



THE JAMESTOWN PRESS

PRST STD
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 5
Jamestown, RI

www.JamestownPress.com

Volume 20, Issue 17

A weekly newspaper serving Conanicut Island

Thursday, August 23, 2007

Vote Tuesday on public works garage

By Donna K. Drago

There is just one question on next Tuesday's ballot and it asks voters to either approve or reject the construction and funding of a highway garage on property at upper Taylor Point.

Specifically, the question reads: "Shall an act, passed at the 2007 session of the General Assembly, entitled 'An act authorizing the Town of Jamestown to finance the construction of a highway garage at a site to be acquired from the Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority and adjacent town land, and to issue not more than \$1,500,000 bonds and notes therefore be approved?'"

Canvassing clerk Karen Montoya said on Aug. 28, two polling sites will be open from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. Residents who live in District 1 will vote at the community center and those in Districts 2 and 3 will cast ballots at the Melrose Avenue School, Montoya said. She noted that when two polling places are used, typically one is the Lawn

See "Vote" on page 13



Chowing down

An old-fashioned pie-eating contest was just one event at the teen center sponsored, Bands at the Bunker Family Picnic, held at Ft. Wetherill Aug. 13.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

Planners want community input

By Michaela Kennedy

Architect Donald Powers introduced his consulting team for the town's zoning ordinance update project at the Planning Commission's Aug. 15 meeting. The team proposed a sequence of events designed to collect community input that will help mold zoning amendments.

Focus on community outreach is essential for maximizing public awareness and input, Powers said. The outreach includes creating a project Web site, and targeting stakeholders with vested interests, such as a property, home, or business owners. The consultant also noted that educational materials on modern zoning designs would be provided. Powers recommended two meetings before the charrette, to begin the dialogue process with residents.

The team expressed hope of involving people in a guided conversation through a community visioning meeting. "It's a way to raise the level of the conversa-

See "Planning" on page 18

Water and sewer rates to climb in next billing cycle

By Tom Shevlin

Jamestown residents will be paying more for water they are not using under two budgets adopted by town councilors sitting as the Water and Sewer Commission on Monday.

Facing increased debt service payments for the town's recent water and sewer upgrades and declin-

ing water revenue, town officials have been faced with a curious paradox. As the town successfully realizes its goal to conserve water with residents' water use dropping, the town has experienced a noticeable drop in revenue leaving gaps in the town's water and sewer budgets.

That means island water cus-

tomers will see their rates rise for the second time in just over three years. The town last increased water and sewer rates in May 2004.

According to Town Administrator Bruce Keiser, water revenue has declined somewhat significantly in recent years. As a result, Jamestown ratepayers will experience a 15- percent rate increase

for the minimum charge and a 23-percent increase for excess water use in their water and sewer bills this year.

That should come as no surprise to residents who approved the funding of various improvements to the town's water infrastructure, including the installation of a town pipeline and the rehabilitation of

the water treatment plant.

"We all knew this was coming" Councilman Julio DiGiando said.

Under the current rate structure, Jamestown water customers currently pay a flat fee of anywhere between \$183.67 and \$1,524.61 per year depending on their meter

See "Rates" on page 18



Eye catching beauties

The 30th annual Fools' Rules Regatta included some 65 boats of all shapes and sizes competing for bragging rights. See the story on page 20.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten