

McDonald bests Spreen in county matchup

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

When Republican Jack McDonald heard GOP gubernatorial candidate William Lucas concede defeat Tuesday, he thought his chances of reelection to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners were fading.

But to his pleasant surprise, his traditionally Republican voters continued their support, enabling him to trounce Democratic challenger John Spreen in the Farmington Hills in their 27th District battle.



Jack McDonald, 27th county commission district includes Farmington and the majority of Farmington Hills.

"I was a little surprised by the final percentages," said McDonald, who in this election held his first fund-raiser.

In a breakdown between the two cities, Farmington Hills voters cast 5,472 votes for McDonald and 3,320

for Spreen. In Farmington, McDonald received 2,184 to Spreen's 1,380.

Though confident in his experience on the county board, McDonald nonetheless admitted his concern over Spreen's name recognition. But his challenger's notoriety only served to encourage McDonald to make greater public efforts and call out the volunteers who have long offered their support.

"I think I am a low-key person — maybe too low-key at times," McDonald said. "But I worked. I got out and hustled."

THE FARMINGTON HILLS resident said area voters stayed true to their Republican leanings even though in other races they split their

tickets. "They were voting back and forth," he said. "But maybe people were a lot more aware of our race than I thought."

Sounding disappointed by the unofficial vote tallies, Spreen said early Wednesday morning that he thought he had a good chance of taking McDonald's long-held seat.

"Que sera, sera — what will be, will be," Spreen said. "I feel I did the best I could. But I thank my volunteers and those who voted for me. And congratulations to Jack."

"I guess I was a dollar short and a day late," he continued.

Spreen said he would have liked a few more days to continue pounding the pavement in Farmington Hills. He managed to cover every street on foot in Farmington.

But with another unsuccessful election attempt under his belt — he was defeated by Daniel Murphy two years ago in the race for Oakland County executive — Spreen said he doubts he will ever again seek election.

"Now I will enjoy the blessings of retirement," Spreen said, adding he will complete his doctorate in educational sociology at Wayne State University.

LOOKING AHEAD to another two years, McDonald said his immediate goal is to attack the county's problem with roads. "Something has to be done. We have to get together on the board. We have to put on the pressure."

Rather than support a new tax or

a tax increase for road improvements in the county, McDonald believes. "The money is there, it's just a matter of distributing it equitably."

McDonald suggests that pressure be put on the state Legislature to change the formula used for determining how money from the state's gas and weight taxes are distributed to Oakland County. McDonald believes the formula should be based on the amount of revenue generated from gas and weight taxes rather than the total mileage of roads in a county.

"We have to either change the formula or find an innovative way to raise money. I hate to talk about raising taxes. People pay so much tax now."

IN OTHER county commission races affecting area residents, Republican David Moffitt was re-elected to a second term representing District 15. His challenger was Democrat Albert Zolton of Farmington Hills. The district includes the northeast portion of Farmington Hills, all of Franklin and Southfield Township, the southwest portion of Bloomfield Township and the southeast portion of West Bloomfield Township.

In the 21st district, Democratic incumbent Alexander Perinoff was re-elected to the seat he has held for 22 years. His challenger was Republican Douglas Sokolowski of Southfield. The district includes the south-east portion of Farmington Hills and the southern half of Southfield.

Accord to yield savings

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Farmington Hills will pay less for collecting garbage but more for disposal.

The city council Oct. 27 agreed to extend a refuse collection contract for four years to the Rubbish Co. of Farmington Hills. The contract in the next year will save the city about \$40,000-\$50,000.

The savings is due to the contract's 2 percent increase in the coming year rather than the planned 4 percent.

This was the last year in a contract with the company that council approved in 1983. But the company owner offered the city an extension and renewal proposal that included the lesser increase for the coming year — the current contract's last year.

While the city will save money this year in garbage collection, the costs paid to dispose of the refuse has increased substantially.

EARLIER THIS year, the city was notified that dumping costs would increase by 71 percent as of Aug. 1 as the result of the sale of the Wadsworth County-based Lyon Development and Holloway Landfill. The landfill's new owner, Browning-Ferris Industries, increased the disposal rate from \$1.75 to \$3 per cubic yard. The new rate will cost the city an additional \$140,000.

"So even with the savings (from the new rubbish contract), we could effectively put into place we will be about \$100,000 over budget," City Manager William Costick said.

The city's expected savings on the collection contract — in addition to a lesser cost increase this year — is due to a breakdown of the major costs involved with collection.

The monthly collection price, for example, will be based on the cost of fuel, dumping and the actual collection service (that includes labor, material, insurance costs and profit).

The city expects to save money by directly providing the rubbish company with fuel. The city not only is exempt from sales tax but is eligible to purchase gasoline at a reduced governmental rate, Costick said.

BECAUSE THE disposal rate has previously been tied into the total collection rate (the rubbish company takes the garbage to the disposal site), the recent 71 percent landfill increase "has had a substantial impact on our collection service rate," Costick said in a report to council.

With the new contract, city officials decided to treat costs separately to determine which costs were increasing or decreasing over the life of the contract.

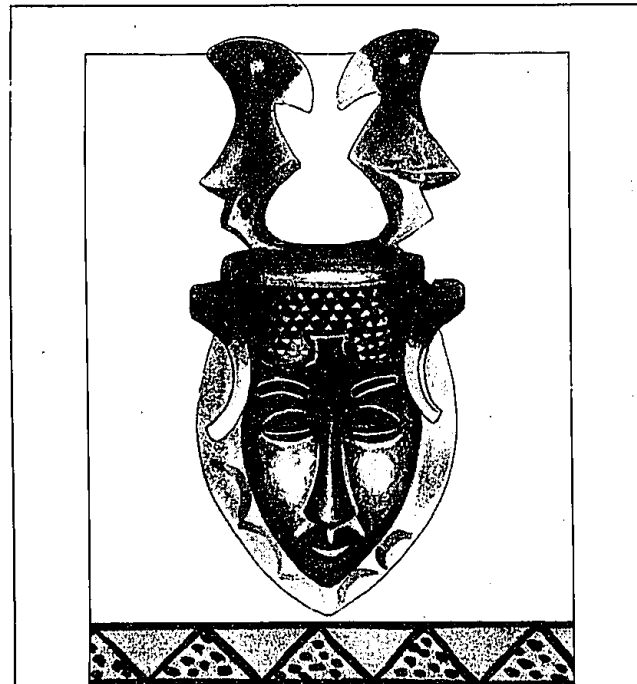
"The real benefit of this approach to the rate-making process is that we know exactly what we are paying for and what costs make up the rate. In addition, it avoids a renegotiation of contract prices that are required in the existing contract due to the increase (decrease) in the dumping fee," Costick said in his report.

"Another advantage to separating component costs is that annual increases are based only on collection services and not on the fuel and landfill components of the rate structure," he continued.

The new contract with the rubbish company calls for a 2 percent increase in 1988-89 and a 3 percent increase annually through 1990.

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