

Voters approve mills, but 102 teachers axed

By LYNN ORR

Although school board officials were delighted with election results at Tuesday night's board meeting, the approximately \$2½ million in revenues generated by the millage did not forestall the pinkslipping of 102 district teachers.

By a two-to-one margin, Farmington School District voters approved a four mill property tax renewal in Tuesday's special election.

"Following such good news about the millage, I'm very sad to have to recommend the termination of these teachers," said Supt. Lewis Schulman, citing projected decreases in en-

rollment. The district is bound to notify teachers of layoffs 60 days before the expiration of its Farmington Education Association (FEA) contract year.

"Hopefully these people can be called back when a position is available," he added. Schulman said declining enrollment is responsible for the layoff of 26 teachers and possible budget shortfalls account for 10 layoffs.

"There are 66 people on leave presently who will be possibly returning in the fall," said Schulman. "What we are trying to do is keep the list as small as possible but make provisions for every eventuality."

OF THE 5,325 VOTES CAST in Tuesday's election, about 2,000 votes under the total vote cast in last year's renewal election, 3,623 yes votes were tallied while 1,696 opposed the renewal.

"I think it's a tribute to the community of how they value education, especially on the heels of recent tax reassessments," said Schulman. "They resisted the natural inclination to strike back."

THE FOUR SCHOOL BOARD members present at the meeting, including Michael Spiece, Dr. Mervyn Ross, Helen Pritow, and Gary Lichtman also approved the rehiring of three administrators who had been pink-

slipped at the last meeting in the eventuality of a millage failure.

Carolyn Plysek, Richard Tyler, and John Summerlies were rehired by the board in a 4-4 decision, which drew dissent from Richard Ringstrom, executive director of the FEA.

"I think there's an inconsistency here," said Ringstrom, a member of the audience. "I think it's inappropriate to be laying off more staff than those administrators could possibly administer."

"It would be more appropriate to call back those administrators when the teachers are called back," he told the board.

According to Schulman, adminis-

trators must be notified of termination 60 days before the expiration of their contract, while under the FEA contract, teachers must be notified 60 days before the contract expires.

Trustee Lichtman pointed out that the three administrators being recalled are employed in buildings that will be open next year.

"While we are doing this on one hand, we are trying to bring back teachers on recall," he said.

Ringstrom and FEA president Ken Berry chose not to consult on the teacher layoffs, according to Dr. Leroy Bartman, director of personnel. Dr. Bartman explained that with an

average teacher salary of \$15,000, the district has to be sure it will have a place for all teachers not previously pinkslipped next September.

"Up to the last minute last year, we had six teachers without a place for them, and there's no telling what will happen in the fall," he said.

Bartman expects to recall a large portion of the pinkslipped staff next fall, but he believes the layoffs are necessary at this point because the district hasn't been notified of returns by many staff members presently on leave.

At present, nine secondary teachers have not been called back to service who were laid off last year, he added.

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Twenty-Five Cents



New anti-smoking laws in public places have had little effect on those who enjoy the age-old habit. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Customer reaction mixed

Puffers keep eateries smoking

The reactions of restaurant managers to a new law requiring them to provide a non-smoking section come in as many varieties as the well known ketchup.

While larger Farmington area restaurants report the non-smoking sections are popular, their smaller counterparts have experienced a resounding lack of customer response to the innovation.

"A lot of customers are poking fun at the non-smoking section," said Rich Bergum, manager of the Flame Number Five, Farmington.

"It's a ridiculous thing to make a fuss over. What difference does it make in a one-room restaurant?" he added.

The Flame management set up its non-smoking section in the back of the room, where the ventilation is the best, according to Bergum. His non-smokers, however, choose to ignore the non-smoking section and sit with the smokers.

"Everyone sits in the same section they always sat in," said Bergum, a non-smoker. "They have their favorite booths and they continue to sit where they want."

"BUT IF A smoker sits in the non-smoking booth, we have to ask him to move," he said.

Patrons at Dunleavy's Pub and Grill, Farmington, have demonstrated a similar lack of concern over the new sections, according to co-owner Jack Dunleavy.

"We've no requests for the section, so far," he said.

Dunleavy's non-smoking section is situated in a corner of the one-room establishment.

Bergum and Dunleavy say that the non-smoking section does little to effectively shield patrons from cigarette smoke.

"There's no way to get away from the smoke. If you open the front door, the smoke travels to the back of the room, just as when you open a car window while smoking," Bergum said.

"If you have four tables in a non-smoking section and the fifth table seats a group of smokers—I just don't see how the section will help," Dunleavy explained.

Across town, the Monk's Cellar reported a similar reaction to the new sections.

"No one has requested a non-smoking section," said Kathy Bokan, day manager and bartender at the Monk's Cellar. The non-smoking section is located off the main floor of the restaurant, which is usually unused during the week.

DURING THE WEEKEND, the restaurant is usually crowded with smokers, according to Ms. Bokan. "It's all smoky here on the weekends. There's no place to seat the non-smokers where there wouldn't be any smoke," she said.

Larger restaurants, such as the Clamdiggers in Farmington Hills, re-

port a much different response to the new regulation. The Chuck Muir eatery has offered a non-smoking section to its customers for the past year, according to John Sisson, Clamdiggers' assistant manager.

"We've had a very good response to our non-smoking section," he said. "A small percentage of our customers book for the section. But more people ask for the section when they see the sign."

About 40-50 per cent of our customers ask for the section. And about 20 per cent of those customers won't sit anywhere else."

The Clamdiggers' non-smoking sec-

tion is located in the back dining room.

Another larger restaurant in Farmington Hills, El Nibble Nook, has the space to provide a separate room for non-smokers. According to manager Ken Baier, there are a lot of requests for the room.

"IT'S COMPLETELY filled up during the weekend," he said. "I like it. I don't smoke either, and I don't like smoke. This way, people enjoy their dining more."

Although a small percentage of the customers at Herc's Beef Buffet request seats in a non-smoking section, co-owner Gary Herc has dubbed the convenience a success.

Committee studies recreation needs

Buying services from Farmington Hills or another community; setting up their own recreation commission; or maintaining the status quo are the options facing the City of Farmington's Ad Hoc Committee on Recreation Services.

The committee chaired by John Stenson was recently appointed by Mayor John Richardson on the council's behalf.

Its task, according to Chairman Stenson, is to examine the options facing the Farmington Area Recreation Commission (FARC) when Farmington Hills officially withdraws from the Commission July 1.

Farmington Hills voted to split from FARC and form its own parks and recreation division last month, withdrawing all financial support from the commission as well. The Hills supplied the major financial support for the FARC.

Stenson is displeased with the timing of the action, as spring and summer activities will soon get underway, but he doesn't believe the move will drastically affect residents.

"THE HILLS DOESN'T HAVE tennis courts or ball diamonds of their own, and any time they use school property, the programs must be open to all residents," Stenson says.

Because Farmington Hills is without city parks or baseball fields, Stenson believes the Hills City Council may have another move in mind.

"I think they're probably preparing Hills taxpayers for a two-mill tax increase, maybe in line with some federal matching funds," he said.

"They've sat on their hands for a long time."

Stenson's committee has had one meeting to discuss the options available to what's left of FARC members, including the City of Farmington, Farmington School District and Clarencville School District.

Personnel problems are one item of consideration, since it is expected that the director, assistant director and senior citizen coordinator of FARC will be hired by Farmington Hills after July 1.

The committee is also considering the possibility of subscribing to services from the YMCA and another city Stenson declined to name.

Committee members include Chairman Stenson; William Burke; Jack Cotton; Gail Hinkle; Jane Humble; Kenneth Murray; Gordon Page; and Jean Tyler.

The committee will meet at 7:30 p.m., April 20 at Farmington City Hall to continue examining options for the commission. A final report will be submitted to Mayor Richardson at a later date.

"Whether the City Council accepts the recommendations is yet to be seen," said City Mgr. Robert Deadman.

Volunteers sought for aging commission

The City of Farmington is seeking volunteers for the Farmington Area Commission on Aging.

The responsibility of the commission will be to investigate and to make recommendations on problems which affect the elderly. A charge of the commission would be to make recommendations on the transportation, housing, recreation and health matters.

The commission, a cooperative effort between the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills, will be composed of five Hills residents and two City residents.

City residents interested in being considered for membership on the council should contact city hall.

School funding options look bleak

By LYNN ORR

School financing has been responsible for a hefty number of headaches over the years, but current proposals being considered by the state legislature are sending Farmington school district administrators back to the books.

The future of school financing for Farmington, however, looks grim any way you look at it, says board of education trustee Michael Spiece.

"The legislature is rearranging furniture on the Titanic as far as Farmington is concerned," says Spiece, who believes current proposals under consideration will fail to benefit the school district.

State lawmakers are looking over proposals by both Governor Milliken and House Speaker Bobby Crim (D-Davidson) that would update the current state aid formula.

And Rep. Roy Smith (R-Ypsilanti) has introduced a bill to abolish local

property tax and levy a state-wide property tax, a proposal that would probably increase residents' taxes but lower Farmington school financing, according to Spiece.

With property tax abolished, the state would collect the 27 mills from each district, and state income tax most likely would be increased, Spiece explains.

The state would then distribute the money in equal amounts per student throughout the state.

Those school districts that wanted something extra could levy up to six additional enrichment mills.

"Looking at it from Farmington's perspective, property taxes would be higher, income tax would be higher, and residents would probably end up paying more for education," Spiece says.

"In addition, Farmington would probably get less money per student under this proposal than the current system. We would be paying more

taxes but getting less money.

"And we would be completely reliant on the state for funding. Residents would no longer have the right to determine how much education means to them in terms of priorities."

Rep. Smith introduced a similar proposal last year, which didn't get very far in the House; but with current school financing under the spotlight, all proposals are being carefully weighed by lawmakers, Spiece added.

BOTH MILLIKEN'S AND CRIM'S PROPOSALS are short-term solutions to school financing woes, he believes. And both are aimed at fiscal neutrality on the state's part, to assure equal funding for all students, now estimated at about 92 per cent equity by a property tax revision report.

"All three proposals don't face the problem of high millage districts," Spiece says. "They are more con-

cerned with districts that don't want to tax themselves.

Under the State Aid Act, the state guarantees that each mill levied brings in an equal amount of money for each school district up to 30 mills.

"All districts that qualify for state aid membership allowances will all receive the same combined amount of revenue per student from the local property tax and from the state aid membership allowance for the first 30 mills of tax levied by the local district," explains William Priuk, business manager for Farmington schools.

"One of the basics for calculating state aid is the State Equalized Valuation (SEV) per pupil, the state equalized valuation of taxable property. The SEV per pupil is the total of values of taxable property of a school district, divided by the number of students enrolled for school in that district," he says.

The SEV in Farmington is estimated at \$35,000 with total enrollment at 13,867 students or \$38,620 SEV per pupil.

Crim's proposal, according to Spiece, takes a look at the effects of current state aid and the Bursley formula and tries to correct the spending gap between rich and poor districts, which has been increasing.

"Crim's proposal would set the guarantee level with the base for all districts at \$184 and then guarantee \$40 per mill levied up to 30 mills," says Spiece.

"Farmington would be guaranteed \$164 per student plus \$40 for each mill levied up to 30 mills to \$1,364 total per student. Milliken's proposal would essentially guarantee the same thing."

However, the second year of each proposal promises a greater gap in revenues for Farmington, Spiece says. For 1978-79, Crim raises the base level to \$184, leaves the extra revenue at \$40 per mill up to 30 mills. But for those districts over 30 mills (including Farmington at 38.6 mills) the production tax the state will guarantee those mills over 30 if you reduce your millage proportionately to the amount of state aid received.

For example, if a district levies 35

More than 100 class offerings for all age groups are on the Farmington, YMCA's docket this spring beginning April 18.

Residents of the City of Farmington, Farmington Hills, West Bloomington, Novi, and Southfield are all invited to register for classes at Farmington Y or receive a free brochure by calling 553-4020.

Farmington YMCA swim classes will be offered from 6:30-10 p.m., Mondays, from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Saturdays, and at a variety of times during the week. All age and skill levels are offered for the six-week courses for a fee of \$10 for Y members and \$15 for non-Y members.

Farmington Club Champion Bruce Conroy will provide professional golf instruction in beginner, intermediate, and advanced classes on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays. The cost for the six-week course is \$8 for youth Y members; \$12 for youth non-members; \$12 for

adult Y members; and \$18 for adult non-Y members.

Art, music, swimming, movement education, and tumbling are in the philosophy of the YMCA's philosophy of meeting pre-school needs. Classes are offered at Mercy Center and the Novi Methodist Church on Mondays and Thursdays.

THE YMCA'S NATIONAL Cardiovascular Fitness Program, including calisthenics and jogging, is part of the adult program. Men's fitness is offered on Tuesday and Thursday evenings; and Farmington resident Kay Burns will instruct women's fitness classes Monday-Thursday at a variety of times.

Other fitness classes include bellydancing, yoga, judo and gymnastics. Small group lessons in indoor tennis will be offered at the Court House, Farmington Rd. and Maple, and at the Westbrook School, near Eight Mile and Orchard Lake Rd. YMCA will provide balls and professional instruction, while those interested in im-

proving their games are required to bring racquets.

Indoor ice skating will be offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Bloomfield Arena, Square Lake Rd. and Telegraph. Cost for the ice skating classes is \$10 for Y members and \$15 for non Y members.

All age and skill levels in indoor horseback riding will be taught at the Everitt Stable for a \$40 fee for Y members and \$45 fee for non Y members for ten lessons of instruction.

Drivers' training will include 30 hours of classroom and six hours of behind-the-wheel training offered to teenagers who have attained their 15th birthday before April 18. The YMCA program is state certified and taught by Dennis Ringle.

The fee is \$88 and separate adult instruction is available for \$57.

Other YMCA spring offerings include folk guitar, organic gardening, massage workshops, a baby sitting course, indoor rollerskating and ballet.

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