



# Farmington Observer

Volume 97 Number 49

Thursday, March 27, 1986

Farmington, Michigan

66 Pages

Twenty-five cents

## Hills rescinds plan for TIFA

*'It is not in the best interest of our community to become divided through legal suits between one local agency and another...'*

— Mayor Joe Alkateeb  
Farmington Hills

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

In an unusual vote — and without public discussion — the Farmington Hills City Council on Monday rescinded its resolution establishing a tax increment financing authority district along 12 Mile, west of Farmington Road. It was being on the cake for the Farmington Board of Education, which now will likely drop litigation recently filed against the city to halt the TIFA formation, school officials said. The vote followed a public state-

ment, read by Mayor Joe Alkateeb. "It is not in the best interest of our community to become divided through legal suits between one local agency and another, both of which represent the same taxpayers' interests," he said. "The Farmington Hills City Council will not become embroiled in expensive and needless litigation with the school district at this point in time."

THE STATEMENT indicated, however, this may not end the issue. "It may well be that at some future date this action, or some other similar form

of action, may be revived." "I'm very glad," Graham Lewis, interim school superintendent, said after hearing of the decision. "We were always hoping we wouldn't have to take this through the courts. I'm assuming... the situation is moot."

"That's good news," school board President Susan Rennels said. "It puts us in a position to work in a positive manner. I think we have a mutual concern as far as quality of life and safety of the roads."

The school district's attorney, Dennis Pollard of Birmingham, had not formu-

lated a response or an advisory to the school board. "The board, I'm sure, would be interested in resolving the litigation," he added. "I'll have to meet with them and resolve the matter. Frankly, I didn't expect this."

"We look forward to the pledged cooperation offered by the school board to gain voter approval of a bond issue for road improvements," Alkateeb said from the prepared statement.

SEVERAL SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

Please turn to Page 7

## Farmington FOCUS

If you have a news item or an idea for a feature story or an action picture with a Farmington-area connection, send a note to our downtown office at 33203 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

UNITED Foundation funding now extends to the Farmington Area Advisory Council.

The council will receive \$30,000 to expand its substance abuse prevention program in the public schools.

The success of the 1985 Torch Drive fund-raising campaign has resulted in the United Foundation now funding 144 local health and community service agencies.

HELPING hand. The Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit will receive all proceeds when Buddy's Pizza in Farmington Hills opens its doors from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday, April 14.

It'll be all the pizza and salad you can eat for \$9 per person, or \$4 per child younger than 12. The Capuchin Charity Guild, in partnership with Buddy's Pizza, will sponsor the spring fund-raiser for the Detroit soup kitchen.

The Capuchin Community Center, based at 1760 Mount Elliott, provides 700,000 meals and distributes 100,000 items of clothing and other household items each year to the needy throughout the metropolitan area.

SOVIET Jewry will grab the spotlight during a Jewish Community Council-sponsored educational forum Sunday, April 13, at the Jewish Community Center, West Bloomfield.

The council's Detroit Soviet Jewry Committee, chaired by Jeannie Weiner of Farmington Hills, is heading up the event, which will run 1:30-4:30 p.m. The spotlight will be turned on the plight of Soviet Jewry in advance of the planned summit meeting between President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

Workshops are scheduled on political action and cultural exchange.

AMONG the new members of the board of directors of the Health Alliance Plan health maintenance organization is Benjamin Carter of Farmington Hills.

The certified public accountant is a senior health care consultant with Plante & Moran CPAs, Southfield.

ASIAN American connection. Two Farmington-area residents were named to Gov. Blanchard's new Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian American Affairs.

The 36-member commission will advise the governor and his administration on the concerns of Asian Pacific Americans of Michigan.

Local commissioners are Leo Ho and Ramon Villanueva, both of Farmington Hills.

FOOTNOTES: One year ago this week — The longstanding careers of Farmington school board veterans Emma Makinen and Richard Wallace are drawing to a close. Both recently announced they will not seek re-election, leaving the race for the seats they currently hold wide open when their four-year terms expire in June 1985.

## Council to seek new tax

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Farmington Hills voters will be asked to support a special 3-mill levy for five years to pay for development of parks and recreation facilities in the city.

Following adoption of the city's five-year master parks and recreation plan Monday, council members unanimously agreed to place the special millage — expected to garner in excess of \$3 million over the next five years — to develop recreational facilities proposed in the plan.

The updated master plan also includes development plans for the 212-acre Spicer property on the west side of Farmington Road, north of 10 Mile — renamed this week as Heritage Park — bought from the Eleanor Spicer estate in June 1985.

The plan offers a comprehensive review of the area's existing recreation services and facilities, as well as an assessment of recreational opportunities and deficiencies. A list of improvements proposed to be undertaken by the city in the next five years to meet community needs completes the plan.

A significant portion of the overall plan is the master land use plan for the Heritage Park. It provides a guideline to follow in creating a park that would offer passive and

Please turn to Page 9



AT LEFT: A meandering creek marks the newly christened Heritage Park, formerly known as the Spicer Property, in Farmington Hills. The 212-acre site is classified as a major natural park in the city's newly adopted master parks and recreation plan.

Grass fire at Heritage Park: 11A

RANDY DORSTHAFF photographer

## Plans set for developing Hills park

By Joanne Maliszewski  
staff writer

Development of the 212-acre Spicer property — renamed this week Heritage Park — represents a major portion of \$7 million in improvements listed in a Farmington Hills five-year master parks and recreation plan.

"Spicer is the lion's share," said Dennis Fitzgerald, Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Commission chairman.

In approving the updated master parks and recreation plan, the Farmington Hills City Council also approved the master land use for Heritage Park, west of Farmington Road, between 10 and 11 Mile.

The master land use plan provides a guideline for creating a central park offering both passive and semi-passive recreation uses for residents, including children and the elderly. The plan also includes a detailed site analysis, a master site plan identifying uses targeted for

each area of the property, a strategy for phasing in the proposed improvements and detailed cost estimates.

Of 21 improvements listed in the overall master parks and recreation plan, 10 are strictly related to the acreage, purchased in June 1985 from the Eleanor Spicer estate.

THE ACREAGE includes a large estate home and farm buildings, as well as fields used in crop production. The remainder of the property

offers wetlands, open meadows, transitional woodlands and mature hardwood forests. The Rouge River also traverses the property's lowlands.

"Since the property is historically and environmentally unique, it is the community's intent to preserve the natural areas and restore the existing buildings," according to the master plan. "The park property will be developed into a nature

Please turn to Page 11

## Selection nears 60 apply for post of school superintendent

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

A "cafeteria-style" salary and benefits package with a dollar cap for Farmington's new school superintendent was recommended to trustees, as deadline nears for selecting a new school chief.

Sixty applications were received before the March 21 deadline. The field will be narrowed to 10, according to school board president Susan Rennels. Public interviews are scheduled for the 10 finalists April 8-12. Finalists' names will not be made available, Rennels said, until all are contacted and accept placement on the final list.

The board is aiming for a mid-May decision on a replacement for Lewis Schulman, who retired as superintendent Dec. 31. His position is being handled by Graham Lewis, whose term as interim superintendent expires July 1.

Contractual details and salary amounts were discussed with trustees by personnel director Robert Coleman and assistant superintendent for finance Michael Flanagan during two special board sessions in the past two weeks.

"Cafeteria style is becoming a popular way of doing things," Flanagan told the board.

USING A cafeteria concept, a dollar cap would be placed on the position, and an applicant could select a menu of salary plus other benefits, depending on individual need.



**Warning against the many costly plans available today, Assistant Superintendent Michael Flanagan said, 'Insurance plans can be extremely creative, especially those that pay for life following retirement.'**

A \$72,000 annual salary figure with "substantial reward" for a good first year, district-owned car for business and personal use, and other benefits totaling between \$10,000 and \$12,000 were discussed by the board, plus a possible two- or three-year contract. A \$2,500 moving expense or one-time contribution to a tax-sheltered annuity, plus possibly salary ranges also were discussed. No official motion was made accepting the figures as final.

The board's real work began Saturday, when members met for an all-day, closed session to begin screening applica-

tions, due the previous day. Flanagan, who has advised the board throughout the search and is presumably not in line for the job, presented results and his recommendations from a financial study of area school district chiefs and their current pay statuses. Schulman was receiving \$75,000 when he retired, according to information given.

SALARIES PLUS tax-sheltered annuities — a common benefit in today's packages — were compared in 15 districts in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb

counties with student populations ranging from 6,197 to 18,063.

Including a 5-percent increase, "consistent with what we've used here," packages would range from \$57,000 to \$102,500, according to Flanagan's findings. The average and median package from the group was about \$76,100.

The average salary of three districts in the 9,000 to 11,000 enrollment range — including Farmington — would be \$73,100 on July 1, when adding appropriate increases, Flanagan said.

In addition, 14 of the 15 districts give a district-owned car as benefit — all with a provision for business and personal use.

"This is a significant change from a couple of years ago," Flanagan said. "It's now become universal."

Tax-sheltered annuities were added to contract packages nationwide to "buck them up," trustee R. Jack Inch said. "A superintendent who moved around a lot could have a light retirement (payment)."

## what's inside

Around Farmington	2B
Business	14C
Cable connection	7B
Club circuit	5B
Classifieds	Sections C-F
Crossword puzzle	7E
Entertainment	14C
Obituaries	8B
Opinion	12A
Police/fire calls	10A
Readers' forum	13A
Recreation news	8B
Sports	1-7D
News line	477-5450
Home delivery	591-0500
Sports line	591-2312
Classified line	591-0900

*Reminder...*

Your Observer carrier will be stopping by this week to collect for the month. Please have the money ready and be sure to get your receipt. It's worth a \$2.00 discount on the next classified advertisement you place in your hometown newspaper.

Please turn to Page 7