

Last Week's Weather		
	Hi	Lo
Wed.	87	58
Thurs.	76	68
Fri.	73	58
Sat.	80	52
Sun.	82	61
Mon.	82	56
Tues.	75	70

# Courier Freeman

A Park Newspaper

COURIER & FREEMAN, POTSDAM, N.Y.—TUESDAY, AUG. 8, 1978

24 PAGES

Potsdam School District voters are reminded to vote on the proposed budget today until 9 p.m. at the high school.

## D. A. Says 'No Chance' For New PURA Probe

BY BETSY BAKER  
There is virtually no chance that the investigation into Potsdam Urban Renewal Agency matters will be reopened on the state level, following a federal grand jury's decision to return no indictments in the case, according to St. Lawrence County District Attorney William Power.

In a telephone interview on Monday, Power told the Courier and Freeman that "because of the long delay in the actions of the federal authorities" it is unlikely that there will be any further action on the State level.

The federal grand jury in Syracuse, which has been investigating Potsdam Urban Renewal Agency matters since May, 1977 returned "no bill" in the case on July 20 of this year. During the course of that investigation former employees of the Urban Renewal Agency, members of the Agency and others testified before the grand jury. Among those known to have testified are former Agency members Luther Gulick, Mayor Ruth Garner, Joseph Calipari, former Agency chairman Gordon Theisen; former Agency Executive Director Ro Vaccaro and former Agency employee Floyd Ramsey; Robert Riggs and Harry Bronson.

The federal investigation into urban renewal matters reportedly began in 1974. At that time Debra Niles Walsh, now of Colorado, a former Agency relocation director had reportedly talked to state BCI investigators and to District Attorney Power about Agency matters.

Possibly because large sums of federal money were involved, the investigation was turned over to federal authorities. Power said that his office took depositions from individuals and provided information to federal authorities in the matter. The FBI was also involved in the investigation.

Throughout the federal investigation Assistant U.S. Attorney Arthur Chalski refused to discuss the investigation, or to say how many witnesses had been called. However, the investigation has included the matter of the "Harold Clark" checks, checks written to a fictitious contractor, and the matter of the sale of the former St. Lawrence Creamery building by former Agency chairman William Benjamin to Potsdam businessman Harry Bronson. The investigation might also have included relocation payments made by the former Agency to individuals and businesses for urban renewal relocation, real estate and other related expenses.

In a 1975 audit, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in its findings had disallowed a total of \$264,665.17 and questioned a total of \$149,900 in payments made by the former Agency.

All but a few of those findings have

been sustained, which means that the monies must be repaid. Disallowed and sustained relocation payments total \$115,934.15. These payments were 100 percent federal funds and must be repaid out of other than federal funds. The Urban Renewal Agency has reduced the amount of the indebtedness by \$37,000 through further documentation of the findings.

The amount of the debt remaining is not known because the Agency is still awaiting word from HUD on its efforts to document additional findings.

In June of this year, letters requesting repayment of the disallowed monies were sent to individuals and businesses named in the audit. The Agency has received some replies to those letters, but the replies have not been made public. Ben Carroll, of the Syracuse law firm of Carroll, Carroll and Butz, who is handling the matter for the Agency, was out of town at presstime and could not be reached for comment.

There is also the possibility of civil court action to recover the monies, according to Chalski. It has been reported that such action may already have begun.



STUDY SCENE—State Police Captain Fred Teeple of Malone examines a pile of steel at the scene where the body of a 16-year-old youth was discovered Tuesday morning. At left is the boy's bicycle, placed upright by police. Speculation was that the youth had ridden into the steel, fatally cutting himself.

## Body Of Youth, 16, Found At Work Site

The body of Richard Grover, 16, Reagan Road, Route 1, Winthrop, son of County Planner Richard Grover was discovered at about 9:15 a.m. today (Tuesday) at the site of construction of the Triple A Lumber building on outer Market Street.

Police said that the youth's body was found lying face up, nude except for shoes and socks, on the asphalt pavement at the rear of the construction site.

The body was found lying near a crane that workmen said had not been used since last Wednesday. Lying about 30 yards away was a men's 10-speed bicycle. The bicycle was found lying near a pile of structural steel that was being used to erect the pre-fabricated building. The boy's clothing was lying in a pile on the other side of the pile of steel.

As of presstime today, police were speculating that the death had been the result of an accident.

County Coroner Dr. Hugh Frame ruled that the death was accidental and due to massive hemorrhaging. No autopsy was ordered.

Reports indicated that there was a severe laceration to the chin and neck.

Also called to the scene was Assistant District Attorney Richard Dudley. He said that it appeared that the death had

been an accident.

Initial speculation from police led to a theory that the boy had been riding his bicycle and had struck the pile of metal, perhaps in the darkness. They theorized that he fell into the sharp angle-iron and received the cut, then made his way toward the crane where his clothes lay.

At the scene were uniformed state police and BCI investigators, as well as Potsdam Village Police. The investigation was turned over to state police, since the scene is just past the village limits. State Police Captain Fred Teeple of Malone arrived at the scene shortly before 10 a.m.

The body was found by construction worker Raymond Johnson, Heuvelton, who is employed by Kirby Construction, Ogdensburg, contractors for the building. Johnson said that he at first saw the blood on the steel, but did not see the body until after he had called a co-worker over to take a look.

Police revealed that the boy was last seen at home about 2:30 p.m. Monday, embarking on his bicycle for Potsdam. Police also revealed that he was last seen by friends at an apartment in the village about 11 p.m. Monday night.

The body was taken to the Warner Funeral Home. Funeral arrangements were incomplete at presstime.

## Voting Today On Potsdam School Budget

BY DAVE EDICK

Little discussion arose over the newly-revised Potsdam Central School District 1978-79 budget at a sparsely-attended 30-minute public hearing in the High School cafeteria Monday night. Public voting on the proposed \$4,652,387 spending plan is being held today (Tuesday) in the High School auditorium from 1-9 p.m.

The new budget, adopted July 18 by the School Board of Education, represents a 3.07 percent increase over last year's total expenditure of \$4,489,545. The initial spending plan of \$4,755,792 went down to defeat, 1,091-782, in the June 14 voting after coming under heavy criticism at previous public hearings. Should the new budget also be rejected, the district will continue the academic year under an austerity budget which it automatically reverted to July 1.

Cutbacks were made in several departments of the district's new spending plan, the largest single cut coming under instruction where the budget allowance was sliced from \$2,337,177 to \$2,249,460. The decrease was made possible by the combination of resignations, the elimination of four teaching positions and the reduction of a half-time nurse.

The eliminated teaching position, however, will not cause any dramatic increase in classroom size, according to Superintendent Dr. Carlos Gutierrez who outlined the new budget before less than 15 persons at Monday night's hearing.

"It's no secret that enrollment figures for the district are declining," Gutierrez said. "There is no question that the

elimination of these positions could cause some less individual time, say for essays, a teacher will be able to spend with the student. However, this new budget will still allow the district to operate its schools with no major reduction in quality."

A decrease of \$27,842 was made through instructional cuts at the Elementary School by the resignation of second grade teacher Karen Shield and third grade teacher Judy Ostrowski. Two teaching positions were also eliminated at the high school through the retirement of social studies teacher William Pelotte and the reassignment of Stephen Andriak to an existing position at the Middle School. Budgeting at the High School was cut by \$42,031 and by \$17,862 at the Middle School through the reduction of the half-time nurse.

Tax rates will show a slight increase under the newly-proposed budget, the largest single-area hike to come for Stockholm residents. According to early estimates by the board, the revised assessed rate per \$1,000 of property valuation for Stockholm residents will be \$154.30 compared to \$137.96 last year.

Under the defeated budget, the valuation would have been \$162.76.

Tax rates for Potsdam residents will be approximately \$96.37 under the proposed spending plan and \$99.70 in Pierrepont. Potsdam's school tax rate last year was \$85.50.

"After a lot of hard work and study by the board, this budget has been cut right to the minimum," Gutierrez said. "We're also keeping our fingers crossed that some of our estimates, such as some items under undistributed expenses, won't be necessary to the maximum."

"The board certainly hopes this budget goes through. Many extra hours have been spent in putting this together. Next time around, though, we aren't going to wait. We're going to get started on the 1979-80 budget in the fall. We hope this next time to avoid any last-minute crises in the spring."

## Residence For Alcoholics Proposed For This Area

Chronic alcoholics who have failed treatment through a number of programs in St. Lawrence County would have still another chance at sobriety if a facility now in the planning stages were to become a reality.

The facility, a community residence for alcoholics, would provide long-term supervised care for chronic alcoholics in St. Lawrence County.

The home, envisioned as a privately-run, non-profit venture to be funded in part with state grants, would be set up somewhere in the Potsdam or Canton area, according to tentative plans.

The group that wants to set up the residence is known as North County Transitional Living Services, Inc. The group has applied to the Central New York Health Systems Agency (CNYHSA) for a review of the proposed project.

The director of the Northern District of the CNYHSA, Peter J. Flieri, said last week that North County Transitional Living Services is a relatively new organization composed of members of related agencies, such as the St. Lawrence County Mental Health Services.

Twelve beds would be provided in the proposed facility. Three of them would be held for short-term clients, as a crisis intervention facility. The remaining nine would be for live-in residents who might stay as long as ten years in an effort to cope with their alcoholism.

The goal of the project is to stop "the revolving door syndrome," according to Richard Mooers, who is reviewing the application for the CNYHSA. Often, other agencies established to help alcoholics see the same people over and over again, Mooers said.

According to Mooers, the facility would be operated on a referral basis, with residents entering after being referred by other agencies. Residents would remain in the home voluntarily "It's not a jail," he said. Residents may have failed treatment at the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center alcohol referral unit, for example.

The anticipated budget for the facility would be \$83,280. Of that amount, it is hoped that \$55,980 would be funded through a grant from the New York State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse.

The remainder of the budget would be made up by money provided by the residents, either from portions of their social security allotments and home relief payments or by direct fees paid on a not-yet-established schedule.

As it is currently intended, the home would be staffed by live-in houseparents who would be responsible for all domestic responsibilities of the home.

Project director for the proposal is John Murphy, who is a fulltime staff member of the St. Lawrence County Mental Health Services, located in

Potsdam.

The CNYHSA is reviewing the application as part of its planning function. The public is invited to attend the meeting at which this project and two others will be reviewed. That meeting is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Aug. 14 at the E.J. Noble Hospital, Gouverneur, in the Kinney Nursing Home Dining Room.

The two other applications that will be reviewed at that time are a \$24,000 grant application by the Lewis County Mental Health and Alcoholism Services for second year funding for the position of Alcoholism Services Coordinator. The grant would come from the New York State Division of Alcoholism. The other application is from Mercy Hospital in Watertown. The hospital is seeking eighth year federal funding in the amount of \$622,171 for continuing 75 fulltime equivalent positions to carry out its programs in the eighth year of operation.

## NRUC Offices Expected To Get Approval

NORWOOD—Approval of a zoning change that would allow the National Railway Utilization Corporation to install offices in the former St. Philip's Episcopal rectory is expected to be officially granted this week, according to Joseph Mariano, chairman of the Zoning Board.

The railway company (NRUC) had asked for a variance to change the use of the rectory from residential to commercial in order to accommodate their offices.

A public hearing was held last Wednesday night on the matter.

Mariano said that the company would begin immediately renovating the large brick house on the corner of Park and Main Streets. Plans had called for the conversion of the downstairs into office space and the upstairs into either apartments or rooms that would be used by company personnel who were visiting the area. Plans also include the installation of a parking lot.

About 10 persons are expected to be employed at the office. The NRUC offices are currently with the Ogdensburg Bridge and Port Authority in Ogdensburg.

## Blair Charges Politics Behind Proposed Merger

CANTON — A county department head has fired another salvo at a proposed plan to merge four offices into a single department.

Ray P. Blair, coordinator of the Human Resources Office, has charged that the proposed merger would constitute "coercive conformity." She has further contended that the consolidation plans are politically motivated, with a primary aim to oust county planner Richard Grover.

Ms. Blair criticized the plan in a letter to the county's human services committee, which met on Monday.

County department heads met with Administrative Assistant William P. Collins last month to discuss a proposed organizational plan for the merger. Collins' proposal was met with little enthusiasm, and the department heads have been directed to draw up their own plans, for another meeting with Collins Thursday.

The four departments which would be merged are the economic development office, planning office, environmental management, and human resources.

After reading the three-page statement to the committee, Ms. Blair asked for direction. She listed the various projects underway in her office, and asked the somewhat rhetorical question: "Do I now set aside these tasks to spend hours discussing the proposed merger, producing reports and

organizational charts and preparing alternative budgets?"

"The committee, which generally had little comment on her statements, decided to hold off on any recommendation until the Human Resources Commission meets this morning. But it moved that the chairman of the committee, Potsdam legislator Francis Healey, be included in the ad hoc committee formed to

examine the merger.

One of the claims made by Ms. Blair in the letter was that Collins' organizational plan included a \$3,000 salary increase for William Cook, who would, according to the plan, head the combined departments. According to reports, however, the salary increase was discussed during a legislative executive session, and was informally approved. But the salary increase reportedly is unrelated to the proposed consolidation.

In the letter, Ms. Blair said that "To propose at this time merging the Human Resources Office and Commission into a Planning and Development Department makes no sense in terms of improving the management, organization or open policy making of county government."

No one, she declared, "has been able to explain this proposed merger in terms of improving government operations or saving taxpayers' money. There are, however, no shortage of political motives for this merger."

## PASNY Withdraws Request For Microwave Towers

BY HAL STOKES

The state Power Authority (PASNY) has withdrawn its application to construct a microwave communications system that would be used in connection with the 765 kV powerline.

Stating that a review of the microwave installations by the Public Service Commission would present too great a delay, the Power Authority has withdrawn its request "for the present time."

In letters from PASNY General Counsel Lewis R. Bennett to both the Federal Communications Commission and to the Public Service Commission, the Power Authority states that it will withdraw the application for the towers. The letters say that PASNY will rely on substitute means of communications "at least initially."

The Power Authority had sought to install seven microwave towers to establish a line of communications along the path of the 765 kV line. On Sept. 12, 1977, PASNY filed seven applications with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to operate private operational-fixed microwave radio services, which would act as support for the high power line. Two of the seven 370 foot high towers would have been built within the Adirondack Park.

On March 7, 1978, the Public Service Commission (PSC) ordered that public hearings be held with respect to environmental and other considerations involving construction of the towers.

The PSC maintained that they were indeed entitled to review the microwave installations because the towers fell under the category of "associated equipment" connected to the 765 kV line. The PSC had conducted an extensive review of the installation of the power line, and they were also empowered to review installation of equipment associated with the line.

On the other hand, PASNY claimed that the tower system would not be considered "associated equipment". PASNY objected to the PSC taking a

regulatory role in the matter and, without submitting any additional environmental impact information, petitioned the FCC to grant a temporary construction permit.

The FCC responded to PASNY on April 11 by requesting additional information in connection with the microwave service applications.

Meanwhile, the PSC continued to maintain that hearings on the system must be convened. On July 5, the PSC issued an order dismissing PASNY's request for reconsideration of the matter.

In withdrawing their application with the FCC, PASNY has apparently left the door open for the possibility that they would reapply for the license in the future, both in asking that the license request be dismissed "without prejudice," and in stating that they would make do with substitute facilities, "at least initially."

But should PASNY later reapply for a license for the towers, the PSC would again maintain that they have jurisdiction over the matter, according to PSC public information officer Francis Rivett. "If they renew, we will take whatever action is required," he told the Courier and Freeman Friday.

The St. Lawrence County League of Women Voters played a key role throughout the dispute over the towers. In December 1977, an officer of the League obtained copies of the license applications submitted by PASNY from the FCC office. Following a study of the application for a permit to construct a tower on Vrooman Ridge in the Town of Fine, the League submitted a letter to the FCC objecting to the proposed tower location and to the Environmental Impact Narrative Statement. The League requested that the FCC take an active role to ensure that a more complete statement be prepared by PASNY and that opinions on the matter be sought from the Adirondack Park Agency and the PSC.

Later, when PASNY objected to the PSC's role in reviewing the request, the League restated its position to the FCC.

## Mid-August Construction Date For Motel Will Not Be Met

Developers of the Holiday Inn motel and restaurant complex proposed for downtown Potsdam probably will not begin construction on the project by mid-August, as they had hoped.

## Town Board Meets

The Potsdam Town Board will meet at 7:30 p.m. tonight (Tuesday) in the Potsdam Town Office building. Among items on the agenda is the establishment of a fee to pay town constables who have been ticketing cars parked in the fire lane at the Potsdam Plaza. The town board decided about two months ago to crack down on drivers who park in the fire lane at the shopping center, and instructed constables to ticket violators.

## No Bids Awarded

## For PURA Site Work

No bids were awarded for completion of an urban renewal site improvement project in Potsdam following a special meeting of the Potsdam Urban Renewal Agency last Friday.

Bids were opened by Agency chairman Norma Thayer and turned over to Joseph Tisdell Associates, Canton, consultants for the project who will study the bids and make a recommendation to the Agency. A special meeting to consider the bids was slated for 1 p.m. Tuesday afternoon.

Apparent low bidder for the project, with a bid of \$182,900, was Fiocco and Riley Construction Co., Inc., of Canton. The only other bidder was Santoro Taroso of Syracuse, with a bid of \$192,120.

The work involves construction of sidewalks, curbs and storm sewers, as well as road paving in the urban renewal project area, which includes parts of Hamilton, Bay, Elm, Beal and Munson Streets. The site improvements are part of the Agency's share of the urban renewal project.

The site improvements were originally part of the contract between the Urban Renewal Agency and JVL Construction Co. of Watertown. The Agency terminated the contract with JVL in August, 1977, because of delays in the completion of the work. That matter has been the subject of litigation between the Agency and JVL.