

## Walsh, Banks Join Council; Huegel Named Borough Attorney

By **KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL**  
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

FANWOOD—On a beautiful New Year's Day, in front of a packed house, Fanwood held its annual reorganization meeting.

The meeting began with the swearing in of three council members. Newly elected Patricia Walsh was sworn in for a three-year term as was newly appointed councilman, Jeffrey Banks. Councilwoman Walsh has lived in the borough for more than 20 years, raising four children through the Scotch Plains-Fanwood School system while Councilman Banks has lived in the borough for 15 years.

Councilwoman Erin McElroy-

Barker was also sworn in as she was re-elected to serve the borough council for another three-year term. She has also been appointed by Mayor Colleen Mahr as the council liaison to the board of education.

Councilman Robert Huegel had to vacate his position as councilman so he could accept the position as the newly appointed borough attorney.

Councilman Tom Kranz was selected as council president.

Councilwoman Katherine Mitchell was appointed by the council to represent the borough on the Union County Revenue Sharing Committee; Councilman Anthony Carter was appointed as the

council's representative to the borough's planning board for a one-year term.

In addition, Timothy Green, Jr. was appointed as a new police officer for the borough.

Jack Molenaar, who recently stepped down as a nine-year council member, was appointed by the mayor to represent the borough for the Union County Transportation Advisory Committee and to the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition.

In all, there were over 30 volunteer positions filled by Fanwood residents. Mayor Mahr stated, "We are so lucky to have such a well-rounded, diverse group of residents. Fanwood continues to be a really great community and for such a small community we do so much."

In other business, Fanwood recently had its first agenda setting and special meeting for the New Year on Monday.

During the special meeting, a resolution was passed to award a contract to Slack Environmental Services to bring gasoline and diesel fuel tanks, currently stored underground at the borough's Department of Public Works building, to above-ground storage containers at the same location.

Recently, in December, the seal on the underground containers was said to have a break in it and therefore failed a New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) inspection. It was found to be "un-fixable" by Slack Environmental. It was also said that the tanks were over 20 years old. The environmental company is charging a \$2,000-a-month fee to rent the new above-ground containers.

According to DEP regulations, fuel cannot sit in underground tanks without a proper seal, even though no fuel was reported as leaking.

The borough was given a one-month grace period to remove the tanks.

Councilman Carter voted against the resolution, stating that he felt the monthly rental fee was too high and wanted to look into other options.

Other council members stated that they voted yes because there was a time limit of having to comply by Sunday, January 27, or else chance being given a DEP summons.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 22, at 7 p.m., at Fanwood Borough Hall.

## Doyle and Strauss to Lead Planning Bd. During Busy '19

By **FRED T. ROSSI**  
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS—The planning board on Monday chose a new chairman and vice-chairman as it embarked on what promises to be a busy year as downtown redevelopment and the building of new affordable-housing units move forward.

Joseph Doyle was chosen to serve as chairman, a post he has held several times over the course of his many years on the board. In nominating Mr. Doyle, Jeffrey Strauss, who was chosen to serve as vice-chairman, said Mr. Doyle had "more experience than all of us put together — except for [long-time township zoning officer] Bob LaCosta — when it comes to planning."

Mr. Doyle, who has more than 40 years of planning board experience, first in Belleville and then in Scotch Plains, called the present board "very experienced and very knowledgeable," adding that its membership reflected "the ideals of the community."

As it was last year, the planning board will be very involved in the downtown redevelopment efforts that have gotten underway. While township officials begin to evaluate pro-



READY FOR BUSINESS...The 2019 Scotch Plains Township Council sits at the dais for the first time at the New Year's Day reorganization meeting. Pictured, from left to right, are: Councilwoman Elizabeth Stampler, Deputy Mayor Joshua Losardo, Mayor Al Smith, Councilman Ted Spera and Councilman Roshan White.

## Palmieri-Moued Begins As Freeholder; Kowalski Named Chair

By **PAUL J. PEYTON**  
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

COUNTY — Kimberly Palmieri-Moued of Westfield and Andrea Staten of Roselle were sworn in on Sunday as the newest Union County freeholders, and Alexander Mirabella began his eighth consecutive term on the nine-member board, at the county's reorganization meeting at the Union County Courthouse in Elizabeth. Freeholder Rebecca Williams of Plainfield began a one-year unexpired term after being appointed to fill a vacancy left when Linda Carter resigned upon her elevation to the State Assembly seat of the late Assemblyman Jerry Green.

Also on Sunday, Bette Jane Kowalski of Cranford was selected as chairwoman for 2019 with Mr. Mirabella named vice-chairman.

With the swearing in of Freeholders Moued and Staten, Union County Democratic Chairman Nick Scutari (D-22nd, Linden) noted that for the first time in Union County history women will hold a majority — five of the nine seats — on the freeholder board. County Clerk Joanne Rajoppi

added that this year marks the 99th anniversary of the 19th amendment to the United States Constitution giving women the right to vote.

Freeholder Moued said it was "truly humbling" to be serving as a county freeholder, the first Westfield resident on the board since 2004. She said she hopes her service "will inspire those around me," including her four sons as well as her nieces. She noted that she became interested in politics when she volunteered on the mayoral campaign of Christian Bollwage at the age of 8 in 1992 while growing up in Elizabeth. She was sworn in by Mayor Bollwage.

She said as a freeholder that she wants to be an advocate for everyone from youth to seniors.

Meanwhile, Freeholder Staten said, "I am excited to join such a dynamic freeholder board."

In noting the new women majority on the board, she said, "We're not asking you to leave the room, just to give us a seat at the table."

She referenced the new freeholder women majority as "the fabulous five."

Freeholder Chairwoman Kowalski announced her initiatives for 2019. Her first is Union County Mobility, which will include a ride-share grant

pilot program "with one of our municipal partners."

"Ride sharing reduces traffic, frees up parking, and gets people directly to their jobs, and mass transit," she said, noting that she hopes the program will "spur the creation of new ride-share programs for commuters."

Her second initiative is the creation of an Office of Business Development, "which will work to attract and retain businesses throughout Union County," she said. As part of this initiative she noted that the county will hold a shared-services summit in Summit with municipal and state agencies.

Her third initiative is a shared service within the Department of Public Safety. As part of this effort the county will establish a First Responders Training Fund, Freeholder Chairwoman Kowalski announced. She said the fund will pay for training needed by police, firefighters, emergency medical personnel and 911 dispatchers.

Her fourth initiative, "Recycling for Life," will include a new interactive and educational recycling display at the Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside as well as a recycling initiative aimed at se-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



ANNUAL BOROUGH ADDRESS...Last Wednesday's Fanwood Borough Council reorganization meeting drew a full house at Borough Hall. Mayor Colleen Mahr is pictured making her annual address.

## Kulikowski Elected President of SP-F BOE

By **KIMBERLY A. BROADWELL**  
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS—For the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education's first official meeting of the new year, Joan Mast, Ed.D., assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and technology, swore in the three incumbent winners in the November school-board election for another term serving the Scotch Plains-Fanwood district. While family and audience members looked on, Deb Brody, Karen Kulikowski and Tonya Williams, all of Scotch Plains, were each sworn in for another three-year term on the board. Ms. Brody, Ms. Kulikowski and Ms. Williams earned 3,396, 3,706 and 3,174 votes, respectively. Alfonso Akins earned 2,633 votes and Sean Keagan Foley had 2,604 votes.

Board members then elected Ms. Kulikowski as president of the board, and elected Evan Murray as vice-president.

Superintendent of Schools Margaret Hayes, Ed.D., then thanked board member Nancy Bauer for her "outstanding job" as board president and expressed her confidence in the new

appointments for president and vice-president.

Ms. Bauer served as president from 2015 through 2018. Prior to that, she was vice-president in 2013 and 2014.

Other appointments earned by board of education members included Amy Winkler of Fanwood as the delegate for the Union County School Boards Association, Amy Boroff as the delegate for the New Jersey School Boards Association and Cynthia Clancy to the Union County Educational Services Commission's Representative Assembly.

Douglas M. Silvestro, of the law firm of The Busch Law Group, LLC, located at 450 Main Street, Metuchen, was appointed as the board attorney.

Longtime board attorney Casper Boehm retired last month. According to a December resolution, Mr. Boehm started working for the district in 1976 and attended 1,008 bi-monthly meetings as the board's legal advisor for 42 years.

The next two Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education meetings will be held on consecutive Thursdays,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



FIRST TERM...Garwood Mayor Sara Todisco, center, poses with Westfield Mayor Shelley Brindle, pictured left, and Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr during the Garwood reorganization meeting January 2 when Ms. Todisco was sworn in to serve her first term as mayor.



FILLING COUNCIL VACANCY...Jeff Banks, selected by the Fanwood Borough Council to replace Councilman Russ Huegel, who resigned in December to become borough attorney, is sworn in as councilman by Mayor Colleen Mahr at the reorganization meeting on January 1. Councilman Banks' daughter, Mallory, founded the Rockin' For Autism fundraiser that takes place each year in La Grande Park.

### PAGE INDEX

Regional .....	2-3	Education .....	14
Editorial .....	4-5	Sports .....	9-12
Police .....	13	Real Estate .....	9
Community ...	6-7, 13	Classifieds .....	13
Obituary .....	6	A&E .....	15-16



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