

By SPF School Superintendent Carol Choye Building a Budget for All Students

The annual school election will take place on Tuesday, April 18. In developing the proposed budget that will go to the Scotch Plains and Fanwood voters that day, the Board of Education, together with the administration and staff, had myriad things to consider.

The focus, however, always remained on our district's mission of educating every student to become a confident and caring lifelong learner. After much discussion and many difficult decisions, I believe the result is a fiscally responsible budget that concentrates district resources squarely on students and learning.

The Board took a "zero-based" budgeting approach and required that every spending proposal be justified based on instructional need. The Board had to consider our continuing enrollment increases (120+ new students are expected in 2006-07), the importance of maintaining current class size ranges, the need to honor negotiated contracts, the increasing costs for benefits and utilities, our increasing numbers of special education students and rising out-of-district tuitions, plus the need for up-to-date texts, materials and technology for our 5,320 students.

Because our major work happens in regular district classrooms every day, and because we need maximum flexibility to respond to growing numbers of students at all grade levels, a top priority was to include 15 new teaching positions in the budget for Grades K-12.

We also included new texts and materials for language arts, science, math and social studies based on curriculum evaluation and routine assessment of current materials. We included technology spending at current levels and maintained industrial-technology education at the middle schools and at SPFH.

The budget allows us to maintain special support programs for students with identified curriculum needs, to continue our extensive Advanced Placement program for students needing the challenge of these rigorous academic studies, and to implement the new Senior Elective Program to keep our seniors fully engaged in independent projects as they approach graduation.

To meet the needs of all our students beyond the classroom, we will continue to offer a variety of activities for personal growth and vocational exploration, for leadership, physical development and competition through our music, art and other elective offerings and our athletic and extracurricular activities.

The proposed budget also allows us to keep pace with our growing number of special education students. Funds are included for two additional resource center teachers in the district and for an increased number of out-of-district placements for students with highly specialized needs.

All our students experience a curriculum that is regularly reviewed and adjusted to be sure it aligns with local, state and federal standards in each academic area. The budget provides for this systematic curriculum review process. It also provides for an extensive staff development program that orients and supports new teachers and refreshes all teachers with the most up-to-date teaching methods and research information that will influence their instructional practices.

In other important areas, the budget also includes items that are mandated or safety-related, as well as maintenance and capital improvement projects in district facilities. We considered cost efficiencies in all programs, administration and support functions. We met the challenges of new statutory guidelines regarding the accumulation and application of surplus funds and still managed to be \$1.5 million under the state spending limit.

I believe the resulting proposed budget for 2006-07 balances the needs of all the district's students and the interests of our local taxpayers. It will support the kind of high quality, desirable schools that are demanded by current and prospective residents. Now it's my hope that all local voters, especially our parents, will do their part and exercise their right to vote on April 18. Our 5,320 students are counting on it!

Notice is hereby given that Westfield Board of Adjustment adopted Resolutions at its April 5, 2006 meeting for the following applications heard at its March 13, 2006 meeting:

Roger C. Dumont, 128 Marion Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.09E6, 12.04E & 12.04F1 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Amended.

Joe DeVito, 140 Tudor Oval, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.06E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Mary & Chris Romano, 716 Kimball Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.06E6, 11.06E7 & 12.04F1 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Kelly Kessler, 424 Hillside Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.04E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Diane Barrasso, 936 Highland Avenue, Seeking permission to erect a raised patio in the side yard contrary to the requirements of Section 13.02C1 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Denied.

The David Henry Agency, 10 Prospect Street, 2nd Floor, Seeking permission to erect a blade sign on the front of the building contrary to the requirements of Section 16.04H & 16.03C2 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Amended.

Arch Knisely & Nancy Thornberry, 647 St. Marks Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.07E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Joseph & Eva Rossi, 914 Union Street, seeking permission to erect an addition contrary to the requirements of Section: 12.03D, 12.04F1, 12.04F2 & 11.07E7 of the Land Use Ordinance. This application was memorialized at the February 14, 2005 meeting. Applicant is requesting a 6-month extension of variance approval from April 5, 2006 to September 11, 2006. Extension granted for 6-months.

Mr. & Mrs. Ryan, 16 Stoneleigh Park, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.05E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Denied due to non-appearance.

Kevin & Laura Callahan, 553 Fairmont Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.07E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Christopher & Mary Alice Ryan, 9 Stoneleigh Park, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.05E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Lauren & Michael Hammer, 704 Forest Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.09E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Marianne Lopapa, 2 Mohawk Trail, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.06E7 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Scott & Marcy Lazar, 783 Fairacres Avenue, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.09E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted with Provisions.

Ray & Lori Yarusi, 1229 Prospect Street, Seeking permission to construct an addition contrary to the requirements of Section 11.08E6 of the Land Use Ordinance. Application Approved as Submitted.

Donald F. Phelan, Clerk of the Superior Court of New Jersey PELLEGRINO & FELDSTEIN, L.L.C. 290 Route 46 West Denville, New Jersey 07834 1 T - 4/13/06, The Leader Fee: \$80.07

HUNG UP!! Time Is Needed to Develop Rapport With Stepchildren

By Milt Faith, Executive Director Youth and Family Counseling Service

Here are some short answers to some tall questions: A Stepmother Writes: I am confused about the initial resistance I am meeting with from my two stepdaughters. They are hot and cold towards me. Is this unusual?

Answer: It is not unusual for stepchildren to approach a parent's remarriage with restraint and guarded emotions. First, the child's fantasy and wish to have the parents stay together is destroyed; it's over! Frequently, sadness, anger and distrust evolve into a testing-out approach. Secondly, children are confused about the role of the new parent; what are the rules, the limits and is it okay to "accept" the stepparent or is the child betraying his/her feeling towards the biological parent?

Answer: Enjoy today; it will never return. Work hard, consciously, to find positive meaning to each day since it will never be repeated.

A Teen Writes: I am seeing a 15-year-old girl. I like her, but she tries to control me by telling me where we should go, or what we should do. I go along with it because I don't want to lose her. My mother thought I should write to you.

Answer: You will be much happier if you let your girlfriend know how you

feel. If you don't, you will, eventually, argue and become sad.

A Concerned Parent Writes: I have a good friend who has a seven-year-old son. Ever since "Sean" (disguised name) was a toddler, his mother talked about getting him the best education so that by the time he had to apply at college, he would be accepted into one of the most prestigious universities.

Sean has gone to the best day care center, private elementary schools and has been pushed to get all A's. Often, I am tempted to tell her she is creating too much pressure for the child. What would you do?

Answer: Nothing. No parent wants to be told how to raise his/her child. Trust me, if you do, the friendship becomes strained or is over!

A Young Woman Writes: What's in a name? I never liked my name and people make fun of it. It is too costly and too involved to change it legally. What do you recommend?

Answer: Many people, particularly celebrities, give their children names that can be very difficult to accept. Since you feel the way you do, I suggest you come up with a nickname or any version of your name with which you are comfortable, and let others identify you as such. I've never admitted this, but I never liked my name, Milton, and so I have always abbreviated it as Milt. I can live with that quite comfortably.

A Young Lady Writes: My boyfriend wants to marry now, and promises to stop drinking and deal with his alcoholism. Should I?

Answer: Tell him no. No marriage, no commitment unless or until he gets intensive professional help for his alcoholism now and resolves his terrible addictive problems. Do not fall for promises in the future!

An Inquisitive Writer asks: Are you conservative or liberal and does this affect the way you help people?

Answer: My political views and value systems are my own, and I am old enough and experienced enough to be objective and professional in my therapeutic role. Sorry!

Barbara Riepe Township Clerk Secretary to the Planning Board 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$38.76

Barbara Riepe Township Clerk Secretary to the Planning Board 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$49.47

Marylou Fashano-Sollis Board Secretary 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$72.42

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Public Notice TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH PLAINS NOTICE OF AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES BY THE TOWNSHIP OF SCOTCH PLAINS

CONTRACTOR: Arthur Thirbault, Esq.; Apruzzese, McDermott, Mastro & Murphy; P.O. Box 112, 25 Independence Boulevard, Liberty Corner, New Jersey 07938

NATURE OF SERVICE: Appointed to represent the Township of Scotch Plains, The Scotch Plains Police Department in a certain employment matter (B.G. vs. S.P.).

AMOUNT: Not to exceed \$5,000.00 and billed at the hourly rate of \$175.00 for Arthur Thirbault, Esq. and to be applied toward fees and costs for those services which shall be subject to the approval of the Township Attorney and which are not covered by insurance.

THE RESOLUTION AND CONTRACT FOR SAME ARE ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE TOWNSHIP CLERK.

Barbara Riepe Township Clerk 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$22.95

Barbara Riepe Township Clerk Secretary to the Planning Board 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$38.76

Barbara Riepe Township Clerk Secretary to the Planning Board 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$49.47

Marylou Fashano-Sollis Board Secretary 1 T - 4/13/06, The Times Fee: \$72.42

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By WF-BOE Candidate Doug Stokes BOE - Sharing of 'Best Practices'

The Westfield Public Schools Strategic Plan outlines the district's mission, beliefs and action steps to: promote positive school climate/student life; offer a deep and challenging curriculum; provide professional development for staff; improve communication and community engagement and explore alternative resources for funding to support school programs.

This "blueprint" for our schools outlines the importance of family, school and the community collaborating together to provide an "effective" education for our children. As a BOE candidate, I value the intent and purpose of the strategic plan, but feel that more needs to be done in improving communication and community engagement, as well as with exploring alternative resources for funding to support school programs.

State aid for Westfield has remained flat for the last six years, but enrollment and costs (utilities, upkeep of buildings, more personnel, etc.) have consistently risen. Basically, it is getting more and more difficult to deliver the high quality of education that we have learned to expect, without putting too much of a burden on our taxpayers.

It is time to engage more members of our community to look for innovative solutions to this growing concern. The strategic plan states, "We believe students must learn to think analytically and creatively." I believe that all constituents involved with making decisions for our children should be held to the same belief. Westfield is a unique community with its own charm, but we can still look beyond our own borders for innovative solutions.

In February, the Cranford Public School System joined an education partnership with about twelve other school districts, including Princeton and Ridgewood. This partnership will give BOE members, superintendents, administrators, teachers and school personnel the opportunity to work with neighboring professionals to share resources and knowledge of what's working for them, or as we say in education, a sharing of "best practices."

These "best practices" promote student achievement and enable teaching professionals to discuss which programs work and to get them running effectively and efficiently. A district could openly share the "trials and tribulations" that were faced when they first implementing a new program. This sharing would increase the learning curve of the new program being implemented in another school district, saving both time and money!

I work in as a curriculum resource teacher. We have been incorporating Balanced Literacy for five years. Westfield recently created a similar program that meets the needs of our children. The team involved is to be commended for a job well done. I am sure that this team met and observed other districts. I imagine the possibilities and growth of the program through a shared and continued partnership.

Another example is Everyday Math. This has been a topic of great discussion and debate. The benefits of having open dialogue with neighboring districts that have adopted and utilized this program might give us more insight on how to address some of the concerns.

We could discuss how other districts have dealt with overcrowding issues. True, there is no one correct approach to dealing with overcrowding. The particulars vary from town to town, but having a consortium on overcrowding with other

Sealed proposals will be received by the Town of Westfield in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Building, 425 East Broad Street, Westfield, New Jersey, at 10:00 AM prevailing time on Monday, May 8, 2006, for the

"2006 IMPROVEMENT OF HILLSIDE AVENUE IN THE TOWN OF WESTFIELD, NEW JERSEY".

The work under this Proposal includes the furnishing of all labor, materials and equipment necessary to complete the work as shown on the Contract Drawings and described in the Contract Specifications, and Proposals shall be in accordance with such Drawings and Specifications and the terms proposed in the Contract.

The major items of work under this contract include, but are not limited to, the following in estimated quantities: 3,850 linear feet of Granite Block Curbing

450 cubic yards of Roadway Excavation 1,000 square yards of Profile Milling 820 tons of 4 inch thick Bituminous Concrete Stabilized Base Course 8,400 square yards of 2 inch thick Bituminous Concrete Surface Course 400 square feet of 6" thick Concrete Aprons & Walk

1,370 square feet of 4 inch thick Concrete Walk Proposals shall be in writing on the forms furnished and must be delivered at the place and before the hour above mentioned, and must be accompanied by a certified check or bid bond payable to the Town of Westfield in an amount equal to at least ten percent (10%) of the base amount of the bid, but not less than \$500.00 nor more than \$20,000.00. Each bid must also be accompanied by a Surety Company Certificate stating that said Surety company will provide the bidder with the required Performance bond in the full amount of the Contract, by a Non-Collusion Affidavit and a Contractor's Qualification Statement, Statement of Ownership, on the forms included in and explained in the contract documents.

All bidders must submit with their bid a copy of their New Jersey Business Registration Certificate. Failure to submit proof of registration will disqualify the bid.

Bidders must be in compliance with all provisions of Chapter 127 P. L. 1975 supplement to the law against discrimination (Affirmative Action) and must pay workmen the prevailing wage rates promulgated by the New Jersey State Department of Labor and Industry for this project, copies of which are on file in the Office of the Town Engineer.

Plans and specifications may be seen or procured at the office of the Town Engineer, Public Works Center, 959 North Avenue West, Westfield, New Jersey. The non-refundable cost of contract documents is \$50.00 made payable to the Town of Westfield, which must be paid in cash or certified check. The Mayor and Council reserve the right to reject any bid, and to waive any informality in any bid, if in the interest of the Town, it is deemed advisable to do so.

Kenneth B. Marsh Town Engineer 1 T - 4/13/06, The Leader Fee: \$68.34

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