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Financial crunch forces Farmington to raise tax

By STEVE BARNARD
Farmington Editor

It's official—City of Farmington residents will be forking out more money to pay their city taxes in the upcoming 1972 fiscal year.

By a unanimous vote, this week the city council voted to raise the tax levy from \$7.75 mills to \$8.75. That means homeowners will be paying \$11 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Reasoning behind the increase was the uncertainty of state and federal revenue sharing and the fact that there has been no growth in the gas and weight tax returns to the local communities. Coupled with these factors are the increased cost of providing services.

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—Bob Deadman

state and federal revenue sharing." City Manager Bob Deadman said in a report to the city council.

ORIGINALLY, Deadman had recom-

mended the tax levy be raised from \$7.75 to \$8.75, but the council decided to raise taxes even higher after examining the budget, according to Mayor John Richardson.

With this increase the budget will be \$1,791,600. This is up approximately \$150,000 from the 1971-72 budget of \$1,641,600.

"The cost of providing basic city services has risen beyond our ability to find sources of revenue other than the local tax rate to fund these services," said Deadman.

He told council that public safety services (police and fire protection) will increase 13 per cent. Library expenditures will increase eight per cent and employee fringe benefits by 5.5 per cent.

Because the highway gas and weight tax hasn't grown in three years, the city will have to transfer \$31,600 from the general fund to supplement the local highway fund. This is a city first, said Deadman.

Although Farmington received approximately \$58,000 in federal revenue sharing this year, city officials are uncertain what part revenue sharing will play in next year's budget.

"I think there will be some form of revenue sharing in our budget but at this time, I don't know what form it will take," said Deadman.

In balancing its budget for next year the city also must face the possibility that the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) positions and funds will be eliminated in the future.

"I haven't provided for the continuation of this program in next year's budget because it may be discontinued. If that happens we will be forced to lay-off seven or eight employees. That means cutting back services," said Deadman.

If CETA is discontinued, about \$20,000 would be lost by the city.

The controversial single business tax also will take its toll.

The state through the single business tax, discontinued taxation on personal property. The state now is reimbursing us for that loss but at 1973 assessment figures. So they don't provide for growth this year," he said.

AFTER PASSAGE OF the single business tax local property assessments declined by 1.75 per cent to \$28,800,000 from a year ago level of \$29,523,000.

Increased cost of fringe benefits also is hitting hard at the city's budget. Blue Cross will increase 23.6 per cent next year. Liability insurance has increased 22.9 per cent from \$1,000 to about \$13,000.

Local taxes provide the city with 32 per cent of its operating revenue with federal monies providing 10 per cent and bond transfer payment 12 per cent.

State shared funds total 18 per cent and sales, charges, fines and licenses provide the city with eight per cent of its revenues.

SC salutes advisors

The 250 persons who serve on applied science and placement advisory committees at Schoolcraft College have been invited to a dinner in their honor at the college's W. Lawrence Campus Center at 7:15 p.m., May 25.

It will be the third annual appreciation dinner for the men and women who advise the 44 applied science or career education programs Schoolcraft offers.

Adrian S. Hobbs, Michigan Director of vocational education, will be the evening's keynote speaker. He will discuss the interrelation of business and industry with occupational education.



BLASTING THE BLAZE

A Farmington Hills firefighter douses this truck which started on fire Monday at the intersection of Northwestern and Middle Belt. The truck's driver, Arthur King of Detroit, said he was unaware of how the blaze started. (Staff photo by Mitch Booth)

In superintendent hunt

Face of past haunts trustees

By RON GARBINSKI

In an attempt to avoid past mistakes and future conflict Farmington school trustees are striving for a full board consensus in choosing a new chief administrator.

"It makes a new superintendent's job a lot easier if he knows the school board is totally supportive of him," says Board President William Corlies.

That wasn't the case in 1970 when Supt. Frederick Smith was forced to resign shortly after his contract had been renewed. The board voted 4-3 to accept Smith's resignation. Shortly thereafter the present superintendent, Marina Van Arneyde, was unanimously chosen as the new school chief.

"WE DON'T want any 4-3 votes when it comes to selecting a superintendent. What we are looking for is a unanimous decision and I think the board can do that," says Corlies.

A new superintendent could be tapped tonight during a special meeting of the board, but Corlies says an announcement can't be made until a final contract is agreed upon.

The decision-making process is made more difficult when you do it this way, but the board feels it is the best way to select a new district head.

The board began its search after Van Arneyde announced his retirement last December. He served 18 years in the Farmington district.

SINCE THEN, the board has narrowed

the field of 147 applicants down to several finalists.

"The intent of the board is to avoid repeating the same situation as was the case when Dr. Frederick Smith was forced to resign four years ago," says Trustee Mervyn Hoza.

"We want a candidate who will be able to support us strongly as the district's continuity will be uninterrupted," Hoza says.

Corlies and Hoza are the only two trustees who were board members in 1970 when Smith was forced to resign.

"There was a 6-1 vote split in the board back then," Hoza explains. "The question was, 'Why was Supt. A's resignation presented and accepted?' when his new contract was approved by the board just a few

weeks before." Hoza continues.

The board was faced with finding a new superintendent in the middle of the school year. With the presence of Van Arneyde and the need for the continuation of programs being important, the board made a unanimous decision to elect Van Arneyde.

Before selecting Van Arneyde in 1970 to replace Smith, the board didn't go through the same selection process it is going through now.

"WE RECEIVED a recommendation from an educator outside our district who we called in to help select a new superintendent. He recommended Van Arneyde," Corlies continues.

"He gave us his recommendation and (Continued on page 18A)

Farmington tour parades architectural beauty

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Shortly after Lemuel and Lucy Botstorf moved to Farmington in 1838, they built a farm north of the village, beyond a ravine.

The farmhouse was built in the Greek Revival style which was popular throughout the Midwest at that time.

In their home, with its Greek-inspired columns, front porch and long windows, they raised their 10 children.

Area residents can walk through this home and seven other elegant old homes during Historical Homes Tour and Flower Show, from 1-7 p.m. May 15.

The tour, sponsored by the Farmington Historical Society and the Farmington Garden Club will give a glimpse of Farmington history through its old homes.

Tickets for the tour are \$1 for adults and \$1.50 for children. They may be purchased at the Farmington Community Center, the Farmington City Hall and the Metropolitan Bank. Cameras are prohibited.

The present owners of the Botstorf home, 1414 Farmington Road, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Wallace, say that they were attracted to the home because "We've always bought old things, antiques, historical things."

Although Oakland County records say that none of the Botstorf children died in the home, a legend persists that the house is haunted by the ghost of one of their children.

"We've heard several stories," Mrs. Wallace said. "But I'm a lawyer and my husband's a psychiatrist and people clam up after a while."

"We've heard a lot of mysterious noises, but my husband says that no self-respecting ghost would live with us anyway."

The living room of the house features an open fireplace, Federalist paneling and part of the original 30-foot-long oak plank floor.

In the rear courtyard, the farm's milk house can be seen. It is still used, although

not in the same way the original owners had in mind when they built it.

"We just moved the benches out," Mrs. Wallace said. "It's still equipped like an old milk house but we plan on using it for a parking house. It's right back of our green house."

With all the nooks and crannies in the house, everyone has a place of their own," she said.

The house also features a hand-carved cherry wood ballustrade. The original drawers are still in place.

"I like old homes," daughter Alana Athey, 17, said. "A new home hasn't been broken in."

THREE OF THE EIGHT homes being shown on the tour are examples of the Greek Revival style.

"This happens to be the period to which Farmington really settled," Mrs. Nancy Leonard of the Farmington Historical Society explained, "referring to the years,

1820-1830.

The style was accompanied by a taste for ornate towers after Greek styles. The long windows and many columns imitated a Greek temple.

"They call them sunbath houses, because the chimneys rise from every side," Mrs. Leonard said.

She owns the Greek Revival style home at 820 Silverstone Road. It was built between 1820-1825 by Benjamin Leonard, one of the earliest pieces of planted property in the village.

Mrs. Leonard had the name built in her name. Her husband's name doesn't appear on the deed, Mrs. Leonard said.

The house, has such typical early construction details as field stone foundation, corner pilasters and a wrap around cornice.

"It has a certain charm," she said. However, living in an old house has certain problems. "The plumbing is old," she conceded. "It's like living in any other home, except the problems are multiplied."

The long living room has been divided by bookcases into three smaller rooms.

"IT USED TO be a snug living room," she explained.

"It's fun to live in an old home," Mrs. Ralph Springfield said. "My family owns a Late Victorian home at 3222 Grand River."

"It's a challenge. It has more character. This is our fifth home. We suspected that we've got the top of an old bed in that window. It may not sound right but it looks sort of like gingerbread," she said.

The exterior of the house features the original gingerbread ornamentation of the era.

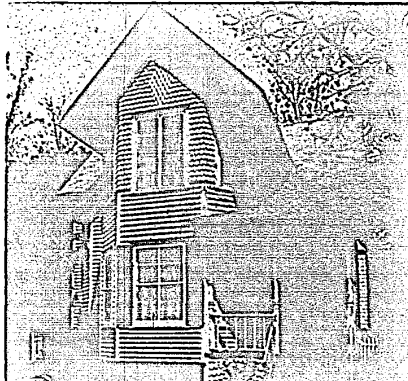
In 1824, Marcella Burrows built a house that combined the charms of a Federalist home and the solidity of an old English cottage. His unique English Revival style can be seen in the home of Mrs. Eleanor Brown, 2911 Farmington Road.

Get back from the road, the house is reached by a gravel drive.

Burrows, who built about 1500 structures in the Detroit area, designed the Birmingham elementary building and the Birmingham Library.

"The people who built this house, spared no expense," Mrs. Spicer said. "They were lived here in an English style

(Continued on page 18A)



The late Victorian home owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Springfield features the gingerbread ornamentation of the period. The house was willed to the city by the original owners, the James Wilber family, but it is still in private possession. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)



Mrs. Nancy Leonard's sitting room exhibits the long windows that are the hallmark of the Greek Revival style. The fireplace was added at the turn of the century.

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