

## Free Press Is Endangered By Talk Of Fake News

One of the very first acts of some governments [is to] take over the radio station and shut down the news. That is, the news they do not like. The news that they consider fake or bogus precisely because they do not like it. The news that they find inconvenient to their policies and plans.

Was it fake news when Columbus announced that the world is not flat?

When Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis told his Viennese colleagues to wash their hands before examining their patients?

When the Wright brothers declared they plan to fly?

When Copernicus said that the Earth is not the center of the Universe?

When Churchill railed against appeasement of Hitler?

When Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie begged the League of Nations to stop Mussolini's aggression against his country?

When abolitionist editor Elijah Lovey spoke out against slavery?

When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. condemned segregation in his famous "I have a dream" speech?

Who is to say what characterizes fake news? A free press is intellectually and even physically endangered by talk of fake news. Public confidence in the integrity of the press is being undermined by such talk. News.

No President until now has accused the press of faking the news. The First Amendment guarantee of the freedom of the press is no guarantee against such vilification! Sad and tragic that our beloved country the very citadel of freedom and liberty is now ensconced in a delib-

ate effort by some to reign in news not to their liking.

We cannot remain a free people if news is so subjectively defined. The road to tyranny is short, straight, and smooth. The road to freedom is rugged and twisting but how breathtaking the vistas it opens up. No one has the right or authority to decide what is fake news. Such a power would render our republic null and void.

Let us therefore reaffirm freedom of the press. The words of Thomas Jefferson in his letter of January 28, 1786 to Dr. James Currie are an excellent place to start.

"Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost."

And then there are the words of Hannah Arendt who in her seminal work concerning totalitarianism provides much needed insight into the importance of freedom of the press.

"The moment we no longer have a free press, anything can happen. What makes it possible for a totalitarian or any other dictatorship to rule is that the people are not informed; how can you have an opinion if you are not informed? If everybody always lies to you, the consequence is not that you believe the lies, but rather that nobody believes anything any longer... And a people that no longer can believe anything cannot make up its mind. It is deprived not only of its capacity to act, but also of its capacity to think and to judge. And with such a people you can then do them what you please."

Stephen Schoeman  
Westfield

## NJ Transit To Advance Positive Train Control Program

NEWARK - Temporary suspension of Atlantic City Rail Line is required for Installation Beginning Sept. 5th; One-Seat Rides To New York On Raritan Valley Line to Be Discontinued Beginning Sept. 10th

NJ TRANSIT continues the installation of Positive Train Control (PTC) equipment on its rail fleet throughout the state. To accommodate this critical safety upgrade, all service on the Atlantic City Rail Line (ACRL) will be temporarily suspended beginning Wednesday, September 5, and off-peak one-seat Raritan Valley Line (RVL) service, will be suspended beginning Monday, September 10. It is anticipated that these services will resume in early 2019. Throughout this time period, ACRL customers will have alternate travel options with discounted fares to and from Philadelphia. This temporary suspension is required for PTC installation to continue on rail cars and on the railroad right-of-way.

"We regret the inconvenience this will cause our customers on the RVL and ACRL. That's why we've maintained the same level of RVL service to/from Penn Station New York with connections at Newark Penn, and are offering a range of options with discounted fares to and from Philadelphia to continue meeting the travel needs of our ACRL customers," said Executive Director Kevin Corbett.

"We have made substantial progress on our PTC project and we're continuing to ramp up installation - in fact, our PTC project completion percentage has increased from 13 percent to 52 percent in the last three months alone. As we push to complete PTC installation, I ask for customers' patience during this process as the end result is a safer railroad for everyone."

Raritan Valley Line: Off-peak, one-seat rides on the RVL to Penn Station New York will be discontinued beginning Monday, September 10. It is important to note that RVL customers will be receiving the same level of service into Penn Station New York, but they will be required to transfer to a New York-bound train at Newark Penn Station.

During the Atlantic City Rail Line temporary suspension, customers will have the following travel options.

Atlantic City Rail Line: All ACRL rail tickets and passes with a destination or origin of Philadelphia will be discounted 25 percent. These rail tickets and passes will be cross-honored on NJT bus route No. 554, PATCO (Lindenwold, Walter Rand Transportation Center (WRTC) and 8th St./Market St. only), River LINE (Pennsauken to WRTC only), and special shuttle bus service operating between Cherry Hill, Pennsauken and WRTC.

Bus route No. 554 will cross-honor rail tickets and passes and will have enhanced service to/from all rail stations between Atlantic City and Lindenwold, operating on similar times to the rail schedule.

Shuttle bus service will be provided between Cherry Hill, Pennsauken and WRTC for connections to PATCO. Customers should display their rail tickets and passes to board the shuttle bus and retain them for cross-honoring on PATCO.

Important Notes:  
ACRL customers utilizing PATCO to/from Philadelphia will not have service

to/from 30th Street station in Philadelphia. Customers will board/exit PATCO at the 8th St./Market St. Station in Philadelphia.

Customers in Atlantic City will not use the Atlantic City Rail Terminal. All customers should utilize the Atlantic City Bus Terminal for service on bus route No. 554, which will arrive/depart only at the Atlantic City Bus Terminal.

Atlantic City casino jitney bus service will not operate to/from the Atlantic City Rail Terminal. This service will relocate to/from the Atlantic City Bus Terminal.

Temporary Ticket Vending Machines (TVMs) will be available at the PATCO 8th St./Market St., station to purchase NJ Transit rail tickets to be cross honored on PATCO.

Detailed rail and bus schedules will be available in the coming days on njtransit.com.

Travel Tips: Customers utilizing paper tickets should retain those tickets for cross honoring on PATCO.

Check njtransit.com or news media before starting your trip for service advisories or alerts that may affect your trip.

Download NJ TRANSIT's Mobile App for easy access to service information and advisories, ticket purchases via MyTix, real-time train departure status through DepartureVision, real-time or scheduled bus arrivals through MyBus, and other features to assist you during your commute.

Purchase round-trip tickets prior to boarding trains, buses or light rail vehicles to speed up your return trip. Tickets are available at ticket vending machines and ticket agent locations at major terminals and stations, as well as through NJ Transit's Mobile App.

## July Committee Hearing on Affordable Housing - Garwood Is A Lost Cause

I apologize that I cannot attend [Committee Hearing on Affordable Housing (AH) July 25th, Chair Wimberly]. I am the secretary of the citizens grassroots committee, "Citizens Improving Affordable Housing" (CIAH). Our president Jim Burd is in attendance at your hearing.

Please read this into the record.

I am a resident of 25 years in Garwood, NJ, in Union County. Our borough has completed a court-approved affordable housing plan to provide for approximately 90 AH units where 20 were already satisfied by senior housing, leaving 70 AH units. This number was negotiated down with FSHC due to the fact that our less than one-square mile borough was already built out. We do have two defunct factory properties and 1 large factory parking lot that we situated our AH plans and a fourth overlay zone on a mall. It was almost immediately that two developers came forward to propose to build three of the four projects, leaving the overlay zone alone.

We are a very small community, as previously noted 7/8ths of a square mile. Our population is approximately 4,500 residents. We have 1,501 residential units, of which 36 percent is rental.

These high-density projects were imposed on our borough under threats of lawsuits, just like every other town is being subjected to. To satisfy 60 our 70 AH units, the developers' three proposals included 439 market rate units for a total of 499 units to be built within three years. They are all rental units. Set asides as agreed by our planning board were 10 percent to 15 percent. Density per acre is 30 to 60 units where our existing zoning allows 16 units per acre.

We residents are incredulous of the impacts to our borough as follows over the next three years: Housing units are increased 499/1501 = +33 percent. Population increase of 790/4500 = +35 percent. Rental ratio will go from 36 percent to 65 percent rental/ownership. Our two main roads North and South avenues, which are only 2 lanes each are already at 100 percent capacity. The two main intersections per traffic testimony are at the worst RSIS rating of F (fail). Yet our planning board approves these projects. Our traffic, infrastructure, programs, services, schools will be

all impacted negatively. Many towns are facing these same ratio impacts, hopefully some are here to testify to that.

Because of the circumstance of many towns regrettably dragging their feet regarding Mt. Laurel, I do not think this severe punishment is warranted by the state assembly on the towns. Is govt. supposed to be that harsh to its citizens?

Issues arise such as: no governing bodies of most suburban type towns have any experience in mega-high density projects, proving no critical thinking possible for best achievement and balance for AH units and maintain quality of the towns. They lost control. This poor planning is left to the developers themselves and to the planning board professional who is usually hired part-time and we find has a full-time conflicting job at a consulting firm working for developers. Developers are now cherry picking towns to build based on how much profit they can achieve with very expensive market rate rentals to offset the AH rental rates. We found in Garwood that a developer had "paid up" for a property to be developed thus needing more market-rate units to offset his first cost financials.

As a resident and I hope my voice is supported, I request a moratorium on this overdevelopment that is being created. This issue must be taken up now before the Assembly to resolve before anymore towns' destruction happen. One suggestion would be for the Assembly to create a state agency, similar to the "School Construction Corp" to analyze, re-formulate, identify, distribute and oversee the building of the AH projects to be fair to all communities while providing affordable housing. Possibly publicly-owned land could be also utilized to offset project costs.

To excuse my bluntness, but our Garwood is a lost cause now, a poster child of the failure of a good intention gone awry, what inexperience of our boards sadly wrought. The issue of affordable housing is indeed just, it is what is piggybacking on it that is the misfeasance and destruction.

Thank you for your time and attention and hopefully you can read this into the record and resolve something more proper than just overdevelopment.

Bruce Paterson  
Garwood, NJ

## Letters to the Editor

### Union County Freeholders Jam Square Peg into Round Hole

Surely many of your readers have found themselves waiting by their mailboxes for "the offer letter" outlining the terms of new employment; or perhaps waiting for FedEx to deliver the cardboard envelope containing an employment contract for their signature. Well, it seems that our newly appointed County Manager, Edward Oatman, did not have to wait for anything in writing to cement his new job opportunity.

After his appointment I had an uneasy feeling about his qualifications for the job and decided to put my prior 25 years experience as a headhunter to work. I submitted an OPRA request to the Office of the Clerk of the Board requesting Mr. Oatman's resume and the letter offering employment. The resume arrived in my email quickly, however, I was informed that there was no letter offering employment. Not to be dismissed that easily I thought that perhaps the county would have an employment contract with him; I requested it. But I was advised that "the county has no records to provide." I must confess that I was puzzled as his starting salary as County Manager was \$169K and in all of my years in the employment industry there was always a letter, contract or even an email outlining the executive's total compensation package especially at this salary level.

The resume shows that he had worked as chief of staff for Sen. Scutari from '12 to '17, for Linda Stender from '02 to '16 and Assemblyman Kennedy from '16 to '17. The timeline shows that he was working for at least two people simultaneously as chief of staff in both their offices. He must have been spread a bit thin as Scutari's office is in Linden, Kennedy's Rahway and Stender's was in Scotch Plains. Further his resume does not show any months only years so it

could be one day in a year or a full 12 months. Since he was paid at a rate of \$50K for each he appears to have been earning at least \$100K a year. His new gig came with at 59 percent salary increase. How nice is that! Most readers would welcome that kind of a salary increase, I am sure. It is like getting a reward for a job well done by somebody else.

The County's Administrative Code and Policies contains the requirements to qualify for the job as well as the powers that the CM possesses. Many of the items are boilerplate and would be applicable to any business of 2,800 employees, but four items stand out as the most important overall. Prior experience formulating and managing a budget (could be in excess of at least \$400 million +/- since this year's budget is \$500mil.). Experience handling labor union negotiations, managing a workforce in excess of 1,000 employees and major contract negotiation experience for goods and services. Mr. Oatman does not possess any of these proven skills thru prior experience. Though he has a degree in political science he does not list any continuing education studying government administration for instance or pursuing an MBA; these bullet points would be a definite plus, plus.

The appointment of this individual to the top position in the county reeks of cronyism as he does not possess the skill set necessary to perform the duties of this job. Were I recruiting for this position I would be putting his resume aside and continue the search for a candidate who could bring to the table the appropriate skill set. The position of County Manager is much too important to receive on the job training by doing.

Patricia Quattrocchi, Clark  
Candidate for UC Freeholder  
Former Garwood Mayor

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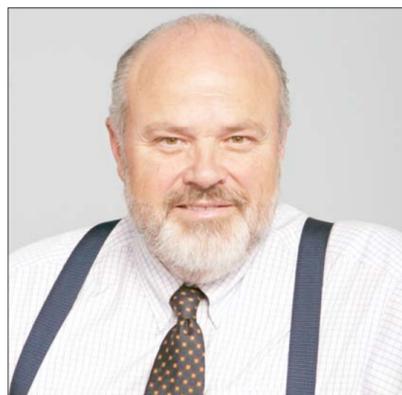
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