

Farmingington Observer & Eccentric

Volume 87 Number 96 Monday, September 20, 1976 Farmington, Michigan 24 Pages Twenty Five Cents

Open meeting bill mandated by lawmakers

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington editor

Local public officials are going to have to be a little more careful about conducting their business in public because of a recently passed bill which limits closed sessions.

The bill swept through both the State House and the Senate with overwhelming majorities. The Senate voted 22-3 for approval. The House voted 86-7.

Although the bill was passed by substantial margins, many legislators felt the bill could have been more far-reaching.

State Rep. Wilbur Brotherton, R-Farmingington, whose district includes part of Southfield, was among lawmakers who wished to see the bill's scope expanded. "I think the bill is a little tight, but it could have gone a little further," said Brotherton, who voted for the bill.

The bill should have gone a step further and called for union negotiations to be open.

"WHETHER ITS LABOR or management, the public really never knows who is making the unreasonable demands. If they had to negotiate in public, everyone would have to deal on the top of the table," he said.

State Sen. Daniel Cooper-D'Oak Park, whose district includes Southfield and the Farmington area, also expressed reservation over the new law which is to go into effect next April.

"A lot of times we meet with commission agency officials. If everytime we do that you had to have an open meeting, the politicians' voices would drown two or three when the cameras are on them," said Cooper, who voted for the bill.

He also indicated the law could slow down emergency legislation and cause committee chairmen to become more autocratic.

Cooper and Brotherton disagree as to whether the legislative "round robin" procedure would be hindered.

The procedure takes place when a resolution is informally passed from one committee member to another for their signatures. The signatures give approval to the document.

Now the committee will have to get together and sign the bill," said Cooper. Brotherton disagrees.

The round robin procedure is okay. There is a clause in the bill allowing so it doesn't effect a damn thing," said Brotherton.

But the new law could have some significant effects on local governmental bodies such as school boards and city councils, said Brotherton.

They won't be able to have anymore executive sessions. They'll have to have free

and open discussions," he said.

Another change is that now budget matters will have to be discussed before the public.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES under which closed meetings could be conducted are:

- To consider the dismissal, suspension or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against a public officer, employee, staff member or individual when the person requests a closed hearing.
- To consider dismissal, suspension or disciplining of a student of a public school when the student or guardian requests a closed hearing.
- For strategy and negotiation sessions necessary in reaching collective bargaining agreement when either party requests a closed hearing.



Erin O'Leary was one of those Farmington residents who took part in the after school gymnastic classes last year. Even more fun awaits participants this year.

Financial woes fought as enrollment decreases

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Fewer teachers, fewer students and rising costs greeted Farmington school administrators at the start of the new academic year.

School officials expect the preliminary student headcount on Sept. 24 to show a decrease of 500 students in area schools.

The phasing out of 41 teachers last spring and the subsequent recall of 54 of those teachers resulted in 37 fewer teachers reporting for work this fall, according to school Superintendent Lewis Schulman.

School officials had to work the 1975-1976 budget around the failure of last spring's millage proposal and Governor William Milliken's veto of state aid to school districts with declining enrollments.

The Farmington School Board is expected to set the date for public budget hearings during its Sept. 21 meeting.

"HAD THE GOVERNOR not vetoed the bill, we would have accrued \$30,600," said school business manager William Prisk.

Although the number of students has decreased the amount of state aid per pupil has risen according to Prisk. This year the school system anticipates receiving \$27.85 per pupil in state aid membership allowance.

Last year, with the governor's budget cutbacks the schools were given \$19.33 per student.

"We think that we have the heart and the soul of the instructional program," Schulman said. "We think we can go through this school year with a good, solid program which fulfills the students' basic educational needs."

"I think Farmington is getting its money's worth," he said. In addition to the regular program the district budget must handle:

- An additional item this year, the Farmington Training Center (FTC), which replaces the centralized Oakland Training Center for handicapped and marled students. The FTC is housed in the Farmington Junior High School Building.
- And the increased cost of transportation.

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The Farmington School Board has elected not to ask the voters a second time for the millage that was defeated in the spring.

"Our people have said no' enough times. We have to live with what we get," Prisk said.

"We're not buying as much education this year as last year," said Prisk. "We have taken \$3 million out of last year's budget. The budget's deficit is \$4 million, but the education is not. The kids will lose," Prisk said.

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THE COMPANY manufactures conveyor belts and other machinery which moves materials.

It maintains 22 sales offices in the United States, three in Canada and 14 in Europe, industrial cities.

The company has licensee offices which are independent concerns selling Webb products. Webb allows them to sell and produce the equipment. It is affiliated with 17 plants in the United States and 13 in Canada.

THE OFFICE will contain 180,000 square feet, in contrast to the 75,000 square foot area of the Detroit building.

The two-story building has three levels. One is underground so the building's height complies with Farmington Hills' building regulations.

It will give us room to grow," Richardson said.

The second and third levels of the office open up to a central area containing the building's mechanical core. Elevators and lounges are within easy distance of each of the offices.

Jervis Webb moves into Hills location

Jervis C. Webb Co. is moving its world headquarters from its Detroit plant to new offices in Farmington Hills.

The company will move about 200 employees, executives and marketing employees to its building on Livernois and Joy Road, Detroit, to the office of the new plant in Farmington Hills.

The last of plant, which presently employs 140 persons, will continue to be used as a factory with 300 employees when the office personnel move in December.

Farmington Hills is a beautiful community," said Robert Richardson, a spokesman for the company.

Richardson, the city manager, was enthusiastic. "We wanted to put in a new driveway and name it Webb Drive. There wasn't any hassle whatsoever," he said.

Webb Co. expects to hire mechanical and electrical engineers as well as office personnel from the Farmington area.

"THE CORE CONCEPT is a long-used, logical office design," Richardson said. "To maximize the ways in which the building can be used, portable walls were added to the office."

"I never knew there were different types of walls," Richardson admitted. "Portable walls will allow us to change the office space as the company grows."

The parking lot will be capable of accommodating between 500-600 cars.

With construction of the exterior completed, construction workers plan to finish the interior of the building by December.

Chance to keep fit After school program offers fun

A whole new lot of classes awaits three interested in enrolling for the Farmington Area Recreation Commission after school programs.

The eight week classes will be at Shawassee School, 30415 Shawassee, Gull School, 21193 Gull and Fairview School, 26200 Oak Crest.

Classes at Shawassee will begin Sept. 27, while those at Gull begin on Sept. 28. Those wishing to attend the activities at Fairview will get their opportunity beginning Oct. 11.

Those who wish to register can do so at the Recreation office, 13444 Eileen Mile, Farmington Hills. Registration closes Sept. 27 for Gull and Shawassee classes and Oct. 11 for Fairview.

Registration will be accepted at the first class meeting if openings are available.

KARATE for 6 and 8 year olds will be offered at Shawassee on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. and at Fairview on Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. The 10-12 year old students in the karate section at 4:30 p.m. at Fairview and Shawassee.

Cost for the class is \$4.

CREATIVE ART for students from kindergarten to the second grade will be offered at 3:30 p.m. on Mondays at Shawassee and Tuesdays at Gull and Fairview. Cost is \$6.

PRE-SCHOOL HOUR for ages 3-5 will be conducted at Shawassee from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at 4:30 p.m. on Mondays and Tuesdays at Gull and Fairview. Cost is \$6. It will include an hour of free movies, games and fun. It begins Oct. 11.

ARTS AND CRAFTS for students in the third through sixth grade will be at 4:30 p.m. at Shawassee and the same time on Tuesdays at the other two schools. Cost is \$6.

AN OPEN GYM session will be conducted at Shawassee for persons in the fourth through sixth grades at 5:30 p.m. Cost is 25 cents and gym shoes must be worn.

DRAMA will be at Shawassee at 4:30 p.m. for students in the third through sixth grades also at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. Cost is \$6.

Gull will have a drama class for students in the fourth through sixth grades on Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m.

TEEN VOLLEYBALL will be at Shawassee at 6:30 p.m. on Mondays and at Fairview at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesdays. Cost is \$6.

MODERN JAZZ DANCE for students in the third through sixth grades will be at Shawassee on Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. and at Fairview on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. Cost is \$6. Leotards or jumps should be worn.

SILMNASTICS for adults and teens will be at Shawassee on Mondays at 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$6.

TAP DANCE also will be a Shawassee only class for adults and teens at 7:30 p.m. on Mondays. Cost is \$6.

WOODCARVING will be at Shawassee from 7:30 p.m. For adults and teens the class will cost \$6.

BEGINNING GYMNASTICS will be at all three schools. At Shawassee and Gull the classes will be on Tuesdays and at Fairview on Mondays. Shawassee classes will be at 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. Fairview classes will be at 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. Cost is \$6.

BEGINNING AND INTERMEDIATE GYMNASTICS for students in grades three through six will be at Shawassee at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesdays and Fairview on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. Cost is \$6.

MODERN JAZZ DANCE for students in the third through sixth grades will be at Shawassee on Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. and at Fairview on Mondays at 4:30 p.m. Cost is \$6. Leotards or jumps must be worn. Cost is \$6.

WILLOUGHBY WONDERERS

Willoughby and his motley crew wonder about all the flap over the urge to change the drinking laws. To see what he has to say turn to page 6A.

Yoder's son, wife injured

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

The wife and son of a Farmington City Council member were injured in a three car accident on Farmington Road near Colfax early Friday morning.

The driver of a green, 1969 Buick lost control of his car when the hood raised as he was driving north on Farmington Road. Joel Yoder, 22, son of City Councilman Ralph Yoder, was driving, with his mother, south on the road when he was struck nearly head on, according to Hills Traffic Officer Ray Cooney.

Yoder's car scraped against a 1973 Plymouth which was alongside it.

The four persons involved in the accident suffered cuts and bruises. Mrs. Mar-



Kristen Schweinsburg, like hundreds of her small fry counterparts, started pre-school classes this week. News staff writer Loraine McClellan and photographer Harry Maubie visited Early Learning Center and talk about it in story and pictures in the Sept. 23 issue of the Observer & Eccentric. (Staff photo by Harry Maubie)