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Tom Cusimano Supports Cooperative Effort to Fix Town's Parks and Fields

WESTFIELD—Thomas Cusimano, Republican Candidate for the Fourth Ward Council seat on the Westfield Town Council, has announced that he supports a cooperative effort between the Westfield Recreation Commission, Westfield Public Works Department and private sports associations for a comprehensive parks and fields maintenance program.

"The youth of our town are indeed fortunate to have as many sports and recreational opportunities as they do. Many adult volunteers devote thousands of hours to provide quality technical instruction as well as teaching the values of teamwork and sportsmanship.

"The outstanding performances at the high school sports level is the result of the outstanding efforts of organizations such as the Westfield Soccer, Baseball, Softball, Basketball, Lacrosse Associations and other clubs," said Mr. Cusimano.

"As a coach myself for the past 12 years, I have witnessed a significant improvement in the quality of our

fields and facilities. The Memorial Park pool has dramatically improved both from an operational as well as a facilities standpoint.

"A long-range plan has been developed by the Recreation Commission to make further upgrades to the pool area as well as the entire park complex. These improvements will enhance the recreational opportunities and enjoyment for all residents of the town," the candidate added.

"I believe that Houlihan Field is one of the premier soccer fields in Union County due to the cooperation between the Westfield Soccer Association and the Westfield Department of Public Works. Also, due in large part to the generosity of a private donor, Gumbert Field was re-grassed and re-seeded.

"It is a beautiful baseball park and should be a source of pride to the Westfield Baseball League. These are just two examples of how the private sector and public sector can work together for the benefit of our

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LETS MAINTAIN OUR PARKS...Tom Cusimano, a member of the Westfield Recreation Commission and Republican candidate for Fourth Ward Councilman, standing on Houlihan Field, said he supports a cooperative effort for a park and field maintenance program.



MEETING THE VOTERS...Fanwood Borough Councilwoman Karen Schurtz, left, was accompanied by her daughter, Joanne, when she stopped to talk about local issues with the Marks family on MacLennan Place last weekend. Councilwoman Schurtz and her Democratic running mate, Kathy Mitchell, have been walking door-to-door in their campaign to win two seats on the Fanwood Borough Council in the Tuesday, November 3 election.

Mr. Goldman Says Local Property Tax 'Challenge' Should Be Council Priority

WESTFIELD - Westfield Democratic Fourth Ward Councilman Lawrence A. Goldman has announced that meeting the local property tax challenge which is being offered from Trenton should be a priority of the Town Council in the



Lawrence A. Goldman

forthcoming years.

Mr. Goldman, who is seeking reelection to a second two-year term, observed that "one of the most trite pledges that a candidate for local office can make is that he or she will work to maintain stable property taxes."

"No local government official takes any pleasure in voting to increase taxes. The real question is whether elected officials have the courage to make the hard decisions that tax stability without gimmicks requires," said Councilman Goldman.

He pointed to recommendations recently released by a panel appointed by Governor Christine Todd Whitman to examine local property tax issues as warranting careful consideration.

"In simple terms, the panel stated that municipalities should be offered state aid incentives to implement shared municipal services with their neighboring towns.

"The underlying message is that every municipality does not need to provide on its own the complete range of services traditionally provided by local government, and that decisions to continue home rule come with a cost," Councilman Goldman stated.

He pointed to the fact that personnel costs comprise one-half of the expense side of operating the municipal government and that each department of town government has its own administrative hierarchy.

Mr. Goldman stated that Westfield should become active in discussions with representatives of neighboring towns about possible combinations of services. He cited Westfield's Health Department, which also acts for several other towns in Union County under contract. Mr. Goldman described this system as an "example of a successful inter-local arrangement."

The other towns pay Westfield in lieu of maintaining their own health departments.

"Trenton has not been kind to municipal governments in recent years. Governors (James J.) Florio and Whitman both devised gimmicks to give the appearance of property tax relief. In reality, real state aid to Westfield has declined dramatically.

"The residents of Westfield have very legitimate complaints about some municipal services which could be improved, yet in my two years on the Town Council I have not found a majority of the councilpersons willing to tackle the hard issue of personnel costs and spending priorities," Mr. Goldman added.

"In a second term, I would hope to increase the dialogue on this issue," he concluded.

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Mr. Greco Calls for Creation Of Parks, Fields Main. Dept.

WESTFIELD - Norman N. Greco, independent Mayoral Candidate of Westfield, has announced his specific plan to revitalize town parks and fields.

The candidate said it is his intention to create a formal Parks and Fields Maintenance Department under the auspices of the Westfield Recreation Commission. Mr. Greco said this will be accomplished through the realignment of the current workforce within the Public Works Department.

Mr. Greco stated that, "Our 200 plus acres of public parks and fields have always been a source of tremendous pride."

Referring to the latest Recreation Commission park maintenance Proposal Mr. Greco stated, "There has been little or no money invested toward the upkeep of our parks and fields despite repeated attempts through capital submissions by the Recreation Commission. As a result, many facilities now require major capital investments rather than the cosmetic repairs which could have been performed earlier."

The new Department, he said, would coordinate a maintenance schedule for parks and fields with the Recreation Commission, thereby ensuring that the fields are appropriately prepared for scheduled games and events. Mr. Greco said he believes that "we can always improve upon areas of our town government."

Mr. Greco said he feels that the Department of Public Works has done a "commendable" job under the current organizational structure. However, the candidate explained, the department's current responsibilities, snow plowing, road repair, leaf collection, and emergencies, tend to take focus away from our parks and fields.

Mr. Greco said this new Parks and Fields Maintenance Department will focus directly on these two specific areas. Furthermore, Mr. Greco stated that, "The condition of our parks and fields leave a lasting impression upon



Norman N. Greco

visiting sports teams and out of town visitors. Properly maintaining Westfield's parks and fields is another example of common sense, business-like government. Property values are enhanced when parks and fields are correctly maintained."

"Our community continues to grow with more and more young families becoming residents in town," the candidate added.

Mr. Greco cited that, "In order to be proactive regarding this specific area of government, the Recreation Commission will complete a study regarding the viability of locations for future park and field expansion. By addressing these needs today, we will be acting progressively versus our current reactionary management process. If elected, I will bring a visionary, common sense approach to all town government."

Noreen Lund Discusses Issue Of Public Safety on the Stump

WESTFIELD - Noreen Lund, the Republican candidate for the Third Ward Town Council seat on the Westfield Town Council, recently walked local neighborhoods to discuss with residents their concerns regarding public safety.

"Westfield is such a wonderful place to live and raise a family, but in order to maintain our quality of life, especially here in the Third Ward, we have to pay attention to the details of our community. Especially when we are talking about safety," Ms. Lund said.

The candidate pointed to the positive reaction that she received from her proposal to fence in the play area at Sycamore Field, if not the entire

field, as a catalyst to a number of concerns of our residents.

"As I have been going door-to-door, people have been sharing with me their concerns for our neighborhoods. I think these are issues that the Town Council must address," Ms. Lund stated.

She said the intersection of Central Avenue and Sycamore Street and Clifton Street was a concern to several people who want to see traffic lines painted on the street to help orient traffic that is turning left from the motorists who are going straight.

"I recognize that Central Avenue is a county road, but in the interest of safety, this issue should be pursued by

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Scotch Plains Democrats Call For An Elected Mayor System

SCOTCH PLAINS - "Efficiency of government and sorely needed, good long range planning would be better served with an elected mayor for Scotch Plains," stated Franklin P. Donatelli, Tarquin Jay Bromley, and Geri Morgan Samuel, Democratic candidates for Township Council.

"The threesome squared off against their opponents this week asserting that 'there must be greater accountability and responsiveness from the all-Republican Township Council. An elected mayor would go a long way in achieving these goals," the candidates stated in their weekly press release.

Lifelong resident Franklin P. Donatelli stated, "It's no wonder that the same problems keep cropping up in Scotch Plains year after year.

"Not much will ever get done with a government presided over by a series of mayors, each of whom serves for a term of just 365 days. Under our

present township charter, the mayor is elected by a majority of the five members of the council.

"Under this system, the all Republican council has chosen to pass the title of mayor from member to member to enhance each of their resumes rather than acting in the long term, best interests of the citizens of the township.

"When one considers the list of problems confronting our community that should have been solved years ago, one can't help but fault the lack of positive leadership brought about by the revolving, 365-day term given to the mayor.

"The taxpayers of Scotch Plains deserve a government with leadership," said Mr. Donatelli.

Mr. Bromley added, "Under the present system of having political considerations dictate who should be mayor for the year, the interests of the

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TOWN BANK
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