

Senate bill would give library independence

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Only some of the provisions of the bill would directly affect the Farmington library. Among them are the independence issue, authority to levy a maximum 2 mills and changes in library board composition, Papal said.

Seeking independence and taxing authority isn't new for the Farmington Community Library. In 1979, voters defeated two library proposals — one for independence and a second for a 1.5-mill levy. In the early 1980s, the two councils denied requests to again place the issue on the ballot.

The public library systems in Rochester Hills and West Bloomfield are examples of independent systems that levy taxes for operations.

Independence means the cities would no longer be forced to directly finance the Farmington Community Library system. In the 1988-89 budget, Farmington Hills will allocate \$14 million and Farmington approximately \$13,000, based on each city's total state equalized value. The library's 1988-89 budget is \$1.9 million.

"With this (bill), we would be assured of good, stable funding," said library board president Charlotte Yavarski, an independence advocate.

NO LONGER having to directly finance the library wouldn't necessarily mean more money for other services and needs in both cities, Farmington and Farmington Hills city managers said. "Initially, I think voters would be looking for relief," Costick said, adding he would expect voters to ask the cities to reduce millage by the amount sought by the library.

"We probably wouldn't just take that money (formerly allocated to the library) and use it elsewhere. We would probably reduce it (the tax rate)," Farmington city manager Robert Deadman said.

If the library became independent, the board of directors would be required to file a "plan of action and agreement for governance" with the state library, Papal said.

She expects the city councils to schedule public hearings if the bill

becomes legislation because of the required action plan and agreement for governance. That plan and agreement would include whether board members are elected or appointed, Papal said.

THE BILL would reduce the current eight-member Farmington library board — four representatives from each city — to five-to-seven members.

The city managers prefer appointment rather than election of library board members. "The council can then be held responsible for their appointments," Deadman said.

And both agreed that voters are already confronted with too many

names for too many offices and boards. "I doubt the situation would change much for library board members," Costick said.

Cropsey's bill, now in the Senate local government and veterans com-

mittee, is expected to be amended because of complaints by both the Michigan Municipal League and Michigan Townships Association, said Cropsey aide Charlene McCallum.

Library services and circulation grow

By Joanne Maliszewski
staff writer

Eighty-one percent of the Farmington Community Library's \$1.9 million 1988-89 budget is financed by the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills.

"Ninety-five percent Hills residents use the Farmington Community Library exclusively. In comparison, there's a small non-residential use. But of that, a large percentage is attributed to people who work here and use the library because it is convenient," library director Beverly Papal said.

Use of the two-branch system continues to increase, with a projected circulation through the end of June to exceed 561,000 or seven items per resident.

"This per-capita total is well above the norm for other Class VI libraries serving a population over 50,000," Papal said in her budget message.

Adult reference services — the greatest increase in use — increased at the Hills branch by 18 percent over the previous year, Papal said. By far, adult reference services shows the greatest increase in use at the Farmington Hills branch, 32,372. Half of the reference use is business-related. Interestingly, a good portion of reference questions and services requested by patrons is for medical information, Papal said.

The 1988-89 library budget comprises about 6 percent of the Hills' \$24 million budget and 3.9 percent of Farmington's \$4.1 million budget. The Hills' share translates to about 0.8-mill of the city's total 9.4 mills levied in the new budget year beginning July 1.

IN ADDITION to the tax-generated revenues from the cities, the library receives money from the state in the form of penal fines and other aid. Revenues also come in from fines, fees and lost books, auditorium rentals and other services provided by the library.

"Our outside revenues are not expected to substantially increase and some is expected to decrease," Papal said. This year's library budget increased 7.7 percent, which is primarily devoted to ever-increasing costs rather than the introduction of new programs, Papal said.

"The costs reflect maintenance of current operations," she said. "We have had expenses over which we

have had absolutely no control."

Among those costs are increases in Social Security, employee health insurance and hospitalization.


The \$190,000 for book purchases is an 8.5 percent increase over last year, an 8 percent inflation rate charged by publishers will limit the library's purchase to 12,000 new books. At this rate, the growth of the book collection is slightly less than projected in the library's five-year plan, Papal said.

THE BUDGET also reflects a 5.5 percent salary increase, which includes expected merit promotions for employees. The increases also reflect upgrading of three library assistants' salaries because they have begun graduate work, which will be a boon to the library, considering the industry is suffering from a librarian shortage, Papal said.

The budget also includes the addition of two part-time library assistants and 15 additional hours for library pages, who generally are students. The library has 42 regular full- and part-time employees.

Capital expenditures totaling about \$60,000 include \$35,000 from the capital reserve fund for future repaving of the Hills branch parking lot, \$2,000 in furniture purchases, \$5,800 for equipment (microfilm reader printer, a computer and computer printers, typewriters, calculators and a photocopier). A van used for delivery between the two branches and visits to the 15 extension service sites will be replaced for \$11,000.

"We really have tried to maintain capital items to a minimum," Papal said.



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