



HONORED FOR THEIR SERVICE... Westfield Crossing Guards were honored for their service to the school district and the community at a breakfast on April 20 at the Westfield Municipal Building.

Garwood BOE

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tors provide relief for students exposed to psychological stress, stated Ms. Lewis. Ms. Lewis said the program identifies and addresses mental health issues within the student population.

Ms. Lewis said she is going to coordinate programs with administration to implement within Lincoln School, assist parents, and promote gun violence prevention.

Resident Rachel Herz said she was concerned with procedures regarding "lockdown" or total security situations at the library. Ms. Herz said she felt she was in the door's sight or, if the situation arises, an active shooter's sight.

"I was clearly visible from the door. Not sure if everyone is aware you should be away from the door," Ms. Herz said.

Superintendent Quigley said the librarian has full correspondence with the school regarding lockdown or emergency situations via a speaker system, a feature not available to the previous librarian. The new librarian is being "fully updated" on all appropriate procedures, Ms. Quigley said.

"The speakers make a big difference," the superintendent said, describing how they act as an immediate communication tool.

Councilwoman Jennifer Blumenstock said "specialized door stoppers," preventive window blinds and an "outside drop-box" for parents dropping off materials during school hours are preventive measures to consider. Ms. Blumenstock said

these measures have been employed by the Clark school district.

Resident Christian Zowosky said he was concerned with students safety during Hartman Park recreation time. Mr. Zowosky said further comments from the police chief and police captain would bring "ease to parents' minds."

Mayor Charles Lombardo said he remains committed to preventing gun violence and is willing to coordinate safety measures with district and safety programs if ever needed. Mayor Lombardo said he signed a mayor's pledge against gun violence prohibiting firearms capacity and distribution within N.J.

"Sadly, this issue has been politicized, so I am here as an elected official," Councilman Richard McCormack said.

Mr. McCormack said all three of his children and grandchildren have attended Garwood public schools. Mr. McCormack said he wanted to "thank Dr. Quigley and the board of education for always keeping school safety top of mind."

"Why do we have to do something for the sake of doing something when in fact it might make our school less safe by telling the world via social media that Lincoln School needs to take better safety measures?" Mr. McCormack asked.

He said school safety is "always on his mind."

"I find it appalling a sitting council person decided to politicize something as sacred as the safety of our children," Mr. McCormack said.

Freeholders OK Cranford To Join 9-1-1 Dispatch

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

COUNTY — The Union County Freeholders last Thursday approved the Township of Cranford as the 13th Union County town to join the county's 9-1-1 dispatch center.

Cranford will pay \$9,804, which will increase 2 percent beginning January 1 of each subsequent year during the duration of the five-year contract.

"Cranford had a situation where their 9-1-1 system collapsed so they were faced with the decision of whether to replace it at a significant cost of a couple hundred thousand dollars," Public Safety Director Andrew Moran said. He said the county dispatch center handled the 9-1-1 calls in Cranford to "fill the gap." Mr. Moran said Cranford officials "felt comfortable" with the county service and decided to contract with the county rather than purchase a new 9-1-1 system.

"So we will be their primary answering point for all 9-1-1 calls," Mr. Moran said.

The dispatch center also handles 9-1-1 calls for Clark, Winfield Park, Roselle, Roselle Park, Springfield, Fanwood, Scotch Plains, Plainfield, Garwood, Mountainside, Kenilworth and Hillside, according to Mr. Moran. He said the dispatch center services 23 agencies.

He said the county handles dispatch calls for fire, police and EMS for Scotch Plains, Fanwood and Winfield Park. The county began expanding its center to fill the coverage gap left when the dispatch center at Overlook Hospital in Summit, known as CenCom, went out of business in 2012.

The freeholders also approved a \$12,700 agreement with Netta Architects, LLC, of Mountainside for architectural design and planning for the expansion of the regional dispatch center. Mr. Moran said the county is looking to create an additional nine dispatch positions for a total of 18 at its center on North Avenue in Westfield.

"Over the last five years we've seen a significant increase in the number of calls coming through the dispatch center. Last year we did just over 120,000 calls, including non-emergency calls," Mr. Moran said.

"We're finding that we are using most of those dispatch positions," he added.

He said Netta will design a conceptual drawing for the additional nine dispatch stations.

"We do have other towns that we are speaking to that are interested in the service," Mr. Moran said.

He said the county dispatch center is close to capacity.

"I think it is a tremendous shared service (for towns)," Freeholder Chris Hudak said.

The last expansion of the system, when it went from two to nine dispatchers, cost \$1.1 million, Mr. Moran said. He said he believes adding nine more dispatchers would give the center another six years before it again reaches capacity.

In other business, the freeholders approved an agreement with Scotch Plains for management of the municipality-owned Scotch Hills Golf Course. Armando Sanchez, director of recreational facilities for the county, said the county will pay Illinois-based Kemper Sports Management, Inc. directly for the added service. He said Scotch Plains will reimburse the county at a cost of \$3,000 per month. The agreement began May 1, 2018 and extends through November 16, 2019, when the Kemper contract with the county expires. Kemper has managed the county's Galloping Hill, Kenilworth, and Ash Brook, Scotch Plains, golf courses since 2009.

Freeholder Angel Estrada said while he does not support subsidizing golf, he is comfortable with the agreement in that it will not result in a cost

to the county and that Scotch Hills' revenues will be improved under Kemper's management.

The freeholders also approved six resolutions to sponsor events around the county at a total of \$22,000. Each sponsorship ranges from \$1,000 to \$4,000. Among them is Scotch Plains' Independence Day Celebration on Saturday, June 30, whereby the township will receive \$4,000 from the county.

The board also approved the 2018 Infrastructure and Municipal Aid Grant Program of \$1.5 million combined for all 21 towns in the county. The check presentation for the program will be held at the next freeholder meeting on Thursday, May 10. Freeholder Hudak said since 2015 the county has awarded \$6 million (including this year's program) to the towns, which provide matching funds for a total of \$12 million. Most of the funding this year will be for road improvements, said Amy Wagner, department of economic development director. The county portion is funded from proceeds from the sale of Runnells Specialized Hospital in 2014.

During the public comment part of the meeting, John Bury of Kenilworth and Bruce Paterson of Garwood both commented on the county budget, which was introduced on April 19. Mr. Bury said freeholders' comments that they follow state law in awarding professional contracts are "disingenuous."

Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados said the board is made up of nine individuals who have their own mindsets, opinions and beliefs.

Mr. Paterson questioned why the county did not come in with a flat budget, noting that the county surplus at the end of 2017 was \$90 million, an amount that has increased \$60 million since 2011.

Freeholder Hudak said by "building up those healthy financial reserves we're able to make sure the tax burden is level in Union County, we're able to maintain a Aaa bond rating but, furthermore and very important, in the event of another economic downturn we will have the opportunity to weather the storm better."

Storm Debris

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ral edition of the new quarterly newsletter the *Mountainside Peak* and encouraged groups to include information about community activities and events such as Yoga with the Mayor on Monday nights at 6 p.m. Other upcoming events include the annual Memorial Day Parade and the Walk with the Mayor this Saturday, May 5, at 10 a.m. at the fitness trail behind Borough Hall. Members of the Mountainside Beautification Committee and the local Boy Scouts will participate in the walk, which will include a discussion of possible improvements to the area.

Borough Engineer Michael Disko conducted the state-mandated storm water discharge training. Mr. Disko explained that in order for Mountainside to maintain its storm-water certification the community must comply with various provisions of the law, which includes a 10-point public education required program. This year's public education initiative will focus on the proper disposal of pet waste.

The council's next public meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 15. Items on the agenda for that meeting will include a proclamation commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Mountainside Rescue Squad, the second reading of a proposed ordinance to appropriate \$240,000 to resurface Partridge Run, and a public hearing on the proposed municipal budget for 2018. There has been a minor modification to the budget as it has become necessary to reallocate surplus funds to cover the costs of storm debris removal, officials said.



EARTH FEST... Travis Gale of Eyes of the Wild educates a large group of children and their families about a variety of animals, including a dove, skunk, black footed ferret, woodchuck and a wallaby and her baby during Union County's Wild Earth Fest held Sunday at the grounds of the Trailside Nature and Science Center in Mountainside.

Cranford BOE Adopts \$67.5-Mil. School Budget

By ROBYN ORR-GIOFFRE
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

CRANFORD — The board of education adopted a \$67,467,691 school budget Monday night.

Superintendent of Schools Scott Rubin, Ed.D., and Business Administrator Robert Carfagno led board members through a PowerPoint presentation that offered a breakdown of the budget during a public hearing.

Mr. Carfagno described enrollment as one important piece of the budget. Current enrollment for 2017-2018 is 3,871 while the projected 2018-2019 enrollment is expected to be 3,882 students.

"Ninety-five percent of your budget is pretty well accounted for," Mr. Carfagno told the board.

More specifically, 85 percent of the budget will go towards salaries and benefits, 5 percent will go towards out-of-district tuition costs, 2 percent will go towards transportation costs, 1 percent will go towards energy costs, another 1 percent will go towards student-related extraordinary service and another 1 percent will be for liabilities and insurance.

The budget will include security enhancements and upgrades that will put the \$187,301 increase in state aid towards establishing a new position that would, among other responsibilities, coordinate district-wide culture and climate initiatives.

Remaining funds will be used for the upgrade, enhancement and improvement of security issues district wide.

The budget also includes facility/maintenance items that involve sanding and refinishing gymnasium floors at the elementary schools and Lincoln, paving repairs at all schools, concrete repairs, classroom carpet/tile abatement and reinstallation.

As previously reported in *The Westfield Leader*, the school budget is at a 3.37-percent increase over the 2017-2018 budget and the total tax increase on the average Cranford home will be \$202.06.

"Taxes are going up," Mr. Carfagno told the board, but noted, "we're enhancing what we currently offer."

Mr. Carfagno further commented that class size will stay the same; staffing, although some positions have been reallocated, will remain the same; students will have technology and needed supplies, and the district will meet all of its obligations, offering professional development, continuing with ongoing projects and maintaining the facilities while still providing upgrades when possible.

In other board business, Personalized Learning and 21st Century Learning Skills were showcased during the meeting, with Bloomingdale Avenue School Principal Lourdes Murphy and Media Specialist Greg D'Amato giving a PowerPoint presentation.

Mrs. Murphy commented to the board that the goals of personalized

learning are to encourage and support learning initiatives and promote the development of 21st-century learning skills.

21st Century Learners, according to Mrs. Murphy, are collaborators, problem solvers, critical thinkers, communicators, self-directed learners and innovators.

These learners are civically engaged, globally aware, financially and economically literate and information and media literate.

Students involved in the program, "don't shy away from hard work that makes them think," Mrs. Murphy told the board.

Additionally, the Teachers Cadets Collaboration in Education was spotlighted, as Cranford High School teacher Barbara Narus discussed achievements.

The program allows cadets to observe elementary, middle-school and special-education classrooms, have diverse teaching experiences and prepares them for placement for their student teaching practicum.

Students are placed in the student teaching practicum based on their interests. They are expected to teach lessons and earn college credits.

Some of the things cadets learn are proper lesson-plan format, classroom management skills and the importance of student relations.

Student Cadet Brenna Dolan told the board, "you make mistakes and you learn from them. It's very reflective."

The board of education honored a request on behalf of the New Jersey School Boards Association and Agencies for the Handicapped to proclaim Sunday, May 13, through Saturday, May 19, 2018, as Special Education Week.

The next board of education meeting will take place on Monday, May 14.

HPC

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said resident Deborah Burslem, describing her feelings towards recent historic property demolition.

The HPC will begin engaging refreshed community outreach branding methods and communication, stated HPC Commissioner Maria Boyes. A Facebook page promoting historic events and community feedback "is being worked on," Ms. Kessler said.

Two new HPC official "seals or logos" were discussed by the commission, yet a finalized logo has not been chosen, Ms. Kessler stated. The logo will be used to "watermark" HPC documents, she said.

HPC commissioners welcomed four Westfield High School students as official HPC interns. Gen Howell, Annie Cerria, Chelsea Frisch and Katie Clark will assist the historic property outreach program, explained Ms. Kessler. The outreach will educate homeowners on their property's historical relevance and how historical preservation benefits the community.

Lincoln Ave.

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the street will be discussed at the May planning board meeting as the applicant's testimony will continue.

The planning board voted on a desirable fence size for corner lots being six feet high. The vote was six board members in favor of six-foot-high fences and four board members in favor of four-foot-high fences.

No official commentary was agreed upon to be suggested to the borough council as the fence ordinance has been "tabled" (set aside by council for further review).

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