

School starts, but strike clouds threaten

By STEVE BARNABY

Although Farmington School District residents can feel safe in sending off their children to school this week, the unsettled contract could cause a teacher work stoppage within 48 hours.

Earlier this week, the Farmington Education Association (FEA) and school board officials agreed to an extension of last year's contract with the stipulation that teachers would give 48 hours notice before going out on strike if teacher negotiators feel

sufficient progress hasn't been made. To demonstrate support for their negotiators more than 200 teachers jammed the board of education offices at Tuesday's school board meeting.

FEA President Ken Barry told board members, "Farmington teachers aren't happy that they have to be here tonight."

"We believe that we have more reason to be on strike than many other Oakland County school districts which are."

Presently, four other districts have

hit the bricks in protest of unsettled contracts. Barry maintains teachers in those districts have been offered even better packages than FEA members.

"WE WANT a new contract, not last year's. But we are making an honest effort to go the very last mile in negotiations without having a work stoppage. But at this point, I believe labor peace is at stake," he said.

Both FEA officials and board representatives agree that the stumbling block to settlement is wages and

fringe benefits. This week's open debate at the school board meeting between Barry and board chief negotiator Bob Coleman reveals that while teachers are asking for an 11-12 per cent increase in pay, the board is offering as low as 2.9 per cent at some teacher levels.

Also at issue is health care coverage. Teachers want to maintain the same health plan, while the board is offering the option of each teacher paying \$100 a year to maintain the same coverage or agreeing to another health plan, at no additional cost,

which teachers maintain is a weaker plan.

While teachers expressed discontent over the unsettled contract, Coleman remained optimistic.

"All of us have been through a lot together. There is a lot of good faith demonstrated on both sides," he said.

But Coleman said it was difficult to operate when teachers were quoted on a local radio station that the board had a "loaded gun" pointed at teachers' heads.

"Your team hasn't done that," he said.

Board Trustee Richard Wallace cautioned residents and teachers attending this week's meeting that discussing salary figures not yet agreed to was futile.

"Negotiations aren't over yet. It is the job of negotiating teams to meet somewhere in the middle. But it also is our responsibility to operate with a balanced budget. We're not like the federal government. We don't have a printing press if we need more money," he said.

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Twenty-Five Cents

Average city bill to jump \$4.50

Sewage costs hike water bills

By LYNN ORR

Water bills for the average City of Farmington resident will jump about \$4.50 each three-month billing period, reflecting almost 100 per cent increases in sewage treatment costs charged by the City of Detroit and Oakland County.

"In reviewing the effect of the proposed rate increase, we find that the typical residential customer will be billed \$32.50 per quarter, which is an

increase of \$4.50 over existing rates," City Mgr. Robert Deadman told the Farmington City Council Tuesday night.

Residents who use more than the average amount of water will notice even more dramatic increases in their bills with the rate increases adopted at Tuesday's meeting.

Previous water bills for City of Farmington residents included a 75 per cent sewer charge based on water usage. New bills will include a 100 per

cent sewer charge based on water usage.

Minimum bills, however, will be raised by only 18 cents. Council voted to reduce the current minimum charge of \$8.30 plus 75 per cent sewer charge (\$11.02) to \$5.60 plus 100 per cent sewer charge, a new minimum charge of \$11.20.

ANY WATER used over the minimum of 6,000 gallons will be charged at 56 cents per 1,000 gallons of water used.

Most of the increase reflects higher sewer treatment costs charged by the City of Detroit and Oakland County. Effective Sept. 1, Detroit will charge its customers including Farmington \$1.72 per 1,000 cubic feet of sewerage, an 82 cents hike over the previous rate. Oakland County proposes a sewer rate raise from \$1.34 per 1,000 cubic feet to \$2.22.

Council members also agreed to eliminate a final read service when property is sold and drop water shut-off procedures as a method of collecting delinquent accounts in an attempt to reduce the overhead expenses of the Farmington Public Works Department.

Under the new provisions, customers can call in final readings on water meters to the city for a pro-rated charge.

Deadman proposed the elimination of the shut-off procedure for residents who haven't paid their bills. Expense incurred in shutting off the water and

then reconnecting when the bill is paid is costing the city too much money, he explained.

"And the shut-off procedure, public relations-wise, is bad news," he added. "Any outstanding debts owed to the city can be added to the tax rolls."

Council members also discussed the possibility of reducing the billing cycle to a two-month period next year to reduce the impact of the rate increases expected next year and to allow residents lower bills over smaller periods of time.

Although council was opposed to a two-month billing period at present, Deadman said he expects to see a two-month billing cycle next year.

"I believe you're going to come to a two-month cycle, especially with the increase from Detroit next July," he said, referring to the sewer rate increase already proposed by Detroit for the middle of next year. A third increase is also expected within two years, Deadman added.

THE NEW RATES basically reflect the price of cleaning up the Detroit sewage disposal system, Detroit, and about 85 suburban customers, are the defendants in a lawsuit filed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which claims Detroit's sewage system is polluting the Great Lakes.

The suit charges that Detroit failed to meet a July 1 deadline for compliance with EPA standards.



Another season

It's the dawn of another football season in the Farmington High Schools, as summer wanes and fall returns. For a look at those last, sad days of summer, turn to page 3A. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Sr. Clare's service earns honors

Michigan State Fair officials took time last week to recognize 28 the contributions of a Farmington nun with "a special quietness about her."

Sister Clare of Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church, Farmington Hills, shared the spotlight with Lydia Mae Holloway of Clayton when the two women received state recognition for their work in the service of their community as part of Senior Citizen Day at the State Fair.

For her part, Sister Clare greeted the award with "complete amazement." "I was unaware it was happening until I won the award," she said.

She has helped seniors for the last seven years in Farmington, beginning with organizing the parish seniors club. Her involvement with seniors grew out of the bounds of parish and religion and she began to work for the elderly in both cities.

"She's a dear," said Senior Adult Program Supervisor Loretta Conway. "She has a special quietness about her. She always says the right words."

Ms. Conway has watched as Sister Clare arranged transportation for seniors to the Gathering Place's Grand River location and managed to get out about 90 meals to homebound seniors daily.



SISTER CLARE

"SHE SPOKE AT MASSES and got people to fill out cards to volunteer transportation and to give out meals. Not only that, she takes out lunches, herself," Ms. Conway said.

"Tag the meals to the homebound was only one part of that job. She found seniors who needed the meals, too."

She also found seniors in Oakhill Nursing Home who wanted someone to stop and chat. It was her work at

"She's a very outgoing person. She takes the time to talk to anyone. She feels concern. She does an amazing job for us."

— Frank Wronski
Oakhill Nursing Administrator

the home that impressed its new administrator Frank Wronski so much that he wrote the nominating letter that made it possible for Sister Clare to win state wide recognition.

"The person that I heard most about when I came to Oakhill, the one I had to get to know was Sister Clare," Wronski remembers.

When he met her, he realized why she was so well liked.

"She never stops. We have a lot of respect for her," he said.

At Oakhill, Sister Clare works with the organization's Living Opportunity Program, every week. On Sundays, it distributes communion.

"She's a very outgoing person. She takes the time to talk to anyone. She feels concern. She does an amazing job for us," Wronski said.

In face of praise, Sister Clare has

kept her customary low profile.

"IT'S CONCRETE proof that there's a lot of loving people in Farmington," she says of her work and its reward.

Her work is cut out for her. As a member of the Farmington Area Commission on Aging, she is working on the problem of senior citizens transportation.

Her next concern is senior housing. That concern extends itself to helping seniors live in their own apartments and homes as well as giving them the opportunity to choose senior housing projects.

"She knows what she wants to do and is decisive and resourceful," said Wronski.

"She gets things done," agreed Ms. Conway. "And she stays in the background, always."

Reprieve denied

Students hoping to extend their summer vacation via a threatened strike by Farmington teachers saw their hopes dashed when the teachers agreed to extend last year's contract. It was business as usual today as the buses rolled and the students took to the books for the 1977-78 school year.

Chamber seeks nominees for Citizen of the Year

You may know the next Citizen of the Year in the Farmington-Farmington Hills area. He or she could be your employer, neighbor, teacher or program coordinator.

Persons eligible for the honor of being recognized as an outstanding citizen of Farmington area will be chosen for the title on the basis of their contribution to the city.

The community member who has performed an outstanding service for the city will be honored in October as Citizen of the Year.

The award is sponsored by the Farmington Chamber of Commerce and has been given out for seven years.

Beahan Jr High robbed

Three juveniles were released to their parents after Farmington Police arrested them in connection with the breaking and entering of Beahan Jr. High School, 2829 Powers at 11 p.m., last Friday.

Farmington Police Officer Tom Cox discovered three youths at the rear of the school and laboratory equipment missing, according to Farmington Police Chief Dan Byrnes.

Nominations should be made before Sept. 26 to the Chamber of Commerce Office, 23715 Farmington Road, Box 15, Farmington 48024.

A screening committee selected by the Chamber of Commerce will choose the top three nominees. The winner will be chosen by the chamber's Board of Directors.

There are no limitations on the sex, age or residency of the nominee.

MEN AND WOMEN in any field can be nominated. Nominees are not required to live in Farmington, but they must have contributed to the city.

Nominators are asked to fill in a form, available at the chamber office, giving a resume of specific service, which the nominee has given to Farmington above and beyond job-related duties. Persons who have undertaken community projects between Jan. 1, 1976 and July 31, 1977 are eligible. This nineteen month period is in effect because of a change in the chamber's fiscal year.

"It is our hope that this award will spotlight community activity and serve as a challenge to all community-minded citizens," said Edward Lane, executive director of the chamber.

inside

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Senior taxi service goes to Mercy Center

Senior citizens will be able to get to the new senior center, The Gathering Place, at Mercy Center via the Farmington senior cab service.

City council voted to extend the 50 cents senior cab service to include the new senior center at Eleven Mile and Middlebelt in Farmington Hills.

The extension will cost the city an additional \$1.60 per ride for those attending the new senior center via the cab service, but the 50 cents per ride charge will remain in effect.

City Mgr. Robert Deadman esti-

mated approximately 10 rides per week will be provided by the cab service. An additional \$540 will be appropriated to the cab service budget, he said.

The new center, which includes a cafeteria, gymnasium, classroom and swimming pool facilities, moved to Mercy Center from its previous location at the American Legion Hall at Grand River and Lakeway. Deadman expects that some senior citizens using the center who previously walked to the hall will require rides to the new location at Mercy.