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today's
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bulletin

'No' At OCC

The Oakland Community College faculty has failed to ratify a proposed contract, and it appears an agreement may be a while in coming.

Faculties at each of the OCC campuses met on the individual campuses Thursday to take an informal vote on the contract submitted for ratification. The straw vote was negative.

The faculty has not set any meetings to ratify a contract but instead is expected to wait until Sept. 24 and elect a new bargaining team.

The faculty association will be meeting Sept. 24 to elect officers for the coming year and will make a decision at that meeting whether or not to elect a new bargaining team.

what's inside

SC Agreement

Negotiating terms at Schoolcraft College have again reached an agreement — this time on a two-year contract. The length of the contract was the big reason the first deal fell through.

Page 9A

The Court & Roads

A couple of problems envisioned by public officials this past week are the condition of roads and the places the court meets. The school board is studying what to do about some bad road conditions, and Township Trustee Fred Lichtman wants to know why the Farmington District Court is not meeting three days a week regularly in Farmington Township.

Page 4A

Amusements	11A
Bowling	12A
Churches in Action	16-17A
Classified Want Ads	Sec. B
Deaths and Funerals	16A
Regional Affairs	9A
Sports-Prep and Pro	12-13A
Spotlight on Women	14-15A



Observer Want Ads
422-0900

Police Leadership Is Being Studied By Township Board

BY EMORY DANIELS

The quality of command leadership of the Farmington Township Police Department is a matter of "extreme concern" to the township board, according to a special statement issued by the board Thursday night.

That was one of the conclusions reached by the board after meeting for two hours Thursday night in "executive" closed-door session to discuss the charges that police officers had refused to cooperate with

law enforcement agencies investigating two killings by township officers.

IN A PUBLIC meeting, which started at 10 p.m., Township Attorney Joseph T. Brennan read a statement on behalf of the board which traced the facts involved and revealed recommendations made by trustees.

The "executive" session, attended by the full board, followed a report by Chief of Police Irving Yates concerning officers who were eye-wit-

nesses to the shootings but not incriminated and who refused to make statements to the county prosecutor's office.

Brennan said the board's concern over the department's leadership does not reflect on the honesty, integrity or sincerity of any of the police administrators.

"The board is concerned that the command is not providing the type of solid discipline in emergency situations that are needed," explained Brennan.

It was reported the board was only able to scratch the surface in discussing command problems during the two-hour secret session, but trustees will continue deliberation and make a judgement "in the shortest time possible."

THE ONLY FINAL action taken by the board Thursday night was to allow two officers to return to work with discipline being limited to a written reprimand by Chief Yates.

Patrolmen Ernest Miller and Richard Murphy were eye-witnesses to the shooting of Eldon Kephart on Aug. 30, allegedly by Corporal Thomas Godwin.

Both gave written statements to the prosecutor within a few days after warrants were issued Sept. 12 against Godwin and William Sonnenberg Jr.

Brennan stated the refusal to testify was particularly shocking and a matter of first impression in the township. Yates said he had never heard of officers not under incrimination refusing to make statements.

It was particularly shocking, added Brennan, because the officers took that action because of advice of counsel. Noel Gage who represents the Farmington Police Officers Association (POA).

The board reported the ac-

tions of Miller and Murphy were improper and unbecoming a police officer but that both had now "purged" themselves by filing written statements with the prosecutor.

"The fact that they were acting under rather strenuous advice of counsel was a mitigating circumstance," explained Brennan.

BUT, BRENNAN continued, "The board is most concerned by the interjection of Officer John Hedrick, POA president, into the investigative work of our department and state police."

"The board feels the appearance of Officer Hedrick on the scene with a POA attorney was improper, violated several rules of the police manual and was conducted unbecomingly as a police officer."

Chief Yates has been commanded to conduct a complete investigation into Hedrick's involvement and to take such disciplinary action that appears to be warranted.

The board instructed Yates to report back on what action was taken in the shortest time possible, probably sometime within the next 30 days.

BRENNAN STRESSED the board is particularly upset over the interjection of the POA into the investigative work of the police department.

As far as the township is concerned, Brennan said, the legal limit of the POA as an organization representing police officers is to be an agent for collective bargaining purposes.

The chief may take recommendations on what ought to be done since the POA, said Brennan, and this will be a matter of continuing concern with the board.

Brennan said the board feels a police officer has an obligation to cooperate fully in an investigation of a crime of alleged crime, including giving full statements to appropriate authorities.

The board does not believe a police officer is in any way stripped of the constitutional right not to incriminate himself, Brennan continued, just because he happens to be a policeman.

"He's entitled not to talk on the grounds of fear of self-incrimination," he added. A policeman charged with a felony should be suspended until cleared of the charge, Brennan said, but no further discipline should come because he has chosen to exercise his constitutional rights.

THERE WERE TWO others who were witnesses to shootings but have refused to make statements to the prosecutor.

Continued on Page 2A



WOOD CREEK FIRST — Running Old Glory up the Brand new flagpole was the signal for official beginning of the first year of life for Wood Creek School, the district's 19th elementary building located at 28350 Danvers. Presenting a flag which had flown over the nation's capitol was Paul Scuphoms (left) aide to Congressman Jack McDonald. Principal Larry Freedman watches the safety boys unfurl the bunting (Evert photo)

OC Sets Nov. 3 Annexation Vote

The annexation question will be decided by vote of the people on Nov. 3. That became official Thursday night when the Oakland County Board of Commissioners voted to set the election.

The annexation question is now headed for the printers to be included on the Nov. 3 general election ballot.

THE COUNTY CLERK already had the proposal written for placement on the ballot and sent it to the printers Friday morning after receiving word of the action taken by the Board of Commissioners.

Residents having the opportunity to vote on the question are those living in the area of the township to be annexed and City of Farmington residents.

If approved by voters, the southern half of Farmington Township would become part of the city. Boundaries of the area to be annexed are everything south of 10 Mile east of Quakertown, and south of 11 Mile west of Quakertown. Haggerty and Inkster are the east-west boundaries.

THE NOV. 3 VOTE was recommended to commissioners in a report given by the local affairs committee of the board.

DURING A county meeting Wednesday, Commissioner Philip Mastin had suggested that it might be in order to hold a public hearing in Farmington before making a decision on establishing an election.

Mastin said that although he made the suggestion, township officials present did not ask for a hearing.

Of course, if the county board agreed to hold a public hearing, the annexation question would not have been placed on the Nov. 3 ballot.

Township Clerk Floyd Cairns reports it will be difficult to separate the voters' lists for the Nov. 3 election.

CAIRNS EXPLAINS the voters must be separated according to who is and is not eligible to vote on the annexation question. Unfortunately, Cairns adds, the precinct boundaries fail to coincide with the annexation boundaries.

The township has filed an appeal to the Michigan Court

of Appeals but that decision will allow after the Nov. 3 vote.

If annexation passes and the Appellate Court overturns the Circuit Court, the results of the election would then be declared invalid.

Judge Rules Against Teeples

Earl Teeples suit against Farmington Township has been dismissed by Oakland County Circuit Judge James Thorburn.

The decision leaves the township board free to discipline Teeples for engaging in political activity, if they feel he has, but discipline will not necessarily follow.

BEFORE the Aug. 4 primary Teeples had his attorney, Bernard Kahn, ask Circuit Court to issue an injunction preventing the Township Board from disciplining him for running for a supervisor.

Kahn claimed the supervisor-elect had a constitutional right to seek public office and should not be disciplined for taking that action.

Judge Thorburn heard the case last Wednesday and dismissed the case after declining to issue the injunction.

Oral arguments were presented by Kahn and Township Attorney Joseph T. Brennan. Brennan also wanted the judge to rule on the validity of the township's police manual especially the section prohibiting policemen from engaging in political activity.

IN EFFECT, Thorburn said Teeples has a constitutional right to run for office as a citizen but not as a police officer.

The conclusion to be drawn from that statement is Teeples should have protected his right to run for office by either resigning from the police force or obtaining a leave of absence.

Thorburn said he upheld the police manual and added it was validly passed and was not vague. The judge did not issue a

Oakland Circuit Judge Frederick Zein had ruled the State Boundary Commission was correct in rejecting Farmington Township's incorporation petition and ruled that annexation was a proper question to be placed before voters.

THE BOARD, when it instructed Brennan to seek a declaratory judgment, on validity of the police manual, did not publicly express any interest in disciplining Teeples but getting a legal judgment on the manual.

BRENNAN explained there were two motions to be heard: (1) the township's request for a summary judgment on the manual; and (2) Kahn's amended complaint regarding alleged political activity on behalf of other police officers for other candidates.

BRENNAN SAID he asked the judge to allow the amended complaint to be introduced and then argued that even with the amended complaint there was no cause for the injunction. The judge agreed, Brennan said.

"Even if every allegation in the amended complaint was true," Brennan explained, "was still not entitled to relief."

Brennan also said the judge ruled it was in violation of the police manual to run for office regardless of whether or not the campaign is "active" or "passive."

Brennan concluded that no one has been disciplined yet for violation of the political prohibition in the manual.

The argument by Kahn that the manual was being unenforced or unjustly enforced is not valid, Brennan added, because that section of the manual has never been enforced.