

RAHWAY News Record

New Jersey's Oldest Weekly Newspaper—Established 1822

VOL. 170 NO. 7

RAHWAY, N.J., THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1992

USPS 454-160

25 CENTS

Kennedy Overrules Council

Suit Withdrawal Preserves UCUA Talks

by Pat DiMaggio
A renegotiated host community agreement was rejected by Rahway's Municipal Council because it was tied to a waiver to withdraw a challenge to the Union County Utilities Authority.

At its regular meeting held on Monday night, the council rejected the

amended agreement negotiated by Mayor Jim Kennedy. Several council members accused the authority of trying to "blackmail" the City and said they would not give up their right to challenge the authority over a recent change in its by-laws.

However, Kennedy superceded the council's opinion by enacting an executive

order to withdraw the challenge. In an "amicable" resolution, the authority has agreed to give the City more time to study the amended agreement.

The City's challenge to the authority's change in its by-laws, which allows the chairman to succeed himself, was to be heard Tuesday before Superior Court Judge Edward Beglin. A nine-page amended host community agreement was faxed to the City on Monday afternoon. The agreement included increased monetary benefits to the City for the incinerator but also included a provision that Rahway withdraw its challenge to the authority's change in its by-laws.

After Monday night's meeting, however, Kennedy instructed the City's law department to withdraw the challenge. In return, the authority agreed to leave the settlement "on the table" for 30 days, according to City Attorney Louis Rainone. "The mayor enacted an executive order to take action on withdrawing the motion to challenge," said Rainone. "The matter was then resolved amicably between the parties in a telephone conversation."

The renegotiated host community agreement included \$800,000 a year during the construction

phase of the incinerator, an additional \$199,000 a year for the loss of seven ratables, and \$5 a ton for garbage exceeding the 85 percent capacity of the facility.

In the original host community agreement, Rahway would have received a one-time payment of \$650,000 and no monies for lost ratables. Monies from the \$800,000 would be dispersed to community organizations, including the Second Baptist Church Scholarship Fund, the First Aid Squad, the NAACP, the JFK Center, Capobianca Plaza family housing units, Rahway Day Care Center, the Union

County Arts Center, Rahway Youth Soccer, CRYC and the YMCA, said Kennedy.

Kennedy called the original host community agreement signed in 1985 an "albatross for this administration." He noted that terms of the agreement were not open for negotiation, but the loss of seven ratables in the Route 17/Lawrence Street area presented a "window of opportunity." "I will continue to negotiate up to the last minute," said the mayor. "But if the council votes 'no' (on the amended agreement), the authority can keep us bound to the

original agreement. And this will result in a loss of funds for many organizations. There won't be further negotiations on the part of the authority. We can receive nothing, or we can receive a better deal."

"This is one of the biggest decisions in the history of the City," said Councilman Alex Shipley before the vote was taken. "We just received this amended agreement and had 20 minutes to look at it. Who knows what it's about? And we're expected to vote on it?"

Councilwoman Nancy Saliga said the City was at a "crossroads" and had to

make a difficult decision. "We can proceed with the lawsuit at a cost in time and money, or we can drop the suit and gain hundreds of thousands of dollars in host community fees," she noted. "I cannot put the taxpayers at risk of losing this money."

Councilwoman Katherine Fulcomer called the amended agreement an attempt at "blackmail" and said she was suspicious of the authority's timing. "The authority seems desperate," she noted. "I don't like making a decision with a gun to my head."

"This issue has been immersed in racism," said Councilman James Jones Jr. "Racism has been the determining factor from the beginning, and I cannot condone that in any form."

Council President Michael Esposito questioned whether the agreement was the "best offer" the City would get. "I think the authority can do better," he

noted. "I am looking forward to meeting with them and working together for an amendment that will be beneficial to both the authority and the City."

Acceptance of the amended host community agreement would end a year of stress in Rahway with council members, Councilmen Jones, Shipley, Fulcomer, Wasek and Esposito opposed, Councilman Chester Holmes, who also was the authority's Rahway representative, abstained from voting.

Tuesday's withdrawal of the challenge will allow Councilman Angelo Bonanno to continue his advocacy of the authority's agreement. The council now will have additional 30 days to study the amended agreement. Kennedy also withdrew his motion to continue negotiations for a renegotiated host community agreement.

Freeholder Seeks 4.5% Spending Cap

Freeholder Mario Paparozzi, a member of the Union County Fiscal Affairs Committee, which is responsible for making recommendations regarding the county budget, said that he will be lobbying state legislators to introduce a bill imposing a 4.5% cap on the budgets of non-code county departments.

Non-code departments are those departments which

are constitutionally mandated such as the courts, Prosecutor's Office, Sheriff's Department, County Registration, etc.

"There is a fundamental problem in the way the constitutional offices are funded," Paparozzi said. "The spending cap of 4.5% which is imposed on the code departments of the county cannot be applied to these constitutional offices."

If the constitutional office request budgets that the county cannot afford, we are placed in a position of having to drastically cut the budget of the code departments, which also provide vital services to county residents, or to raise taxes.

Paparozzi maintained that the current state of affairs is not an equitable one: "In these tough fiscal times, we should expect all the departments of county government to live within 4.5%."

Group Will Ask For Resignation

The Concerned Citizens of Union County are planning to hold a demonstration today at the Union County Administration Building, Elizabeth, at 7 p.m.

They also will attend the subsequent Board of Freeholders meeting to demand the resignation of the entire Union County Utilities Authority (UCUA).

"In the recent past it has become clear that the UCUA is completely out of control," said Concerned Citizen Vice Chairman Bob Carson. "They arranged a secret groundhreaking which was an insult to all the citizens of Union County. The Chairman, Angelo Bonanno, has demonstrated his disdain for the public by answering reasonable questions with 'I have no obligation to respond.' Dominick Venditti, a UCUA member, told a Concerned Citizen, 'I'm tired of looking at your face.' They have the incredible gall to consider appointing James Welsh as Executive Director immediately after the voters of Union County threw him out of office. After missing many deadlines, their recycling plan has not even begun to get off the ground. And as county after county in New Jersey backs away from incineration, they still cannot tell us what a non-burn plan would cost."

Carson said that the history of the UCUA's involvement in the Rahway resource recovery project "is a dismal one. At every point, they have demonstrated that they have no idea what 'public service' means or how to shoulder the responsibilities entailed in serving the citizens of Union County. They have consistently betrayed the public trust."

"For all these reasons, the Concerned Citizens of Union County will demand their immediate and collective resignation," he concluded.

Currently, if the county does not provide a constitutional officer with the funds that he/she has requested, the constitutional officer may take the county to court in order to be awarded additional funds. If the court does award the additional funds — which has, historically been the case in the past — the county "is placed again in an untenable position," he said. Additionally, going to court further exacerbates the county's fiscal problems due to the cost of litigation.

Paparozzi stated that during the last legislative session, Assemblyman McEnroe introduced a spending cap bill, but the bill died during the last legislative session. "What is needed now is reintroduction of a similar bill," Paparozzi said.

Paparozzi stated that he will aggressively seek Senate and Assembly sponsorship of a spending cap bill, and he intends to make every effort to have spending cap legislation fast-tracked in order to provide relief for county residents.

"Unless the state pays for state-mandated services or spending cap legislation is enacted into law, the judiciary is placed into a position of affecting tax levies," Paparozzi said.

Whenever tax levies are determined by anyone other than elected legislators, "the citizens are put into a position of having taxation without representation," he said.

NJ Transit Names Rahway Resident

Armando Arrastia, 31, of Rahway has been named by NJ Transit as its Director of Public Information, the agency has announced.

In his new position, Arrastia will be responsible for the dissemination of information to the public through the news media. He will also act as the agency's chief spokesperson and liaison to the news media.

Formerly a spokesperson for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, Arrastia can be reached at (201) 491-7078 or 7081.

To Bond Or Not To Bond

by Pat DiMaggio
Municipal council members continued to discuss the merits of \$7 million in bonds to be used to finance the City's expenditures from Jan. 1 to June 30. At its regular meeting held on Monday night, the council voted to approve a resolution determining the form of \$7.2 million in Fiscal Year Adjustment Bonds and the sale of the bonds to E.A. Moos and Company.

In May, the council adopted a \$14.3 million transitional year budget to fund expenditures from Jan. 1 to June 30, with \$7.2 million to be raised through the sale of bonds.

In September, the City then adopted a \$23 million fiscal year budget to bring its spending plan in line with the state. The fiscal year budget will run from July 1, 1992 to June 30, 1993.

In the past, the City used tax anticipation notes to finance expenditures until monies were received from the state. By changing over to a fiscal year budget, Rahway will not have to borrow

money to meet expenses, said Business Administrator Peter Pellissier.

Last year, Rahway lost \$1 million in state aid because of its calendar year budget. "We've saved money by changing over to a fiscal year budget," said Pellissier. "And it was a way to start the fiscal stability this City needed."

Two council members vehemently disagreed. "This is a lot of money just to get \$1 million," said Councilman William Wasek. "We are in financial trouble. We will end up paying \$50 million to borrow \$7 million."

"This might seem painless right now, but we will all suffer later on," said Councilwoman Katherine Fulcomer.

James Fulcomer, Midwood Drive, spoke to the council before the vote was taken and urged them to defeat the resolution determining the form of the sale of the bonds. "This bond ordinance is larger than the

one for City Hall," he noted. "And we have nothing to show for it. You will be spending much more money than you have to. It was wrong last year, and it's wrong this year."

Council President Michael Esposito, who opposed the bonds in the past, said failure to approve a bond sale would result in increased taxes. "I am not thrilled that Rahway has to purchase bonds," said Esposito. "But if we don't, we will suffer an enormous tax increase."

The council finally approved the resolution on a vote of six in favor, with Wasek and Fulcomer opposed and Councilman Chester Holmes absent.

In other business, the council appointed Brian O'Donnell to the Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority and Councilwoman Nancy Saliga to the Planning Board.

Environmental quality and revitalizing the economy are two of the most important issues to New Jersey and its citizens, and it is for these reasons that Gov. Jim Florio and Commerce Commissioner Barbara McCannell were scheduled to join Merck & Co. Inc. Chairman and CEO P. Roy Vagelos, M.D., today to break ground for construction of a new technologically advanced pilot plant at Merck's facilities in Rahway.

The new facility is of great importance to Merck; to Rahway and to New Jersey because pilot plants such as this one are a critical link between research and manufacturing. These facilities help to develop the safest, most cost-effective, environmentally sound methods to discover, develop and test new medicines.

This new facility has been designed to meet Merck's drug development needs well into the 21st Century, and represents a substantial investment in our

quarters site at the beginning of Merck's second century," said John M. Bloomfield, Manager of Public Affairs.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

Police said they were summoned to the bar on a report of a man with a gun, and recovered a handgun at the scene where the suspect's vehicle was parked.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

Police Arrest Man with Gun

Police arrested a 33-year-old Edison man on Feb. 4 on charges of aggravated assault and unlawful possession of a weapon at Scorpio's Lounge, Irving Street.

The alleged incident occurred at 2:04 p.m., according to police, who arrested Frank S. Prassnal. Bail was set at \$55,000.

Police said they were summoned to the bar on a report of a man with a gun, and recovered a handgun at the scene where the suspect's vehicle was parked.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

King Bust Is Defaced

The recently dedicated bust of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has been defaced with white spray paint, and police are seeking clues to determine who is responsible.

Police were notified about 7:50 a.m. last Friday that the likeness of the slain civil rights leader had been spray-painted. The monument is located in the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Park behind Rahway's train station, bordered by Broad, Cherry and Campbell Streets, which was dedicated on Jan. 20, the legal observance of Dr. King's birthday.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

NOTE: The 24 hour
NARCOTIC INFORMATION HOTLINE
for Rahway is 388-1553

RAHWAY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES



LIBRARY BOARD REORGANIZES... At its recent Reorganization meeting, Rahway Library Board of Trustees elected Willard Jacobs President, second from left; William Gladek Vice President, far left; Mary Finelli Treasurer, second from right, and Helen Jenkins Secretary far right.



LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS APPOINTED BY MAYOR... Mayor Jim Kennedy has appointed Mary Louise Collier, center, to the Library Board of Trustees term ending Dec. 31, 1995; Helen Jenkins, right, for the term ending Dec. 31, 1992, and Dr. Sandra Brown Flahinger, left, for the term ending Dec. 31, 1993.

Groundbreaking Set For March

Environmental quality and revitalizing the economy are two of the most important issues to New Jersey and its citizens, and it is for these reasons that Gov. Jim Florio and Commerce Commissioner Barbara McCannell were scheduled to join Merck & Co. Inc. Chairman and CEO P. Roy Vagelos, M.D., today to break ground for construction of a new technologically advanced pilot plant at Merck's facilities in Rahway.

The new facility is of great importance to Merck; to Rahway and to New Jersey because pilot plants such as this one are a critical link between research and manufacturing. These facilities help to develop the safest, most cost-effective, environmentally sound methods to discover, develop and test new medicines.

This new facility has been designed to meet Merck's drug development needs well into the 21st Century, and represents a substantial investment in our

quarters site at the beginning of Merck's second century," said John M. Bloomfield, Manager of Public Affairs.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

Police said they were summoned to the bar on a report of a man with a gun, and recovered a handgun at the scene where the suspect's vehicle was parked.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

Police said they were summoned to the bar on a report of a man with a gun, and recovered a handgun at the scene where the suspect's vehicle was parked.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

Police said they were summoned to the bar on a report of a man with a gun, and recovered a handgun at the scene where the suspect's vehicle was parked.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.

Anyone with further information about this incident is asked to call Det. Stuart Bachman at 388-5600, Ext. 447, or the Rahway Police TIPS Line, 388-1553.

Police said they were summoned to the bar on a report of a man with a gun, and recovered a handgun at the scene where the suspect's vehicle was parked.

No injuries were sustained by anyone involved, police said.