000 into the county treasury.

"Although County government is not intended to be a profit-oriented organization, it is prudent to look at any and all means to generate additional income," he added.

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LYING DOWN ON THE JOB ... (Seated l. to r.) William Anderson, Jane Dowling and Kathie Koste were 3 of 77 concerned Rahway Hospital employees who recently took part in the hospital's successful bi-annual blood drive. Standing center to monitor their progress is Toni Custara-Santorelli, R.N., unit manager for the American National Red Cross—N.J. Blood Services.