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Half-mill increase

City budget gets boost

By LYNN ORR

A half-mill tax hike for next year was approved by the Farmington City Council last week, the first increase in city taxes in more than three years.

About three-fifths of the \$50,000 anticipated by the tax increase will be earmarked for road repair and improvements in the city, according to City Mgr. Robert Deadman. The remaining \$20,000 will be used to balance the budget.

The \$2.25 million budget in fiscal year 1978-79 basically holds the line on city services, according to Deadman, while the 11.5-mill city tax rate most likely will maintain Farmington's place as the second lowest tax rate, including bond and operating mills, in Oakland County, he added.

The half-mill hike amounts to 50 cents on every \$1,000 of assessed value on property. That amounts to a \$10 annual tax increase for a home assessed at \$20,000 (half of its value).

The overall budget reflects a 7.2 per cent increase over last year's budget. Local taxes constitute nearly \$1.2 mil-

lion of anticipated revenues, while shared state revenues are expected to total nearly \$400,000. Licenses and permit fees, intergovernmental revenues, charges for services and sales provide the balance of revenues.

Public safety tops the list of expenditures at \$712,000, while \$413,000 will be allotted to public services, and nearly \$400,000 to general government.

Insurance and fixed expenditures requires about \$367,000, a nearly \$50,000 increase.

ONE SNAG in the budget could come if federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) funds are withdrawn, as speculated by some officials. CETA renewals will be announced in June.

"We would have to reduce the level of services," Deadman says, if the city lost about \$150,000 projected as CETA revenues. Specific CETA projects, such as the downtown beautification program, have been withdrawn from the fiscal budget next year.

Salaries of two public safety officers and several Department of Public

Works employees are now compensated by CETA funds, Deadman explained.

"We would have to evaluate what's left of the program if things were cut," he said.

The 1978-79 budget calls for one new face at City Hall in the job of a part-time clerk for the clerk's office, and a warrant officer for the 47th District Court. Revenues generated by court fees are expected to offset the costs of the warrant officer, Deadman added.

Other increase in expenditures include a substantial sewer rate increase expected in July; a 19 per cent increase in the purchase of recreational services from Farmington Hills; a seven per cent increase in salaries for public safety officers; an average 6.5 per cent increase for the city's general employees; and a 10 per cent increase in the Farmington Community Library budget.

The council elected to continue winter maintenance of Grand River, anticipating some funding from the county for the services.



RICHARD HEADLEE

Headlee promotes tax limitation

By LYNN ORR

Richard Headlee brought his statewide campaign for a tax ceiling home to Farmington last week with a plea for advocacy, money, and signatures to place the tax limitation amendment on November's ballot.

Headlee, president of Alexander Hamilton Insurance Co. in Farmington Hills and chairman of Taxpayers United, Inc., brought a film and a bag of quotes to the Farmington Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting to plead his cause.

In return, he received the support of State Rep. Wilbur Brotherton (R-Farmington), and the hope that some of those who walked out with petitions would return them completed.

The taxpayers' group has set June 15 as its goal to get 250,000 validated signatures to place an amendment to the Michigan Constitution on the fall ballot for voter approval.

The deadline is July 7, 120 days before the election. The group hopes to garner at least 300,000 signatures by mid-June, allowing for some signatures that will be invalidated.

"WE HAVE our last dollar out on the table in the form of 100 pennies, and we've compromised penny by penny until 42 pennies of each dollar are being taken," he said. "We're not trying to hold back, freeze out, or hamstring government, we're trying to prevent lateral encroachment."

"The proposed amendment would place a limit on the ability of the legislature to increase state taxes beyond its current proportion of personal income in the state, Headlee explained.

The state's income would expand only as the economy of the state expands, he added.

"Government spending is out of control," he says, comparing current Democratic and Republican platforms to the Socialist platform of 1932.

"Constitutional law will determine how much authority our public servants will have to interfere with our lives."

The amendment would force the legislature and local taxing bodies to hold revenues to current levels, in relation to personal income, unless an emergency should arise or voters approved a tax increase.

Upon recommendation of the governor and approval of two-thirds of the legislature, the limit could be exceeded for an emergency purpose during a specific fiscal year.

For example, if a home has an assessed value of \$20,000, and the voters have approved a tax levy of 30 mills, property taxes are \$600. If the amendment is approved, if the assessed value of the home is raised to \$30,000, the approved tax millage would be rolled back to 20 mills to maintain the \$600 property tax, according to Headlee.

SPRINKLING his talk with quotes from Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill, and reciting his "favorite" poem about home-towns, Headlee urged Chamber members to get involved in the tax limitation campaign.

He also commented on the "hostile" atmosphere at last week's Farmington Hills council meeting, during which about 300 residents protested elimination of city funding of the chloride dust control program for unpaved roads.

"I only wish I could transform that hostility into interest in tax limitation," he said. "We can make the fundamental reforms and the fundamental changes that must be made."



Lighting up the skies

Multicolored hot air balloons will light up Oakland County's skies May 20-28 during the third annual Rochester HighAmerica Balloon Festival. Sponsors expect 50 balloonists from across the country to compete in three major races. Preceding the daily balloon fun will be live entertainment and games beginning at 4 p.m. Balloonists will ascend at 6 p.m. each day, weather permitting, from Avon Township's Michigan Christian College Campus, on the north side of Avon Road, between Rochester and Livernois roads. (Photo by Charles D. Derringer)

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Balloonists congregate at Oakland festival

By SUSAN TAUBER KLEIN

Holland has its tulip festival, Detroit has its ethnic festivals and greater Rochester has its hot air balloon races.

The races, which have taken place on Rochester's Hallock field the last two Memorial Day weekends, are on their way to becoming a nationally known, event all because of the work of many residents and business leaders.

Linden Harding, owner of the HighAmerica Ballooncenter, has invited 1,200 balloonists from the United States and Europe to join in the third annual Rochester HighAmerica Balloon Festival slated for May 20-28.

Volunteers from Avon Hills Lions Club have organized their annual carnival beginning Monday, May 15, and continuing through May 21. Members of the Greater Rochester Chamber of Commerce are planning the May 26-29 Village Fair, which will end with the Floatable Boatables event, sponsored by the Rochester Kiwanis Club.

Everyone, including volunteers, has been working for months to plan the event. Promoters say they hope to draw 100,000 visitors to the 15 days of festivities.

The nine days of balloon races and flying for fun will be on the green landscape of the Michigan Christian College, just east of the campus buildings and tennis courts, on Avon Road between Rochester and Livernois

roads in Avon Township. Avon Hills Lions Club Carnival will be in the Winchester Mall parking lot by the mall's main entrance at Rochester and Avon roads. The Village Fair will be on the grounds of the Rochester Municipal Park behind the police station at 400 Sixth.

THE RACE FOR the first weekend, May 20-21, will involve a Hare and Hound or team Hare and Hound race, in which the balloons will follow the hare (lead balloon) and try to land as close to it as possible after it lands, which could be in any place at any time, said festival director Harding. Sponsor of this race is Birmingham Camera.

During the week of May 21, balloonists and their crews will have free days to fly. If the weather doesn't permit the first race to be held, it will take place during the week. To permit safe flying, winds must be limited to 5-10 miles per hour.

By the fourth day, the main race will begin. This is the Channel 7 Key Contest. Balloonists will fly three miles from the field and they fly back, trying to grab the set of keys to a four-wheel drive 1978 Chevrolet truck from a string on a pole.

The balloonist who gets the keys, or comes closest to reaching them, wins the truck. Although three days are reserved for this race, participants will only get one chance to retrieve the keys.

THE LAST WEEKEND, Memorial Day weekend, will feature the convergent navigational projectile event. Sponsored by Manufacturers National Bank, this race involves balloonists again flying three miles and returning to the Michigan Christian College balloon field, then trying to land on or nearest to a red "X" marked on the ground.

Avon Hills Lions Carnival will set the festive theme for the activities planned by organizations. There will be 22 rides at the carnival with entertainment. Balloon and helicopter rides and snacks available. Hours of the May 15-21 carnival are Monday-Thursday, 3-10 p.m.; Friday-3-11 p.m.; Saturday-11 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday-noon to 10 p.m. Proceeds will go to the Avon Hills Lions Club, which will donate money to charities, including Leader Dogs for the Blind.

"There has been 100 per cent participation by all the Avon Hills Lions on planning this," said Russ Shelton, Avon Hills Lions Club president and carnival and balloon festival coordinator.

Organizers of the nine-day event have arranged for the expected 50 balloonists to stay at Michigan Christian College, Oakland University and area motels.

TOURS HAVE BEEN arranged at Stroh's Brewery, the Renaissance Center and Meadow Brook Hall. (Continued on Page 2A)

Agendas set

CITY OF FARMINGTON Council meeting 8 p.m., May 15 2800 Liberty

The council meeting will begin with a public hearing on a proposed \$1 million improvement to the city's water system. Financing of the project has not yet been determined, but could include the sale of water and sewer or general obligation bonds. The project may go to the voters on referendum.

Other business before the council includes a presentation by Steven West of Federal Department Stores in response to concern about warehousing expressed by city officials. The council also will consider variances to sign ordinances regarding A.A. Armstrong Lock and Safe Co. on Grand River and Bremner's Standard Service station on Farmington Road.

Information concerning sewer rate hikes by Oakland County will be presented.

Auditing firm Plante & Moran will make a presentation concerning a proposed new rate structure for water and sewer costs in the city. A request for renewal of taxicab bond plates, a proposed contract for the garbage and rubbish collection, and a request to amend the Environmental Protection Act Step I facilities planning act will also be considered.

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS Council meeting 7:30 p.m., May 15 31555 Eleven Mile

The city council meeting will begin with a series of six public hearings. Five of these hearings deal with zoning changes.

The first public hearing is concerned with the proposed use of federal revenue sharing funds for the next fiscal period.

The requests for zoning changes begin with a consideration of changing

the zoning of land on Eight Mile between Gill and Drake from single family residential to multiple family dwellings.

Land at 2955 Haggerty is the subject of a change from single family residential to planned residential use. On Grand River between Drake and Gill, land is posted for a switch from light industrial use to business service district use.

The south side of Twelve Mile west of Farmington Road is the subject of consideration over a request the zoning be changed from single family residential to office use. Property west of I-96 and south of Ten Mile on Grand River will be up for a zoning change from light industrial use to business use.

Under new business, the council will discuss the vacating of an undeveloped alley located between Eight and Nine Mile and west of Farmington Road.

A special assessment district will be considered to provide sewer improvements on Edgell.

Property which is the subject of a planned residential development located on the southeast corner of Halstead and Nine Mile will be considered at council. The land is the subject of a dispute in Rowenschuck vs. the City of Farmington Hills.

Contract will be awarded for the purchase of police cars.

There will be a consideration of a quarterly transfer of major road funds to the local road fund.

There will be a consideration of approval of drainage easements and the use of a private service drive easement which was granted by the White Motor Co. to the Star Cutter Co.

There will be a regularly scheduled meeting of the Farmington school board at 8 p.m., May 16, in the board's offices on Shawwassee near Power.

Meeting slated for candidates

The Farmington Democratic and Republican clubs will host a joint candidates night for Farmington Board of Education candidates.

The meeting will be at 8 p.m. at the Botsford Inn, Eight Mile and Grand River, on May 18. The public is invited. Questions will be taken from the audience.

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Residents honored

Two area residents have new angles to their lives. Dave Jones, Farmington DPW director, has decided to take it easy and has announced his retirement. Thomas Blattert of Farmington Hills has been honored by General Motors. To get the entire story, turn to Page 2A.