



Farmington Observer

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Twenty-five cents

Millage hike for Walled Lake

By Patricia Bowling
Novi-Walled Lake News

For the first time since 1976 voters have said "yes" to the Walled Lake Schools.

Despite a heavy winter storm, 5,858 voters showed up at the polls Tuesday and approved a proposal to increase the millage rate a total five mills for five years.

The unofficial tally showed 3,337 votes in favor of the millage and 2,521 opposed — a margin of 816 votes. Voter turnout was approximately 18 percent.

"This gives us a future — a bright

one," said Superintendent Don Sheldon. "This is beautiful," Sheldon added after the millage proposal was voted the final tally. "I've been here 13 years, and I can't remember anything that has been more satisfying or more exciting."

Immediately after the vote had been tabulated the school board met in special session to begin the recall of laid-off staff members. In a 7-0 vote, the board approved Sheldon's recommendation to recall counselors immediately and bring all other laid-off staff back to work Dec. 12. Counselors were needed immediately to begin the rescheduling of classrooms and student schedules to their pre-layoff state.

The millage increase was approved in six of the eight voting precincts. The greatest support came from Precinct 2 (Keith Elementary), which approved the hike by a margin of 610-325.

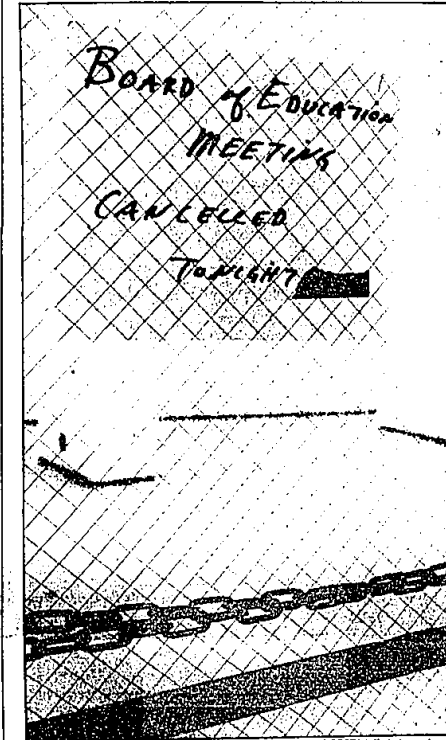
THE ONLY precinct to vote down the millage proposal was Precinct 1 (Walled Lake Junior High). But election workers said they considered the 343-to-319 vote a victory in that precinct, which typically flatly rejects millage proposals. Precinct 5 (Glenary Elementary) split right down the middle — 422 votes for the millage and 422 against.

Approval of the five mills increases Walled Lake's operating millage rate from 33.540 to 38.540. The total millage rate, including 1.091 mills for debt retirement increases from 34.631 to 39.631.

The results by precinct were as follows: Precinct 1, 319 yes, 343 no; Precinct 2, 610 yes, 325 no; Precinct 3, 459 yes, 384 no; Precinct 4, 378 yes, 234 no; Precinct 5, 422 yes, 422 no; Precinct 6, 357 yes, 222 no; Precinct 7, 352 yes, 254 no; Precinct 8, 304 yes, 244 no. The five-mill increase boosts the district's total millage to the tenth highest in Oakland County. In 1983 Walled Lake millage rate was among the lowest in the county — 22nd out of 28 districts.

District voters have not passed a millage increase since 1976. The board offered voters a choice between a 5.5-mill increase for five years or a 4-mill increase for five years in April 1976. Both proposals were rejected so the board prepared a second ballot in June asking for the 4-mill increase for five years only. This second proposal was approved by a slim 422-vote margin.

Four millage increase requests were rejected by voters between 1979 and 1981.



Residents who braved the snow to attend Tuesday's scheduled Board of Education meeting at Farmington High were greeted with the above sign.

Meeting on Campus Life victim of snow

By Tom Beer
staff writer

As Michigan blizzards go, last Tuesday's four-to-six-inch dumping — the first appreciable snowfall of the winter — wasn't that bad.

But the storm, which started last Monday evening and continued intermittently throughout the next day, was enough to force the cancellation of a few events and meetings in the Farmington area, chief among them last Tuesday's Farmington Board of Education meeting.

A large crowd had been expected at the meeting, which was to have been held in Farmington High School's auditorium.

Reason for the interest: The board was to have delivered a policy statement concerning Campus Life, the controversial social group with religious overtones which has been active around North Farmington High School the past few years.

To its supporters, Campus Life provides wholesome Christian activities for young people. Detractors believe that such activities, when carried out or promoted in public schools, violate the U.S. Constitution, which provides for separation of church and state. But interested citizens will have to wait until the board's next meeting on Dec. 20 to hear the new policy on "schools and religion" as last Tuesday's agenda put it.

The Dec. 20 meeting will begin with the policy statement at 7 p.m. in the Farmington High auditorium.

THE DECISION to scratch last Tuesday's meeting was made at about 5 p.m. by Superintendent Lewis Schulman and Board President Helen Prutow.

"I was on my way to the meeting and it took me about 25 minutes to go a couple of blocks," said Schulman, who lives in West Bloomfield.

"I didn't want to have a meeting that people couldn't attend freely. If you hold a meeting and only a few people show up, those who couldn't make it would ask, 'Why didn't you cancel it because of the weather?'"

Prutow said that a cancellation message was placed on the telephone answering device at the school district office and that area radio and television stations were asked to make an announcement.

"And we made a lot of personal phone calls to all the people we knew were involved," she said. "We just got the word out as best we could."

Prutow said she wanted to have the Campus Life issue "over and done with," but the snow prevented the meeting.

"There was no getting around it," she said. "It's pretty bad up here. Let's face it, this (issue) affects North Farmington. People from up here would have to go down there (to Farmington High) for the meeting and then try to get out of there."

"Most of the people we contacted seemed to be relieved that they wouldn't have to go out. It's really bad up here."

AT A BOARD meeting back on Nov. 8, several angry parents said they believed that religious groups have no right in and around the public schools.

They accused North Farmington Principal Clayton Graham and other North teachers and administrators of supporting Campus Life by allowing its

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Drains almost complete

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Although Farmington's long-awaited "Old Town" drain improvements to help alleviate basement flooding were expected to be completed by winter, the contractor will have to return next spring to finish some of the work.

Since construction on the more than \$700,000 worth of improvements began in August, the contractor, M.D. Taddie and Co. Inc., has installed all the storm drains, catch basins and manholes in the 98-acre problem area, said Farmington City Manager Robert Deadman. "We recent damp weather and residents' request in October to pave Alta Loma as part of the drain improvements extended the project, he added. The project also was delayed because Farmington Founders' Festival officials asked that the roads targeted for improvements remain open until after the festivities.

To date, concrete roadway has been installed on Alta Loma and the driveway approaches should be installed this week, although the contractor will spread gravel instead of asphalt now because of the weather, Deadman said. And while the base coat of asphalt has been laid on Oakland, Cass and Main comb streets, the final topcoating will

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Speak up now if you want your gravel road paved in '84

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills residents living on gravel roads who want their street paved in 1984 should contact the city manager's office as soon as possible.

Because at least three months are needed for required public hearings and completion of paving design plans, city officials want to schedule informational meetings for interested residents sometime in December and January so paving projects can begin in June 1984, said Thomas Blasell, director of public services.

During the informational meetings, "the whole process is explained," Bi-

asell said, including paving costs, special assessment districts and the project's starting date. Residents also will learn how the road will be paved under the city's less expensive soil stabilization program.

Petitions, which are used to give the City Council an indication that more than 50 percent of a street's residents want paving, will be available at the informational meetings, Blasell said.

"The council would like to see a majority of signatures on the petitions," Blasell said. "They use this as a measure of whether or not to proceed."

Before actual construction can begin, the City Council must approve the project as well as the special assess-

ment district and roll.

BEFORE 1981, when the city began the soil stabilization program and accompanying informational meetings, residents who wanted paving would sign petitions often without understanding what they were getting into. Providing residents with the details of a paving program, Blasell said, gives them "an educated perspective" before signing a petition and committing themselves to an assessment.

But Blasell said city officials are looking for "an active rather than isolated interest" in paving a residential road. That means individual residents should join forces or work through

their homeowners association to request an informational meeting, he said.

"We are not going to put together a whole informational meeting for one individual," Blasell added.

While city officials hope residents will initiate paving projects, "the City Council can establish special assessment districts if it is in the best interest of the community," Blasell said.

When Farmington Hills first became a city, approximately 90 miles of road were gravel. In the last three construction seasons, close to 22 miles have been paved, compared to about seven miles before the soil stabilization program.

oral quarrel

Should rapists have castration choice?

A South Carolina judge created a controversy recently by giving three admitted rapists an unusual choice — 30 years in prison or voluntary surgical castration.

The three, who pleaded guilty to the crime in hopes of receiving a lenient sentence as first offenders, are said to be considering the judge's alternative to the long prison term.

Today's Oral Quarrel question:

Should convicted or admitted rapists routinely be given the choice of castration over incarceration?

To answer this question, call 477-5498. You have until 1 p.m. on Friday to respond. To see how your neighbors feel about this issue, please look in Monday's Farmington Observer.

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Winter's here

Heavy coats, hats, scarves and galoshes were necessary pieces of wearing apparel Tuesday as winter made its first appearance in

the Detroit area. Above, citizens brave the elements on Grand River in downtown Farmington.

RANDY BOST/Staff photographer