

# Farmington Observer

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Twenty-Five Cents

## Hills manager quits; replaced by assistant



William Costick

By Jean Adamczak  
staff writer

Farmington Hills City Council members voted Tuesday night to accept "regretfully" the resignation of City Manager Larry Savage effective June 30.

At the same time the council voted to appoint Assistant City Manager William Costick to the post vacated by Savage. Costick will become city manager July 1.

In his resignation letter, Savage said he had been considering his retirement and consequent resignation for the past several months.

"Upon my acceptance of this position, I assured the Council at that time that I would remain as manager for at least three years, but probably no longer

than five years," Savage said in his letter.

"I feel I have met this commitment having completed my fifth year in February of this year."

"I'm sure this comes as a surprise to many of you (the audience) out there," acting Mayor Jan Dolan said.

Dolan expressed her regrets at losing Savage who, she said, has been "a super guy to work with, and who has given us an extra six months of his time."

Council members Jodi Soronen, Joe Alkateeb and Donn Wolf also expressed regrets about Savage's resignation.

"It is with deep regret that we see him (Savage) leave," Soronen said.

"He's done a hell of a job," Alkateeb agreed.

"I hope he makes good on one promise — that he will be available if

over the need arises for us to call on him."

**SAVAGE SAID** he feels the time is "appropriate" for him to retire and that "now is a proper time" for his resignation.

"A good staff is in place and a most competent and able assistant city manager has been with the organization for several years," Savage said in his resignation letter.

"The current fiscal year is closing and the budgets for the coming year have been prepared and submitted to Council for its consideration," Savage added.

Costick comes "highly recommended" for the position, said Dolan.

"Larry (Savage) has been grooming him all along for the position," Dolan said.

The board voted that as part of his severance pay Savage receive 50 percent of all unused sick pay and unused vacation pay as of June 30.

The board also granted Savage three months compensation pay as part of his severance pay.

Savage was selected from a field of 84 candidates and appointed by the board in 1978 to fill the spot vacated by George Majoros in August 1978.

Savage's contract expires June 30, 1984 and was last renewed July 1, 1983.

Before coming to Farmington Hills, Savage served as chief administrative executive for 15 years in Traverso City where he administered a \$10 million annual budget and 240 employees. Savage plans to spend his retirement time back in Traverso City.



Larry Savage

## Ideas sought by Hills for park

By Jean Adamczak  
staff writer

A citizens committee is being formed to determine how the 212-acre Spicer plot will be developed for recreational use.

Dennis Fitzgerald, chairman of the Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission, presented a plan to council Tuesday and recommended an organizational structure to be used in planning and developing the property on Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile.

Fitzgerald's presentation focused on a special committee to be formed called the "Citizens' Advisory Committee on Spicer Property and Development."

The "nuts, bolts and meat" of the advisory committee will be comprised of agencies, activity groups and interest groups from the community and will work in conjunction with the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Special Services Department.

"The idea of the advisory committee is to get as many people involved in the developing process as possible," Fitzgerald says.

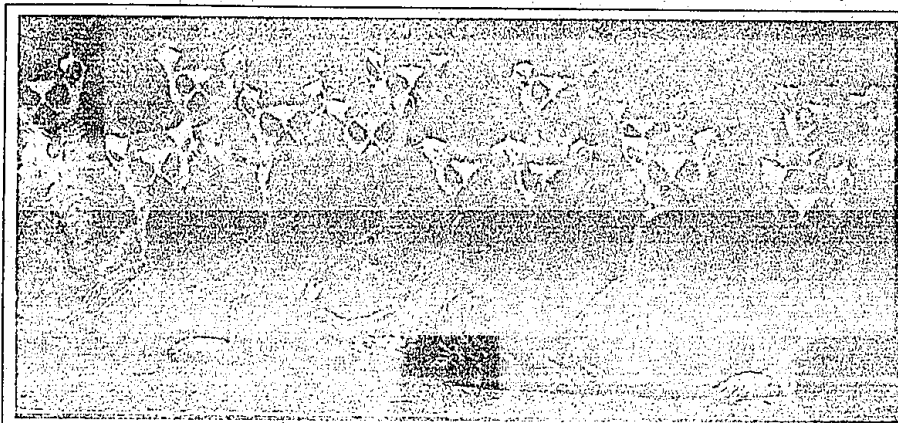
Developing the property is "an awesome task," says Fitzgerald. "But we are more than equipped to handle it."

The Citizens' Advisory Committee will include such agencies as the YMCA, Community Center, Oakland Community College, public and private schools and community clubs.

**ACTIVITY GROUPS** included in the committee are youth/adult sports, garden clubs/naturalists and cultural arts. Interest groups such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, senior citizens and subdivisions surrounding the property are also included in the committee.

Fitzgerald says the "door is left open" for additional groups and agencies.

Please turn to Page 12



STEPHEN CANTRELL/staff photographer

## When E.F. Hutton talks . . .

Just stare right back when the black and white lemurs fix their gaze on you. That's the best advice we can give you for your next visit to the Detroit Zoo. The lemurs are among the many attractions

expected to boost zoo attendance this year. But more financial support for the zoo is needed. Please turn to page 3A and our editorial page for details.

## She brings multitude of skills to Botsford principal's office

By Teri Benson  
staff writer

When Annie Layton-Dixon was considering whether she would accept the job of principal at Botsford Elementary School, she decided first to see what the residents of the school district thought of the place. One afternoon she went to the Livonia Mall and canvassed some of the shoppers.

"I asked them what they thought of it (Botsford School) and if they sent their children there. Most of them spoke very highly of the district," said Layton-Dixon. "I found a lot of parents at-

tended Clarencsville schools and now their children are attending. There's a lot of pride there."

Shortly after Layton-Dixon accepted the district's \$40,000 offer to become only the second principal in Botsford's history, replacing the retiring Leo Larowe who spent 30 years in the job. She steps into the job Aug. 1.

**TO LAYTON-DIXON**, who had been a school principal at an elementary school, a middle school and at a kindergarten through 9th grade alternative school, all in California, she also knew what she wanted in a school community.

"I really wanted involved parents. It sure makes the job easier," she said. When she read a letter the Botsford parents sent the school board about what they wanted in a school principal, she was pleased.

Layton-Dixon, 47, arrived in Michigan last December after her husband, Ernest, a Barrington's executive, was transferred here from Santa Ana, Calif.

There were 60 applicants and eight semifinalists for the job in Clarencsville, a school system made up of parts of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford Township. Layton-Dixon was the only finalist named by the selection committee.

In California, she had spent 14 years holding not only a professional career and family but an impressive list of varied civic involvements. "Most" recently, she spent two months working as the director of a Positive YMCA, and before that worked a year as an attorney with the World Aids Society in Anaheim.

She served on the Fullerton (Calif.) Transportation Commission, the Child Abuse Task Force of Orange County,



Annie Layton-Dixon

went with me and stood in line for my courses," she said with an easy laugh. "It was sort of a family affair."

After receiving a bachelor's degree in education (with honors) in 1968 from the University of Maryland, she found initial positions as a classroom teacher, learning disability teacher, reading specialist and director of an early childhood education project.

Then in 1976 she earned a master's degree in school administration (with honors) from California State University in Fullerton and three years later found herself in her first principal's assignment.

**ACCORDING TO** Layton-Dixon, being a school principal takes more than a strong background in education. "It really is a multi-faceted business. You have a building, a staff to manage, all the responsibilities of a business."

Even with her master's degree, she said she felt ill-prepared to deal with complex legal issues surrounding education.

That's when she decided to go to law school. She earned a law degree in 1981 from the American College of Law in Anaheim.

"Each year in California there were 200-300 law passed a year, federal regulations, teaching, union contract, job, a law degree almost became a necessity," she said.

Layton-Dixon, a woman with a distinguished gentle nature, enjoys negotiating when she negotiates. She likes to take for a newspaper editor. Recently, she teamed with pride when she explained that she was held up because she had to change a flat tire while on

"In fact, my son knew more about taking a microphone (at that time) than I did. I think we kind of went to school together. When I registered, they both

## Headlee has new tax idea

By Joanne Meliszewski  
staff writer

Republican activist Richard Headlee admits the effects of the proposed Voter's Choice Amendment would be "tough" on local and state budgets.

"It's tough. But it ought to be," said Headlee, member of Voter's Choice '84. "It's to limit revenue and requires the (state) Legislature and/or city councils to get a ratification vote of the people for spending levels."

Voter's Choice '84, a coalition of Michigan taxpayers organized to promote the passage of the Voter's Choice Amendment, still needs about 60,000-70,000 valid signatures to put the proposal on the ballot Nov. 6, Headlee said.

If at least 50 percent of the Michigan voters adopt the proposed amendment, the state Constitution would require voter approval of all state and local tax increases since December 1981.

**THAT MEANS** all Michigan taxing units would have to roll back tax rates to what they were at the end of 1981. Future state and local tax increase requests would require a majority vote of taxpayers.

Although Headlee says "it won't really be that different in the local community than it is right now," local city officials might disagree.

Please turn to Page 10

## oral quarrel

## Should taxpayers vote on increases?

The proposed Voter's Choice Amendment to the state constitution would require voters to approve or disapprove of all state and local tax increases instead of letting politicians decide on their own.

**TODAY'S ORAL QUARREL** question is: **HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WHICH WOULD ALLOW YOU RATHER THAN THE POLITICIANS TO DECIDE TAX INCREASES?**

To answer this question, call 477-6498 anytime before 1 p.m. on Friday, June 1. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, please look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

## what's inside

Amusements	8-12C
Business	6-7C
Cable Connection	2A
Classifieds	Sections D-E
Community Calendar	4B
Club Circuit	2B
Crossword Puzzle	7E
Editorials	14A
Engagements	5B
Memory Lane	6A
Obituary	A4
Suburban Life	1-10B
Sports	1-5C
Travel	15C
NEWSLINE	477-5450
CLASSIFIEDS	6B-6300
HOME DELIVERY	884-6252

**"GREAT RESPONSE"**

C. Peck took the time to call and tell us what great response he received from his Observer & Economic Classifieds. **ADVERTISING TRAINING CERTIFICATION** is placed. "It's called 'The first person who called bought the call'!"

Thank you, C. Peck!

**One call does it all!**

**591-0900**

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Please turn to Page 12