

Farmington battles tax sharing concept

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

Farmington, county and state officials are looking out at a bill under consideration which would force local governments to pool half of their growth and business property taxes.

Some Oakland County opponents say that House Bill 6010 primarily would benefit Detroit because it would contribute less than it would receive back under the plan. Other opponents also fear that the bill would stifle local governments from attracting industry to their cities.

The bill would take half of the assessed value of growth and business property taxes and place it in a seven-county pool.

Farmington City Manager Bob Deadman said:

"THIS BILL would allow the sharing of property taxes from commercial and industrial property with other, poorer cities," Deadman said.

"The taxes would finance the have-nots."

"A community that is growing must finance a city that isn't growing," he said.

"If the bill had been in effect for the last three years, the City of Farmington would have paid out more than it received."

Oakland County, like Farmington, would also contribute more than it would receive, Deadman said.

"If the bill goes into effect, Dan Murphy, the Oakland County executive, projects that Oakland County will contribute \$10 million in excess of what it will receive in return."

The City of Farmington opposes the bill even though it could possibly benefit by it in the future.

"We're about 100 per cent developed," Deadman said. "We're not projecting a lot of commercial and industrial growth in the city."

"We object to it on the basis of its approving general income sharing."

The bill doesn't take into account the increased services that growing communities

have to supply and accommodate growing populations, Murphy maintains.

"IF THE POPULATION in these communities was dominant, it would be OK," Murphy said. "But when people move in, you have to give them services. I believe there is a distinct correlation between the amount of taxes and the number of new people in a community," he said.

If part of the money went into a pool, communities might have to raise taxes to cope with increased demands on its services, he said.

"It's an atrocious bill," he said.

State Rep. Phil Mastin (D-Holland Park) doesn't support the bill, which he originally co-sponsored, because it doesn't take

into account a developing city's ability to fund increased services.

"It imparts a burden on growth communities," he said.

Basic data indicates that the results of the bill would be difficult for growth communities. It would take a great deal of revenue from communities while the development of tax revenue would impart a burden on these communities.

In place of House Bill 6010, Mastin suggests that the state use its revenue to provide equity for older communities, just as the state uses the state equalized valuations (SEV) to equalize the state's educational system.

"If a school district has a high SEV

level, it doesn't receive as many state dollars as a district with a low SEV per pupil."

"ANOTHER CONCEPT, which is more complicated, concerns the older community which is already developed and must be redeveloped. If a city can create and industrial redevelopment or attract new or expanded growth, the state allows it to give the industry a tax break for up to 12 years. This encouragement for development hasn't been implemented by many communities. The state is realizing the loss in this case, not the city, and the state isn't sharing the revenue with the local communities," Mastin said.

(Continued on page 6A)

Farmington Observer Eccentric

Volume 87, Number 67 Farmington, Michigan 70 Pages Twenty Five Cents

Voters will determine future of their children's education

By RON GARBINSKI

The choices are clear for Farmington area voters in Monday's millage election. If residents approve the 2.4 mill increase for five years, the Farmington School District's educational program will continue at its present level.

If the millage is defeated, the district will lose \$1.1 million in operating revenue, causing drastic reductions in programs, staff and an increase in class size.

The district is requesting the millage increase for several reasons. The major factors being the loss of state school aid, declining enrollments and inflationary costs.

Expenditures for 1978-79 are estimated to be \$25,148,294, according to school officials. Last year's budget totaled \$23,167,152.

The district's four precincts will open at 7 a.m. Monday and will close at 8 p.m.

To cope with problems the district faces next year, the school board elected to seek a 2.4 mill increase rather than the estimated three mills that State Rep. Robert Crim, Speaker of the Michigan House, stated all schools districts in the state should levy in order to maintain their present program levels through 1977.

•Testing supplies would be halved, affecting the amount of standardized testing and reporting to parents.

•Maintenance reductions will reduce the level of cleanliness in each school.

•A reduction of 2.5 music teachers would increase the number of buildings served by the instrumental music staff and cause the elimination of many small-group instruction classes.

•A reduction of seven teacher aides would reduce service in kindergarten and first grades. This reduction and the resulting increase in class size would make individualized instruction at the early grade levels difficult, officials say.

•A reduction of 11 reading specialist aides would cause the curtailment of the academically talented program. If the millage passes, the program, now housed in six elementary schools, will be expanded to all 17 schools next year.

On the secondary level, the picture looks about the same if the millage is defeated.

•Class size in the junior and senior highs will increase because 17.5 teachers will be released. Twelve secondary teachers were terminated earlier this year due to declining enrollments.

•Class scheduling flexibility might be impaired because senior highs will be forced to offer fewer classes.

•Books and supplies will be reduced. Worn out and damaged equipment won't be replaced because the funds will be unavailable. Cleaning time available for each building will also be cut.

•One librarian will be released, curtailing the library and instructional media service available to all students.

Presently, the district leases 3413 multis for operation and 487 multis for debt retirement.

But the district debt retirement levy will be reduced, cutting the tax from 4.67 to 4.37. This one-half mill levy reduction means that the actual millage increase for

(Continued on page 6A)



A PRETTY FACE

After a long 15-mile walk in the Jaycees Walk for Farmington last weekend, Rochelle Reagan looks as pretty as ever. A host of charities benefit from donations received from sponsors of the walkers. (Staff photo by Harry Maute)

Campaigns intensify as 5 vie for school board posts

Farmington School District voters will have a choice of five candidates to fill two four-year seats in the June 14 election.

Seeking re-election are Dr. Mervyn Rom and William Corliss. Newcomers are Helen Prutow, Larry Lichtman and H. Bud Pickett.

Ross 41, has served on the board since 1971. Main campaign issues he has addressed are a balanced program for both marginal and able children during and after regular class hours; a reformed financing system for providing funds for the district; development of community schools and improved communications between the board, teachers and parents.

Corliss 42, is seeking his second four-year term. Among goals he would like to accomplish if re-elected are continuation of efforts to stabilize state school funding, maintaining and strengthening educational programs in the face of declining enrollments and improving student counseling services.

He also would like to expand teacher and administrator in-service training, broaden pre-school evaluation and post-graduate surveys, improve curriculum continuity between elementary and secondary schools and improve management and budget systems.

Mrs. Prutow 35, presently is the Farmington Area PTA president. She would like

Pickett 46, has served on (two school) millage committees, and as an equipment advisor to the Farmington schools.

He would like to see the district study available alternatives of financing before requesting any more mills. Also he would like a better correlation of programs between primary and secondary levels, improved communication between parents and the school officials and an in-depth study of the middle school concept.

Lichtman 18, is a graduate of Harrison High School. His main concern is to make educational programs equitable among the three high schools. He says as the district presently operates, programs are more comprehensive at Harrison than at the other two high schools.

Lichtman opposes teachers' strikes and would like to put more demands on them to work harder. He believes that many of the courses offered in the district are poor and should be eliminated and replaced with better programs.

See endorsements on page 16A

to see improvement of educational opportunities for female students and an increase in the number of women in top-level administrative posts.

She would like to see the organization of the board improved. Among her objectives is for the board to make long range plans, set deadlines and outline goals to avoid future economic strife.

A city eyesore is eliminated

By RON GARBINSKI

A downtown Farmington eyesore is getting a facelift.

The old Medallion Pool building on the north side of Grand River is scheduled to open in July completely remodeled as a mini-mall with five specialty shops.

While the deteriorated building is being redesigned, most other downtown Farmington merchants have joined the excitement of improving downtown Farmington's image.

"It might have taken a little pushing by city officials and a few concerned owners, but most merchants have started the ball

rolling," said city building inspector Jay Harrison.

"Sometimes it only takes a few to set the idea and then others follow," he continued. "and this is exactly what is happening. I just hope remodeling the Medallion building will get a lot of other mer-

chants thinking about improving their store fronts."

As the city rides itself of another condemnable building and begins a facelift on the downtown area, City Manager Robert Deadman said Farmington is having problems trying to get the major portion of the master downtown redevelopment plan off the ground.

OWNERS OF THE Village Mall are planning to expand the facility's second floor, developing a banquet area for the Corner Cafe and two smaller offices that will be leased.

Harrison said he is meeting with the manager of Farmington Hardware on the southwest corner of Grand River and Farmington, and is discussing the possibility of upgrading the rear of that building.

The businessmen located on Grand River between Hawthorne Street and Nine Mile recently formed an association and are planning a major facelift for that area. Merchants in and around the Farm-

ington Plaza also formed a merchants' group to discuss improvements to buildings and the possibility of drawing more stores to the area.

"The businessmen are moving in the right direction," Harrison continued. "Everyone is going in and looking to see what they can do to their business area. They want to improve the appearance so they might be able to draw more trade."

But the biggest thing going right now is the Medallion Pool building project and I hope it serves as a shot in the arm for all businesses in town. The north side of

(Continued on page 6A)

Facelift gives downtown a brighter front



A major facelift project began this month to eliminate the Medallion Pool building eyesore that has plagued downtown Farmington as construction worker started shaping the facility into the Village Outlet of Farmington, five specialty shops designed in a mini-mall concept. (Staff photo by Harry Maute)

inside

News
Editorials
Entertainers
Observation Post
Business
Sports
Classified
Suburban Life
Club Circuit
Community Calendar

Section A
16
18
18
Section B
9
Section D
Section E
5

HIRE A STUDENT

If you have a phone that needs answering or a lawn that needs tending, check today's classified section for high school students in your area who are seeking employment during the summer months.