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Colleague tapped for council seat

By MARY GNIEWEK

William Mitchell was the unanimous choice of the Farmington City Council Monday to replace Councilman Warren Buckler.

Mitchell, 42, vice chairman of the Farmington Planning Commission, will serve the remainder of Buckler's term. He is expected to run for election in 1982.

Mitchell was chosen from a field of 13 candidates that council members considered after Buckler's Jan. 8 resignation.

Those considered included Thomas Carr, a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals; Jack Cotton, Farmington Schools athletic director; Thomas Duke Jr., president of the Farmington Jaycees; Nancy Leonard, a member of the Farmington Historical Commission; and Joanne McShane, a member of the ZBA and past chairwoman of the Farmington Beautification Committee. Also considered were James Mitchell, local attorney and past president of the Farmington Jaycees; Lee Ratliff, ZBA and Planning Commission member; Michelle Rhoton, former candidate

for city council; Shirley Richardson, past chairwoman of the Beautification Committee; Ernie Sauter, member of the Farmington Library Board; John Straky, a consulting engineer; and Roger Walker, a member of the Board of Review.

The council relied on resumes, phone calls, letters of recommendation and direct contact with candidates to trim the list.

THE TWO CRITERIA for appointment were community involvement and a candidate's willingness to stand

for election at the end of the appointed term, according to Mayor William Hartsock.

Mitchell was the only person nominated Monday. His bid was approved quickly by the four councilmen.

Called from his seat in the audience, Mitchell was sworn in by City Clerk Nedra Viane and sat with his new colleagues for the remainder of Monday's meeting.

"I look forward to assumption of new duties," Mitchell said. "I have an ongoing

interest in doing something for the community. It's another step."

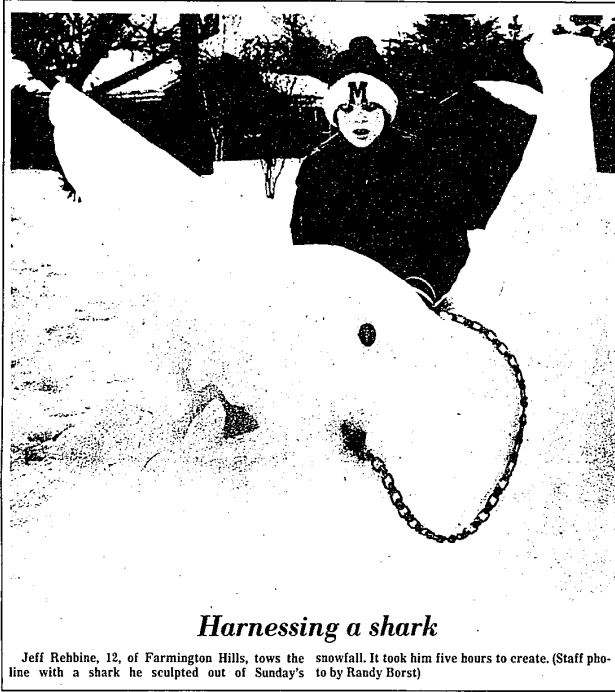
Mitchell, a Farmington resident for 20 years, became interested in civic affairs while a member of the Jaycees. He has been a member of the planning commission for nine years.

Mitchell is president of MB Associates Inc., a manufacturers representative agency dealing with the production of auto parts.

He is a member of Ward Presbyterian Church.



WILLIAM MITCHELL



Harnessing a shark

Jeff Rehbine, 12, of Farmington Hills, tames the snowfall. It took him five hours to create. (Staff photo by a shark he scupted out of Sunday's to by Randy Borst)

Hospital petitions city for finance authority

A proposal to establish a local hospital finance authority would lead to a reduction of patient health care costs, according to Botsford General Hospital Vice President Gerson Cooper.

Cooper made the proposal at a study session of the Farmington Hills City Council Monday evening.

Botsford has launched a two-phase expansion program which would increase patient services, according to hospital authorities.

Council has agreed to consider the proposal further at a regularly scheduled legislative session.

"A local financing authority... will provide for tax exempt capital financing for the hospital, resulting in lower health care costs for our community," said Cooper.

Under the plan, the local authority would be empowered to issue bonds on behalf of the hospital to finance various types of projects. Financed projects would be the construction, acquisition, reconstruction remodeling or improvement of hospital facilities, including medical office buildings.

It also would allow refinancing for existing hospital indebtedness. The advantage to the hospital is that the bonds are tax exempt.

"Since the interest on the bonds is tax exempt, the interest rate on the bonds is considerably less than that normally associated with conventional borrowing. It results in borrowing costs savings to the hospital which translates into reduced health care costs," said a report released by Botsford.

BONDS WOULD be sold at public or private sale at a discount not to exceed 10 percent. The bonds couldn't be sold at a price which would make the interest cost on the money borrowed exceed 13 percent a year, according to the report.

"It should be noted that a municipality assumes no liability and no expenses in local authority financing," said Cooper's report.

"The obligation to make timely payment of principal and interest on bonds issued is solely the obligation of the hospital financing."

The local authority would be composed of three to five members appointed by the mayor and city council. It would operate independently. Administrative staff would be unnecessary.

Another advantage, said Cooper,

would be the creation of a partnership between Farmington Hills and the hospital.

Bonds issued by the local authority would be approved by the Michigan Municipal Finance Commission prior to their issuance.

The finance commission would require a financial feasibility study prior to issuing of bonds.

Presently, Botsford is involved in a \$5 million acquisition and remodeling project involving Clarenceville's Edgewood School.

THE DEAL for Edgewood was closed last week at a cost of \$1.2 million.

The building will be used to house facilities for medical education, records, human services, nursing and cardiac rehabilitation, according to Cooper.

The remodeled building will be linked to the main hospital by a tunnel extending from basement level of the hospital for approximately 465 feet and rising by elevator to an entrance foyer at the school.

Plans are presently being made for the second phase for diagnostic, treatment and support zones.

Man charged in bar shooting

A Livonia man faces charges of assault following a shoot-out at the Towne Square Pub in Farmington Hills early Saturday.

Federico Morillo Ramirez, 61, was released on \$10,000 personal bond Saturday after an arraignment before Judge Margaret Schaefer in Farmington District Court.

Ramirez is charged with two counts of possession of a firearm in the commission of a felony, felonious assault

and assault with intent to do great bodily harm, a 10-year felony.

Both gun charges carry mandatory two-year sentences on conviction. Felonious assault is a four-year felony.

POLICE ARRIVED at the bar, 27406 W. Eight Mile, just after midnight Jan. 31 to find several patrons subduing Ramirez. A handgun was lying nearby.

The bartender, Murray Joseph Bozzer, 31, also of Livonia, was shot in

the stomach. He is in stable condition this week at Botsford General Hospital.

Witnesses told police that the suspect pulled a gun and first fired two rounds at his table companion, who escaped injury by ducking on the floor.

When Bozzer hollered over to the suspect from the bar area, the gun-toting man turned around and fired, striking him in the lower abdomen, police said.

Mayor blasts editorial, defends council action

By MARY GNIEWEK

Farmington Mayor William Hartsock blasted an Observer editorial Monday which accused the Farmington City Council of sidestepping the Open Meetings Act in choosing a replacement for a resigning councilman.

Hartsock labeled the Jan. 29 editorial false and denied charges of skirting the law in appointing a replacement for Warren Buckler, who resigned Jan. 8.

The editorial chided the City Council for neglecting to keep the public adequately informed of its progress, for meeting privately with candidates, and for depriving voters of knowing who was being considered.

Gov. Milliken recently vetoed a proposed revision of the Open Meetings Act that would've allowed city councils to interview applicants for key positions in private.

"To bar interested citizens from such discussions isolates from the public view discussions which directly affect

the quality and character of government," Milliken said.

A consensus on Buckler's replacement was reached through a series of phone calls and meetings with council members and separate discussion between candidates and councilmen, Hartsock said.

He described the selection process at Monday's meeting, just minutes before council approved the appointment of William Mitchell.

HARTSOCK NAMED 13 candidates that were under consideration and described the criteria for selection, which included community service and willingness to run for office in 1982.

"We believe the process used in filling this vacancy is not only fair to the candidates, but also assures the community of the best possible choice," Hartsock said in a prepared statement.

"We believe the process used follows the requirements of the Farmington City Council and all state statutes.

"Above all, I believe this council has

acted in good faith to serve the best interests of the residents of this city."

"I will always respect criticism based on a difference of opinion," he continued. "But I will never remain silent when accused of violating the law, abusing the public trust and neglecting my responsibilities."

Hartsock spent more time Monday defending the council's action than council spent talking about any of the 13 candidates, including Mitchell.

Most of the 13 are members of city commissions or boards. All are civic oriented.

"It would be highly improper to get in a public meeting and find out that a candidate wouldn't want the job," said Councilman Alton Bennett.

Hartsock summed up his complaint this way:

"This council has spent a great deal of time and care in fulfilling its responsibility in appointing a replacement. "I would have hoped the press would have done the same in reporting and editorializing on this event."

Botsford forging pact with Redford hospital

By LYNN ORR

Redford Community and Botsford General hospitals will be combined if the Redford hospital's board of directors approves.

After five months of negotiations between representatives of the two non-profit hospitals, that decision is expected within the next few weeks, according to participants.

Botsford has reached a tentative agreement with Dr. Ray Stoller to acquire the lease rights on all of the space currently occupied by the Redford Medical Center, the clinic adjacent to Redford Community Hospital, according to Gerson Cooper, Botsford vice president of administration.

Dr. Stoller is the senior partner of the privately-owned medical center, which supplies about 90 percent of the patients to Redford Community Hospital.

Dr. Stoller has worked in the area for 25 years and is also a member of Redford Community's Board of Directors. He intends to retire and sell the clinic, according to participants in the negotiations. Dr. Stoller was out town and unavailable for comment.

Botsford has asked that the Redford hospital's Board of Directors agree to combine with Botsford, in connection with the acquisition of the clinic.

THE DECISION to combine with Botsford most likely will be based on the need to avoid the fate of other small hospitals in the metropolitan area that have been closed by financial problems and/or state-mandated bed reductions. Redford Community has 72 beds, compared to Botsford's 308. The service areas of the hospitals overlap, while the majority of emergency cases are taken to Botsford.

In addition, a recent study done by a medical planning firm for Redford Community Hospital determined that the hospital would not have a long-range future on its own without combining with a larger hospital.

Botsford's interest in the purchase of the medical center and the combination of the two hospitals rests in the opportunity to expand the scope and depth of health care services in the communities, according to Cooper.

Botsford also hopes to immediately establish a site at Redford Community for the training of residents in family practice, Cooper said.

Currently interns and residents in

family practice are rotated through Botsford's various departments. They then work with several selected practitioners in offices outside the hospital.

Botsford hopes to circulate those residents to Redford, where they could be trained in family practice under accountable procedures.

The hospitals would remain as two separate organizations, and community members of Redford's Board of Directors would remain on the Redford board, Cooper said.

THE BENEFITS for Redford Community Hospital in the combination would be in providing a larger affiliation for the hospital and possible services, such as maternity and pediatrics, which Redford lacks, according to Redford Township Supervisor James Kelly, a member of the Redford board.

"But we're not completely sold that we should just give away a hospital," Kelly said. The 14-member board has postponed its decision for a few weeks to give Redford hospital staff members an opportunity to decide if they are able to purchase the clinic, he said.

Kelly is also worried about any potential long-range plans by Botsford for turning the Redford hospital into a convalescent center or reducing beds there rather than at Botsford in the case of another bed reduction plan.

"Are we going to be the sacrificial

lamb if the state wants more beds dropped?" Kelly asked.

COOPER IS trying to reassure the Redford board members that their worst fears would not be realized, he said.

"As long as there's a demonstrable need, we are further ahead continuing as a family practice community hospital," Cooper explained. "If, in fact, we would find somewhere down the road, five or even 10 years, that there no longer is a need for an acute care facility, it would in effect be used for some other health care."

Care for the aging and/or a community mental health center would be possibilities, he said; but he does not foresee the need to go that route, he added.

Botsford was ordered originally to reduce beds by 14 in a plan that was later rejected by the state Legislature.

Redford Community was ordered to reduce beds by three. But Cooper said unused capacity at Redford Community could also accommodate demand at Botsford, which is close to 100 percent average capacity.

Another possible problem in the negotiations arises from Botsford's orientation as an osteopathic hospital. Cooper calls that a "phantom issue." There are medical doctors and osteopaths on

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The Sweetest Buy in Town

For \$1.00 a line, you can warm the heart of your Valentine. Details in today's classified section.