

# RECORD REVIEW

The official newspaper of the towns of Bedford, Pound Ridge and Lewisboro

**COVID-19**

## Latimer: 'Clearly a surge'

By TODD SLISS

The current surge in COVID-19 cases in Westchester has upended expectations that warmer weather and high vaccinations rates would spell relief from the 27-month-old pandemic, County Executive George Latimer said at a press conference Monday.

Confirmed cases in the county have grown more than five-fold since mid-March, but, in a bright spot, hospitalizations and fatalities have remained at moderate levels, he noted.

"There's no question we are now in another surge of COVID," Mr. Latimer said. "We had hoped that COVID was behind us and I think most people felt that when the omicron surge withered out at the end of January into February, that we were past the worst of it." He noted that during this time period, he and Ken Jenkins, deputy county executive, both came down with the virus, exhibiting "very mild symptoms or no symptoms at all."

"Then it really felt as we were heading to the warm weather and we would be outdoors that we would see a drop in the infection. That is the exact opposite of what's happened. And while we were hopeful that we wouldn't see this and call it a surge, it is clearly a surge," he said.

As of Sunday, May 15, there are 5,476 active cases in the county. That was up from 3,047 on April 15 and just 966 on March 15, he said. Hospitalizations from COVID-19 totaled 113 on May 15, up significantly from 30 two months earlier, but still far below the peak of 700, according to county data.

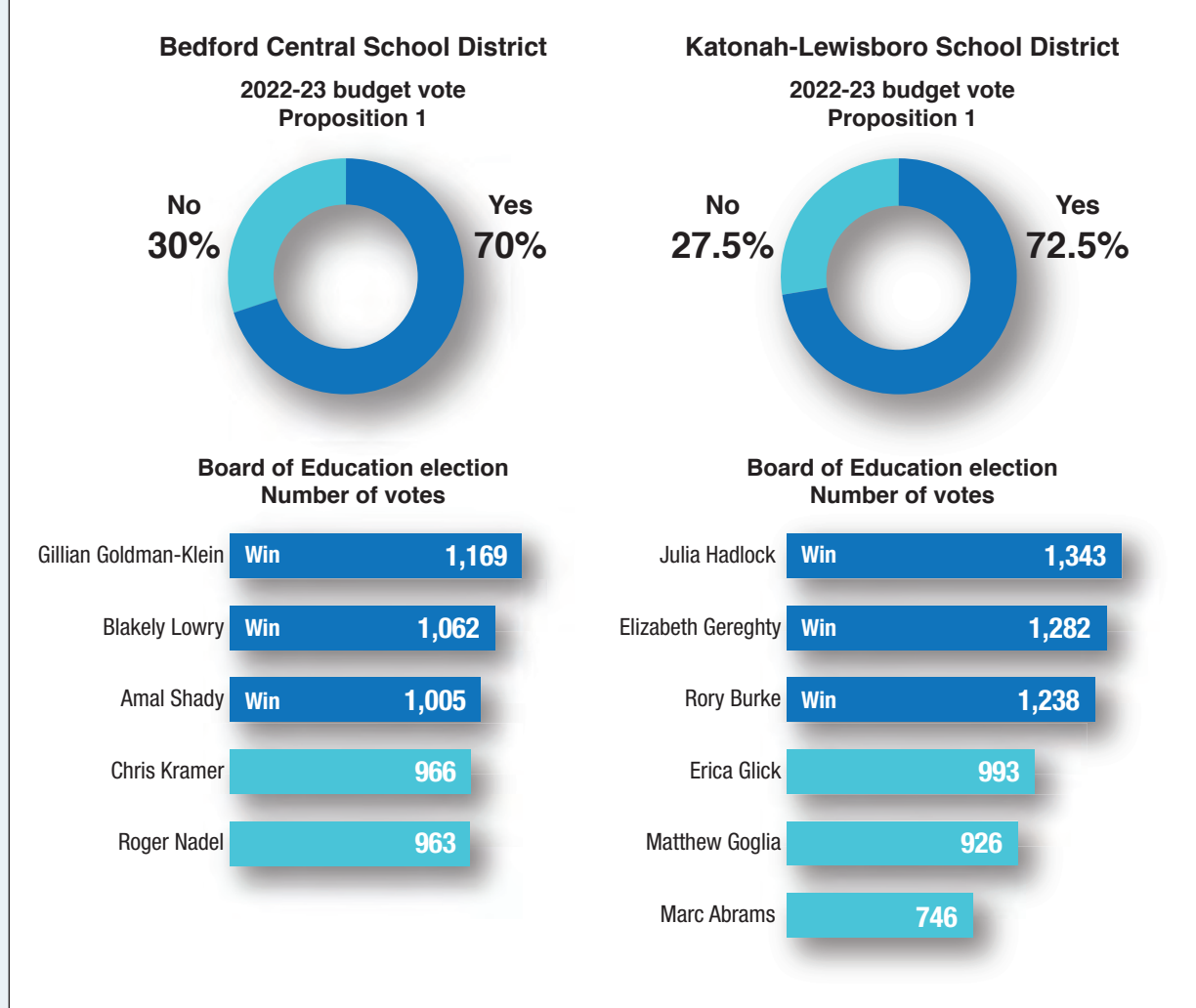
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Voters Tuesday approved annual budgets proposed in both school districts by more than 2-to-1 margins. In the Board of Education races, three first-time candidates won seats in Bedford Central, and three incumbent trustees were reelected in Katonah-Lewisboro.

GRAPHICS BY DAVID LADA/RECORD-REVIEW. SOURCE: BCSD, KLSL

**Bedford Central**

## Budget, bonds pass handily; new trustees win

By JEFF MORRIS

Results from Tuesday's Bedford Central School District budget vote and school board election, certified by the Board of Education on Wednesday afternoon, showed the budget and both bond propositions passed easily.

In the election to fill three open board seats, the winners were Gillian Goldman-Klein, Blakely Lowry and Amal Shady.

Budget Proposition 1, calling for \$148,032,191 in spending, a budget-to-budget increase of 2.47% and a 2.69% tax

levy increase, passed by more than 2-to-1. There were 1,382 "yes" votes and 592 "no" votes, a 70% to 30% margin.

The facilities spending authorization had been split into two bonds. Facilities Bond Proposition 1, \$58,964,798 aims to provide spending to upgrade the aging infrastructure of all buildings, and reimagine and improve shared learning spaces on the Fox Lane campus. Facilities

Bond Proposition 2, for \$3,651,800, was dependent on the passage of the first proposition. It was strictly for air conditioning at Fox Lane High School, providing air-cooling to two wings of the school. The total cost of all the renovations and improvement projects, \$62.6 million, will be paid over 15 years.

Bond Proposition 1 passed, 1,341 to 618, a 68% to 32% margin, and Proposition 2 passed by a similar margin, 1,342 to 610, or 69% to 31%.

Voters were able to vote for three trustee candidates.

The largest number of votes went to Ms. Goldman-Klein, with 1,169. Second was Ms. Lowry with 1,062 votes, and third was Ms. Shady, with 1,005 votes. All three were first-time candidates. They will fill the seats being vacated June 30 by board president John Boucher and trustees Jessica Cambareri and Beth Staropoli, who chose not to run again. The Board of Ed terms run for three years.

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Turnout continued to fall in the BCSD Board of Ed election, dropping 23% from last year's total vote.

## Racist graffiti found at JJMS spurs new calls for action

By JESSICA LEIBMAN

Two weeks ago, the Katonah-Lewisboro School District community learned that racist graffiti was found scratched into the stall door of a first floor boys bathroom in John Jay Middle School.

JJMS Principal Jeffrey Swiatowicz and Superintendent of Schools Andrew Selesnick quickly released statements condemning the act, just as they did after incidents of swastikas found in the middle school on three earlier occasions.

Mr. Selesnick also addressed the incident briefly at the KLSL Board of Education meeting that evening. "An incident like this points out to us absolutely clearly how much more work we have to do," Mr. Selesnick said.

While the board moved onto their regular business, several community members spoke about the incident during the public comment period. District parent Ben Goldner said his son, who is a Black middle schooler, came home that day and told him about the latest racist offense. "I've never seen him look so heartbroken," Mr. Goldner said.

Mr. Goldner said his son was confused and had many questions, including whether he belonged in the district. Mr. Goldner asserted that

*'I've never seen him look so heartbroken.'*  
 — KLSL PARENT BEN GOLDNER SAID OF HIS SON, A BLACK MIDDLE SCHOOLER, REACTING TO THE DISCOVERY OF RACIST GRAFFITI AT JOHN JAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

the district hasn't been welcoming to Black students, and that he and many others are tired of empty words of inclusion and diversity without an adequate response.

Cynthia Ryan, a Lewisboro resident, also felt compelled to speak during the public comment period after hearing Mr. Goldner describe his son's feelings.

Ms. Ryan said to board members that she and two other women, Dawn Brown-Berenson and Teasha Stapleton, created Equity for All Lewisboro because many families of color don't feel safe in Katonah-Lewisboro schools. Ms. Ryan said these families often choose not to speak up out of fear of repercussions, and that there is no one in the district for children of color to turn to for support.

The day following the school board meeting, Ms. Ryan, Ms. Brown-Berenson and Ms. Stapleton shared their reactions to news

of the incident and reflected on the district's response.

While Ms. Ryan praised the communications sent by the two senior district officials immediately following the discovery of the graffiti, she felt the impact of the emails was diluted by other emails and comments to the BOE Mr. Selesnick made, which focused on fun student activities taking place in the district. Ms. Ryan said she hoped the board would have addressed the incident further and displayed insensitivity by not doing so.

Ms. Brown-Berenson commented that the district responded similarly to the graffiti and swastika incidents and was looking for follow through on the part of school officials. "I'd like to see them do their job, and hopefully there's a fire lit under them," she said.

Ms. Brown-Berenson said it's imperative for the district to allow the

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**Katonah-Lewisboro**

## Incumbents sweep Board of Ed races

By JESSICA LEIBMAN

In the Katonah-Lewisboro School District budget and Board of Education election held Tuesday, voters easily passed the 2022-23 budget, approved the transfer of funds from this school year's budget to purchase vehicles and reelected the three incumbent candidates to the BOE.

The three incumbents, Julia Hadlock, Rory Burke and Elizabeth Gereghy, received the most votes. Their tallies combined for 59% of the 6,528 total votes cast in the Board of Ed race. Their reelection comes after almost two years of some parents criticizing the board for their handlings of several issues in the district, including literacy and special education.

The incumbents defeated three parent activists — Erika Glick, Matthew Goglia and Marc Abrams — who ran on a platform of creating a more transparent and communicative board. They split the remaining

41% of the votes.

The votes totals were as follows: Ms. Hadlock, 1,342; Ms. Gereghy, 1,282; Mr. Burke, 1,238; Ms. Glick, 993; Mr. Goglia, 926; and Mr. Abrams, 746.

Prior to the election, each BOE trustee running for reelection commended Superintendent of Schools Andrew Selesnick's leadership of the district through COVID-19 and, with the pandemic seemingly under control in the schools, said they looked forward to shifting their focus to other areas.

Ms. Hadlock, Ms. Gereghy and Mr. Burke said they believed the current board has worked well together and they wanted to see that continue. The candidates also spoke about the importance of examining how the pandemic has affected students in the district and continuing to support students as the lasting effective board. They split the remaining

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*'I look forward to continuing this good work.'*

— ELIZABETH GEREGHY, BOARD OF EDUCATION TRUSTEE

## Katonah gears up for 125th anniversary celebration

By JEFF MORRIS

On April 5, 1897, a New York Central train stopped in "new" Katonah to deliver mail for the first time. It will be May 21, 2022 when everyone stops to celebrate that milestone — because after 125 years, what's a few weeks between friends?

This Saturday, friends and neighbors are coming together to commemorate the beginning of modern Katonah and the vibrant hamlet it has become. Organizers promise it will be a day filled with fun, music, art and history, honoring the past, celebrating the present and looking toward the future.

"The day, and beyond, will be filled with festivities celebrating Katonah," said Bedford Town Supervisor Ellen Calves.

The day begins at 11 a.m. with a Children's and Dollhouse Wagon Parade down Katonah Avenue, starting at the intersection of Al-

len Place, with kids pulling small houses around Katonah. Then at 11:30 a.m., a New York State Historical Marker will be unveiled at the gazebo. The marker commemorates the inspiring story of a community that refused to be drowned out of existence.

Lloyd Trufelman, who collaborated with two local history experts — Deirdre Courtney-Batson and John Stockbridge, who is the Bedford town historian — on the marker project, noted that many current Katonah residents are not aware of the fact that the entire town was moved to make way for a reservoir that supplies drinking water to New York City. He hoped having the marker permanently installed will open the door for people to look further into the history.

The large blue and yellow cast-iron marker was approved by the town board two weeks ago and funded by a grant from the William

G. Pomeroy Foundation to the Katonah Historical Museum.

As noted by the Katonah Village Improvement Society, it was at a KVIS meeting that the people of Old Katonah pondered New York City's decision to condemn and submerge their village. They decided to move the hamlet — buildings and all. The Katonah Land Company purchased a farm south of the old village and hired landscape architects G.S. and B.S. Olmstead to design New Katonah, with broad islands and tree-lined streets arranged in a Celtic cross design, which remains clearly visible today.

That first mail delivery to the new Katonah station in 1897 sealed the deal, and is the reason KVIS, the Katonah Village Library, the Katonah Museum of Art, the Katonah Chamber of Commerce, and so many community organizations are joining together Saturday,

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MARIA GOLAGO PHOTO

Organizers of the 125th anniversary celebration hang a banner at the Jay Street gazebo in Katonah, where a New York State Historical Marker will be unveiled tomorrow, Saturday, May 21, at 11:30 a.m.