

Open meetings bill praised by politicians

Some local politicians are glad they will be able to fire public employees, suspend students and discuss the preliminary of land purchases behind closed doors.

The recently passed open meeting bill, which goes into effect in April 1972, allows public officials to continue these discussions in private.

The bill requires that most council and board sessions, including those dealing with the hiring of public employees, must be open to the public.

Initial discussions concerning the purchase of land should be kept quiet, said Farmington Hills Councilman Fred Luchman.

It avoids speculation among the people involved. People make unreasonable demands if they know a governing unit wants the land, Luchman said.

I'm not sure that hiring public employees up to a certain level isn't so different from hiring any other employee, he said. I don't know if the hiring or firing of a lower level public employee should be done in public. But whatever the discussion is, the candidate's ability to carry out the job should be public knowledge.

I don't think that the final decision to hire should be made in public, he said.

LUCHMAN believes that the bill won't affect the Hills council. We do have study sessions that aren't secret, but they are not public discussions, he said.

I have no objections to the bill. We do everything publicly, he said.

Farmington Councilmember Ralph Voder said he is concerned about the practicality of calling of emergency council meetings over the new law goes into effect.

How can you call an emergency meeting, like the one that we had about the recreational vehicle question on the ball? We didn't have time to put up a public notice. You need three to four days to inform people about the meeting.

The council is expected to remove the question from the Nov. 2 ballot at this week's council session.

The Oakland County clerk has referred the city that it should consolidate the two questions into one because there isn't enough room for them on the ballot.

Michigan's ballots are unusually long this year because nine political parties are listing candidates.

THE TWO QUESTIONS could be on the ballot, explained City Clerk Nedra Viane. But they couldn't be looked out for just one question.

That was, people could vote for both questions and not just one. It wouldn't give the council the information it wanted, she said.

There is 49 inches across the top of the ballot. The state is using 32 inches. That leaves Farmington with eight inches of space on the machine, she said.

The tax advisory questions ask voters whether they would prefer leaving the rec-

I hesitate to knock the bill," he said. "It has its place. We've been lax in the past. We don't make decisions in the back room. We just discuss the issues."

(One area of the bill I really find hard to swallow is the part that says we have to interview in public," said Farmington School Board President Arne Struble. "If you're looking for a new job, you don't always tell your employer."

"I think we'd get a smaller number of able candidates applying if we have to conduct final interviews in public. If you have five applicants, four won't be accepted," she said.

What about their problems with their employers afterwards?" she said.

Perhaps other boards are less open," she said. "We're very close to compliance except on the land and personnel provisions," she said.

The public will have to learn a different attitude when listening to the open meetings. They'll have to remember that they'll hear all the alternatives discussed," Mrs. Struble said.

"The only area in which I can see an improvement is in hiring administrators," said School Board Trustee Helen Proulx. "But I think hiring administrators should have been open all along. Even the public should have the opportunity to ask questions."

The newly elected trustee has "mixed feelings" on opening up teacher negotiations to the public.

I'm just afraid we might get into the situation of grandstanding. But the taxpayers are paying the bill and opening the negotiations might shorten negotiations."

The problem with closed negotiations is that administration and teacher union stands lose something in the translation when released to the public, she says.

MRS. PRITLOW SAYS that she will walk out of closed school board meetings if issues are discussed which are outside of the law.

Employ contracts and hiring and firing shouldn't be done in public," said City Councilmember William Hartsock. "But the results should be aired in public eventually."

Employees should have the prerogative of a closed meeting to discuss negotiations.

There are some favorable aspects to discussing land acquisitions in public," he said. "It could discourage backroom dealing and those type of things. That part would affect other developing cities like the Hills, that aren't completely zoned, yet."

Some of the discussion taking place in the back room before city meetings should be conducted during the formal meeting, according to Hartsock.

"Unfortunately, a lot discussed in these meetings should be brought out. All beneficial discussion that could have been in public has been completed before the meeting," he said.

If you're talking about things covered

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A flying Falcon

Farmington's Rick Milhizer dives for a pass reception from quarterback Randy Meiler. The diving catch garnered the Falcons 13 yards in

their 18-16 defeat over Waterford. Milhizer went on to score two touchdowns for the Farmington team. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Knot tied in hospital

Love affair becomes eternal

By LYNN ORR

It was planned originally for that time or that place, but someone at St. Mary Hospital seemed the appropriate setting for a wedding.

Five months ago, Nyla Sundria, a resident of Farmington Hills for 30 years, and Olath Jones, a disabled veteran from the east side of Detroit, met when Mrs. Sundria was visiting her mother in the Livonia hospital.

Mrs. Sundria struck up a friendship with Margaret Moore, another visitor at the hospital. A successful matchmaking episode was initiated when Mrs. Moore carried glowing reports of her new friend to bachelor Jones.

"It's just like a fairy tale," Mrs. Sundria began. "He said he'd never marry again, but then he said he was in love before we met."

MRS. SUNDRIA was widowed two years ago and thought it might be too soon to remarry. "But when you're 63, time doesn't stop for you," she explained.

Jones, 60, decided to give up his bachelorhood, because "I wasn't getting any younger. Everybody needs somebody some time," he added.

The couple planned to marry Oct. 23 in West Bloomfield, but fate decided to alter their plans. Mrs. Sundria suffered a heart attack three weeks ago and was once again back at St. Mary—this time as a patient.

"I wanted to postpone the wedding," she said, "but Olath decided he wanted to move it up. He got the okay from the doctors and the hospital, and we decided to marry in the hospital chapel."

Finding a minister was the only problem. Judge Michael Hand was originally supposed to marry the couple, but he would not be available Sept. 28—so Jones took matter into his own hands.

"I saw this minister in the hospital corridor and asked him if he'd marry us," Jones chuckled. "He said 'Sure I will, so we were all set.'"

The ceremony was only St. Mary's second hospital wedding and the first for a heart patient. Friends and relatives were present, and Mrs. Sundria's son and daughter-in-law, Frank and Norma Sundria, were attendants. Her brother Russell Ryckman gave the bride away. The Rev. Bert Kreiler officiated.

WEARING a blue chignon gown with wide, butterfly sleeves and a shoulder-length blue veil with a pearl crown, the bride was wheeled down the aisle by nurse Janet Mitek. Her outfit was completed by a corsage of yellow Shasta daisies and three white mums tipped in blue.

"Blue is his favorite color," the new Mrs. Jones said shyly, although she was so nervous about the wedding that she forgot to put on his favorite cologne.

With 12 children and 41 grandchildren between them, the Joneses are not at all a lack for relatives, but as a practical nurse and longtime school cafeteria employee in Farmington, Mrs. Jones has been working with children for a long time.

"That's probably what got me into the hospital," she said. "I just never say no when someone asks me to stay with their children or take an in-home assignment."

The new bride left the hospital yesterday to return to her home at 2800 Medbury where the couple will reside.

Echanted with her whirlwind courtship and the beautiful, if somewhat unusual wedding, Mrs. Jones is extremely happy. "You just know when the right one comes along. Who can describe how happy you are when someone loves you?"



Matron of honor, Norma Ryckman watches while Olath Jones and Nyla Sundria exchange rings in front of Rev. Bert Kreiler.

School bus drivers honored

Five days a week a crew of 56 bus drivers beat the streets of Farmington and Farmington Hills to deliver students to school safely.

The open house is being held in observance of National School Bus Safety Week. "Our motto is that school buses carry the most precious cargo in the world—your children," says Darlene Thompson, one of the district's drivers.

BUT QUALIFYING to drive a school bus is much more difficult than many persons realize, according to Clara Simpson, supervisor of the bus corps.

Mrs. Simpson has been with the district's bus driving system for 24 years. The first stipulation is to keep a good driving record.

"You can't drive a school bus with any more than six points," she says. "School bus drivers throughout the state are re-tagged in Lansing. If one of my drivers gets five points, I'm immediately notified by the state."

Actually, the district has 80 drivers, the extra four being substitutes for drivers who may become ill.

Every driver must pass a basic training course which lasts 12 hours. After passing the initial basic tests, drivers must complete a nine-hour course every year. Drivers also must pass a physical examination, obtain a chauffeur's license and pass a written and road-driving test, says Mrs. Simpson.

THROUGHOUT HER YEARS with the district, Mrs. Simpson says school buses have changed for the better because of tougher safety regulations which have been imposed.

The big yellow buses have been equipped with power steering. The seats have been padded.

One of the biggest safety features is the cross-over mirrors which allow drivers to see alongside the wheel housings and in front of the bus.

Late hours set for vote sign up

Both the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills administrative offices will be open until 8 p.m. today for those persons who wish to register for the Nov. 2 election.

The City of Farmington administrative building is at 2200 Liberty, west of Farmington Road and south of Grand River. The Hills administrative offices are on the southwest corner of Eleven Mile and Orchard Lake roads.

Both clerks ask those wanting absentee ballots to send in an application as soon as possible so ballots may be mailed to them.

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CREATIVITY BOUND

A local psychiatrist says that the idea of creativity and untalented personalities goes together in a nut. To see what he has to say, turn to page 2A.

Farmington Observer

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There's still time to sign up for the fourth annual Farmington Observer publicity press seminar to be Oct. 7 at 8 p.m. in the Farmington Holiday Inn, 38123 Ten Mile, Farmington. Whether you're a group representative or just an interested individual, be sure to send in a coupon so we can get to know one another. It will be an enjoyable evening. Mail the coupon to the Farmington Observer, P.O. Box 69, Southfield 48037.