

Farmington Observer

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Options weighed Tuesday

District finances critical

By LYNN ORR

A \$500,000 projected deficit in next year's budget faces the Farmington School Board, while administration officials attempt to stave off a possible \$175,000 deficit in this year's budget.

A stop on capital outlay, turning off lights, a moratorium on secretarial substitutes and other economic measures are attempts to block a potential deficit this year.

"We won't know until June if we're successful," said William Prisk, assistant superintendent of finance. If not, a deficit will have to be provided off the top of next year's allocations, he explains.

To balance next year's budget in accordance with state law, the board next likely will consider three options at tonight's open study session: make \$500,000 in cuts; oil the gears for a millage increase request from the taxpayers; or adopt a wait-and-see attitude and hope the legislature comes up with more money than the governor is proposing.

Prisk doubts that a millage increase request is in the offing.

However, he and the administrative



WILLIAM PRISK

staff have prepared a list of recommended cuts for the board's consideration, he said.

"That's what we've been agonizing over all week."

AS IT STANDS, the budget calls for \$28,570,731 in expenditures next year. Revenues are estimated at \$28,010,869. Revenues include an 11 per cent increase in local taxes and State Equalized Value (SEV); however most of those increases will be offset by state aid declines, Prisk said.

State aid this year was about \$4.5 million. Prisk estimated next year's state aid will be \$3,817,568. The governor's recommendations are included in next year's budget projections, Prisk said.

"History has shown that we usually get no less than what the governor's recommending."

A projected decline of 654 students is the district's state aid problem. Earlier last week, the board took steps supporting two recommendations to the "Crim-O'Neill" school aid formula that, if adopted and fully funded, could realize about \$300,000 to the district.

Recommendation one would permit

The second resolution would raise the pupil guarantee (under SEV) from \$20 to \$280 per student. Another \$36 million would be required to fund this proposal.

The board adopted both resolutions, providing full funding was guaranteed, by a 5-1 vote. Trustee Emma Makinen dissented, preferring an adoption of the concepts without the funding provision.

"If they don't fund it 75 per cent, the concept is basically meaningless to us," said Trustee Michael Spiecke. "It won't help Farmington unless it's funded at a high level."

If the legislature adopts the resolutions, it would not be the "end-all" answer, said Trustee Helen Prutow.

NEXT YEAR'S budget projects about a seven per cent increase in expenditures. The 1977-78 school budget included about \$26½ million in revenues and expenditures.

The open study session to discuss the budget will begin at 8 p.m. tonight in administrative offices, 32500 Shawanssee. A balanced budget must be submitted to the county Board of Allocators in April.

Mixed reviews given I-275 triple option

Two rival groups are competing for state attention for their plans to replace M-275, the western Oakland County freeway project cancelled last year by the State Highway Commission.

As of last week, a staff team from the state highway department was concentrating its attention on the so-called McConnell compromise and the plan of Steve Rosman. Apparently out of the running is a third plan advocated by a shrinking majority of the Walled Lake City Council.

West Bloomfield Township and Farmington Hills officials are either committed or leaning toward the McConnell plan.

The highway staff team headed by Mike Flajole visited both a Walled Lake council meeting and a multi-community meeting in Commerce Township.

The Commerce session was attended by representatives of Farmington Hills and West Bloomfield as well as the City of Novi, Wolverine Lake Vil-

lage, White Lake Township and the county executive's office.

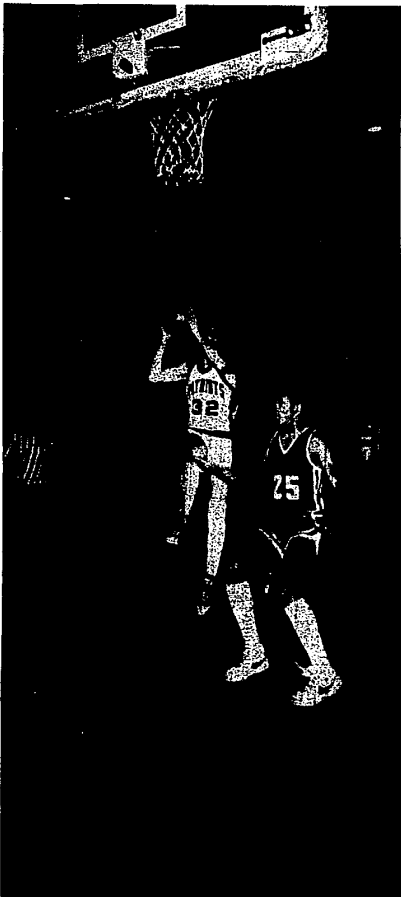
The Commerce meeting was put together by County Commissioner Robert McConnell (R-Farmington Hills), who is gradually accumulating support from local officials for his compromise.

Making his own visit to Lansing last week was Steve Rosman, the Commerce Township resident who in 1976-77 led Citizens in Opposition to M-275. That group was chiefly responsible for sinking both M-275 and the related Northwestern Highway extension in West Bloomfield.

THESE ARE the rival plans (see map):

- Rosman's calls for a four-lane state trunkline in the Haggerty Road corridor from Eight Mile to M-59. It would have no interchange with the freeway. For this reason, it is liked by some members of the State Highway Commission.

(Continued on page 4A)



Tourney time

Basketball teams from across the state, including those in the Observer & Eccentric area, will begin battling this week in the annual season-ending tournament. You can expect to see action like this—Livonia Franklin's John Zanis going in for a layup over Southfield's Darryl Clausell. Who really is number one? Only time will tell. (Staff photo by Bob Woodring)

Experience counts for young racers

At a time when most of their friends are just mastering the beginner slopes, Jill Robins, 14, and Lisa Williams, 15, are training to perfect their downhill racing techniques.

Both Farmington Hills skiers said they started skiing when they were toddlers. Since then, they've been dividing their time between school work and preparing for the next race. Their racing careers started within a year of each other when each skier entered the Detroit News race. Both girls were eight years old when they entered their first races.

Until then, they skied simply for pleasure. Ms. Robins' first time on skis was marked by her interesting approach to the slopes. She made her way down the hill hanging onto her father's knees. She was three years old.



LISA WILLIAMS

MS. WILLIAMS' family was introduced to the sport by the Robins. Because the families were friends, the



JILL ROBINS

two girls began to ski together.

NOW, they share the same ski coach and a hectic schedule that finds them sandwiching their homework in over dinner at Mt. Brighton during most week nights.

In spite of the tight schedule they follow, both girls are determined to stick with skiing.

"I'll keep on skis," said Ms. Robins. "It's my best spot."

"I'd feel kind of lost without it," said Ms. Williams.

While they would like to take their skills to the Olympics, each girl has a wait-and-see attitude.

"I'd like to be in the Olympics," admitted Ms. Robins.

"We're trying," added Ms. Williams. "But you really can't tell now. Some kids get good young and then they fizzle out."

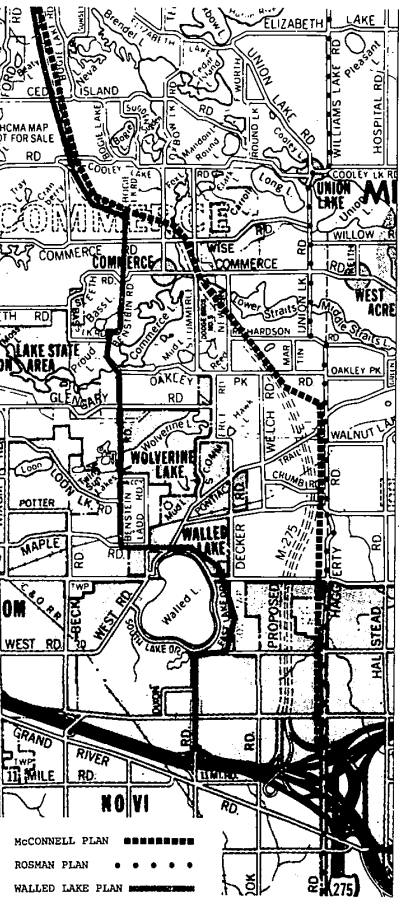
"Some peak later when they're 18 years old and they're fantastic," added Ms. Robins.

In the meantime, the duo keeps in shape by hiking, bicycling and running in the summer. Summer's a good time to get in shape.

"Skiing doesn't get you into good shape," Ms. Williams said.

SO far the strategy has worked for the friends. During a recent meet at Sugarloaf Village, Ms. Robins won a silver medal and three bronze awards. Ms. Williams won a bronze medal.

Usually, the girls place in the top three, but they admit it depends on the age of their competitors.



Elderly housing featured at meeting

FARMINGTON HILLS Council Meeting 7:30 p.m., Feb. 27 31555 Eleven Mile

The meeting will begin with the consideration of enactment of the following amendatory ordinances:

- The rezoning of property on Orchard Lake Rd. between Thirteen and Fourteen Mile from Business Service to RCE-1, senior citizens mid-rise.
- An amendment to the city code which would change the primary election date to the Tuesday following the second Monday in September. The primary currently is held in August.
- An amendment which would authorize the Director of Finance to make "interfund" loans for cash management purposes and

advancement of funds from one city fund to another for the purpose of financing construction.

•The rezoning of property at Eight Mile and Narden from single family to multiple. (Lots 53, 54, and 55).

•The rezoning of property located on the east side of Haggerty between Thirteen and Fourteen Mile from single family to planned residential.

•An amendment to ordinance C-62M to add some regulations for single family zoning.

Council will also consider the following new business:

•The introduction of an amendatory ordinance to add a paragraph to the uniform traffic code which would prohibit parking in front of

mail boxes which obstruct delivery of the mail.

•Preliminary plat approval for the Park Ravine subdivision (33 lots).

•The approval of an open space plan for Park Ravine, to be completed by June, 1980.

•Preliminary plat approval for the Margiotta subdivision (26 lots).

•Establishment of a Special Assessment District for road improvement in Lincolnshire Estate subdivision.

•Establishment of a Special Assessment District for sewer improvement on Randall, Folsom, and River Glen Streets.

•A resolution concerning the assessment of penalties on delinquent tax payments.

•A resolution waiving bid

requirements for certain road maintenance materials.

•Recommendation from the Housing and Building Commissions regarding the feasibility of developing senior citizen housing on Drake and Freedom site using municipal bond funds. This land was donated to the city in December, 1977.

Council will also consider holding an executive session to discuss the settlement of a law suit.

BOARD OF EDUCATION Open Study Session 8 p.m., Feb. 27 32448 Shawanssee

The Farmington Board of Education will hold an open study session to discuss the 1978-79 school budget.

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TROLLEY TRANSPORTS

Trolley transportation at the beginning of the century was "the" mode of transportation. To see what memorabilia an area resident has about that subject, turn to page 5C.