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Fifteen Cents

How does Farmington Hills cutback affect funding for youth programs?

By DAN McCOSH

Supporters of the Farmington area youth programs are regrouping, attempting to recover from the shock of having the bulk of the local support cut from under them by the Farmington Hills city council.

Last week, the remnants of a 21-member board which was attempting to put together a consolidated youth program voted to adjourn indefinitely.

The board, which was supposed to represent the funding bodies of four youth-related programs in the Farmington area, never really existed. The Farmington Hills council refused to send two delegates to the board. It

never met with full membership. Several weeks after the Hills council abruptly ended funding for the Farmington Area Advisory Council, Farmington Youth Assistance, and the Farmington Area Recreation Commission, the volunteers and city officials working with the program are unsure of the effect of the decision.

THE FUND CUT was for the upcoming fiscal year, and sources within the city council and city administration indicate some of the programs, particularly the recreation commission, will be budgeted as usual.

But the immediate effect was to pull out the financial rug from the

analysis

youth programs which had leaned mainly on Farmington Hills for funding.

The programs were funded by the City of Farmington, the schools, service clubs, Oakland County and donations as well as the Hills contribution. The largest slice of local funds was being supplied by the Hills.

The Hills council leaned heavily on a recent ruling by the city attorney, Joseph T. Brennan, which limited the kinds of funding the city could pro-

vide, in making its decision. The ruling limited the council to funding programs which operated with a direct contract with the city, or which were under the administrative control of the city government.

Since only the Farmington Youth Advisory Council appeared to have such a contractual relationship (mainly with Oakland County), the fundings appeared illegal.

But the ruling only reinforced opposition to several of the programs

which were being funded, and the cut probably would have been made without it.

MAYOR ROBERT McConnell, who voted against continuing funding, says the main problem was an inflated budget proposal and an ineffectual committee which was supposed to bring about consolidation.

McConnell cites a six-member committee formed approximately a year ago with the idea of coming up with a way to consolidate youth services in Farmington.

Chaired by Mrs. Kathryn Sterling (who has since resigned her school board seat) the committee had representatives from the schools, and the two cities.

"After meeting seven months, nothing was done," McConnell said.

"The idea was to reduce the overhead cost, the intent was to see the kids really got the money," McConnell said.

The conclusion of the original committee was a larger committee was needed, and they suggested a 21-member board be set up. While most of the funding agencies sent representatives, who then elected John Forbes chairman, the Hills council balked.

McConnell cited a proposed "consolidated" budget which added up to 50 per cent more than the total of the last year's individual budgets as one of the main reasons.

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GIRL SCOUTS Debbie Gembarski, Andrea MacIntosh and Ann Barber show off the apple head dolls they fashioned for the collection now on display at Gill School. The girls earned a badge for their work while at the same time contributed to the city's Sesquicentennial Celebration. The collection can be viewed in the school's library. (Evert photos)

Embezzlement case warrant is issued

Mrs. Fran Lane, Farmington Hills Public Safety Director Ronald Holko's executive secretary, was released on a \$1,000 personal bond following her arraignment on charges of embezzling \$700 from the police department.

Mrs. Lane, 27, now living in Howell, stood mute at the arraignment before District Judge Michael Hand. No examination date was set.

The charge carries a maximum 10-year sentence. The warrant for the arrest was issued Thursday afternoon by the Oakland County prosecutor's office.

Mrs. Lane is charged with embezzling money from license and other fees turned into the department between August of 1973 and February of 1974.

An audit indicated there was more money missing over a 14 month period, but investigators indicated the period on the warrant was selected to aid in establishing the charge.

Director Holko was on vacation at the time of Mrs. Lane's arrest.

The warrant was issued while two hearings on police department personnel who originally began the investigation continued.

The hearing on Lt. William Kelly, suspended, then notified of an "indefinite suspension" by the director.

has been adjourned to Friday, April 12.

Lt. Kelly was suspended for his handling of the case after it was first reported by a clerk-typist, Mrs. Debbie Roberts, who worked with Mrs. Lane in the director's office.

Mrs. Roberts hearing ended testimony Tuesday, but the personnel committee has not reached a decision.

Mrs. Roberts says she was fired following her disclosure of the embezzlement. She has been charged with violating department rules regarding chain of command and confidentiality of department files.

Ice rink is coming up before Hills council

A rezoning request to permit a private ice rink on the northeast corner of Drake and Freedom Road is to be heard by the Farmington Hills City Council Monday, April 8, at 8 p.m.

The Farmington Hills planning commission failed to approve the rezoning at the March 14 meeting.

A report by the Farmington Hills police on the recent embezzlement within their department is also scheduled for the council meeting.

The police are expected to make a statement regarding the arrest of a city employee in connection with the embezzlement.

The council will also take a number

State arts council funds local group

The Farmington Arts Council recently received a grant of \$3,600 from the Michigan Council for the Arts, according to Chairman Mrs. Marlowe Belanger.

The grant will fund four projects this summer, matched with money raised by the local group.

The Farmington group was one of 14 in the state which received money from the state agency, according to Mrs. Belanger.

The money will help fund a community involvement conference, sponsored by the local group at Oakland Community College next month.

It also will help finance a membership drive, a special concert by the Oakway Symphony and a senior citizens enrichment program.

Elated by the support for the local group, Mrs. Belanger said the local arts council ranked high on the applicants which made application for the assistance.

Farmington budget tax rate stable

By DAN McCOSH

FARMINGTON - A proposed budget submitted to the Farmington City Council absorbs inflationary cost increases with the increased revenue from higher assessments, without an increase in the city tax rate.

Due for approval the third week in May, the budget continues the city tax rate the same as it has been for the past three years, according to City Manager Robert Deadman.

The \$1.5 million total for the general fund for 1974-75 represents about a nine per cent increase over last year.

To some extent, the city budget is a record of inflationary pressures facing the average household.

ded by the program, according to Deadman.

The budget includes money for capital improvements, including expansion of the municipal building purchase of a new pumper fire truck; replacement of dump trucks and improvements of the facilities at Shawwassee Park.

Funds for these projects are anticipated from the capital reserve fund and Federal shared revenue.

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William Grace celebrates

Students at William Grace Elementary in Farmington celebrated the Farmington Sesquicentennial recently by dressing in authentic period costumes. From left: Kenneth Stelter, Lubinka Ivey and John Caszar try out some antique life-styles. (photo by Fran Evert)

GAS PRICES increased over 100 per cent; street lighting 12 per cent; road repair materials 70 per cent and equipment repair costs 20 per cent.

Federally funded, the Public Employment Program has been phased out, and local revenues will be needed to continue the positions formerly fun-