

# Park ban on dogs, loitering upheld

By Joanne Maliszowski  
staff writer

Despite a last-minute effort to liberalize park regulations, dogs and loitering still will be prohibited in Farmington Hills parks.

The Farmington Hills City Council adopted 6-1 an ordinance specifying rules and regulations for all city parks. Councilman Joe Alkateeb opposed the rules.

No pets, no loitering in parking lots, no feeding wild animals and no ball games except in designated areas are some of the new rules that will be enforced in the city's parks, including the new Heritage and Pioneer parks. The rules also include a curfew, which prohibits patrons between sunset and sunrise.

Violating the rules will be a misdemeanor with a maximum penalty of \$500 and 90 days in jail. Though councilman Aldo Vagnozzi made an unsuccessful final plea to reward a provision prohibiting loitering in the parks' parking lots, he joined the majority in adopting the

new set of rules. But Alkateeb, who has maintained the city council is attempting to legislate too much, continued his fight. "I will be voting against this enactment," Alkateeb said. "I think by banning dogs . . . we are playing too much government."

IN EARLIER discussions, Alkateeb said dogs should be as welcome in the parks as they are in American families. But Monday he said he's more concerned with what he believes is over-legislation.

"We should be a little cautious tightening the noose on the people of the city on what they can and can't do," he said.

Vagnozzi agreed. "I think Joe makes a good point. We've got too many restrictions now," he said, arguing for different wording in the loitering provision. "We ought to define loitering. Otherwise, we can end up with people doing what's natural in a park or parking lot (and being in violation of the rules)."

Vagnozzi suggested providing a definition of loitering in the provision or changing the provision to read: "No person shall loiter in any parking lot in any public park in a manner inconsistent with the use of the parking lot." The adopted provision simply prohibits loitering in the parks' parking lots.

But Alkateeb and Vagnozzi failed to convince their colleagues. "We wouldn't need the law if everyone who had a dog was responsible for it as the woman is who wrote that letter," said councilman Terry Sever, referring to a letter from a resident opposed to the ban on dogs.

Mayor Jody Soronen held her ground, arguing that the parks are for people, not dogs.

COUNCILMAN BEN Marks opposed adding wording to the loitering provision. He called Vagnozzi's suggested wording, "redundant."

"What's happening here is we're trying to protect guys who are doing wrong," Marks said.

Patrons who are simply talking

will have no problems with park personnel. Those who are causing a ruckus will have a problem, he said.

The current provision allows park personnel to have discretion in enforcing the loitering provision, Marks said.

## 16 mph speed limit set

It's not going to be easy to find it, but the new speed limit in Farmington Hills' Heritage and Pioneer parks is 16 mph.

The decision to establish the out-of-the-ordinary limit — a mile faster than the minimum allowed by the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code — came from a comment made by councilwoman Jan Dolan. In other communities she's visited, odd number speed limits are posted to grab motorists' attention, Dolan said.

All but councilman Aldo Vagnozzi latched onto the idea. "I think we're getting too deeply involved in mat-

ters that are best left up to staff," he said.

"We're talking about banning loitering without spelling it out," Vagnozzi added.

In addition to establishing a speed limit, the council adopted a resolution allowing for any regulatory signs needed in the parks, including stop and yield signs, directional guides and parking restrictions.

Councilwoman Jean Fox asked city administrators to use signs that "will be in harmony with the park concept" rather than the usual metal signs. City manager William Costick said, as in other parks, the signs most likely will be made of wood and appear a bit more rustic than the metal signs.

## carrier of the month

### Farmington.



Matt Black

Matt Black, 14, delivers the Farmington Observer in Canterbury Commons subdivision in Farmington Hills. He has delivered the newspaper since July 1985.

The North Farmington High School ninth grader's favorite subjects are English and mathematics. His hobbies include collecting things. Keeping track of income and work organization are two of the things he has learned as a result of delivering the Observer. The work also helps him manage stress better.

Matt is the son of Christine and William Black. He has one brother, Jeff, 18.

If you want to be a Farmington Observer carrier, please call 591-0500

# County surplus to benefit Hills' roads

By Joanne Maliszowski  
staff writer

Farmington Hills administrators aren't wasting time in determining what to do with more than \$300,000 from the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

"We'd like to try to put the money into improvements on 12 Mile," said city manager William Costick. "That's a big area where we can spend the money on. That's really the only idea we have right now."

In particular, administrators are looking at needed improvements at the 12 Mile-Halsted intersection.

"We've had requests from businesses that we need work on left-turn signals there," Costick said.

The Farmington Hills City Council in December agreed to have 25 gravelers in the West Farmington Cemetery at 12 Mile and Halsted moved for possible future widening of the roadway.

With help from the board of commissioners and 61 local governments, the Oakland County Road Commission is drawing up a \$5 million list of improvements.

The source of the money is part of the county's general fund surplus, which commissioners earmarked for

road improvements, overriding the veto of county executive Daniel Murphy. The county board allocated \$3.5 million to cities and villages and \$1.5 million to townships.

"WE CERTAINLY have places to put it," Costick said.

The money also could be used to supplement the city's more than \$14 million, three-year road improvement program that's financed in part with voter-approved \$7 million general obligation bonds, he added.

City administrators will discuss ideas with the Farmington Hills City Council in spring when budget preparations begin. When city officials have decided on a project, they will forward it to the county road commission. If approved, the city will receive the money.

Projects that could be financed with the county money include road widenings, paving, repaving, recon-

struction, restoration, safety and drainage improvements, bridge and culvert replacements, traffic control devices and guard rails.

The county's distribution of the money is pro-rated on the basis of each community's state equalized valuations. Municipalities may choose to take the money and use it on their own street systems rather than county roads. Examples of some allocations include: Troy, \$508,000; Southfield, \$502,000; West Bloomfield Township, \$292,000; Farmington, \$53,000.

In November, the Farmington City Council discussed possible uses of the money they will receive from the county. Several joint projects with Farmington Hills, including improvement of the Nine Mile Farmington Road intersection, were discussed.

CITY MANAGER Robert Deadman said in November that he had

"very tentative discussions" with Farmington Hills administrators on several projects that would benefit both cities.

"It would appear . . . that the highest priority should be allocated to Nine Mile Road improvements," Deadman said.

Other projects being discussed include an overlay and repair of Drake Road, between Grand River and Freedom, and an overlay of Freedom Road, from Nine Mile to the western city limits.

The county board's decision to allocate money for road improvements drew controversy. County executive Murphy vetoed the measure on the ground it violated state law prohibiting use of property tax revenue for roads. The board reasoned that the measure was legal, however, because property taxes weren't earmarked for roads and are mixed with other revenues in the general fund.

## Mail stops for King Day

The U.S. Postal Service will operate on a holiday schedule during its observance honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Monday, Jan. 18.

Farmington Postmaster Kenneth Harris said there will be no regular residential or business mail delivery. Special delivery, Express Mail and Post Office Box service will be provided.

Limited carrier service will be available only for customers who regularly pick up their mail at either the Farmington Office, 33200 Slo-

cum, or the Farmington Hills Office, 3245 12 Mile Road. The service windows will be open 8-10 a.m. for those customers; however, there will be no financial transactions.

Mail will be picked up from all residential collection boxes as late in the day as possible to meet first-class mail service standards. All business collection boxes, with the large 5 p.m. decal, will be picked up after 5 p.m.

Nat'l mail service will resume the Farmington Office, 33200 Slo-

Tuesday, Jan. 19.

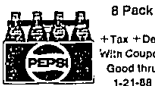
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