

# Farmington Observer

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Twenty-five cents

## Education cost driven up to \$35 million

By MARY GNIEWEK

The Farmington School Board approved a \$35 million budget for 1980-81 Tuesday before an audience of one district taxpayer. The new budget is a \$4 million increase over last year's budget.

"Nobody came to ask for different allocations," said Michael Spiece, board trustee.

"It (the budget) represents the blueprint of where the district is going, and residents showed very little interest."

The lone taxpayer in attendance, Zan Alley, co-owner of a Farmington Hills home, was there as a representative of the Farmington Education Association. She is executive director of the teachers union.

The school board adopted the budget unanimously without having to field a single taxpayer question or protest.

Property owners in the district, which covers Farmington, most of Farmington Hills and a southern portion of West Bloomfield Township, will pay \$30 million in school taxes this year.

The remainder of money will be come from county, state and federal taxes.

Gas prices, paying for new middle school programs like intramural/inter-scholastic sports, and inflation have driven costs up over last year.

The district reduced its tax rate from 36.23 mills last year to the current 33.53 levy. One mill is \$1 in taxes for each \$1,000 of state equalized property, valuation. Each mill produced \$876,330 for the school district. Substantial new construction and soaring property values have added \$3 million to the tax base.

"THIS BUDGET IS one of the best we've had in a long time," said William Prisk, superintendent of finance.

"There have been no cuts this year. We've reinstalled field trips and made some other small improvements."

The biggest increase (\$1 million) was allocated for capital needs like building improvements.

"We have plant facilities worth more than \$60 million. We have to keep them in good repair," Spiece said.

**'Nobody came to ask for different allocations. It (the budget) represents the blueprint of where the district is going and residents showed very little interest.'**

—Trustee Michael Spiece

Adding computers in middle schools and high schools cost \$100,000. Also, the bilingual program is expanding this year, with 250 identifiable bilingual students.

Staff salaries make up 85 percent of the budget. More than 70 percent of Farmington school teachers are at the top of the pay scale, earning salaries ranging from \$23,000 to \$27,000. The 38 administrators earn \$29,000 to \$40,000.

A reduction of 14 staff positions was made in elementary and high schools, most notably with the closing of High-meadow Elementary School last June. To balance that difference, 14 positions were created in the middle schools,

where teacher/pupil ratios were lower.

Another gifted program coordinator was added for middle schools. Now there are three staff persons for gifted students in grades six-eight.

The budget leaves a fund equity of \$1.7 million, which includes the value of bus.

"Also, (the fund equity) provides a cushion to protect against unexpected contingencies," Spiece said. "It provides budget stabilization for the future."

"We know these have been good years. We're taking money for the bad years."

### Farmington Public Schools

	79-80	80-81
Local Revenues	\$26,218,298	\$30,052,167
State Revenues	\$ 2,575,699	\$ 2,240,407
Federal Revenues	\$ 962,856	\$ 878,896
Other Gov't Revenues	\$ 1,638,865	\$ 2,597,130
Other Transactions	\$ 55,600	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$31,451,318</b>	<b>\$35,768,600</b>

## Cities brace for cuts if Tisch gets voter nod

By Steve Barnaby  
Farmington editor

Farmington and Farmington Hills residents could lose library, senior citizen and park services if the Tisch (Proposal D) amendment is approved Nov. 4.

"Both cities' budgets would have to be cut by almost 20 percent, say the cities' chief executives. Non-essential services would be the victims."

"We've taken a look at Tisch and estimate we would have to reduce revenues by \$104,000," says Farmington City Manager Bob Deadman.

The city's current budget is \$2.7 million, \$463,000 of which is supported by

state shared revenues. At least 20 percent of those state revenues would be lost, which, says Deadman, is a conservative estimate.

But those three services studied for cuts account for only \$200,000. Another

\$200,000 would have to come out of essential services — police, fire and public services.

Farmington contributes \$125,000 to the library, \$30,000 to senior citizen recreation program, and \$35,000 to parks maintenance.

The city splits the cost of these services with Farmington Hills. Hills City Manager Larry Savage is less specific about future cuts, but says at least \$2 million will be slashed from that city's \$12.2 million budget.

"IT'S OBVIOUS that any cutbacks are going to mean personnel layoffs in the less critical services," says Savage.

"We would try to minimize any layoffs in our emergency departments and street operations. But even in those areas there would be some layoffs. I don't think they can escape."

Savage is reluctant to be too specific, he says, because "a number of things are unclear in the amendment itself." Tax and legal experts say it is unclear whether the Tisch proposal would eliminate most current tax exemptions from the property tax — property owned by municipalities, non-profit housing groups, charitable and cultural organizations, veterans groups, parks and cemeteries.

Some personal property now exempt also could be placed on the tax rolls, depending on how the proposal is interpreted — motor vehicles owned by individuals or businesses, tools and dies and business inventory.

A stickier problem, says Deadman, is the two percent yearly limit on residential and agricultural assessments which Tisch would impose.

"What that would do over a period of time is reduce property tax to an incidental expense," said Deadman.

"IF INFLATION stays at ten percent every year, something has to give."

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Abigail Adams, you say? Well, look again. In reality that is Peg Harding, who has made the famous historical figure come to life. Mrs. Harding visits

### Our first feminist

## Abigail Adams comes alive

She walks into the room with her long skirts rustling and her face almost hidden by a ruffled mobcap.

In one hand she carries a metal box that is her footwarmer. In another, she carries her sewing box.

When this 18th century woman speaks, the subjects range from politics to baking, for that's how Peg Harding sees women's contributions to history.

She speaks through the person of Abigail Adams, wife of the signer of the Declaration of Independence and second president of the United States, John Adams.

"Abigail was the first feminist," said Mrs. Harding, a Livonia resident who takes her lecture to such groups as the Quakers in Farmington Hills where she will speak Wednesday.

She wrote to her husband to be careful not to let husbands become ly-

rants. If you let them, then women will rebel."

Educated by her father and grandfather, Mrs. Adams was erudite enough to offer advice to colonial leaders and astute enough to phrase it to fit the situation.

Mrs. Harding likes to add that Mrs. Adams knew how to coat her opinions with "a little honey."

In addition to having first hand information about events of the time, Mrs. Adams had the extra advantage of being a prolific diarist at a time when most women and a substantial amount of men were illiterate.

HER NUMEROUS separations from her husband added impetus to her writing as did the belief that she was recording events for future generations.

She even regarded her long separations from her husband as a contribution to the revolutionary movement, according to Mrs. Harding.

"They might have had long separations but no historian has dug up any dirt on them, yet," said Mrs. Harding.

Mrs. Harding's program features Mrs. Adams when she was in her mid-30s and her husband has returned from his post as commissioner to France.

As she entertains her sister, Mary, she knocks off comments about the fashions of the day, telling a story about the time she had her hair powdered and piled high on her head. The process was so expensive, she slept with a log at the back of her neck to keep the elaborate style in place.

The tactic was successful and the hairstyle remained until six months later.

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## Headlee decries tax scare tactics

As the day draws closer to when taxpayers will vote on their state's financial future, Farmington Hills insurance executive Richard Headlee heightens his campaign in support of the Tisch Amendment (Proposal D).

In a recent speech at the University of Detroit, he made light of Governor William Milliken's claim that the proposal would require at least a 55 percent reduction in state services.

"In my position as chairman of the board of trustees of Oakland University, someone suggested last week that the 60 percent required budget cuts if Tisch passes would include closing Oakland University. I don't believe it and neither should anyone else," he said.

Recently Headlee voted against a majority, OU board decision which came out against the Tisch proposal.

## 2 teens hurt in auto crash

Two teen-agers were injured in a one-car mishap Monday night when their auto smashed into the front of a building in Redford Township.

According to police, the driver of the car, Sheryl Dee Tender, 17, of Farmington, and a passenger, Mark Galau, 19, of Detroit, were taken to Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills.

A hospital official said both are in stable condition.

Witnesses told police they saw the car at about 10:30 p.m. traveling west on Grand River Road at a high speed. The couple apparently were squabbling, said police, because witnesses said the passenger was hitting the driver.

According to witnesses, the car ran a red traffic signal at Seven Mile Road, and about a half-mile further west on Grand River, the driver lost control of the auto which smashed into the front of the State Wide Aluminum building, 26550 Grand River.

Police said the collision resulted in extensive damage to both the car and the building. No tickets were issued, said police.

### what's inside

