

the Farmington enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

15¢ a Copy

Weekend of January 8-9, 1972

Vol. 83, No. 25 20 Pages, 2 Sections

Hamlin Retiring 'Mr. Oakland County' Ending 30-Year Career

By EMORY DANIELS

Mr. Oakland County is going to retire. Delos Hamlin, 67, has decided 1972 will be his last year in government service, bringing to an end a political career covering 42 years including 30 years on the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Hamlin, who arrived home in the City of Farmington Wednesday from Florida, told the Farmington Enterprise & Observer he will not run for re-election as county commissioner in the fall.

"I decided I've served long enough and will spend some time on my farm near Clare and fishing in Florida. At the last election, I decided this would be my last term, and I plan not to run again."

THAT DECISION will have the same kind of

impact on Oakland County government as the retirement of Gordie Howe had on the Detroit Red Wings.

Hamlin is an institution and was the City of Farmington's gift to Oakland County in the same manner that Fred Warner served the State of Michigan.

At age 25, Hamlin was elected to the Farmington City Council and served on the council from 1939-39. He served as mayor from 1939-49 and is credited with converting the city to the city manager form of government.

During the 1930's, Hamlin operated a meat market in Farmington and was a part-time real estate man. In 1940, he sold the store and went full-time in the real estate investment business. His local investments included a restaurant and bowling alley, Farmington Lanes, which is

still operated on Grand River by his son, Fred Hamlin.

THIRTY YEARS ago Hamlin was appointed by the city to the Oakland County Board of Supervisors.

He smashed county records by serving as board chairman for 13 years. Before Hamlin had become chairman, it was customary for chairmen to serve for two years.

He served as chairman of the county public works board from 1957-69, was a past president and director of the State Association of Supervisors, a director of the National Association of Counties, and member of the executive committee and vice-chairman of SEMCOG.

Under Hamlin's chairmanship, the county created the Department of Public Works in 1957. The subsequent construction of interceptor sewers and arms resulted in the lifting of a building ban which had been imposed because of sewage disposal problems.

Hamlin says he pushed for establishment of a county DPW to help Farmington Township build its interceptor systems. The result was much more far-reaching as a building boom swept Oakland County.

Under his chairmanship, the courthouse was built in the county service area on Telegraph in Pontiac and remains today as one of the finest county headquarters in the state.

HAMLIN SOON was given the title of Mr. Oakland County and in January 1969, when he stepped down as board chairman, fellow commissioners honored him with a standing ovation.

Five years ago, a silver anniversary dinner was held in the Raleigh House in Southfield to honor his contributions to Oakland County. In 1967, as notables gathered to honor Hamlin, it was noted that during his 25-year tenure the county had grown in population from 254,000 to 850,000 persons.

Hamlin was also honored in 1969 when a dormitory, Hamlin Hall, at Oakland University was named in his honor. The plaque reads: "Named in the honor of Delos Hamlin, dedicated public servant, recognized leader of Oakland County and long-time friend of Oakland University."

A few months ago, Hamlin resigned as member of the City of Farmington's Review Board and Zoning Board of Appeals, an agency he helped create 34 years ago.

He explained then that he planned on spending the winter months in Florida and lacked the time to serve on these two boards.

HIS TIME will also be spent near Clare where he owns a 1,000 parcel containing a private lake, summer home and farm land and another nearby 1,800 acres of timber and pasture for the Hamlin cattle herd.

Hamlin, who enjoys hunting and fishing, often helps with the farm chores and once helped put in four miles of fencing.

Born in Durand in 1904, Hamlin graduated from public schools in Clare. He married Mildred Hartz in 1925, and the Hamlins



DELOS HAMLIN
Mr. Oakland County

raised three children, Fred, Mrs. David Clark and Mrs. Tony Byers.

He was a trustee of Oakland University Foundation, a director of the Michigan Society for Mental Health, member of the Presbyterian church, Farmington Masonic Lodge, Farmington Elks and Farmington Exchange Club.

HAMLIN SAYS he is pleased with the transition made by county government from an appointed board of supervisors to the new system of commissioners being elected.

"The new system is working well and is more of a democratic process because officials are responsible to the electorate."

The county has always had a pretty good board, he adds, because Oakland has always had many cities and the city councils traditionally appointed competent supervisors.

"Our record of progress was pretty good," he recalls. "We were non-partisan and dedicated. But the new board will be better over the next few years, for the county and state."

Hamlin feels there have been certain growing pains in the transition of streamlining county government but looks optimistically to the future.

A problem of county government, he explains, is that many of the important jobs are handled by commissions with appointed members. Hamlin feels the county must operate under a charter some day in order to departmentalize the entire county operation.

Hamlin doesn't feel he'll miss government service too much when he steps down after 42 years. "I thought I'd miss being board chairman, but after stepping down, it was a relief to have the flexibility of being just a commissioner."

"I'm sure it will be a relief to be just a husband and father and have the time to hunt, fish and visit friends. I'll still be interested in government, but I'm retiring."

Moving & Adding

Farmington Board of Education Trustees agreed to transfer 150 Dunckel students to North Farmington High, construct media centers at three elementary schools, and take bids on the fifth junior high.

Page 3A

Ace In Sleeve

The City of Farmington would like Grand River widened from Gill to Drake and resurfaced for its entire length. The city might be able to trump in if it can pull the ace from its sleeve when sitting down to the poker table with the state.

Page 3A

Experts Agree

Planning commission members Monday night will be given two traffic studies which were presented to the Farmington City Council at its last two sessions. The dual studies agreed that congestion would not result if a Landmark restaurant were located at Grand River and Mayfield.

Page 2A

Art Series

The famed art series on the history of "Civilisation" will be shown for the first time in Observerland at Madonna College, Livonia. It begins Tuesday. Details are in our Amusements section.

Page 8A

Amusements	8A
Bowling	10A
Churches in Action	4-5A
Classified Want Ads	1-7B
Dateline Outdoors	10A
Deaths and Funerals	5A
Sports -- Prep and Pro	10-11A
Spotlight on Women	9A
Turf Tips & Oups	10A



HAMLIN'S NAMESAKE—Delos Hamlin (second from left) checked the construction progress of Hamlin Hall, an Oakland University dormitory named after him and dedicated in February 1969.

School Board To Meet Secretly To Decide On Student Advisors

By MARTHA MAHAN

Whether students should be added to the Farmington Board of Education as non-voting advisors apparently will be decided at a private meeting with neither public nor students listening in.

A suggestion that the board open the doors for its debate on the seating of young people was turned down Tuesday at a meeting which one member later described ruefully as a "circus."

Trustee Aldo Vagnozzi, who originally recommended addition of student representatives to the board, asked for the open meeting and was joined by Dr. Mervyn Ross. But Trustees Ronald Emmitt and Kenneth Perrin, the only other members there, opposed it.

PERRIN, presiding in the absence of President Richard Peters, said he preferred to leave it up to Peters whether a special open meeting should be called but said he personally would oppose it.

However, Peters later gave firm support to closed meetings, which the board euphemistically dubbed "study" sessions, and the back of his hand to Vagnozzi as well.

In an apparent reference to Vagnozzi, Peters said the "purpose or advantage" of the private meetings are that they "allow discussion without the posturing

and politicking that seems to occur as part of public meetings" and without "playing up to the press and certain segments of the community."

"CIRCUS" aspects of the board's Tuesday meeting came with a wrangle over whether Vagnozzi's original proposal had been in the form of a suggestion or a formal motion, whether it should have come up for board decision at an earlier date and who was responsible for the delay, and Vagnozzi's insistence on re-reading aloud the lengthy recommendation.

Absent from the meeting besides Peters were the board's two women trustees, Mrs. Betty Brennan and Mrs. Kay Stirling.

Mrs. Brennan, who had been out of town, later said she would prefer that the board meet privately first and after that "would not mind a study session where the young people were involved."

Mrs. Stirling, kept away from the Tuesday meeting by illness, later commented that she didn't "care one way or the other" whether students were invited to hear the board's discussion but called the proposal to add youthful representation to the board "tokenism."

"I just don't think they're all that interested," Mrs. Stirling said. "I don't see a bunch of kids at our public meetings now or any particular rattling of the

doors. The only time they come is when there is something that directly involves them."

Mrs. Stirling said she couldn't see such matters as administrative salaries and the board's general housekeeping chores as attractive to young people. At the same time, she expressed belief some way should be devised to enable students to make the board more aware of youthful needs.

VAGNOZZI, a longtime critic of the board's private meetings, said it was his opinion that "the people involved should be there—if not as participants at least as listeners."

"We always talk about student affairs without the students around," he complained.

Ross remarked that inviting students to board sessions dealing with student matters "only helps the board to come to a more reasonable and informed decision."

Emmitt called the proposal to add student representation "excellent in many ways." But he said he feared the young people might drag meetings out until 11 or 12 o'clock at night or 1 in the morning because of their "added voices."

Emmitt said the board's newly hired public relations consultant had suggested other ways to accomplish student representation and that these ways should be given study.



January means many things to many people. It means winter sports, winter sales and the beginning of a brand, spanking new year. Read about the sports, the sales and what your friends and neighbors are planning for 1972 in today's Observer.