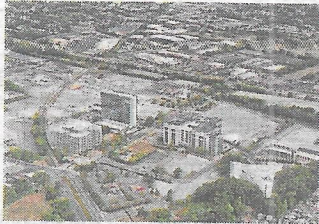


LETTERS



Aerial image of the Hoffmann-La Roche facility in Nutley and Clifton.

COURTESY OF PRISM CAPITAL PARTNERS AND ON3

the land assessment. It can be negotiated up to a 30-year period. However, under a payment in lieu of tax agreement the school board does not receive any tax-

Payment in lieu of taxes

A payment in lieu of taxes is an agreement the city enters into with a developer in which the developer would only pay a small portion of the actual amount of taxes due on the improvements (building) and pays the full taxes due on

es on the assessment of the building. The city gets 95 percent of the negotiated payment and the county gets the other 5 percent.

Take the payment in lieu of tax agreement this council entered into on part of the old Hoffman La Roche property where the Seton Hall Medical School is located. (New block and lot numbers were made on this entire property in order to divide it into different payment in lieu of tax agreements.)

This is a five-year agreement which began in 2017 and where the payment remains flat or the same over this period. (Wouldn't you like for your taxes to remain flat?) Under this agreement the developer will only pay \$797,292.50 on the building instead of \$1.7 million (this year) if it was fully taxed. The city keeps 95 per-

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cent of the \$797,292 or \$757,527 and the county gets the remaining 5 percent. The school board gets nothing and basically is out \$800,190 they would have received this year if the building was fully taxed (46.57 percent of \$1.7 million).

The developer also pays the full taxes due on the land assessment which this year is \$32,432.96. The school board only gets \$15,104 or the 46.57 percent of the land portion.

I sincerely hope this explains how a payment in lieu of taxes work. The council makes decisions which will impact our lives for years to come and impact the school board as well. The

school board was not involved in these negotiations and should have been since they were impacted by this decision. The council just entered into another payment in lieu of tax agreement for 30 years with the developer of the Quest building.

As I have been saying, elections have consequences. This is just one consequence.

Mary Sadrakula
Clifton

Clifton Journal

9/14/18

LETTER

Passaic Valley Water Commission salaries

Do you earn \$312 per hour? This is what each of the seven appointed water commissioners to the Passaic Valley Water Commission earn.

Each commissioner's annual salary is \$7,500 plus full health care benefits, including pension benefits. The seven commissioners are paid to attend one

meeting per month. A review of the minutes which were found on the PVWC website show these meetings are held at 9:30 a.m. and last less than two hours – closer to an hour and a half. So, basically each of the seven commissioners are paid \$625 per meeting, or more than \$312 per hour. The next monthly meeting is

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Sept. 19 at 9:30 a.m. (don't these commissioners have full-time jobs?).

The seven commissioners include two from Clifton (Gerald Friend and Councilman Joseph Kolodziej); Idia Rodriguez, Rigo Sanchez, Robert L. Vannoy, Jeffrey Levine, and Ronald Van Rensalier. These commissioners are appointed by the owners of PVWC - Clifton, Passaic and Paterson. Therefore, the Clifton Council appoints our two commissioners for a term of three years.

No wonder we pay an outrageous amount of money to Passaic Valley Water Commission. Look carefully at your next bill and notice the "service charge" on your bill – before you use one drop of water. This service charge can exceed the cost of the water you used and ranges from \$70.47 per quarter for a 5/8-inch meter to \$176.16 per quarter for a one-inch meter.

These outrageous service fees have

troubled me for a long time. No one can tell me why those of us with a one-inch pipe pay a service fee almost two and a half times more than those customers with a 5/8 meter. According to the many engineers I know, having a larger size pipe only means your pressure is greater. To add injury to insult, PVWC continues to include notices with our bills about the lead content in the drinking water.

In 2017, when Clifton had an opening to a commissioner position, Donald Kowal submitted his application and publicly stated at a council meeting that he would donate his Passaic Valley Water Commission salary to the John Samra Memorial Fund. It fell on deaf ears to this council and Councilman Kolodziej was appointed.

If I am elected to the Clifton Council, I assure you I will take a proactive lead and speak out against this abuse and wasteful spending. As I have been saying, elections have consequences and this is yet another consequence.

Mary Sadrakula
Clifton

LETTER

Lack of dialogue between the speakers and the council

Clifton, the city we all love, has many problems facing it; not the least of which is that our citizens have lost faith in some of our elected officials and unresponsive boards.

Apathy is at an all-time high and few residents speak out at city council meetings. Those that do speak out at meetings have faced tongue lashings or eye rolling by some of the council members; some are too busy on their cellphones to pay attention to residents' concerns; or residents leave with no answers to their questions. Lack of dialogue between speakers and the council is apparent.

If elected to the City Council, one of my goals is to increase community involvement in our local government by changing the format of the public portion of

the City Council meetings. Many municipalities like Park Ridge conduct the public portion of their meetings as a true discussion time between speakers and the elected governing body. Anyone speaking at the microphone is free to ask questions and each council member responds if they wish and the public can ask follow-up questions. This format allows questions and follow-up questions to be answered immediately without speakers having to wait the two weeks between council meetings to have to return to ask follow up questions or get answers.

In fact, some municipalities have two public portions of their council meetings – one for old business and one for new business. Clearly, more public involvement is needed at our local level. Additionally, I firmly believe none of our city council members

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should be using mobile devices to communicate with anyone during both the work session or public council meetings. I will push to eliminate cellphone use by any council member during the

meetings with an ordinance prohibiting this use.

I firmly believe in the saying "government for the people and by the people." Often times our elected officials have forgotten they work for the people. Our voices need to be heard.

Mary Sadrakula
Clifton

