

Debate's thrust — Hills-paid council trips

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

The torch that Farmington Hills City Councilwoman Joan Dudley began carrying years ago for holding the line on council members' expenses is still burning.

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Dudley was sharply critical Monday of sending the councilmen — Mayor Joe Alkateeb, Don Wolf and Ben Marks — to a National League of Cities conference in Washington, D.C., in early March, at city expense.

In a policy established in 1984 — at Dudley's request — council members are required to seek council approval before spending public money on conferences, seminars, luncheons or other functions. The previous policy allowed council members to turn in expense sheets to the city manager's office for reimbursement.

Dudley was not opposed to Alkateeb attending the conference at a cost of \$723, but she drew the line at Wolf's

and Marks' request to attend. The \$723 covers conference registration fee, transportation and accommodations. "I cannot support sending these council members to this conference," she said.

DESPITE HER opposition, council approved expenses for Wolf and Marks to join Alkateeb at the conference.

Dudley in particular criticized Wolf — who attended a conference in Seattle recently — for attending conferences and never reporting any new information or ideas to the council on his return.

"I haven't seen any new plans from Mr. Wolf on the agenda," she added.

Sending the city manager (whose expenses for such conferences are already included in the city's budget) and one council member, particularly the mayor, is acceptable, Dudley said.

"You will be getting a written report, Mrs. Dudley," Wolf replied, adding he has learned a lot from attending intergovernmental conferences.

Dudley replied: "I would probably learn a lot if I attended Harvard University," adding it's not within her budget.

In a 7-0 vote, council approved Dudley's motion to send Alkateeb to the conference. But council later approved expenses for Wolf and Marks to also attend.

SUPPORTING THE notion that council members can benefit from attending conferences, Alkateeb said: "I am not saying to be spendthrift," Alkateeb said. "But let's not be penny wise and pound foolish."

The purpose of attending the conference, Alkateeb said, is to be involved in discussions about possible cuts in federal highway dollars.

Dudley reminded council, however, of Wolf's consistent opposition to local governmental units taking federal dollars for programs. Dudley maintained that Wolf is the one — who attends the conferences — yet consistently fails to

support local tax increases.

Councilwoman Jody Soronen also supported council members' attendance at national conferences, but added, "I tell you, I am not getting in the middle of this."

Explaining why he wants to attend the Washington conference, Marks said, "It's going to make me a little more educated. When I go to these conferences, I work. If I go, you can bet your life I am going to learn something."

Councilman Terry Sever suggested discussing conference attendance at budget time to determine whether the money is well-spent.

Service academy nominees set

U.S. Rep. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, announced the names of his nominees who will compete for 1986 appointments to the service academies.

Each representative may have a maximum of five cadets or midshipmen charged to their office's quota in attendance at each service academy at any one time. For each vacancy, a representative may select no more than 10 nominees to compete for the vacancy.

There is one vacancy each at the Air

Force, Naval, and Military academies and 10 nominees were selected for each of these academies. Four nominees will compete on a statewide basis for 12 vacancies allotted to the State of Michigan at the Merchant Marine Academy.

Under the competitive appointment system used by Broomfield, final appointments to the academies will be made by selection boards at each academy. The academies have started announcing appointments and will do so until May 1.

Broomfield nominees are:

• Military Academy — Michael Dautermann, Farmington Hills, a senior at Temple Christian School; Todd Shepard, Farmington Hills, a senior at North Farmington High School.

• Naval Academy — Charles Bright, Farmington Hills, a senior at Birmingham Brother Rice High School.

• Merchant Marine Academy — James Sweeney, Jr., Farmington Hills, a senior at Farmington Harrison High School.

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