

TV system will focus in on city's sewers

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Thanks to city council action Monday, Farmington public works employees will now have a clearer view of the city's sewer problems.

Waiving the city's regular bid process and approving a \$12,000 increase in the water and sewer budget, council unanimously approved purchase of a \$27,000 television monitoring program for the city's sewer system Monday.

Cues Manufacturing of Orlando, Fla., manufactures the portable system, designed to check problems in sewer mains 8-30 inches in diameter, which have caused most of the sewer problems in Farmington.

"Cues has pretty well dominated the sewer camera industry in Michigan,"

City Manager Robert Deadman said. Local distributor for the product is Doherty Sales of Northville. It is used by Oakland County, DeWitt County and the cities of Detroit, Madison Heights, Lincoln Park, Mason and Holland, according to information given to the council.

THE OTHER communities are "very pleased" with the system, which requires "very little maintenance," according to Director of Public Services Earl Billing.

About 50 miles of sanitary and storm sewers 3-50 years old run through the city.

"There are numerous times when the department had to dig up the sewer system to determine the cause of the problem," the report continued. "This

is not only expensive, but oftentimes requires disturbing larger areas than necessary."

The monitoring system was recommended by Billing and Deadman following a six-month equipment review.

The public services department has logged "numerous incidents in the past few years where TV inspection would have aided them in determining the type of correction needed when investigating a sewer problem," Deadman told the council.

OUTSIDE INSPECTION service companies charge the city from 30 cents to \$1.90 per foot depending upon "variables of the work involved in the inspection."

When the city used outside services in the past, it took from seven days to a

month, Deadman added. "Being able to determine the problem in a timely manner is most important."

The \$15,000 originally approved for the monitor in this year's water and sewer budget was not enough, according to Deadman's report to the council. "A single TV sewer monitoring system would probably not provide adequate inspection of the smallest to the largest sewer mains," the report said. Equipment requirements ranged from \$25,000-\$175,000.

The system — called the Cues Cube — has a 10-year life expectancy, includes 1,000 feet of stainless cable, a manhole guide system, camera transportation skis, an 1,800-watt generator, a towing assembly, a television camera and an employee training course, according to the city report.

BILLING PLANS to review the city's entire sewer system with the new equipment, which would cost an estimated \$75,000 if done through an outside service, officials said. The 1,000 feet of cable will accommodate viewing from manhole-to-manhole 400-500 feet apart, Billing added.

Television inspections will help employees identify the location of unknown taps into the sanitary sewer system, and infiltration including joint failure, sewer collapse or other system deterrents, the report added.

It will also aid city workers in monitoring the chemical program used in the sewer system, which is designed to retard root growth.

Council members asked questions about current technology, references from other cities, use in the entire sewer system, trading off with other communities (which Farmington does not often do with electronic equipment), and maintenance costs. Officials will be able to stop illegal tap-ins to the sewer system, by seeing them more easily, they added.

Federal dollars in limbo

Continued from Page 1

face the federal budget crunch impact now as they hold their own annual budget review sessions. Most councils will review their respective budgets in April and May.

"There's no question, it's going to hurt," Councilman Ralph Yoder added.

FEDERAL SHARED revenue can be used "for any expenditure we can le-

gally spend money for," Deadman explained. The federal program has been reauthorized every year, although "with much difficulty."

The federal government "has taken the position that local governments are able to finance their own public services," Deadman added. "Therefore, it is not only calling for the termination of the program, but the elimination of a payment owed under the current program."

Seniors, faculty square off

Jackie Aho is a North Farmington High School senior.

By Jackie Aho
special writer

The atmosphere of friendly competition is again evident in the halls of North Farmington High School.

This time, however, the feeling is not exclusively for the students, but is shared by the teachers as they rise to the challenge of this year's seniors.

"This is the fourth year of the annual 'Senior-Faculty Challenges,'" the games started Feb. 5 with a "Dual of Trivia," and will continue through May 28, ending with a game of softball.

Eleven contests are scheduled, and the majority winner receives the glory. The purpose of the games is simply to have fun. "Students want to get involved and be with friends," said Dave

Murley, senior class president. "Also, these kids who compete will probably don't mind taking a teacher out."

BARRY MUSSATTO, guidance counselor and faculty organizer for the games, agreed that the games give students and faculty an opportunity to have fun in a setting other than the classroom.

"I've already met kids that I really didn't know before," said Mussatto, illustrating that the games can improve faculty-student relationships.

Signup has been tremendous on both sides this year, especially from seniors. This is perhaps due to the inspirational and competition-minded class president.

In many events, more students have signed up than are needed. For example, 80 students signed up to fill 20 slots in the upcoming canoe race. Because the students may register for as many

competitions as they choose, the positions will be distributed equally.

ALTHOUGH the first three games brought victories for the faculty, Murley assures the seniors, "It ain't over till it's over," adding, "This is a lucky break to help them out a bit. We'll build them up so we can knock them down."

Both sides compete seriously and try their best in the midst of the fun. Honor, pride and revenge (for any number of reasons) are at stake. "Ideally, the games would end in a tie," said Mussatto.

Murley disagrees, however, and jokes, "We'd like to beat the teachers fair and square, but if that policy fails, we'll have to resort to other methods. There's no substitute for victory, and extremism is no vice in the defense of seniors."

May the best team win!

City OKs sign variance

A sign variance allowing an awning with maximum 12-inch lettering was approved Monday, March 3, by the Farmington City Council for the Peillon Sweater Shop, 33245 Grand River, downtown Farmington.

Owner Norma Kobel recently moved her business from the rear of the same building to the Grand River side and proposes to place the awning on the structure, rather than a sign.

lettering to nine inches.

"We believe the proposed variance is in keeping with the other types of signs approved in the CBD (central business district)," an administrative report to the council recommending the variance said.

"The proposed awning would be aesthetically compatible and would be preferable over other types of signs, which could be installed on the mansard roof of the building."

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