

the farmington

enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Wednesday, August 29, 1973.

15¢ a Copy

Farmington Hills Challenges Schools' Proposed Tax Hike

By DAN McCOSH

The Farmington Hills City Council balked at going along with a 0.7 mill increase approved recently by the Farmington Board of Education.

As a preliminary to a court fight on the issue, the council directed the city clerk to refuse to certify the taxes levied by the school district, normally a "rubber stamp" operation.

"To me, this is raising the taxes without a vote of the people," Councilman Frederick Lichtman said.

The school board recently approved a millage rate for 1973-74 of 27.53, up 0.7 mills from the previous year.

The Oakland County Allocation Board added 1.2 mills

to the school district allotment, money which formerly went to Farmington Township before it incorporated as the City of Farmington Hills.

Effect of the transfer is to raise the millage limitation for school operations by 1.2 mills.

In addition, the school board decided to levy the 0.5 mills remaining of their total voted millage, bringing the total increase for operations up to 1.7 additional mills.

The debt retirement millage was reduced from seven mills to six mills, leaving a net increase of 0.7 mills, according to Business Manager William Prisk.

The city council was anxious to challenge the school action, basing its case mainly on the "differential

millage" levied by Oakland County.

Attorney Joseph T. Brennan recommended challenging the additional school levy, saying the current practice of the Oakland County Allocation Board was unconstitutional.

He told the council it was necessary to be a taxing unit to enter into a legal fight.

The council decided that as the certifying agency for the millage, it could begin legal action.

Oakland County is the only county in the state which levies "differential millage."

The county Tax Allocation Board distributes the 15-mill county tax between local school districts, townships and the county government.

Their past practice has been to grant millage either to townships or schools.

In effect, township residents deduct their township millage from the school levy,

while city residents pay the whole school tax.

The practice was last challenged in Birmingham two years ago in a case involving the City of Birmingham and Southfield Township.

That case was not resolved.

The Farmington School District includes a small portion of West Bloomfield Township, which now levies 1.4 mills for operations.

"If it wasn't for that one square mile, it would prob-

ably be legal, but it still wouldn't be right," Attorney Brennan said.

The council agreed with him, and voted unanimously to begin the fight.

School officials Tuesday had no chance to react to the council action. It was not clear whether the 0.7 mills of the entire school tax was affected by the action.

Following the meeting, several council members who were also members of the charter commission said incorporation was presented on the basis the 1.2 mill township tax would not be included in the computation of the new city tax.

"They said they were unaware at the time it could be transferred to the schools."

"To me, this is raising the taxes without a vote of the people."

--Councilman Lichtman

today's hot line

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what's inside

Strike Threat?

The Farmington Education Assn. is expected to make preliminary moves toward a strike, although negotiations are still under way, according to the FEA. The story is on

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Tax Cut/Hike

At first, it looked as if the Clarenceville Board of Education had cut property taxes by cutting the tax rate. But our reporter looked closer and found that because of rising valuations, some parts of the school district will actually pay more.

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Burglars Nabbed

A wave of breaking and enterings took place in the Farmington area over the weekend, and two suspects were arrested.

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Who Deals?

What makes someone become an antique dealer? Observer writer Elinor Graham knows the answer and has two stories and pictures on the Plymouth antique mart on

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Dispelling A Stigma

The nutritional value of dry milk combined with the product's low cost is told by a man who is waging a war against what he calls "the dry milk stigma." Leon Sanna states his case on

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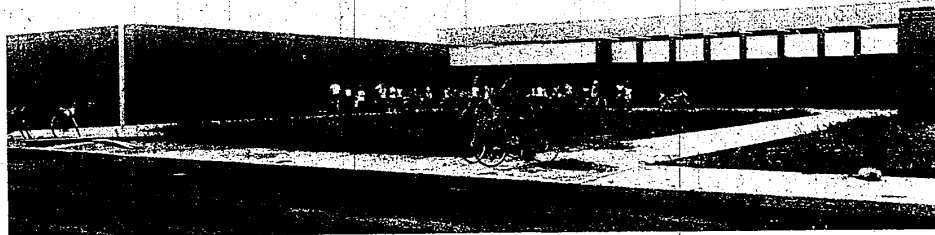
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WARNER JUNIOR HIGH is named after the first Farmington resident to become governor of the State of Michigan.

New Junior High To Open Doors

By DAN McCOSH

Alton Bennett is the type of guy who remains calm in the face of crisis.

But just seven days remained as of Monday and 800 students are due next week to start school at Warner Junior High, the first class at the \$3 million facility.

And Bennett, the first principal at the new school, still didn't have any chairs.

"Contractors!" he said. "It wouldn't be so bad if we had ordered late, but we met our timetable right down the line."

Desks weren't arriving on time, the library was in cardboard boxes, and machines in the shop classes were still crated, with just seven days to go.

Students outside were lined

up, oblivious to Bennett's problems. A mother rushed in trying to buy a gym suit.

To them, the new school is all they expected it to be.

The new school at 36303 14 Mile Road was named after Fred M. Warner, a former governor of Michigan from Farmington.

The 92,000 square foot building opening next week will take students from Eagle, Bond, Fairview, Highmeadow and Woodcreek elementary schools.

"They will go to class in a building which Asst. Supt. Lewis Shulman calls "a very nice, clean design."

"The building includes some educational innovations. For instance, some classrooms are paired with a seminar room between, allowing coordination of teach-

ing, or separating groups from the main class.

Lockers are grouped in a central room, and there is a huge bombined cafeteria and auditorium.

The band-orchestra room is a polygon, with practice rooms along the outside.

The library includes "media" rooms along the side, with a heavy emphasis on electronics.

The rooms are spacious and well-lighted. Most are carpeted. The building is air-conditioned throughout.

"The classrooms allow for

Continued on Page 3A

Evert Photos



CHECKING in the new students are Principal Alton Bennett (left) and assistant Robert Anderson.

Enterprise & Observer Helps Marine Enroll

By DAN McCOSH

Cpl. Gerald L. Anderson still has a chance to start the fall term at Oakland Community College, with some help from the Farmington Enterprise and Observer.

Anderson is finishing a two-year stint with the U.S. Marine Corps in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Despite applying last year, his request for an "early out," a special discharge to

allow him to start classes in the fall with OCC, was held up until last week.

His mother, Mrs. Gerald Anderson, had been making arrangements for him to begin college as soon as he returned. She had already paid the first term tuition when a friend told her "you get forgotten if you are stationed in Cuba."

She called the Enterprise and Observer, and a reporter contacted the office of U.S. Rep. Martha Griffiths to help speed up the paperwork.

Mrs. Griffiths checked out the request through the Marine Corps, and the orders came out Aug. 7, effective Aug. 27 - leaving a narrow margin of time before the opening of school, but apparently time enough.

"When I talked to him Monday, he still hadn't heard," Mrs. Anderson said. "But the orders have been issued."

"It'll be good to see him home."

Next Week's Edition Due On Thursday

Your home town paper will arrive a day late next week, and delivered instead on Thursday.

Because Monday, Sept. 3, is the Labor Day holiday, the edition scheduled for Wednesday will be published Tuesday. Deadline for phone-in classified ads is Wednesday at 11 a.m. The Sept. 8-9 weekend edition will be published on Saturday, as usual, with no change in deadlines.



A BODY waits for the first biology students in the new lab.