

Mayor Of Linden Defeated In Bid For Another Term

By Emily Colo

Linden Mayor Paul Werkmeister, who has been leading the effort to close Linden Airport and replace it with Solberg, was defeated Tuesday in his bid for a new term.

Linden Councilman James Iozzi could not say Tuesday whether this changed the Solberg replacement plan, but he did say it would probably put the negotiations in a holding pattern for a while.

Iozzi said former mayor John Gregorio defeated Werkmeister in the Democratic primary by a 2-1 margin. Readington officials said Gregorio had the support of the regular Democratic organization, while Werkmeister did not.

Gregorio received 6,335 votes while Werkmeister received 3,739.

Iozzi said the airport issue would

probably be discussed at a Linden City council meeting scheduled for last night, and he felt the council would hold up the negotiations to allow further study.

The owners of Solberg submitted "a letter of intent" to the city council Friday agreeing to be Linden Airport's substitute provided the city pays for improvements and Iozzi said he thought the council would want to review that letter more and discuss what it will mean for the city.

"We want to do what's best for the taxpayers of Linden," he said, "whether that means selling (the airport) or selling part of it" or finding other alternatives.

Iozzi commented that Werkmeister's recent push for an agreement with Solberg was "politically motivated," and geared toward helping him win the primary.

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