



Enjoy Memorial Day Weekend –
Remember those who served.

THE WESTFIELD LEADER

Ad Populos, Non Aditus, Pervenimus

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SIXTY CENTS

RVSA Representatives Outline How Mandate Affects Westfield Taxes

By MICHAEL J. POLLACK
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD – Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority (RVSA) representatives visited the town council Tuesday to give an update on what court-ordered mandates mean for the Rahway facility and how the changes affect Westfield's annual assessment – what Finance Policy Committee Chairman Peter Echausse has repeatedly described as the "800-pound gorilla."

The RVSA sewer service area includes all or a portion of 12 separate municipalities, including Clark, Cranford, Garwood, Kenilworth,

Mountainside, Rahway, Roselle Park, Scotch Plains, Springfield, Westfield, Woodbridge and Winfield Park.

Former Westfield Mayor Allen Chin, RVSA commissioner and Westfield representative, said the RVSA facility is currently permitted to discharge 40 million gallons per day (MGD), with the ability to accommodate a maximum peak flow of 63 MGD.

During wet-weather events, he said, excessive infiltration and inflow (I/I) – extraneous storm and ground water that enters the sanitary sewer system through cracked pipes, leaking manholes, downspouts and sump pumps

and adds to the daily volume of wastewater – exceeds the facility's capacity and ends up discharged into the Rahway River from two sanitary sewer overflow points.

"We would automatically divert it (I/I) to the ocean," Mr. Chin said. "All of a sudden, the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) said that's not allowed."

Under the terms of a Judicial Consent Order (JCO), these two sanitary sewer overflow points will now be eliminated, and the flows will be directed to the RVSA facility. Ultimately, the total capacity will be expanded to approximately 105 MGD to handle these additional wet-weather flows.

Mr. Chin said of the litigation, "It's like a [cop] seeing 400 speeders, and you get the ticket."

Outlining the overall capital improvement program, Michael Brinker, RVSA interim executive director, said the comprehensive strategic plan, among other things, funds the closing of the two overflow points into the Rahway River, in addition to the construction of the 105-MGD pump station and a 30-MGD gravity-relief sewer – a 6,100-foot "express line" to the plant.

The plan totals \$146 million, representing 83 percent of the capital program.

To provide a primary and secondary source of power for the treatment plant, a cogeneration/sludge drying facility will be constructed. Representing 12 percent of the capital program, the facility will cost \$22.5 million.

Mr. Brinker said improvements to the treatment plant are about 68 percent complete. The anticipated completion date is September 2008, but he noted the authority is "ahead of schedule."

He said the cogeneration facility is 95 percent complete, but, as noted in a *Westfield Leader* page 2 story, "suffered a setback." Two of three engines "had a mishap and literally blew. [This will] set us back about six months."

Bob Materna, secretary and treasurer of the RVSA, said the authority's 2007 operating expenses are \$14.1 million, while debt service represents \$3.4 million. Next year alone, debt

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The above chart, published in the August 12, 2004, *Westfield Leader*, shows the RVSA's then-Capital Improvement Plan. Current figures show increases of \$7 million in terms of the CSP, with decreases of \$1.5 million with regards to the cogeneration facility and \$2 million in major upgrades.

BOE VP Declares Impasse In MEA Negotiations

By ALLISON GIBBONS
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

MOUNTAINSIDE – Mountainside Board of Education (BOE) Vice President MaryBeth Schaumburg announced Tuesday night that negotiations with the Mountainside Education Association (MEA) have reached a stalemate.

"I'm here to report that we have mutually reached an impasse," she said, of their attempts to reach a new contract.

Despite some slow progress, many important issues could not be tackled, she said. A mediator will now be brought in to try and reach an agreement.

The BOE met Tuesday night in the media center of the Beechwood School for roughly 30 minutes.

Cathy Jakositz, a parent, spoke at the meeting due to her concern about the summer-school program.

"I would like to know why there was a directive passed down to the teachers...to scale back the list of students," she asked the board.

The board responded that it feels small class sizes are a necessity for the summer-school students.

"Adequate summer school has been provided," BOE President John Perrin said.

Total enrollment for summer school is not yet known because about half of parents have yet to respond, despite a May 15 deadline.

The student list is prioritized by the teacher and the level of need. When a student declines to attend, another will be granted his or her place.

"We try to keep a small class size," Chief School Administrator (CSA)

Richard O'Malley said, in order to optimize the learning environment for the students in summer school.

The board also discussed adding staff positions, including a new special education teacher, and the addition of more substitute nurses. The special-education teacher, Susan Livak, will teach a class over the summer, as well.

"We are getting to the point where

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GW BOE to Open Discussion On Administrators' Contracts

By JENNA NIERSTEDT
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

GARWOOD – Borough Councilwoman Kathy Villaggio, school board liaison, informed the mayor and council at Tuesday night's meeting that the Garwood Board of Education meeting set for June 19 would include a discussion and possible action regarding an extension or amendment of the superintendent and/or business administrator contracts. Members of the public are invited to make comments on the compensation of the administrators.

Borough clerk Christina Ariemma said that the board used to be able to take this course of action on its own, but now the board must follow certain policies and notify the public.

The council also approved a few ordinances on first reading. One related to the industrial sewer charge. Council members approved raising the rate for industrial users and lowering the threshold amount of water that

gamers a bill to 20,000 gallons. Another ordinance dealt with the construction of gutters and sidewalks. The council discussed funding for sidewalk repairs to areas damaged by borough trees.

The council also proposed some upcoming Department of Transportation road projects and funding. The road projects would address East Street, West Street and Willow Avenue from Center Street to East Street. The council also addressed drainage issues on East and West Streets. The proposal includes an \$185,000 price tag.

In closing, Mayor Dennis McCarthy invited residents to the eighth-grade graduation at Lincoln/Franklin School and reminded those in attendance of the Firemen's Memorial Service on Wednesday evening.

Local Communities Plan Memorial Day Events

Westfield: Opening ceremonies will begin at 9 a.m. at the World War I monument at the North Avenue and East Broad Street plaza. The parade will travel along East Broad Street and end with closing ceremonies at Fairview Cemetery.

Garwood: The borough's annual service will begin at noon at the Garwood Knights of Columbus Hall at 43 South Avenue.

Mountainside: The Mountainside VFW co-sponsors the Westfield parade. Its veterans will participate in the opening ceremony at the War World I monument and at the closing ceremony at Fairview cemetery. They will also march in the parade.

Scotch Plains-Fanwood: The Albany Marine Band will perform a patriotic concert at Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School at 8 p.m. on Sunday.

On Monday, a memorial service will begin at 8 a.m. at American Legion Post No. 209, located at Park Avenue and Sunset Place in Scotch Plains. A wreath-laying ceremony will begin at 9 a.m. at the Fanwood



Greg Ryan for The Westfield Leader

IT'S MILLER-CORY TIME... Last Saturday, Union County College held a ceremony to commemorate Union County's 150th anniversary. Multiple municipal historical groups received county proclamations acknowledging their efforts to the county and its celebration, including the Westfield and Mountainside Historical Societies and the Miller-Cory House, whose staff is pictured above.

Westfield District Hires Principal For Franklin Elementary School

By CAROLINE KOELLHOFFER
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD – The board announced on Tuesday night that Westfield resident Eileen Cambria will begin her new appointment as Franklin Elementary School principal on September 1.

The board also announced the appointment of Robert Gardella as assistant principal at Wilson School.

Ms. Cambria, a former teacher at Franklin, told *The Westfield Leader*, "It was hard for me to leave the school those years ago when I got an offer from Bernards Township. Now I am very excited to be back."

Mr. Gardella also taught at Franklin, but he took an administrative job last year with Franklin borough. "Coming back to Westfield feels like coming home," he said.

"The district is held in such high regard," said Ms. Cambria. "It is a thrill to be back."

In other business, Noel Baxter, supervisor for social studies curriculum, reported to the board on curriculum revisions for the department. The revisions implemented at all grade levels this coming fall will need final approval from the board in the spring of 2008. At the high-school level, they will focus presently on the students' required courses, said Ms. Baxter.

"My understanding of the intermediate curriculum is that the current focus comes from what we might call a threat from the state. When eighth-graders started being tested, schools across the state began scrambling to meet mandated core-curriculum standards. The curriculum now is very content-heavy as a reflection of that," said Ms. Baxter.

"Teachers now are ready to take a little step back. So the question is: how do we take this content and make it meaningful and challenging for the students?"

In the elementary schools, Ms. Baxter

said that they are developing ways to overlap the curricula. "Students have to learn to read," she said. "Why not read books related to social studies?"

"We are looking at building a lot of bridges that way. For instance, say in the first grade, you are doing a unit on responsibility. This topic can be related in many ways to social studies. It's an easy connection."

Five Westfield High School students, who took second place in the Fed Challenge on May 3, performed a portion of their presentation to the board.

Tom Hornish, faculty advisor for the team, described the Fed Challenge as "an academic competition that requires the students to do a

macro-analysis of the state of the economy. After they make their presentation, they must sit down and answer questions from people who do this stuff all the time."

These students, Jake Stevens-Haas, Will Schwartz, Jessica Sheft-Ason, Pratik Mehta and Andrew Calvaruso, competed in front of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York against 150 other high schools and missed first place by one point.

"I was so impressed with these students," said Ginny Leiz, BOE president. "I attended the completion in New York City intending to stay to only see these students compete. I ended up staying the whole day."

Report on Station Mews Wall Collapse Could Take Weeks

By JENNA NIERSTEDT
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

FANWOOD – The borough has issued a stop-work order on all construction work on The Station Mews redevelopment project pending an investigation into last Tuesday's collapse of a concrete firewall at The Mews redevelopment project onto an adjacent building on South Avenue, officials said this week.

Two employees and a customer of the Livingston Wilbor Corporation on South Avenue were trapped inside their offices when part of the Mews' firewall fell on top of and collapsed Livingston Wilbor's roof on the workers.

Mayor Colleen Mahr said the site is under investigation and it could take up to a month for a final report to be produced on the cause of the accident. She said the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is the "lead agency in determining the cause."

"While they finished (the) field inspection, it is still an ongoing investigation," she said.

Mayor Mahr said borough building inspector Bruce Helmstetter placed a stop-work order on the construction site. She also said the site is secure in that fencing has been put

around the Wilbor site and fencing was already present at Station Mews.

"The jurisdiction of the site is in our building official's hands," Mayor Mahr said. "He will work with the contractor and the owner to ensure a safe working environment is there for all."

Fanwood Police Lieutenant Richard Trigo told *The Leader* last week that it was not known when Mr. Helmstetter last inspected the Mews project. Mr. Helmstetter was out of town when *The Leader* called his office Tuesday.

Garry Wilbor, owner of the Livingston Wilbor Corporation, has applied for a demolition permit, according to Fanwood Planning Board Chairman Greg Cummings.

Although Mr. Wilbor told *The Leader* last week that he expected to return to business within a few days, Mr. Cummings said he believed the demolition permit would be for the entire building, located at 238 South Avenue.

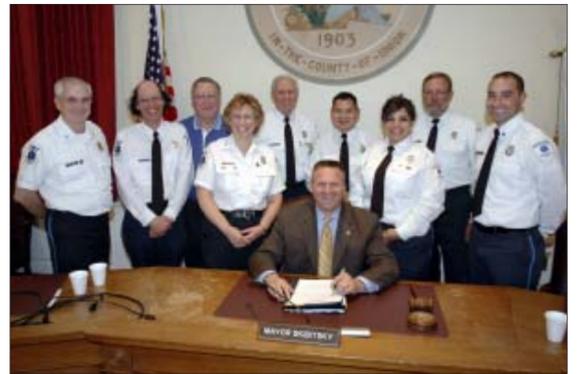
"We owe a huge thank you to all of our first responders," Mayor Mahr said. "They worked seamlessly and professionally in an incident that we have not seen before in town. It's not until tragedy strikes that you really get to see

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HAZARD CLEANUP... Petro Extrusion Technologies at 490 South Avenue in Garwood found a leaky barrel in a Fed-Ex delivery made to its facility on Tuesday afternoon, said Garwood Fire Chief Ed Silver. The barrel leaked a resin material of low flammability that is used with plastics. Buildings from 450 to 494 South Avenue were evacuated. Union County Hazmat and Garwood Police, Fire Department and First Aid responded to the scene.

Jenna Nierstedt for The Westfield Leader



SAVING LIVES... Rescue Squad members are recognized for length of service to Westfield by the town council on May 15. Pictured, left to right, are: Arthur Cooke, Robert Billson, Ray Showfety, Lynn Feldman, Robert Barrett, Mayor Andrew Skibitsky, Rong Liu, Noelle DeLousa, Richard Warwick and Jonathan Dilorio. See details on page 10.

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