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Strathmore

OBSERVER

VOL. 1 — No. 12

A PUBLICATION OF THE STRATHMORE CIVIC ASSO

OCCUPANT
19 NOBLE PL
MATAWAN NJ



VOTE YES

ASS'N. ENDORSES COUNCIL-MANAGER PLAN

ASSOCIATION MEETING
Wednesday, Nov. 11
8:30 p.m. Sharp (Veteran's Day)

NEW REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
BAYSHORE HOSPITAL CRISIS
See Page 7

Attend Association Meeting

The best way to improve Matawan Township is to vote "yes" on the proposed change to a Council-Manager Government. The 7-man Council-Manager Plan has the good features of the present system with party primaries and political elections and at the same time introduces these advantages:

1. A professional manager hired by the Council who will have adequate authority to administer the Township operations on a full-time basis.
2. A seven-man council instead of five which will broaden the representative base of the governing body.
3. Four-year terms for the councilmen with biennial elections. This will produce greater stability with administrations lasting a minimum of two years. We now have our fourth different mayor in four years, each of whom has been an opponent of the previous administration.
4. The right of "initiative" and "recall" which provides the machinery for the public to force a particular action or to veto an action of the Township through a referendum.

Township To Acquire Strathmore Water Co.

Strathmore water rates will drop by at least 25% for the Spring quarter. The Township has made an agreement with Levitt and Sons to purchase the water company for \$1,362,500. This confirms the findings of the Association's and Township's special committees, both headed by Norton Berlin, that the water company should be purchased by a Township utilities authority for \$1,400,000. Mayor Traphagen, Dan Downey, Dick Schwartz and John V. Moran, the Township's negotiators, bettered the original estimate by \$37,500.

Strathmore residents who have been paying exorbitant water rates for up to two years are grateful that the negotiations were successful. Had they failed, a long condemnation proceeding would have been necessary. The fact that a 25% rate reduction is expected instead of the 31% which had been predicted is disappointing. The additional 6% savings may be realized after a period of operation under the initial reduced rates gives the authority an income experience to use for the reevaluation of the rate schedules.

The Council Manager System has the endorsement of our own Association, the Strathmore Democratic Club, the Matawan Township Republican Club and the Taxpayers Association. The only formal opposition to the change is based mainly on the instability which might arise next year if the change is approved. It is stated that this uncertainty produced by the 7-man primary and election would prevent effective work through the year, but an examination of the committee posts at stake this year and next shows that it is possible for us to have a different mayor next year and again in 1966 with the present system unchanged. A further argument would be that if we are going to change our Government it is best to do it as soon as possible and get the transition over with.

It is worth noting that even those who oppose the change admit that a full-time administrator is vitally necessary in the Township. Consequently, they propose that the Township hire an "Business Administrator." The Charter study commission's report advised against such a step because the administrator is prohibited by State law from having any

authority of his own and thus would only be a high-salaried clerk. The contrast between weakness of the administrator and the power and authority which is clearly spelled out by State law for the Township Manager is sharp and clear — the former is no substitute, it is at best an inadequate half measure.

The strong need for a full-time Manager is shown by the fact that when Mayor Traphagen took office this year he took a three-month leave of absence from his employment in order to have time to do the work required and at the end of that three-months was compelled to extend for a second three months. The Mayor of future years must not be limited to those who can afford to make that kind of sacrifice.

Remember a "no" vote means that we may not consider any other changes for four years; a "YES" vote for the Council Manager plan is the best hope for a better Township.

Regardless of whom you vote for give them the best tools with which to do their job. The best men can only do an inadequate job with an inadequate system of government.

Lend Your Support To The Association

JOIN NOW DUES ONLY \$2.00 PER YEAR

FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS FORM TO

STRATHMORE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

Post Office Box 100

Matawan, New Jersey

Name

Address

Phone Number

I am interested in joining the following committee:

- Education
- Property and Utilities
- Taxation
- Zoning and Planning
- Public Information (The Observer)
- Streets and Safety
- Recreation
- Membership

We would appreciate your comments on the Association, its past and suggested future activities.

with the remainder paid out of general tax funds. The fraction paid out of general tax dollars is usually determined by the governing body, based upon their judgment as to what extent each particular street serves as a public thoroughfare versus access to the contiguous private properties. (I have this information from several personal and business acquaintances, who are now and have been in the past committeemen in several municipalities in New Jersey.)

may not have been performed at all without the existence of Strathmore and the tax dollars paid by Strathmore residents. This is all the more repugnant since it is a departure from usual practice.

Where were the officers of the Strathmore Civic Association when hundreds of thousands of tax dollars were being inequitably appropriated by the Township committee? Perhaps you were concerned with the \$30,000 lot staking problem.

I am informed by the members of the Matawan Township Committee that the current Township street improvement program, excluding those roads being improved by Levitt, is being financed solely out of general Township tax money. The private property that will benefit from these improvements are not being assessed at all, and have never been assessed before.

The Strathmore Civic Association cannot be on top of all problems at once. Therefore, each problem must be viewed in the proper perspective, based upon its relative importance. I submit to you that the annual disposition of hundreds of thousands of dollars by the Township Committee is of sufficient importance to merit the formation of a permanent, standing committee of the Civic Association, to maintain constant supervision and to profer constructive advise as to the most prudent and equitable disposition of these funds. I trust that the Executive Committee will extend due consideration to this proposal.

As you know the residents of Strathmore paid every cent of the cost of the streets, curbs, rights-of-way, and sidewalks in the Strathmore section of town. We are now paying a considerable portion of the cost of the street improvement program in another part of town, which

Very truly yours,
EDWARD FUCHS

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ed. Note: The Association has not had the opportunity to investigate the details of the letter or to determine their local applicability.

Dear Sir:

It was my understanding that one of the major functions of the Strathmore Civic Association is that of watching over the township officials in the exercise of their duties to insure protection of the public and private welfare of the township residents. Indeed, it was with this understanding that I became a member of the Civic Association.

In this connection the efforts of the Civic Association, especially of its elected and appointed officials, toward educating the public and urging a course of action to solve the public education problems of the Matawan school district were exemplary. Of late, however, I have come to the opinion that the officials of the Civic Association have lost sight of the forest for preoccupation with several less significant trees.

The particular forest to which I allude is the hundreds of thousands of tax dollars paid by Township residents, which are put into the hands of Township Committee for disposition in the behalf of the Township residents. It should be a purpose of the Strathmore Civic Association to attempt to insure that these tax dollars are appropriated wisely and equitably.

I have recently learned, to my utter disbelief, that the method employed by most local governments in New Jersey to finance local street improvement programs is to levy special assessments on the private properties bordering on the improved streets, since those properties are the primary beneficiaries of the improvements. Of course, this is done only for the initial street improvement, where the private properties have never previously been assessed for the same improvements. Since streets are used for the public good as well as for access to private property, the assessment is usually for some fraction of the cost,

Association Holds Spirited Session

The October meeting of the Association, held in the Matawan Regional High School, began with a spirited business meeting which resulted in the passage of one by-law amendment, the defeat of a second amendment, the endorsement of a change in the Township charter, and the authorization of funds to be used in the defense of the survey stake case. This was followed by a program featuring the Dem. and Repub. candidates for Matawan Township Committee.

Passed unanimously was an amendment permitting the Executive Committee, by a two-thirds vote of members present at any legal meeting to appropriate up to \$200 for any item which it finds to be of such a nature that it may not be held over until the next meeting. This must be followed by a report at the next general meeting of the Association.

Record Township Registration

There are 2,346 more registered voters in Matawan Township in 1964 than in 1960, the last presidential election year, according to voter registration figures released recently by Glenn L. Swader, County Commissioner of Registration.

In 1960 there were 4,448 registered voters in the township. 1964 figures show a total registration of 6,794. These figures generally reflect a county-wide increase of 18,629.

PLANS COMPLETE FOR FIRST AID BUILDING

The Matawan Township First Aid Squad announced that preliminary plans for a First Aid Building at Church Street and Lloyd Road have been approved by Levitt and Sons. The building facade will be similar to the Strathmore "ranch" in order to blend with the community. Final construction plans and other details are now underway. Construction will be financed in part by the First Aid Fund. Contributions to date are still \$3,000 short of the \$10,000 goal. Ralph Haspel, the First Aid Treasurer, asks that anyone wishing to make a further contribution to mail it to:

Matawan Township First Aid Squad
Post Office Box 412
Cliffwood, New Jersey

The fire house, which will be built on the same site is still in the planning stage.

Oiled Your Mailbox Lately?

A postman's life is not a happy one. Through all kinds of weather he trudges the long, winding Strathmore streets to deliver the mail to your door. And when he gets there he invariably finds the mail box stuck and not in working order. A little oil will go a long way. Our Postmaster, Mr. Charles Haseman, has asked us to keep our mail boxes in working order.

SURVEY STAKES

The Association membership at the October meeting voted \$650 for the legal fight to get Levitt to survey and stake every lot in Strathmore. This fight which has been going on since last December will come to a head shortly, with a trial probably in November.

Levitt is suing the Association and the Township in order to upset the order issued by the Township compelling the Levitt firm to provide the surveys which are required by a town ordinance. The legal arguments on our side were good enough to convince the Township Committee that the Association is right in demanding the surveys, but the court fight will be based primarily on legal technicalities and Levitt's contention that the deciding vote by a member of the Township Committee was void due to conflict of interest.

It is the ultimate in irony that in both this and the 15% case we have excellent arguments based on the actual points of law, while Levitt's arguments are all based on technicalities involving filing dates, preliminary versus final approval etc. which the courts often base their decisions on rather than the prime consideration that the Township law requires the surveys and the additional land we are seeking.

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WEEKEND OF OCT. 30

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WEEKEND OF NOV. 20

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QUORUM AMENDMENT DEFEATED

A proposed by-laws revision altering quorum requirements was defeated at the October meeting of the Civic Association. The proposal, submitted by the Executive Committee, aroused considerable discussion because it would have required no minimum number of members present at a meeting in order to conduct business, provided that notice was distributed at least five days prior to the meeting. The by-law amendment, in order to prevent hasty action by a small number of members, provided that a two thirds vote be required and confirmation by the Association's Executive Committee for any action taken by less than 10% or 100 of the members.

The quorum problem is a result of the very nature of the Association, which now has almost two thousand members, a great many of whom join only to show their approval and to contribute to the support of the Association. These members who are vital to the Association, if it is to have any influence, create the problem by not attending meetings. An even greater cause of the quorum problem may be that the meetings tend to be overly formal. The main work of the Association is done by the various committees, the general meeting having final authority over all projects and funds.

When attempts are made to add interesting programs to the meetings, it

generally means that there is not enough time for all the necessary business that must be conducted, or for new items of business which members might wish to bring up. When no program is offered then it is difficult to get enough members to attend.

Suggestions made by members during the debate on the quorum by-law amendment were: 1) To set a minimum of 50 members to make up a quorum, 2) To provide for mail ballots on important issues, 3) That provisions be made for a minimum number of members at least for election of officers, 4) That two types of membership be established, [a] active, and [b] supporting, with only active members being counted in calculating the 10% quorum requirement.

These suggestions are being considered, and several of them may be incorporated into a revised form of the by-law amendment which will be submitted at the November meeting.

If you have any suggestions as to how this problem may be solved, or any ideas on the by-laws, please call David Sutliff, 566 - 8367.

CHARTER STUDY

Vote YES Nov. 3

CLOWNS LOSE TO ASS'N.

The over-crowded October Association program created more than one problem, not the least of which was for the winners of the Strathmore softball league. The team, The Cambridge Clowns, was invited to the meeting to receive their trophies. Because of the many items scheduled for the evening, it was planned to present the trophies at the start of the meeting — 8:30. Unfortunately the team understood that it was to be held at 9:00.

The Clowns won their title by defeating the Ivyhill Pioneers, winners of the first seven game series of the season. The players on the victorious team are: Al Grubow, Pete Kolbrenner, Alan Lesh, Stu Lewis, Howard Plotkin, Bill Carroll, Joel Rifkin also Manny Miller, Ron Joseph, Bruno Setteducati, Lou Dambrosio, Ron Bleicher, Mort Wall, and Lonnie Zaslow.

Trees Anyone?

In case you haven't noticed lately area trees have taken on the golden hue of Fall. Some people believe that trees add to property values and in case you don't agree recent developments in the area seem to bear this out. A local newspaper carried a page one story which told a sad story of a neighboring development's loss of nearly all the newly planted trees. The Matawan Township Committee is currently drafting a Shade Tree Commission ordinance.



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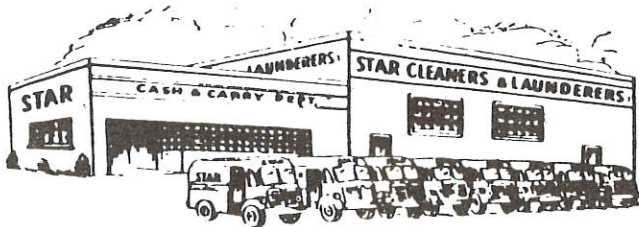
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Babe Ruth League Reports Last Season

After considerable effort on the part of many people, Strathmore entered two teams in the Bayshore Babe Ruth League last summer. The Babe Ruth League provides athletic competition during the summer months for boys between the ages of 13 to 15 inclusive. The league has been in existence for five years and is comprised of three teams from Keyport, two from Matawan Borough, two from Cliffwood, and now two from Strathmore.

Two teams were named the Strathmore Falcons, and the Strathmore Gulls. During the season just ended the Falcons had a record of 4 wins, 10 losses, and 2 ties while the Gulls had 3 wins, 11 losses, and 2 ties. A number of the boys were on both the 15 and 13 year old All-Star teams.

The people of Strathmore generously donated their cash and good wishes during the spring canvass.

Mr. Bob Shafto, President of the league, lent a mighty helping hand during the initial organization. At a recent meeting, the following people agreed to look after the functions of Babe Ruth baseball in Strathmore during 1965: Stan Kresky, Joe Walsh, Sherm Sitzman, Frank Duncan, Mrs. Mary Lou Smith, Bill Yurko.

▶ Letter to Editor ◀

Ed. Note: The following "Letter to the Editor" was received and is being printed because it reflects one view of the last Association meeting.

Last month we saw at our candidates four
 So many old members . . . we even had a quorum
 The candidates and the voters waited while by-law changes were being debated.
 The loudest detractors did strangely appear to be members whose faces we see once-a-year.
 One called the quorum amendment horrendous but none of the language did really offend us
 Some members kept calling for more discussion
 And charged that Herb Parker was purposely rushin'
 But Herb ran the meeting with the greatest decorum
 And dissenters were heard . . . he didn't ignore 'em
 For words are cheap and time is fleeting
 They'll never show up at our next meeting . . .
 Or will they?

WHAT NEXT FOR BAYSHORE HOSPITAL?

Association Program
 Wednesday, November 11

Deny Hospital Funds

The State has refused to allocate funds toward the construction of the Bayshore Community Hospital. The refusal reportedly based on a lack of need for additional hospital space in this area is a major disappointment. The present figures and projections of population growth in this area proved to us the severity of the need.

Hasty conclusions which we might come to will do little good. What is necessary is a thorough investigation and review of the facts. If new investigations warrant it, we hope an appeal or reapplication can be made. Even if the numbers today prove the State correct, it is difficult to see how existing and proposed other facilities in the area could possibly accommodate the needs of the exploding population of the Bayshore Area. We cannot imagine and we sincerely hope that the regulations governing Hill-Burton fund disbursement do not penalize those who try to be prepared for the future.

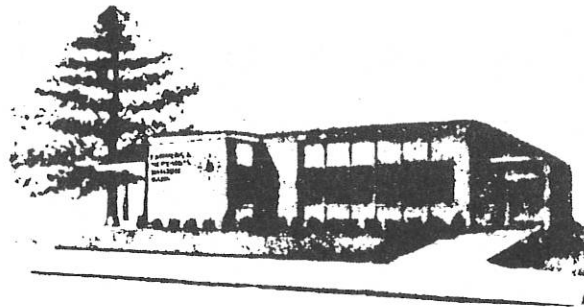
STANDING COMMITTEES

Taxation—John Skvarla	7224
Zoning—Dan Millman	8279
Education—Frank Gilbert	5720
Recreation—Carmine Caffera	8283
Streets & Safety—Sheldon Pivnick	8319
Membership—John Driscoll	8770
Property & Utilities— Steve Levine	7523

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