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Twenty-Five Cents

Farmington eyes drop in city tax rate

By MARY GNIEWEK

Despite the uncertainty of state and federal revenue for the coming budget year, the city tax rate for Farmington may drop by 0.7 of a mill in fiscal 1980-81.

Though the rate may drop from 11.9 to 11.2 mills, most Farmington homeowners will pay more local taxes because of assessment hikes, which averaged 15 percent this year.

A homeowner with a \$10,000 state equalized valuation (SEV) of property last year paid \$119.57 for city taxes. If that homeowner experienced the average increase, his new assessment would be \$11,300 and the tax bill would cost \$126.55 — up \$6.98.

The Headlee Tax Limitation Amendment may be sought as a saving grace

doesn't apply to Farmington. That's because the amount of adjustment in the city's assessed valuation combined average of homeowners, industrial and commercial property values — doesn't exceed the nationally established rate of inflation of 11.3 percent for 1979.

Total expenditures are up \$265,775 over 1979-80, from \$2,451,365 to \$2,717,140. Revenue is expected to rise \$224,055 over the current fiscal year.

City Manager Robert Deadman is recommending a balanced city budget for 1980-81 of \$2,717,140. It takes into account a \$91,530 fund surplus and assessment hikes which will help offset expected federal and state revenue losses.

AT STAKE ARE Federal Revenue Sharing and Comprehensive Employment

Training Act (CETA) funds for which President Carter has recommended reductions. Together they account for more than \$14,500 in Farmington's current fiscal budget.

Also with Michigan suffering its most severe economic recession since 1974, the state Department of Management and Budget may hold back shared revenue — an expected \$465,000 — until it works out its own problems.

If cutbacks occur in CETA, which provides federal funds for hiring city employees in an 18-month renewable program, one position each at the 47th District Court and the Farmington Community Library would be lost.

No provisions have been made in the proposed budget to retain those positions.

The Department of Public Services

also has 1.5 CETA positions on the line. If eliminated, the City Council will decide whether to pay for retaining those positions which cost \$42,735 this year, or cut them and the level of DFS services.

If Federal Revenue Sharing is cut, it will affect expected revenues in the last half of fiscal 1980-81, which starts July 1 and ends June 30 next year.

This year, Federal Revenue Sharing paid \$54,500 for Public Safety Department officers' salaries and senior citizen programs. Next year, the senior resident rate cash service will be financed by the Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA).

THE CITY IS banking on \$58,700 next year if the federal legislature renews the revenue sharing program. If

the funds dry up, the city council will have to cut back on existing programs or supplement the local budget.

The debt service millage rate may have to increase by 0.2 of a mill. But if no additional debt is incurred by the city, and if assessed valuation continues to rise, the debt service millage rate may be reduced over the next two or three years.

City Council has the option of not reducing the debt service millage rate by a half-mill this year if they favor a gradual reduction over a few years instead of fluctuations from year to year.

So far there's no implied threat to Federal Community Development Block Grant funding, which is expected to pay \$65,000 for several road paving projects next year, including Astor, Elm and Thomas streets.

Funds to improve the intersection and bridge at Shawwassee and Farmington roads will be shared by federal, state and local governments. The cost of the project approved this year is \$275,000 and the city's share is \$55,000.

Some of the major expenses in the proposed budget are a new \$85,000 computer system to replace the old one which handles administrative record keeping; a \$13,000 auxiliary electric power generator for the Public Safety Department; and employee salaries and fringe benefits.

The Farmington City Council will have a public review of the budget tonight at 7 p.m. at city hall and another on April 24.

Copies of the proposed city budget will be available for viewing.

Ends political wrangling

Hills' mayor appoints two to city's plan commission

By STEVE BARNABY

Farmington editor

After months of being subjected to behind-the-scenes political wrangling, Farmington Hills Mayor Joann Soronen has made her appointments to the planning commission.

New appointees are Joseph Hovanesian and Robert Anzlov. Reappointed were Judy Guertin and Ed Raedle. Each were appointed until the end of 1982.

Objecting to Hovanesian's appointment was Councilwoman Jan Dolan. "I deplore the tactics used on getting to this point," she told her colleagues at Monday night's council session.

"Traditionally decisions are made at public meetings by seven members of the council. That wasn't done in this case," she said.

The controversy arose when Mrs. Soronen wished to appoint Anzlov to one of the vacant seats on the commission. Four other council members wanted her to appoint Hovanesian.

The four were Jack Burwell, Joe Alkateb, William Lange and Donn Wolf. They threatened to deny the reappointments if Hovanesian wasn't appointed. At that time there was only one vacancy.

But since that time, commission member Walter Stanton resigned because of outside job responsibilities leaving the way clear for appointment of both Anzlov and Hovanesian.

Anzlov has been a longtime political supporter of Mrs. Soronen. Both have been affiliated with the Council of Homeowners of Farmington Hills.

Hovanesian is the husband of Juliann Hovanesian, founder of Citizens for More Responsible Government (CMRG), a group which opposed the senior citizen/low income housing plan which was to be built at Freedom and Drake roads.

CMRG backed Burwell, Lange and Wolf for election at the last election. The planning commission terms had expired at the beginning of the year.

Although denied by Wolf, other council members claimed that the Hovanesian supporters had threatened to renege Mrs. Soronen as mayor if she refused to appoint Hovanesian.

Wolf also has denied that there is any connection between the commission appointment and CMRG support for his election to council. He lauded the mayor's choices, saying that both members bring a "sound philosophy" to the commission.

Although supporting both Hovanesian and Anzlov, Councilman Earl Oysterhauser gave a word of warning. "I never felt that appointments should be a matter of philosophy. I don't believe in stacking commissions, particularly when it comes to the planning commission," he said.

"Philosophies make no difference. We need all philosophies," he said.

Burwell, Lange and Wolf lauded the way in which Mrs. Soronen handled the appointments.

"This is a masterful way you handled this," said Lange. "It shows the council does work together."

Inkster paving plan hits dead-end

By BARBARA UNDERWOOD

Franklin residents living along a half-mile of Inkster Road may have to cope indefinitely with what they have called "intolerable" road conditions.

Joint plans of the Franklin Village Council and the Farmington Hills Council to pave Inkster between Thirteen Mile Road and Northwestern Highway appear to have hit a dead end.

The west side of the half-mile stretch is in Farmington Hills. The east side is in Franklin.

Five months ago the two councils discussed splitting the estimated \$256,000 cost of improving the road. But last month Farmington Hills reported a "tight budget problem."

"The problem with Farmington Hills is money," Franklin Village President John Verdon said Monday. "Franklin is ready to participate, but Farmington Hills says it could only do it if we lend them the money and we don't have the money to lend."

FARMINGTON HILLS had intended to finance its portion of the costs by a special assessment district, requiring special assessment bonds. Because of the bond market situation today (high interest rates making bonds less attractive as investments), that is no longer seems feasible.

Letters were sent recently to Franklin residents living along Inkster advising them of the paving impasse and plans to chlorinate the road to arrest the dust.

Earlier plans to oil the road were discarded after waste oil used on some area roads was found to contain traces of PCB (polychlorinated biphenyls), a suspected cancer-causing chemical.

Two residents responded to the let-

(Continued on page 4A)

Music staff, parents share same concerns over school program

By MARY GNIEWEK

A committee of music teachers plan to present school administrators with a list of recommendations for improving the music program in the Farmington Public Schools.

Doug MacQueen, a band director at North Farmington High who chaired the committee, called the recently publicized concerns of the newly formed Concerned Parents for Music group a total coincidence.

MacQueen said his staff committee was established last spring at the request of school administrators to look at other music programs in comparable school districts like Royal Oak, Birmingham and Ann Arbor to see how Farmington can improve.

The results of the year-long study are being compiled. MacQueen hopes to make the report available to Lawrence Freedman, assistant superintendent of instruction, by the beginning of next month.

He declined to name specific concerns because the report is not in its final form.

"The concerns the parents expressed are shared by the professional staff," MacQueen said. "Hopefully some of these recommendations can be investigated so we can come up with a course of action."

Tire slashings net two arrests

Two men were arraigned Saturday morning before Judge Michael Hand in connection with a series of tire slashings that caused \$44,000 in estimated damages in the Greenhall apartment complex in Farmington Hills.

Mark Gordon Briesemer, 18, and Jeffrey Edward Coffey, 17, both of Farmington Hills, stood mute during the arraignment in 47th district court. They are free after paying 10 percent of their \$5,000 bond, according to Detective Dennis Rochford of the Farmington

Hills Police Department.

A third person was turned over to juvenile authorities in connection with the incidents.

After the early Friday morning incidents in which tires were slashed and some car windows shattered, police received 15 complaints referring to about 22 damaged cars.

One family discovered each tire on the three cars parked in their driveway had been slashed.



Hey brother, look

While Scott Bruce, 15, concentrates on making sure the kite string is just right for a proper launch, younger brother Chris, 4, attends to more important matters, keeping his eye on the ever so

important tail. These Farmington residents were enjoying a day in the city park. (Staff photo by Randy Borst)

South Dakota, Missouri, NBC-TV head for the Hills of Farmington

South Dakota, Missouri and the NBC television camera crew will be a stone's throw from each other in Farmington Hills during the Republican National Convention, July 14 to 18.

The 37 delegates from South Dakota and Missouri's 22 representatives will be housed with an equal number of alternates from those states in the Holiday Inn of Farmington Hills. The camera crew will be quartered in the Red Roof Inn. Both hotels are in the Grand River-10 Mile roads area.

While the GOP room assignments filled the area's two larger hotels, the two smaller ones involved in housing convention attendees will be kept waiting until the party announces a second wave of room assignments in early May.

Botsford Inn and the Rainbow Park Motel in Farmington Hills are both committed to housing convention attendees.

Spokespersons for the Republican National Convention's housing committee say the hotels which haven't been mentioned in room assignments won't be left holding the bag on June 20 when their contracts with the GOP expire.

The committee expects to house enough visitors to fill the Joe Louis Arena in its 16,000 persons capacity. It has 148 Detroit area hotels committed to providing rooms for delegates.

In addition to delegates and alternates, the GOP needs to consider family members who are accompanying the representatives.

IN CALCULATING the number of rooms which will be needed, the GOP requested living space for 2.5 times the number of delegates.

The second wave of assignments will include media members.

After that announcement, the housing committee will once again consider room requests made by delegations and may offer more rooms to some states.

In the first wave of room assignments, none of the delegations received as many as they originally requested, according to housing committee member Sandy Weber.

Hotel space will be apportioned according to the size of the delegation and its proximity to Detroit, according to Theresa Johnson, executive director of the Republican National Committee's housing committee.

Delegations who are traveling at least 500 miles to Detroit will receive extra rooms.

If the state carried the Republican

candidate for president during the last national election, its delegation will be favored with more space.

The Botsford Inn has reserved slightly less than half of its 85 rooms to the convention. Some of those rooms are located in the hotel's new wing which is still under construction and THE BOTSFORD is booked for the weeks surrounding the convention. The week after the Republicans leave town, the hotel hosts a church group convention, according to its owner John Anbut.

If the convention's housing committee cancels some of its reservations, a possibility which organizers deny, Anbut says, "we'll go out and fill as much as we can."

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From plants to paint, it's all part of our Home & Garden guide — a special section in Monday's paper. Don't miss it.

