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Audit to be reviewed in private

By Julie Brown
staff writer

Farmington's library trustees plan to meet Thursday to review the results of an audit conducted by the Plante and Moran accounting firm.

"The meeting's purpose is to review the results of our investigative efforts with Mr. (Gordon) Lewis and his attorney," said Ernie Sauter, president of the Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees. "That's what we've been trying to do all along."

A meeting of the Library Board of Trustees has been scheduled for 5 p.m. Thursday at the Farmington Hills library branch. A memo announcing the special meeting was posted Friday.

THE THURSDAY meeting with Library Director Lewis will be a closed one, Sauter said.

"That's at Mr. Lewis' request. This is an executive (closed) session, to review that with him. The results of the meeting will certainly be open."

Those results will be made public "as soon as the board makes a decision," he said.

Sauter refused to discuss the audit's findings.

"No, because it's not proper to do so. What do you want to do, try him first in the newspaper? Is that the idea? Don't you think he should have the courtesy of answering these things first? We're going to follow the proper procedure, step by step."

Sauter also declined to pinpoint the audit's completion date.

"This week, I'd say," he said, when asked Friday afternoon about the completion date. "I believe yesterday or today. I don't know that."

"THE WORK of the audit was not completed as of yesterday," Farmington Hills City Manager William Costick said Friday. "There are still some questions that have to be addressed." Costick and Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman met informally

'What do you want to do, try him first in the newspaper? Is that the idea?'

— Ernie Sauter
library trustee

with two library trustees, Sauter and Jonathan Grant, Thursday.

"We met with the members of the board and the auditor," Costick said. "We looked at some of the preliminary things and discussed them. Really, I'm not at liberty to say what they were."

"They (the library trustees) are going to discuss it in their meeting Thursday I understand it," Costick said. "They've got to meet with the parties. There are some questions that need to be answered yet. Until they have their meeting Thursday, they won't have completed their analysis."

The meeting has "been called by the Library Board," Deadman, Farmington's city manager, said Friday. "I suspect they (the audit results) will be out by that time. I really can't fill you in much more than that."

As of Friday, Beverly Pappal, assistant library director, was continuing to supervise the operations of both the Farmington and Farmington Hills libraries. Library trustees met in a closed session Wednesday, April 10, with Library Director Lewis. The trustees refused to reveal what actions, if any, were taken during the closed meeting.

A memo issued to library staffers the day after the closed meeting referred to Lewis as being on "vacation." "During Mr. Lewis' vacation, Mrs. Beverly Pappal, assistant director, will be directing the activities of both libraries," the April 11 memo reads. "Any questions on library affairs should be directed to Mrs. Pappal."



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Up in smoke

No injuries were reported in a car fire that occurred Thursday morning on Freedom Road, west of Farmington Road, in Farmington. Police officials estimated damages to be \$500. The car's hood had to be pried open. The occupants were Ruby Caswell and Michael Caswell of Farmington Hills.

School tax rate slated to drop

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington school officials are proposing to reduce the tax rate levied in the district in 1985-86 by less than a mill. But the school district will make out better financially because of increases in the district's value. School trustees unanimously voted 7-0 last week to recommend levying 34 mills in 1985-86. The levy would include 32.5 mills for operations and 1.5 mills for debt.

In 1984-85, school officials levied 34.7 mills, comprised of 33 mills for operations and 1.7 mills for debt.

"We will be able to reduce operating and debt levy despite expansion of programs," said Richard Wallace, head of the school board's finance committee. The district's proposed 32.5 mills for operations is 4.70 mills less than the voter-authorized maximum limit of 37.20 mills.

Even though school officials intend to levy less millage in 1985-86, the school district will be generating more revenue than last year because the district's total state equalized valuation (SEV) has increased approximately \$117 million, with \$74 million of that in new construction, said Superintendent Lewis Schulman.

"WE ARE fortunate to learn in the last few weeks that the boards of review, that the valuation we will be

working with is higher than our first estimate," Wallace said.

Under the Truth-in-Taxation Act, the school district is limited to levying an amount which would generate the same amount of tax revenue as the previous year from the same tax rate unless a resolution is adopted and a public hearing is scheduled to notify the public. Based on the proposed 32.5 operating mills the district will generate additional revenue worth 1.2 mills, Schulman said.

As required by the state's Truth-in-Taxation Act, a public hearing is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 7 to explain why the district will be generating more money than in the previous year despite a lower tax rate. School officials will also discuss the district's preliminary \$49.7 million 1985-86 budget.

The additional revenue generated through the increased SEV will help the district balance its proposed operating budget in 1985-86, Schulman added. Salary increases, capital projects and a general increase in district costs make it necessary to use the increased revenue rather than trim the tax rate down to generate the same amount of revenues last year, Schulman said.

The district's preliminary budget reflects an estimated 5 percent increase in expenditures over the 1984-85 budget, according to a report on the proposed budget.

The increases are due in large part to anticipated increases in elementary and special education enrollment, a 4 percent salary increase for all district employees and an increased expenditure for student supplies.

IN ADDITION, the preliminary budget includes the following:

- Employment of two consultants for the elementary science program.
- New copy machines for the secondary schools to serve as alternates when the rented machines need repairs.
- Expansion of the computer applications class to include North and Harrison high schools.

- Replacement of seven passenger buses and two orthopedic buses.
- An increased allocation to replace two maintenance vehicles.
- The addition of a teacher and aides for the reading and gifted program which will be split into separate programs.
- An increase in the district's capital needs account.

On a related note, school officials will ask district voters to reauthorize four mills for 10 years when they go to the polls in the regular school election June 10.

The four mills that are up for renewal this year are part of the district's 37.20 mills voters previously authorized years ago.

Harrison goes for grad party

Parents of seniors at Harrison High School got the go-ahead late last week to start making plans for an all-night graduation party.

Parents of seniors in North Farmington High set the tone quite a few years ago for a no-alcohol-no-drugs party for their graduates, that was followed early this spring by parents of seniors in Farmington High.

The parents at Farmington High who took their party-planning lessons from the veterans at North Farmington, are now tutoring the newcomers.

The three parties, all running from about 11:30 p.m. to early morning on consecutive nights, June 10, 11 and 12 in each of the three public high schools, are given with the hope of providing both a fun and safe night for all of the district's '85 graduates.

The party-giving committees from all three schools have the full endorsement of Farmington-Farmington Hills Chamber of Commerce. The endorse-

ment is given with the knowledge that the committees are going to need help from the entire committee to provide enough food, fun and games for all comers. Time, talents, gifts for prizes, discounts and money are needed at all three schools.

Joan Barbrick-Lorenz, chair for the party planned for Farmington High's graduates, spoke for all of the graduation party planners when she said she hoped the parties will be so attractive they will eliminate every house party in the two cities where beer or liquor might be served.

Barbrick-Lorenz is particularly pleased about two recent donations that have come to her. One was a check from a woman that had no children in the school district. The other was from Frank Yanke, a Farmington resident, an award-winning jeweler and father of a 2-year-old, who gave several pieces of gold jewelry to be used as prizes.

Police say warrant to be issued in traffic deaths of two sisters

By Julie Brown
staff writer

Farmington Hills police expect a warrant to be issued early this week in connection with the auto accident in which two West Bloomfield sisters died last month.

The girls, Vanessa Carloni, 16, and Lara, 15, died early in the morning on March 10 when the car they were riding in collided with another on Farmington Road near Heritage Hills Drive. The site is just south of 14 Mile Road in

Farmington Hills.

The Carloni girls were passengers in a car driven by Brian Smith, 17, of Southfield. The other car was driven by Laura Pinis, 21, of Birmingham.

"WE DIDN'T get it (the warrant) issued today," said Lt. Ernie Miller, head of the Farmington Hills Police Department's traffic division. The prosecutor "got tied up on something else." "That's about all I can tell you right now," Miller said Friday. "I'm almost positive we'll have it Monday."

"That's about it," he said. "It just depends on the circumstances of it. When we have no witnesses to an accident, it takes longer. You've got to go back through the physical evidence to prove your case. We had to go back and do a lot of work."

AN ACCIDENT reconstructionist

from the Michigan State Police assisted in the investigation of the accident.

"I've gone up to the prosecutor's office in less than a week on some fatalities," Miller said. Investigation of other fatal accidents, however, takes more time.

"It just depends on what you have. It just depends on the case."

Hills will computerize city hall

By Julie Brown
staff writer

The Farmington Hills City Council last week unanimously authorized an allocation of \$169,750 for data processing equipment and software programming.

The money, which will come out of the capital improvement fund, will be used to buy computer equipment and software, training and other expenses.

The cost estimate is broken down into the following areas:

- \$112,500 for equipment
- \$37,250 for software
- \$13,000 for training
- \$2,000 for installation and delivery

• \$4,000 for micro-mini interface. This device allows the microcomputers to communicate with the minicomputers. A total of \$2,000 for start-up supplies will come from the general fund.

The proposal submitted to the city council breaks down the installation into three phases. The first phase includes buying a minicomputer and its component, 11 microcomputers and printers.

"I consider it the most important phase," said City Manager William Costick.

The first phase will cover the office automation needs of the finance department, the assessor's department, the city clerk's office, the fire department, the engineering department, the Department of Special Services, personnel, community development and the Department of Public Services.

THE SECOND AND THIRD PHASES will take place in the future and will be based on departmental needs.

Those phases will "depend on the installation and the need," said Karen Birkholz, assistant to the city manager. "It's not tied to any specific budget year."

The city clerk's office has two word processors, Costick said.

"The only other area that has word processing equipment is the police department."

"We've had the need identified," he said. "We've had it studied for the past few years." In July 1984, a report from the Plante and Moran firm outlining the city's computer system requirements was submitted to the city council.

The computer system will have a variety of adaptations, the city manager said, such as a number of uses for the city's engineering department.

The same is true for registration, parks and recreation programs.

"There are so many adaptations. A big area, for example, is the fire department." The computer system could be used to keep track of fire department incidents and could provide statistical information on such things as response time.

can use this for," Costick said. The system could be used to keep track of voter registration, business licenses and other licenses, assessment and finance department information, and other types of records, such as minutes from meetings.

"We've got the equipment picked at this point," the city manager said. The system used for cost estimating includes the IBM PC/AT and System 36 computers.

The city plans to work with Plante and Moran in selecting software and in installing the system.

"You need somebody that is technically knowledgeable in that area, to oversee the installation of the system, making sure it's properly installed and workable," Costick said.

"Many of our departments have been a long time in waiting for this. We're behind, from what I see. Most other communities have data processing equipment."

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