

\$200 Million RVSA Project Built Without Emergency Backup Power

By WAYNE BAKER
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

RAHWAY - The Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority (RVSA) board of directors discussed last Thursday the dilemma it faces after they learned that emergency backup power provisions are not included in its \$200-million expansion project. Emergency diesel generators were removed from the design at the time of value engineering, reportedly relying on gas combustion engines of the new cogeneration phase to provide the emergency backup power. However, technicians from Caterpillar, manufacturer of the combustion engines used

in the RVSA's cogeneration facility, revealed that the engines could not be put under full load until warmed up. This delay, estimated between five and 20 minutes, could result in portions of the plant being flooded in the event of a power failure.

As described by RVSA Executive Director Michael Brinker, this changes the scenario from [running] on cogeneration power with PSE&G as back up, to [running on] PSE&G power with the cogeneration plant needing to function as the source of emergency backup power. Mr. Brinker said the plant's daily intake of 30 to 80 million gallons of wastewater could

flood significant portions of the facility in minutes if power were unavailable - and that it could result in significant damage to equipment.

An additional emergency power plan was discussed involving adding a second power line to the plant. Mr. Brinker said this plan has a major flaw in that failure of a single substation might knock out all power to the facility.

At the time of value engineering, authorities noted that energy costs were high and the expectation was that a blend of digester and natural gas would be used to generate electric power. The heat from burning the gas is also to be used to dry sludge prior to shipment. The drop in energy prices means that there is again the likelihood that the plant will sometimes purchase electricity, officials said.

The RVSA board of directors said goodbye to Clark Landale, Mountainside's commissioner. Mr. Landale, who has served on the board for five years, told *The Westfield Leader* that he wanted to spend more time with his family. He said that he was asked to continue his commitment in borough politics and serving the town. Rene Dierkes will fill Mr. Landale's spot for Mountainside on the board.

Robert Luban, the commissioner from Woodbridge, saying to Mr. Landale, "You and I had some donnybrooks, but we always walked out as friends." Several others on both the board and management stated their friendship and respect for Mr. Landale.

The Township of Springfield's attorney requested a delay of the municipality's excess flow hearing scheduled for January 22. Mr. Luban said that if a delay were granted to Springfield, Woodbridge would immediately request one also. The commissioners opted to postpone the hearings to a date agreeable to all three towns involved - Springfield, Woodbridge and Roselle Park.

Jim Wancho of Paulus, Sokolowski and Sartor, the authority's consulting engineering firm, told the board he had agreed months ago to speak to the convention of Association of Environmental Authorities on the RVSA plant upgrade project, and was formally requesting permission from the board.

Mr. Wancho said he expected the project to have been completed by now. Citing some ongoing issues with contracts, the board requested Mr. Wancho have Mr. Brinker review what he was to speak about before he makes the speech.

WF Asks NJSA to Amend Library Funding Formula

By MICHAEL J. POLLACK
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD - Joining fellow municipalities in the state, such as neighboring Garwood, Westfield has called upon the New Jersey State Legislature to amend the formula by which towns fund libraries.

"Our library is an exceptional library," Town Administrator Jim Gildea told *The Westfield Leader* after Tuesday's public council meeting. "But in the past, as assessed property values increased, libraries were getting an extraordinary increase in their budget."

Mr. Gildea asked rhetorically, "In these times of financial crisis, what department do you know of in the Town



HAIL TO THE CHIEF...An estimated two million people gather in Washington, D.C., in chilly weather on Tuesday for the official swearing-in ceremony for United States President Barack Obama, the 44th President and the first African-American to be elected as leader of the nation. The mood was festive, and the ceremony was well managed, as millions throughout the world viewed the inauguration on television and the Internet.

Pres. Obama Vows to Create Jobs, Build Roads, Fix Healthcare System

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama was officially sworn in Tuesday as the nation's 44th President, and the first African-American President, before an estimated crowd of two million at the United States Capitol and the facing Washington Mall.

In explaining the challenges his administration faces, the new President said in his inaugural speech that, "Our nation is at war against a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. Our economy is badly weakened, a consequence of greed and irresponsibility on the part of some, but also our collective failure to make hard choices and prepare the nation for a new age."

The President cited home foreclosures, high unemployment, closed businesses and the high cost of healthcare.

"Today, I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America, they will be met," President Obama said.

He also focused on the worst economic crisis the nation has faced in

some 70 years. "The state of the economy calls for action, bold and swift, and we will act not only to create new jobs, but to lay a new foundation for growth," he said. "We will build roads and bridges, the electric grids and digital lines that feed our commerce and bind us together," he noted, while saying science would be used to "raise health care's quality and lower its cost."

President Obama spoke about alternative energy, saying wind and solar power need to be used "to fuel our cars and run our factories."

Another key point was on the effectiveness of government. The President said it was not so important as to whether government was "too big or small but whether it works."

"Where the answer is 'yes,' we intend to move forward. Where the answer is 'no,' programs will end," he said.

He closed by quoting President George Washington: "Let it be told the future world... that in the depth of winter, when nothing but hope and virtue could survive... that the city and the country, alarmed at one common danger, came forth to meet [it]."

"America, in the face of common dangers, in this winter of hardship, let us remember these timeless words. With hope and virtue, let us brave once more the icy currents, and endure what storms may come," President Obama said. "Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested, we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of

freedom and delivered it safely to future generations."

The reaction to his speech among New Jersey officials was positive.

State Assembly Speaker Joseph Roberts (LD-5, Camden), a Democrat, said,

"This is a thrilling and historic day that re-energizes our hope in the American dream. President Obama's inauguration is an inspiring and powerful moment that shows the phrase 'all men are created equal' isn't just words on a document, but a living example of the opportunities America can offer."

"Today also brings

New Jersey a partner in Washington who shares our commitment to a strong economy, a protected environment and quality healthcare and education for all. But while today is one of emotion and inspiration, we also must remember to heed President Obama's call to work together and share responsibility for guiding America forward. Hard work lies ahead, but by working together and taking responsibility, we can get it done."

Likewise, State Senate Republican Leader Tom Kean, Jr. (LD-21, Westfield) said, "President Obama today issued a firm warning that Americans are united against terrorists and any nation that would threaten or attack our democracy. I stand with our new President in his commitment to keeping our nation safe."

"It was also heartening to hear President Obama state that he will embrace what's working in our federal government and eliminate what doesn't. Such a common-sense strategy is refreshing, particularly to the hard-pressed taxpayers of New Jersey."



Wayne Baker for The Westfield Leader

POWER PROBLEM...Rahway Valley Sewerage Authority board members listen to the discussion of lack of emergency backup electric power in the design for the \$200 million expansion. Clark Landale, right, outgoing commissioner from Mountainside, bids goodbye to the board after five years of service. Commissioner Frank Mazzarella of Clark looks on.

100 Years of The Westfield Leader are Now Online

By DEBORAH MADISON
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD - The Westfield Memorial Library, in conjunction with *The Westfield Leader*, has placed 100 years (from 1907) of the newspaper on the Internet. These archives are searchable and available at no cost to the public.

This effort joins that of its sister newspaper, *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*, which was placed online in 2006, with archives going back to 1963. Both newspapers' archives are available at goleader.com/archives, which has links to the libraries - archive.wmlnj.org and thejointlibrary.org/archives.

The *Leader* project was achieved by the concerted efforts of newspaper staff and Westfield Library staff, including the library's executive director, Phil Israel, technology librarian Jeffrey Bennet and head reference librarian Jennifer Schulze.

The project was born in 1997, when *Leader* and *Times* Publisher Horace Corbin began researching the technology for making the transfer from microfilm to a digital format.

When discretionary funding of \$29,500 became available to the library to pursue the project, the team spent a year of research to determine the best technology and to find companies to do the job. Innovative Document Imaging of East Brunswick was chosen to convert microfilm to digital format. ELB Internet Services in Westfield, headed by Pete Billson, indexed the records and installed the work onto a new computer server at the library. The system went online

January 14, 2009.

New Jersey Press Association Executive Director John O'Brien told *The Leader* that "this was quite an accomplishment" and that he did not know of any other weekly newspapers in New Jersey that had gone this far.

According to documents from the New Jersey State Library from assistant director Margaret Nizolek, there are numerous weekly newspapers that have digitized their microfilm archives from the late 1970s to the present. And, there are national newspapers, such as *The New York Times*, which has digital archives going back to the 1850s. However, some newspapers charge a fee for archives older than 14 days, while the entire archive of *The Leader* is free. According to documents from Ms. Nizolek, there are no other New Jersey weekly newspapers that had an Internet archive going as far back as *The Leader's*.

"The trend of transferring newspapers from microfilm to digital format is becoming more prevalent," Mr. O'Brien said. "Ten years ago it was just an idea that many newspapers were discussing, because at that time, the technology was new and cost prohibitive," he said.

Having the newspaper digitally archived offers the convenience of accessing the information from any computer as opposed to having to go to the library to view a specific reel of microfilm. Mr. Israel pointed out. Also, digitally archived news can be searched by keywords, making it easier than scrolling through reels of microfilm.

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Benjamin B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader

MANY YEARS AGO...The Westfield Memorial Library staff last week reviews its success in digitizing 100 years of archives of *The Westfield Leader* and placing them online, free to the public. Pictured, from left to right, are: Executive Director Phil Israel, Head Reference Librarian Jennifer Schulze and Technology Librarian Jeffrey Bennet. See story on this page.

Gatherers Honor MLK Jr. Legacy, Usher in Obama

By MICHAEL J. POLLACK
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

WESTFIELD - A procession of people, representing all races and ages, walked from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial at the South Avenue circle to St. Paul's Episcopal Church on snowy streets Monday.

Some spent the walk rekindling old acquaintances or making new ones; others joined in humming "We Shall Overcome," the famous Civil Rights Movement protest song.

Before departing on the walk, gatherers said a prayer, thanking Dr. King for the "strength and vision" he supplied to those who continue to "progress" in fighting for equal rights.

The prayer also beseeched President Barack Obama to lead with "truth and justice."

Following the walk, and once inside the church, parishioners and guests took part in the 22nd annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Commemoration Service. (See remarks, page 10).

Reading the litany of commemoration, Thelma Smith, of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Association, said Dr. King envisioned "the ultimate freedom, the freedom achieved in struggle, the freedom reached in brotherhood... the freedom inspired by the cry of a people, the freedom free of hate, the freedom full of love."

She later read, "He came into our lives when the yearning of people to be free had turned their attention to justice. For justice and only justice, we shall follow, that we may live and inherit the land which the Lord our God gives us."



Michael J. Pollack for The Westfield Leader

FIT FOR A KING...Walkers travel down East Broad Street from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial at the South Avenue circle to St. Paul's Episcopal Church. Gatherers hummed "We Shall Overcome" along the route, as they honored the legacy of Dr. King and prayed for President Barack Obama to lead with integrity.

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