

Mahr-Led Dem. Ticket Sweeps In Fanwood In Primary Election

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

REGION – Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr and her line of candidates for the Fanwood Democratic Committee defeated a line backed by the Union County Democratic Committee and its chairman, Senator Nicholas Scutari, in Tuesday's Primary Election.

Mayor Mahr and Fanwood borough council members Kathy Mitchell and Jeff Banks and council candidate Kevin Boris, a former councilman, ran unopposed in the Primary for mayor and three council seats, respectively. Mayor Mahr is unopposed in the General Election, while the three Democratic council candidates will face Republicans Brian Walter and Jay Morris.

Mayor Mahr announced before

screaming supporters at a victory party at Fabio's Bistro in Fanwood that her "Column B" candidates had swept all 14 seats in Fanwood's seven voting districts to maintain local control of the party in the borough. She said they won by margins of four to one or better, including the seat formerly held by Union County Freeholder and Fanwood resident Alexander Mirabella.

"We won each and every one of our districts, all seven. We swept by over four to one," Mayor Mahr said.

Unofficial tallies as of Tuesday are as follows: In District 1, Kathy Mitchell, who was not challenged, received 120 votes, while Bill Lee garnered 111 votes to 15 for his challenger, Michael Marcovecchio. In District 2, Steven Falco defeated Robert Brennan, 97 to

6, while Patricia Walsh bested Barbara Brennan, 99 to 5. In District 3, Scott Sinclair beat Scott Brelinsky, 133 to 2, while Amy Boroff beat Kerry Brelinsky, 132 to 3. In District 4, Adele Kenny beat Jennifer Ann Campion, 142 to 3, and Matthew Glennon defeated Michael Campion, 142 to 2. In District 5, John Celardo bested Mark Brink, 154 to 16, while Erin McElroy Barker defeated Anita McNamara, 150 to 20.

In District 6, Salvatore Fazzino defeated Alexander Mirabella, 104 to 29, and Mayor Mahr defeated Phyllis Mirabella, 111 to 24. In District 7, Thomas Plante bested Jeffrey Briel, 88 to 8, while Patricia Plante defeated Vanessa Hobbs, 89 to 8.

Mayor Mahr thanked the Fanwood Democratic Committee members as well as Fanwood voters who she said "came out in historic numbers" to vote, referencing the traditionally low turnout in Primary Elections. Turnout was 10.7 percent in Cranford, 6 percent in Westfield and 7 percent in Mountainside.

"We are diverse, we are dedicated and we are here because we deserve to be here," Mayor Mahr told supporters.

Three Union County incumbent Freeholders won a nine-candidate Freeholder race in Tuesday's Democratic Primary Election.

Unofficial tallies show Freeholders Bette Jane Kowalski, 8,309; Sergio Granados, 7,997, and Rebecca Williams, 8,508, winning the race, followed by Lorraine McNeil, 1,655; Jack Molenaar, 1,447; Anthony Esposito, 1,408; Wilma Campbell, 4,170; Alex Lospinoso, 3,785, and Sylvia Turnage, 3,730. The winners will face Republicans Peter Kane of Summit and Glenn Gelband of Mountainside in November.

Incumbent County Surrogate James LaCorte of Union defeated challenger Lisa McCormick of Rahway, 8,524 to 4,609, in that Democratic race. Mr. LaCorte faces a challenge from Republican Peter Lijoi of Summit in November.

In the race for State Assembly, Democrats Lisa Mandelblatt of Westfield and her running mate, Stacey Gunderman of New Providence, received 2,470 and 2,569 votes, respectively, to defeat Jill Lazare of Summit, who garnered 1,558. Ms. Mandelblatt and Ms. Gunderman will move on to face incumbent Republican members Jon Bramnick of Westfield and Nancy

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SPEECH, SPEECH...Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr reads off the results of Tuesday's Primary Election at a victory party, held at Fabio's Bistro, for her slate of candidates.



VICTORY...Fanwood Democrats celebrate their victory Tuesday night over a Union County Democratic Committee candidate slate for seats on the Fanwood Democratic Committee at Fabio's Bistro. Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr is pictured in front holding up her hand.

Westfield Rec. Panel Votes, 7-2, to Allow Temporary Hockey Rink

By KATE BROWNE
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

WESTFIELD — Hundreds of Westfield and Garwood residents attended Monday's Westfield Recreation Commission meeting where the panel voted 7-to-2 to recommend to the town council to allow Ken Anderson, the owner of Union Sports Arena, to continue to operate a temporary ice rink at the Gumbert Park basketball court. The issue will now go to the town council, which will vote and also be responsible for drafting the terms and conditions of the contract with Union Sports Arena.

Commissioners Larry McDermott and Peter Echausse cast the dissenting votes, noting that while they fully support all youth sports including hockey, the rink's location in a residential neighborhood was inappropriate because of the noise, traffic and the aesthetics of the 40-foot-tall white tent.

The meeting, which lasted more than two hours, included passionate presentations from residents in favor and opposed to the rink. Tom Pedas, a Garwood resident asked how the commission members would feel if dozens of children, idling buses, construction vehicles, and Zambonis op-

erated outside their homes at 9 p.m. at night and several members of the Westfield Girls Hockey Team described the positive impact the rink has had on their program. Others noted that while the town's Master Plan might eventually include a permanent rink there was an immediate need for ice time and to lose the rink would negatively affect the local hockey community.

Commission Chair Gary Fox presented data on the estimated costs of installing a temporary rink at other locations in town including Tamaques Park and Memorial Field. In both cases, the annual site preparation estimates were in excess of \$150,000 and the cost of installing utilities were in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000. Commission member Russ Howell detailed the results of his interviews with the owners of several small businesses near the rink, who described minimal impact to their operations.

Commission member Ruth Malone stated that she intended to advise the town council, to consider responding to residents' concerns by requiring the rink to close earlier and to limit the hours of operations for holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The Westfield Rink Advisory Committee's report on the rink's operations noted that the town received upgrades to sidewalks and picnic areas valued at approximately \$35,600. In addition, after closure of the rink, approximately \$6,600 worth of concrete blocks and stone dust was donated to the Westfield Department of Public Works and \$1,400 worth of shrubs were planted. The town spent

\$3,600 of additional Department of Public Works expenses and incurred \$9,800 for crossing guard salaries.

Westfield residents accounted for 60 percent of public skating attendance the equivalent of 4,400 users. The index on the traffic and safety impact included 36 "calls for service" to the Westfield Police Department between November 1, 2018 and February 28, 2019. The calls included four motor-vehicle complaints, 11 parking complaints and two public service complaints that lead to 10 summons being issued. There were six noise complaints and four medical calls.

In other business, Recreation Director Don Bogardus advised that the Memorial Pool opening was a great success with positive feedback on the new splash pad, the lounge chairs, and free WIFI. Director Bogardus urged residents who wish to join the pool to contact the Recreation Department. In addition, he advised the public that Heather Re-Ferratti will be promoted to assistant recreation director. Registration for the summer Playground Program is ongoing. The program will begin on Tuesday, June 25 and end on Friday, August 9 and will include new field trips and traditional events such as the camp carnival.

The commission received updates on the renovations to Kehler Field, which are on track to be completed by the end of August and thanked all of the user groups for their flexibility and cooperation during the renovations. The Commission also approved an Eagle Scout's proposal to install wooden bike racks at Tamaques Park.



FRESH PRODUCE...The first vegetables have been picked and are ready for sale as the Scotch Plains Farmers' Market, open every Saturday, enters the busy summer months.

SP-F Board of Education Recognizes PTA Leadership

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

SCOTCH PLAINS – The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education meeting last Thursday evening honored Parent Teacher Association (PTA) leaders for their service to the district.

Regina Ganon was thanked for her role as the PTA Council president this year. It was noted that this was her first year in that role and that she would be back for the next school year.

Tracey Leone was honored for her role as the PTA president for Brunner Elementary School. She also just completed her first year as the PTA president and plans to return in the fall.

Sue Appezatto also was honored for her first year as a PTA president for Evergreen Elementary School. She noted that she would return in the fall.

Debbie Fitzgerald was recognized for her first year serving as the PTA president for School One Elementary School. She stated that she will serve again in the fall.

Dawn Smith was thanked for her second and final year as the PTA president of Park Middle School. Ms. Smith stated that she was leaving the middle

school as her youngest child was graduating from Park Middle School in a few weeks. It was noted that over the years Ms. Smith also served the PTA in the elementary schools as well.

Superintendent of Schools Margaret Hayes, Ed.D., thanked all of the PTA presidents for their hard work and dedication to the district. She stated, "tonight we celebrate and thank all the leaders of the PTA." She also said, "there were three leaders that unfortunately could not make it to the meeting."

In other business, the board unanimously approved a one-year contract award to Pomptonian Food Service Management Company of Fairfield for the period running from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020. Officials noted that this was the one and only bid received by the district.

A resolution also was unanimously approved for masonry work done on Park Middle School to Spartan Construction Inc., in South Amboy, for \$579,000. It was noted that the lowest bid came from another company in Wycoff, but that the company was not

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GREEK FEST WITH FRIENDS...The 2019 Holy Trinity Greek Fest on Friday night at Westfield's Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church was a chance to meet friends while enjoying "A Taste of Greece" with souvlaki, spanakopita, falafel, gyro and baklava as well as music and dancing.

Fanwood Council Approves \$9.6-Mil. Budget, Cap. Bond

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

FANWOOD – The borough council on Monday approved the 2019 municipal budget, with expenditures set to be lower than last year and municipal property taxes less than in 2018.

At a brief special meeting to consider the budget as well as amendments to the \$9,965,642 spending plan, which were necessitated by several recently-acquired grants for an electric vehicle charger and a new police department hiring, the council voted 5-to-0 to approve the budget, which is about \$88,000 lower than last year. Slightly more than a third of the expenditures — \$3.4 million — will go to salaries and wages. Mandated contributions to the state police and firefighter pension program will rise from about \$506,000 to \$565,000.

The budget will be funded in part by a local tax levy amounting to \$6.1 million, surplus of just over \$1 million and state aid of \$755,288. Mayor Colleen Mahr noted that municipal taxes will decline slightly for a second straight year "without sacrificing any services."

The council also approved a \$50,000 capital bond ordinance to finance various purchases, including,

according to Council President Tom Kranz, three police cars, several pieces of heavy equipment for the Public Works Department and new data terminals and cameras for police cars.

At the council's regularly-scheduled meeting afterward, Mayor Mahr addressed PSE&G's proposal to install new, higher utility poles carrying wires with three times the kilovolts as present in residential neighborhoods in nearby towns. She said she has heard of alternative routes that could include the right-of-way where PSE&G's transmission towers are located parallel to Terrill Road. She said it was important to "keep an eye on it" as the process moves forward.

Borough redevelopment consultant Liz Jeffery updated the governing body on business and development matters, noting that the new 35-unit Station Square townhome development is fully rented. She also said that Fanwood Animal Hospital had received approval to repurpose a building at 137 South Avenue into a new 6,000-square foot state-of-the-art animal hospital.

A draft redevelopment plan for the Old South Avenue West is currently under review, Ms. Jeffery said, and Mayor Mahr said redevelopment of that street "is going to be transformative."

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