

Hills police fees set

Beginning Monday, March 1, the Farmington Hills Police Department will charge for two services to defray processing costs.

A cost of \$5 will be charged for each "permit to purchase firearms" request and another \$5 for the fingerprinting that is part of a concealed weapons application at the time requested.

For the past decade, the State of Michigan has allowed police departments to levy the fee, Chief William Dewey said. Up to this point, however, the department chose not to charge.

However, people would request the permits and then not follow through, said Inspector Brian Miller. "It was for a variety of reasons, like they didn't have the money or they didn't like the gun," he said.

This tied up staff time, Dwyer and Miller said.

All requests must be made in person at the police station, 11 Mile and Orchard Lake Road. No requests will be handled by telephone or mail.

Schools face hit from tax plans

BY LARRY O'CONNOR STAFF WRITER

Farmington School Board members got the Lansing showdown on property tax reform. The message: Expect to take a hit.

State Sen. David Honigman, R-West Bloomfield, and State Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, spoke to trustees at Tuesday's board meeting.

Both offered their insights on the glut of proposals under consideration, not the least of which is Gov. John Engler's plan to cut property taxes by 20 percent.

The Son of C — as it is called by detractors, after the governor's failed Proposal C in the November election — passed in the Senate; the bill is in the House Education Committee.

Farmington Public Schools would lose an estimated \$16 million if the plan passed.

That amount would drop if the proposal passes with reimbursement tied in.

"We're talking damage control up there," Dolan said.

Engler's plan had an amendment tacked on by the Senate, promising reimbursement to out-of-formula schools. Not stated, however, was where the money would come from.

Other proposals, such as Team 14 and Sweet 16, include raising the sales tax to replace money lost.

"We fear we'll take the property tax out and never vote the sales tax increase," said Superintendent Michael Flanagan.

The discussion didn't quell such apprehension. Instead, both talked about what's being done to lessen the blow.

Honigman was the architect of a last-minute compromise in the Senate, which would've replaced some lost revenue.

His idea included a 30-percent property tax cut if voters added a penny to the sales tax.

The deal didn't go over. Engler's plan made it to the House instead with an amendment.

Honigman expressed concern over the governor's initial proposal.

"After all, wasn't that the lesson of Proposal C?" said Honigman, who eventually voted yes on the governor's plan. "Exit polling was done and it was revealed the overwhelming reason why people voted against Proposal C, not because they didn't want their tax bill cut."

"They didn't trust the state to reimburse the schools for the revenues they would've

lost."

The senator pointed out the Engler plan includes a "Headlee twist," which could conceivably cut the state's equalized valuation (SEV) of property — currently 60 percent of market value — to less than 40 percent over three years.

For example, Honigman said, if assessments rise 7 percent and inflation is 3 percent, a rollback of 4 percent would be factored in. That would knock the SEV back to 33.9 percent of market value.

"I tried to figure out what the governor's motivation is," Honigman said. "He is a master politician. . . I can't figure it out."

Honigman said he also had misgivings about the Team 14 proposal.

That plan includes placing a proposal on the 1994 ballot to raise the sales tax to 6 percent. Reimbursement would have to be included in the state constitution, he said.

"Even if the penny sales tax passes," Honigman said, "nothing will prevent the state legislature from redistributing the money in the future; nothing will prevent them from raising the property tax after they increase the sales tax."

OBITUARIES

NEIL A. BOWERS

Mr. Bowers, 56, of Farmington Hills died Feb. 23.

Born in Detroit, Mr. Bowers was vice president of a chemical company. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Monaghan Council, in Livonia.

Survivors include his wife, Patricia; daughter, Cathleen Hofseas; sisters, Todd Mather, Carol McClaime and Diane Broadwater;

brother, Walter Cullen; one grandchild.

Mass was celebrated Feb. 27 in St. Fabian Catholic Church, Farmington Hills, with the Rev. Norbert Kencierski officiating. Burial was in Glen Eden Cemetery, Livonia.

Memorials may be made to Alzheimer's Association. Envelopes at the funeral home. Arrangements were made by the McCabe Funeral Home, Farmington Hills.

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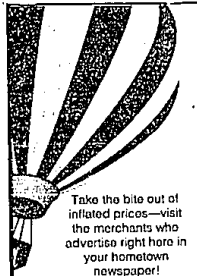
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