

Alkateeb quits as councilman

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COUNCILMAN BEN Marks, one of Alkateeb's supporters on council and in the 1987 election in which Alkateeb was the top vote-getter, was surprised by the resignation.

"I feel badly. I'm disappointed. I'm going to miss him. I'm going to miss his analytical ability and his in-depth love for the community," Marks said.

Alkateeb's resignation came little more than three weeks after he published his anger toward the council and said he was considering resigning.

In response to growing criticism of his absences from council meetings, Alkateeb said he must devote more time to his electrical engineering and contracting business, particularly because his partner will be in the hospital until April. "I'm carrying the whole ball."

Alkateeb said he found many of the recent council meetings useless. "We meet. We talk. We argue. And we come up with great decisions. Then two weeks later, they are totally forgotten."

The latest example, he said, is council's decision to continue having planning consultant Claude Costes discuss a project before the proponent has his say. But at the next meeting, the council changed its mind. "So why go to meetings?"

Still, Alkateeb is concerned with what he calls the "politics and hypocrisy" of the city council.

Too often, Alkateeb said, the council bows to the demands of a loud individual or group. "I hope in the end, they are pro-fairness to all. Not just the loud mouths. The council has to have the courage to say this is good for the city, not just for this road, this one part of the city."

WITH THE city's growth, Alka-

teeb said, it's time to change the city charter and provide for an elected mayor form of government. "The city manager cannot be the political leader of the community. Too much pressure is put on the city manager and that shouldn't happen."

The current system allows four council members with similar sentiments and votes "to run the place." An elected mayor would have veto power and it would take six votes to override the mayor, Alkateeb said.

The present system of a city manager form of government with an honorary mayor isn't working. "Terry (Sever) is trying very hard. Nevertheless, he is not an emperor. I hope he understands his limitations."

Sever said he wasn't sure how to react to Alkateeb's comments. "I feel confidence in my ability to be mayor. Some people may see that as an emperor-type position. When I make up my mind, I'm very steadfast in my decisions. (Alkateeb) hasn't been there to see how I handle things. I don't go in there with orders. I'm more into discussing."

ALKATEEB ALSO criticized the council for what he called a lack of courage. "I believe I'm the only one with the courage to speak out. Nobody ever comes to my support, not because they disagree with me. Because they don't have the guts. They (the public and city council) don't want courage. No one wants to hear the truth."

Alkateeb admitted that a particular thorn in his side is the "constant criticism" of the city from the public and council members. "Growth is a very popular word today. The city government has little to do with growth. It's a market issue."

The city's responsibility is to develop zoning regulations to maintain orderly growth. "We've done that."

Process begins to fill vacancy

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of former councilwoman Jan Dolan to the state House.

A 1985 amendment to the city charter requires the new appointee to run for election in November. The same provision would apply to Arnold.

"In the interim, the vacancy in the council shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining council members, the appointee to hold office until his successor is elected and qualified," according to the charter amendment.

COUNCIL MEMBERS are expected to interview appointment candidates for Alkateeb's vacant seat. In the last appointment process, only council members Aldo Vagnozzi and Jean Fox interviewed the seven candidates.

Candidates in December included Arnold; planning commissioner Jonathan Grant; former board of zoning appeals member and planning commissioner Lawrence Lichtman; Olde Town activist and Housing Rehabilitation Loan Board member George Roberts; Economic Development Corporation member Bob Beauchamp; Council of Homeowners Associations of Farmington Hills vice chairman Martin Krohn; and board of zoning appeals member Richard Corey.

Mayor Terry Sever told council members he would like to see more women apply for the seat. But councilman Ben Marks said he would prefer to choose an appointee who is qualified, rather than one chosen based on gender or where in the city they live.

police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

● BURGLARY SUSPECTS

Two Wayne County men face felony charges in connection with the break-in of a Farmington Hills house Friday morning.

Arraigned Friday before District Judge Michael Hand of Farmington, Ronald Kevin Dickey, 26, of Livonia and George Hadjian, 31, of Redford Township pleaded not guilty to single counts of breaking and entering of an occupied dwelling with intent to commit larceny.

Hand set cash/surety bond at \$5,000 for each defendant pending a preliminary exam in 47th District Court. The defendants face up to 10 years in prison if convicted.

According to Farmington Hills police:

Two men were arrested after a homeowner on the 21200 block of Tuck reported that a strange man banged on the kitchen door, then moved a shop-vac valued at \$100 from an attached kitchen porch into a van about 8 a.m.

The man and the van's driver were walking holes in each other's lawn when officers arrived. The driver dropped a large screwdriver.

● PURSE SNATCHING

A man thought to be in his 20s ran up to a woman entering her Redwood Hill Condos home on Berrywood at 12:05 a.m. Wednesday and snatched her purse.

The woman struggled, but lost hold of her purse, in the process falling backwards onto the grass.

The purse contained \$45.

The thief apparently was accompanied in the getaway car, a red Ford Escort hatchback, by another man also thought to be in his 20s, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

● ELECTRICAL FIRES

Two electrical fires were reported within 20 minutes of each other in the city of Farmington Tuesday night, one causing damage to a downtown store.

Damage from a fire reported shortly before 9 p.m. at the Bon Ton Shops in the Downtown Farmington Center caused about \$1,000 in damage.

According to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report, an electrical short in the exterior wood overhang of the store caused sparks, flame and charring. The wires had come in contact with water due to the deteriorating overhang. The city

building department was notified.

The second fire call came in about 6:15 p.m., when firefighters were downtown. An industrial fire at Century Industries on the city's south end was reported in the shop area, where an electrical cable to a bridge welder had overheated and ignited the rubber insulator. Employees extinguished it before public safety officers arrived; no damage was reported.

● CANDY OFFERED

Two men in a car approached two girls walking home at Fox Point Condos on Halsted in Farmington Hills and offered them candy at 4 p.m. Monday.

When the girls, ages 9 and 7, refused the offer, the men drove away. The girls had seen the blue and white full-sized car in the complex before, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

● SUITES BURGLARIZED

Four office suites in the Woodcreek Office Center on Northwestern Highway in Farmington Hills were burglarized Feb. 16-20.

An electric typewriter and five desk calculators valued at \$560 were reported stolen. There were no signs of forced entry in the break-ins at 31275 Northwestern Highway, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

● UNDERAGE DRINKING

A 17-year-old Farmington Hills man was ticketed under the city's host liability ordinance when young people were found with beer at a house party on 13 Mile, west of Farmington Road, Friday night, police said.

Responding to a loud party at 11:20 p.m., officers found 20 people younger than 21 at the party, which included beer, according to Farmington Hills police.

A 17-year-old man and an 18-year-old man, both from Farmington Hills, were ticketed for possessing alcohol following a traffic stop in the city of Farmington Feb. 18, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

● KNIFE SEIZED

A 29-year-old West Bloomfield man faces a felony charge after a military knife was found in his car during a traffic stop at Northwestern Highway and Middlebelt Saturday, police said.

Arraigned Sunday before District Judge Michael Hand of Farmington, the man stood mute to a charge of carrying a concealed weapon. An innocent plea was entered. Hand set

cash/surety bond at \$5,000 pending a preliminary exam in 47th District Court.

The defendant faces up to five years in prison if convicted.

He was arrested at 8:45 p.m. after a Marine Corps knife with a seven-inch blade was found between the console and the seat, according to Farmington Hills police.

● STORE BREAK-IN

Farmington public safety officers are investigating a Sunday night break-in at Computerland, 34455 Grand River, which occurred about 10 p.m.

Officers Duane Cowger and Vince Ziegler responded to an alarm to find an open van being loaded with computers and accessories. The thief fled on foot and was not captured, despite the help of state police tracking dogs.

According to police reports, the stolen van — a 1989 Ford Aerostar — was the property of a Southfield dealership and still had dealer information attached to the keys. In the van was a color monitor, two key-boards, three personal computers and one printer.

The thief left physical evidence in the van, which police are processing. There was \$200 in damage listed to the store's front door, broken in the break-in.

● THEFTS REPORTED

A 1970 Pontiac GTO and a 1971 Chevrolet Camaro Z-28, each valued at \$15,000, were reported stolen from a driveway on Ivywood Feb. 10-17.

A temporary furnace valued at \$250 was reported stolen from a house under construction on Burton Drive Feb. 15-17.

Stereo equipment, an electric guitar, a quilt, video game cartridges, jewelry and money valued at \$1,380 were reported stolen from a house on Westcott Crescent Circle Feb. 17.

A 1984 Dodge Charger valued at \$2,000 was reported stolen from Piza One, 31160 Grand River, Feb. 17, as a customer entered the store to pick up a pizza.

A cassette radio valued at \$80 was reported stolen from a car parked in a driveway on Birchwood Feb. 17-18.

Two wallets, cash, a VCR and a 1987 Pontiac in the garage were reported stolen from a house on Fink Feb. 17-18 while two adults and two children were asleep upstairs. The property was valued at \$14,540.

Tools and automotive stereo equipment valued at \$1,025 were reported stolen from a car parked in a garage on Parker Feb. 20.

● CAR RECOVERED

A 1988 Chevrolet stolen from Taylor was recovered at the Clarion Hotel, 31525 12 Mile, Feb. 17.

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