

# Pierce, Allen Debate 1-City Benefits For Township

**By WYLIE GERDES**

FARMINGTON

A small audience of Farmington Township residents heard charges of deception from both sides during the second of five public meetings on the question of consolidation.

The meetings are sponsored by the joint governmental study committee to distribute information about the proposed consolidation of Farmington Township, the City of Farmington and villages of Wood Creek Farms and Quakertown.

Proponents and opponents of consolidation debated and then

answered questions from the audience.

ONLY 30 PERSONS attended the first of two meetings scheduled for the township, the most populous area involved.

Four candidates of 18 who have filed for seats on the consolidation charter commission from the township were at the meeting held Wednesday night at East Junior High.

They were Arnold S. Michlin of 31460 Skidwood Ct., Thomas F. Gust of 22628 Tulane, Ronald Wyszynski of 23653 N. (Stockton), and Walter T. Frontczak of 26355 Dundalk Lane.

THE MODERATOR of the

meeting, Dr. John Richardson, reviewed the consolidation process before the debate began.

A vote on consolidation will be held Nov. 4. If the issue is approved in all four areas, he said, nine men will be elected to write a charter for the new city.

A charter must be approved by a majority vote in each of the four areas before it can be implemented, City Councilman Richardson added. If the first charter presented by a commission is defeated, a second may be submitted within two years of the date of the first election.

The defeat of a second proposed charter would end consolidation attempt for two years.

THE FIRST meeting for township residents featured charges by a proponent of consolidation that opponents, by urging a no vote on Nov. 4, are trying to prevent the voters from inspecting a charter for the new city.

An opponent of consolidation replied, supporters of the merger are "burying the facts" concerning possible taxes of a new city.

Robert Pierce of 32308 Balm-tree in Farmington Township debated for consolidation.

Farmington City Councilman John Allen spoke in opposition to consolidation.

Pierce, a candidate for the charter commission, urged a yes vote Nov. 4 which would "give you the opportunity to decide whether you really want to consolidate or not."

After a charter is drawn up, "then you can consider whether they were able to come up with something to satisfy your interests," he added.

Those who urge defeating consolidation on Nov. 4 are trying to deprive the public of the opportunity of making such a decision, he said.

"What's the objection to letting you see a charter and deciding for yourself," Pierce asked.

ALLEN ANSWERED Pierce by saying proponents of consolidation have had plenty of time to publicize facts about a charter but haven't done so.

"They don't make any effort to tell you how much it's going to cost you," he said.

Allen also attacked candidates for the charter commission on the grounds of inexperience.

None have planning experience, he said, and their stand on taxes for a new city show it.

"To say taxes aren't going to be higher shows very little experience. I'm talking about," he said.

Pierce, who spoke first, hammered on the point that a second vote will be needed to implement consolidation.

Voters have nothing to lose by approving consolidation Nov. 4, he said, because of their opportunity to reject a proposed charter. During the period while a charter is being studied, "everything is status quo," Pierce said.

IF CONSOLIDATION is defeated Nov. 4, annexation of township territory and incorporation of the township will be attempted, Pierce predicted.

"Further discussion, further arguments in the community, further attempts to incorporate, and further attempts to annex" will occur if consolidation is turned down on the first vote, Pierce said.

Pierce said public demands for more services increase taxes, not incorporation or consolidation. He pointed out taxes have increased in Farmington Township after incorporation attempts failed.

The government formed by consolidation can be made "more answerable to the people," Pierce said.

"Reserve your opinion on the actual consolidation," Pierce concluded, "until you see the charter."

SPEAKING IN opposition to the governmental merger, Allen rebutted Pierce's argument for approving consolidation on the first vote.

"If you're for consolidation, you vote 'yes.' If you're against, you vote 'no,'" Allen said.

"There's no point in spending more money on a charter commission, more studies, then more elections," Allen said.

Allen said figures prepared by Farmington City Manager John Dineen estimated the tax levy would be higher for township residents.

Allen said the tax levy for the new city would be "8.6 mills at the very minimum to provide approximately the services you have now," Allen said he thinks the levy will be even higher, nearer 11 or 12 mills.


IN COMPARISON, Allen pointed to Southfield's levy of 7.6 mills and Livonia's of 8.8 mills. Both Southfield and Livonia have large industrial tax bases, which Farmington lacks, Allen said. Therefore, levies in Farmington would have to be about 11 mills to produce the services offered by Livonia or Southfield.

"No matter what they (supporters of consolidation) say the taxes will be, they can be changed," Allen said.

"I think the thing the public is most afraid of is paying for things they're not involved with," Allen said.

"Most of us have moved out here to get out of big city problems and we're not about to get back in," he concluded.

in your area...



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## Allen Challenges 1-City Arguments

(Following is another in a series of articles written by John Allen on behalf of WE, a group of city residents opposed to the question of consolidation.)

Township and city residents are still being told that Nov. 4 Farmington Area residents will be asked to choose whether a nine-man charter commission shall write a charter to combine the four governmental units into a single, new city.

This is misleading. Remember this when you see the ballot and what it really says is "For consolidation of the city of Farmington, the township of Farmington and the villages of Quakertown and Woodcreek Farms." — Yes...No.

Only the second part of this ballot lists the candidates for the charter commission. Why not say it is?

TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS are being told consolidation means better roads. They are not being told better roads cost money, and they are going to have to pay for them. That can mean special assessments for paving and possibly as in Southfield for dust control and street lights.

An article speaking of the better roads states "It would be easier to widen Orchard Lake ... since the larger return from the state would provide more funds to match with Oakland County."

Warning: They don't tell you the cost of road widening is \$600,000 per mile. To widen Orchard Lake from Grand River to 14 Mile Road would cost about \$3 million. If the township consolidates its share would be one-half or \$1.5 million.

The combined revenue from gas and weight tax refunds is estimated at \$900,000. Only 40 per cent of this can be bonded for road improvement, or about \$200,000. This would use up

the total bonding capacity for many years. In the meantime, what about the other urgent projects, or the equipment?

THE RECENT Editorial chides the Farmington City Public Safety Department for being inadequate to handle a particular city fire without help. As a citizen, I am enraged by this attack on one of the finest records of efficiency in the state. The fact is that every good fire department has a reciprocal agreement with its neighbor. This saves a great deal of money and affords a great deal more protection. Our ability to protect the city is unencumbered and any change to a volunteer system would be a serious setback for public safety in the city.

Why aren't these facts shown? The people for a Better Farmington have them. Is winning an election so important that we can hold back? Come on fellows - let's have all the facts.

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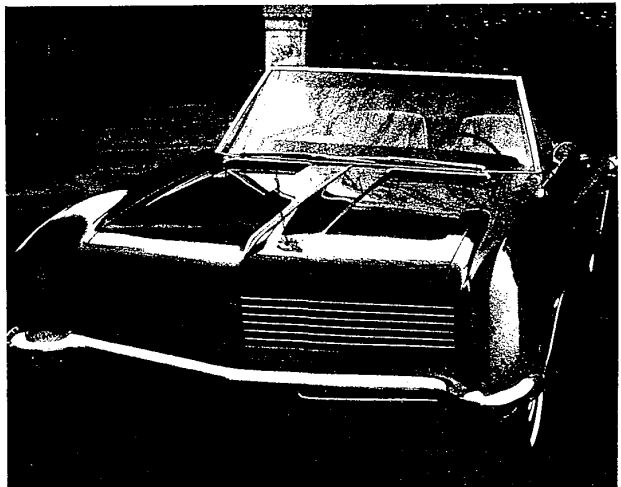


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