

# Farmington Observer

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Twenty-Five Cents

## Wolf balks at proposal for tax boost

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Even though a decision has yet to be made, Farmington Hills officials are keeping open their options to increase local taxes.

In a 6-1 vote last Monday, council members passed a resolution of intent to raise taxes from the current 7.8 mills to 8.2 mills in 1984-85.

Councilman Donn Wolf, an ardent anti-tax proponent, voted against the resolution.

"I didn't like the resolution," Wolf said, referring specifically to the wording of the second paragraph.

That paragraph states that "... Council has determined that to continue basic city operations and services and to provide for the addition of three police officers and for capital improvements in the city's road system, drainage system and to construct other needed public facilities..."

ALTHOUGH THE resolution's passage is required by the state even if council members officially decide against raising taxes; Wolf said "it appears we have determined this. I haven't determined that we need a tax increase."

The proposed .3745-mill tax increase over the 1983-84 rate reflects the city's increased operating costs and an additional levy for implementing some capital improvements.

If council adopts the proposed \$15.3-million 1984-85 budget following a scheduled public hearing on June 4, Farmington Hills taxpayers will pay 8.82 percent more in local taxes in 1984-85 than last year.

That means if you own a \$90,000 house assessed at \$45,000, your city taxes would run approximately \$69 in 1984-85 if the increase is approved.

The recommended 8.2 mills can be broken down into several components: 7.3193 mills for operating costs; .3087-mill for debt retirement; and one-half mill for capital improvements.

The total 7.70 mills for operating costs and debt levy, excluding the proposed one-half mill for capital improvements, appears to be a net reduction from the 7.5255 mills in 1983-84 (which did not include millage for capital improvements).

But the money each mill will generate for the city's operating costs and debt levy in 1984-85 represents an increase of 1.88 percent because of an increase in the state equalized valuation (SEV) of residential property.

Farmington Hills this year is the only community in Oakland County which received a state equalization factor of 1.02, said City Manager Lawrence Savage.

SAVAGE SAID he was unaware whether this equalization factor was included in the assessments property owners received a couple of months ago. But the effects of the factor would be evident in property owners' tax bills, he added.

The city's total SEV in 1984-85, meanwhile, is expected to rise to \$998,159,938 from 1983, \$927,700 in 1983-84.

The proposed \$15.3-million 1984-85 budget represents a 4.34-percent increase over last year.

"Everything is more expensive than it was the year before," Savage said.

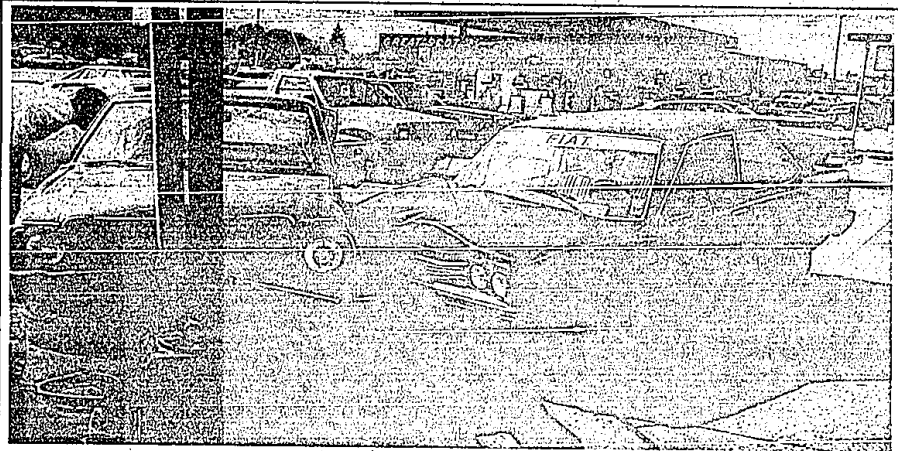
But the 4.34 percent increase in expenditures is also due to plans to hire three new patrol officers in the police department, as well as increasing three part-time positions to full time. Two of the three part-time positions are in the building and engineering departments. The third part-time position is the city's housing rehabilitation specialist.

The proposed one-half mill for capital improvements would be used to implement the first year of a recommended six-year capital improvements plan.

Although the proposed one-half mill would generate \$498,000, the city's 1984-85 capital improvements budget stands at \$1.5 million.

To meet the necessary costs of the first-year program, city officials would have to use approximately \$983,000 in reserves and a \$435,000 contribution from the city's general fund in addition to the proposed one-half mill.

As suggested in the 1984-85 proposed budget, the city plans to work on the following improvements: drainage, including the debt service on the Caddell Drain, continued architectural drawings for the police building, sidewalks, 12 Mile Road improvements, equipment purchases, a payment on the Spicer property and initial park development, as well as work on athletic fields.



## Drivers escape injury

Farmington Hills residents Diane E. Therasse, 30, and Miller Eugene Currier, 74, escaped injury last Tuesday when the cars they were driving collided about 4:20 p.m. at the Orchard Lake and 13

Mile intersection. Because of conflicting statements, lack of witnesses and minor damage to the cars, police did not issue either driver a citation.

RANDY DONOHUE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## She'll take her political bread from the un-Levined loaf, thanks

By Tom Beer  
staff writer

When it comes to United States senators from Michigan, Farmington Hills resident Dorothy Dunneback doesn't like what she sees.

"We're electing people who are not representing us," said Dunneback, speaking specifically of Sen. Carl Levin, a liberal Democrat who'll be standing for re-election in the Nov. 6 general election.

As a staunch supporter of the anti-abortion "pro-life" movement and an active member of a local Right-to-Life organization, Dunneback said she can't abide Levin's stand on two issues — abortion and prayer in schools.

"I'm very disappointed with Levin," said Dunneback, the mother of three teen-age sons. "I'd think anyone would be."

"The people have shown overwhelming support for the pro-life movement, but that support has been completely

ignored by Levin and (Michigan Sen. Donald) Riegle."

Dunneback said she wrote to Levin concerning his stand on Medicaid funding for abortions — definitely a pro-life issue — and she didn't much care for his response.

"I wrote to him to ask why he's ignoring his constituents, and he said he had to vote his conscience," she said.

"Of course, I wrote back to say I didn't believe that people are elected to vote their consciences. I feel they're elected to represent their constituents."

A CONSTITUTIONAL amendment allowing prayer in public schools was an emotional issue last March. The U.S. Senate voted down the amendment, and Dunneback wasn't happy with the way Michigan's senators voted.

"They said they've never had such overwhelming response from the state of Michigan as far as telegrams and letters and such," she said. "But he (Levin) chose to ignore it and vote against it."

Dunneback said she called the offices of both Michigan senators to complain.

"The reply I got from Riegle's office was that people are organized on this and in order to get a true picture of how people in Michigan feel about it they would have to hear from everybody in the state. That's ridiculous. That makes no sense at all!"

Dunneback said she's just about giving up trying to communicate with her senators.

"We do have senators who are ignoring what the people are asking for," she said. "We're told to write our senators and congressmen and tell how we feel. But they ignore us. I don't see any point in doing that."

And she's not too keen on the Republican alternative for the office of senator — especially former representative Jim Dunn of East Lansing, who will have to beat former-astronaut Jack Loumsa in the Aug. 7 primary in order to get back at Levin.

"He (Dunn) frightens me because he seems to be throwing so much mud and

has been so aggressive toward Loumsa," she said, adding that she "knows very little about Loumsa."

DUNNEBACK AND other area pro-lifers plan to work on a survey "to identify pro-life voters," according to Joe Brady, a retired Farmington Hills dentist who said he shares Dunneback's sentiments about Michigan's senators.

"The object of the survey is to educate pro-life voters as to which are the pro-life candidates in the elections," Brady said. "We attempt to get these pro-life candidates elected."

Concerning Levin and the abortion issue, Brady said, "I've heard that Levin has said that he's against abortion, personally, but that legally he tolerates it. To me, that's like being against slavery, but still tolerating it."

Brady, who said that the Michigan Right-to-Life organization would probably endorse Loumsa in the primary, claimed between 50,000 and 60,000 members in the group, which is headquartered in Grand Rapids.

## City eyes proposal to mandate sidewalks

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington property owners will be required to install sidewalks along their developed property if officials revise the city's sidewalk policy.

"The change is that the council's provisions policy did not call for filling in the void on developed property," said City Manager Robert Deadman.

Council members, however, have yet to adopt the revised policy. Councilman Roger Walker last week asked that the

issue be tabled until residents were notified of the proposed change and given an opportunity to voice their opinion.

The proposed policy would require the installation of sidewalks, at the property owner's expense, in developed areas. The revisions would mostly affect the older sections of Farmington where property was developed without sidewalks, Deadman said.

The city's sidewalk policy, Deadman said, requires the installation of sidewalk along the major and local streets as property is developed.

But in the city's older sections, property was developed without installing sidewalks, which has resulted in open spaces along the existing sections of sidewalk.

Council members asked Deadman to draw up a revised policy, he said, because they felt the existing policy was unfair. Under the city's sidewalk repair program, a resident would have to pay for repairs to the sidewalk adjacent to their property. But their neighbor may not have a sidewalk adjacent to their house to repair.

Although council now has the option of ordering the installation of sidewalk where it considers it necessary, the proposed policy change would provide the council with a "method of implementation" that option," Deadman said.

In the past, council members have ordered the installation of sidewalks on Grand River and Drake Road. The installation of sidewalks on Farmington Road is planned for next year, Deadman said.

Under the revised policy, property owners would have seven years to com-

plete the installation of sidewalk adjacent to their property, Deadman said. "This time period will allow the city to include the installation of sidewalk during its regular sidewalk repair program," Deadman said.

In other words, if a piece of developed property is without sidewalk when repairs are being done in that area, the city can order the property owner to install the walkway to coincide with the repair program.

Although it took the city seven years to run the city's existing sidewalks

through the repair program, city officials can order earlier installation of sidewalks.

But the proposed revisions also include a provision that either a property owner or city administrator can appeal to the council to waive the sidewalk requirement, Deadman said.

"This provision would be used where it has been determined that the cost of installing sidewalk is unreasonable because of topographic conditions or where existing structures or utilities interfere with the construction of the sidewalk."

## How eclipse can harm the eyes

By Diane Gale  
staff writer

Even though partial solar eclipses are rare, astronomers warn star gazers not to look directly at the partial eclipse that is expected from 11:14 a.m. to 2:09 p.m. Wednesday.

The sky will darken as the moon blocks approximately 75 percent of the sun. It will be the first partial eclipse visible in the area since February 1979.

Another one isn't expected until May 1974, according to Raymond Bullock, Cranbrook Institute of Science coordinator of astronomy.

It's usually a natural response to protect your eyes by looking away from the sun. But, during partial eclipses, Michiganders will be tempted to gaze

Bullock warns against doing so. "During an eclipse the brightness safeguard is gone so people think it's OK. Some people wear sunglasses, but even that's not safe," Bullock said.

"It will cut out the physical light, but it's the ultraviolet light that will blind you. But in fact it's the sun that will blind you."

SOLAR FILTERS, sold with small telescopes also can protect the eyes.

An eclipse of the sun happens when the moon, orbiting around the earth, appears to cover the sun. Most of the time the moon's orbit appears to pass above or below the sun.

Total eclipse was in 1806 and the next visible anywhere in the United States will be in 2017, Bullock said.

For those who want to safely observe the partial eclipse, Cranbrook is providing observations of the sun projected through a telescope from 11 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Maximum coverage of the sun will be at 12:39 p.m.

Bullock described how to view the partial eclipse, using household items without endangering eyesight.

"Put your back to the sun, make a pinhole through a piece of paper, cardboard or clean white wall and let the shadow fall on the wall and the pinhole should level. Allow the sunlight to pass through the hole so it shows on a second piece of paper. The image of the partially covered sun will be projected through the pinhole onto the paper. Moving the papers closer together or

farther apart will decrease or increase the size of the image.

What you'll see on the paper is the sun with "a big bite" taken out, Bullock said.

"The May 30 eclipse occurs when the moon is at a far point from the earth," he said. "The moon appears slightly smaller than usual, because of its distance so it won't totally cover the sun. Instead, at the mid-point of the eclipse, a little ring of the sun will be visible around the moon."

"Anular eclipse" from the Latin word "annulus," which means a ring.

Interest in astronomy "peaks and wanes" with happenings, Bullock said.

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