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Final council meeting for Long, likely Schnack

By Tom Shevlin

Business went on as usual at this week's council session as Town Council President David Long presided over his final meeting.

"Last one?" an audience member asked before the meeting began. Long replied with a nod and a smile.

Long was typically business-oriented through the course of what was a diverse council agen-

da. At the conclusion of the meeting, the outgoing council president took a few moments to reflect on his time on the council.

"After 8 1/2 years, it's been a pleasure and a privilege," Long said. "A lot of good things have been accomplished." One of those things, he said, was the council's decision to hire Town Administrator Bruce Keiser.

Keiser replied in kind. Speaking See "Council" on page 11

Town Council election vote recount today

By Tom Shevlin

Jamestown voters may have gone to the polls last week, but the election isn't over for one council candidate.

Michael Schnack, who narrowly lost reelection last week, has exercised his right to a recount.

Last Tuesday, 1,694 voters turned out to cast their votes in Jamestown's municipal elections. Schnack, who received 774 votes, was the only incumbent up for re-

election not to win one of the five council slots. He trailed fellow incumbent Barbara Szepatowski by 28 votes, or 1.6 percent of the total votes cast. According to Rhode Island election laws, in a race where more than one candidate is selected and 5,000 or fewer votes are cast, any candidate who falls within 2 percent or 50 votes, whichever is fewer, of the next highest vote get-

See "Recount" on page 8



Rocky rescue

Members of Jamestown's fire and ambulance squads rescued a man who fell on the rocks at Beavertail State Park on Monday morning. The North Smithfield man suffered a broken lower leg in the fall and was taken to Newport Hospital.

Photo by Andrea von Hohenleiten

School special education staff welcomes parents to open house

By Michaela Kennedy

Melrose Avenue School was the venue Tuesday evening for the second annual open house presented by the Jamestown Special Education Local Advisory Committee. Resource teachers, case managers and therapists met with parents for presentations and conversations about the educational support system.

At the Nov. 13 meeting, SELAC co-chairwoman Donna Perry introduced new staff members and encouraged questions. "This is really the only time during the year when the parents can get a one-on-one meeting with all of the staff," she said. The open house also provided a platform for the administration to communicate state and federal regulation changes that affect the district, such as school aid.

Perry stressed vigilance where legislation was concerned. "We need to be aware of what's happening at the state level. All the good intentions don't mean anything if there are no dollars," she added.

Robert Fricklas, the new director of Pupil Services and Special Education, noted that the open house was an important key for parents as they navigate the special education process. He also stressed the need for awareness of events happening statewide that would directly affect local school

programs. He mentioned two public hearings slated to review the proposed regulation changes from the Rhode Island Board of Regents. New regulations may mean larger class sizes and less financial support. One of the hearings is scheduled for Dec. 3, at 6 p.m., at South Kingstown High School. "Comments are critical to change the Regents' mind," Fricklas said.

Perry urged public input at the hearing, and noted that SELAC members were encouraged to attend.

Fricklas also noted that, starting in the 2007-2008 school year, all educational agencies must provide data on state performance assessments. The schools must report on nine target areas, and focus on solving weaknesses in any areas that fall short of meeting the state standards. Some of the points the administration are required to address are parent involvement, transition to high school, and general supervision.

Ray Marcotte, the newly-appointed psychologist for the district, said that after only six weeks on the job, his job is "still being refined." He praised the close relationship between teachers and parents on the island, and commented on the strength of the team approach used by the educational and support staff. "Decisions are not left up to one person," he said.

Terry Kahn, speech pathologist for the Jamestown schools, outlined speech and language therapy used to help students overcome communication disorders. Teacher-oriented tasks, small groups in classrooms and collaborations with the pathologist and occupational therapist were some of the approaches explained by Kahn. "I use the hybrid method most," she noted, referring to a technique of modifying a student's environment to elicit positive responses.

Kahn emphasized that communication between home and school was important. Students have a folder that goes back and forth between the school and parents, informing them of progress and problems. "Homework is included in the folders," she added.

Occupational therapist Sharon McNeil also presented a description of her work with people and children "to help them be as independent as possible." She offers support in academic and non-academic areas, with a focus on simple skills. "We touch every aspect of a child's life," she noted. "Sometimes because of a disability or injury, they need a little extra help." McNeil also teaches visual motor skills that facilitate other skills such as writing and computer use.

When asked if a general school

See "Open house" on page 8



Home of the brave

A rifle squad comprised of members of the island's VFW and American Legion posts prepares to give a salute at Sunday morning's Veterans Day ceremonies.

Photo by Vic Richardson