

City backing fell short — library

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Sever said the city council did everything library trustees requested. "But if people are asking whether we should have launched a tougher political campaign, yes, perhaps we should have done that. I suppose we could have done a little bit more."

Farmington Mayor Richard Tupper's was not listed on endorsement letters. "I just felt the people of our community should make up their own minds. I'm not sure city councils should go out beating on doors to promote."

The city managers and mayors participated in developing the library's expansion needs and proposals. "I think the (library) board has totally misread the managers," Farmington city manager Robert Deadman said. Campaigning in the political arena is not a city manager's role, he added.

Farmington Hills city manager William Costick said he felt library officials and volunteers "were doing what

was necessary. I was careful to answer the questions asked (by voters), very carefully. No one, in my mind, worked against the issues."

TRUSTEES AGREED that voters' "no-more tax" mood led to the library proposals' demise: a \$14.5-million bond issue to build a new main library and a maximum 1.5-mill operating levy. "They (voters) were there to vote against a tax increase," said newly elected Farmington Hills city councilman Jonathan Grant, co-chairman of Citizens to Support the Library.

Deadman disagreed. With a more than 40 percent turnout in both cities, voters spoke clearly. "I'm not sure anything would have sold the operating tax issue."

Trustees consider the new library's proposed site — on the north side of 12 Mile, just east of Halsted — a factor in the ballot defeat. The bond proposal won in 11 of Farmington Hills' 27 precincts. The precincts are along the city's northern border and west of Farmington Road.

Confusion about the proposals, especially the maximum 1.5 mills for 20 years for operations, played a role in the defeat. Many didn't understand that the 1.5 mills requested was a maximum ceiling or that it was a tax shift, not a tax increase, trustees said.

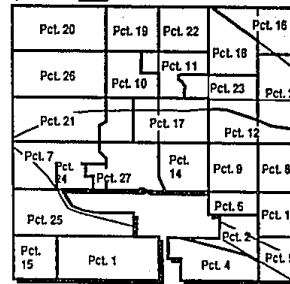
TUPPER SAID the maximum ceiling made some voters wonder why it was requested if it wouldn't be used. "Both issues (bond and tax) were open-ended. You couldn't get a definitive answer to questions that should have been answered."

Voters also questioned why the library was not selling the 12 Mile branch, rather than deciding the building to the cities to be used for other purposes, trustees said.

"We didn't have any say in the matter. We were put into an uncomfortable, uncompromising position," Yavarski said.

Tupper said some voters didn't like the lack of plans for the future use of the existing branch. "They felt uncomfortable with this hit-and-miss plan."

Precincts where library bond proposal passed



New vote is considered, just 'question of when'

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THE PRIMARY problem is a cramped main library on 12 Mile, east of Farmington Road. The unsuccessful \$14.5-million bond proposal would have raised money to build, furnish and equip an expanded facility on the north side of 12 Mile, just east of Halsted.

Bond money also would have been used to renovate the downtown Farmington branch.

The ballot request for a maximum 1.5 mills for 20 years would have allowed the library system to operate independently of its two financing units, Farmington and Farmington Hills. Libraries were recently given state permission to seek their own operating taxes.

Trustees are faced with a couple options. One is going to voters sometime next year with two similar proposals.

The other is splitting the proposals. Trustees could ask for the bond proposal sometime next year. Because construction would take about two years, trustees said they could wait until then to ask voters for operating taxes.

Trustees also are faced with deciding whether to schedule a special election to ask voters one or both proposals, or seek approval at the August primary, or November general election.

BUT THE options bring accompanying problems. A special election would cost an estimated \$32,000-\$35,000, which the library would have to pay. Having to spend that amount for an election to ask for construction and operating money may draw criticism from the public, some trustees said.

"I think that you stand a much better chance of winning if you had a special election," said newly

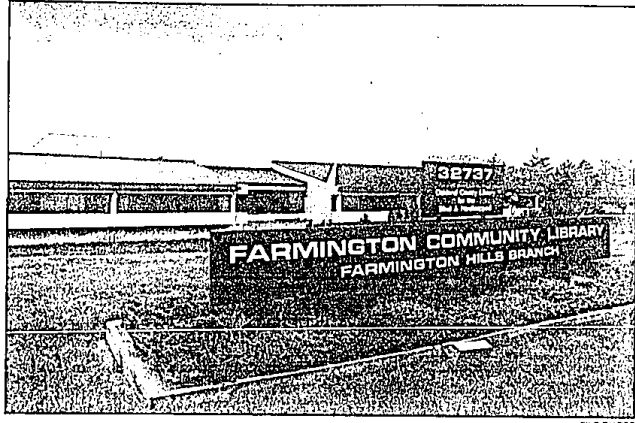
elected Farmington Hills city councilman Jonathan Grant, co-chairman of the library campaign's Citizens to Support the Library.

Putting the proposals on the August primary or November election ballots would be less costly, but there's the chance of competing with other tax proposals from the state or cities.

"I think we're going to get criticism no matter what we're going to do," library director Beverly Papal said.

Trustees directed Papal to request a 30-day extension on their purchase options on the 19 acres targeted for the new library. If the property owners request additional money, however, the purchase options will not be exercised.

Trustees are scheduled to meet, 5:15 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 21, at the Farmington Hills Branch, 32737 12 Mile.



FILE PHOTO

The 17-year-old Farmington Community Library Farmington Hills Branch is at 12 Mile and Kendallwood.

Historic area moviehouse to add 2nd screen

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"Not only will it bring people to the downtown area, but the Civic adds to the traditional flavor of a downtown main street. It will definitely draw more people to the area, which is great for bringing in other businesses."

OTHER THAN the new auditorium, there will be no visible changes at the theater, a historic landmark on Grand River, just east of Farmington Road.

"This is really the only way I know of for maximizing the existence of this business," said Hohler, who recently raised his ticket price from \$1.50 to \$2.

There are too many days where you don't get enough people to fill up an auditorium. If you only have one product to offer, you're only going to pick up that portion of the market that wants to see that one specific picture. If you have two pictures to offer, you've got twice the chance for more business."

Hohler took over the theater from

his dad in 1973 after a stint in the Air Force. The theater has been in the Hohler family since 1940.

Because his theater is a subsequent, Hohler said he never actually knows which movies will be made available.

"All of the distributors operate differently," he said. "Sometimes, I won't know what the movie is until a few days before I'll be showing it."

THERE ARE a lot of rules and regulations when it comes to subsequent movie theaters and the movies that they can show, according to Hohler.

How do second-run moviehouses actually obtain movies? "Today, the market is totally different," Hohler said. "All first-run movie releases must be bid on through a distributor. In turn, they guarantee them so much dollars and so many playing hours. The result: the person with the highest bid gets the movie."

This practice is virtually impossible for smaller theaters, such as subsequent ones. "Your larger theaters are national companies with a lot of

money behind them," Hohler said. "If they get a turkey movie that bombs out, it's not going to put them under, but if that happened to a little guy like myself, I'd be in trouble."

How does the Civic operate? "We pay a percentage of the box office that runs anywhere from 35-60 percent," he said. "The more business you do, the higher the percentage goes. I also use a booking agent who keeps me up-to-date on the market."

HÖHLER USES his own judgment when choosing movies sometimes. "I just go by what I've heard and what's out there," he said. "A lot of it is by word of mouth."

He said he has worked at the historic theater since he was in his teens, a time when his father Edward was at the helm.

"When I was a little boy, I did everything from usher to selling candy at the refreshment counter to sweeping the floors," he recalled. "And believe it or not, I still do a lot of those things when an additional helping hand is needed today."

"It's funny because, personally, I

don't think the industry has changed that much since my dad first started this theater," he said. "People still love a good comedy and they still love to go out to the movies just like they did in the '40s."

In regards to being involved in the movie business, Hohler said, "I've been in this business all my life and I wouldn't be doing anything else."

Who exactly frequents the Civic?

"I think the bulk of the people who

attend subsequent theaters are a lot of families that can't afford to pay \$30 for the family to see a first-run movie, teenagers and people who saw the movie a first time, loved it and wanted to see it again."



RANDY DORST/Staff photographer

Owner Greg Hohler (center) watches as Leroy Paschke (right) and his son, Lee, remove existing fixtures from the rear of the Civic as preparations begin for the installation of a projector booth that will serve the main floor of the downtown theater.

Smoke testing to identify Farmington sewer defects

Farmington sewers will be smoke tested during the next month. Testing is used to identify system defects. Prior to smoke testing, handbills will be distributed.

During the testing, which begins Wednesday, smoke may enter structures through unused drains or disconnected plumbing fixtures. Residents are advised to pour water down drains and fixtures to fill traps not regularly used.

If smoke does not enter the building during testing, contact a member of the survey team work-

ing on your street. The smoke is non-staining and is not dangerous to pets. The smoke will dissipate quickly if a window or door is opened and will leave no odor or residue.

The testing is being conducted by the engineering firms of Black & Veatch and Orchard, Hill & McClellent Inc.

If you have any questions regarding the smoke testing program, contact the Farmington Department of Public Services at 473-7250.

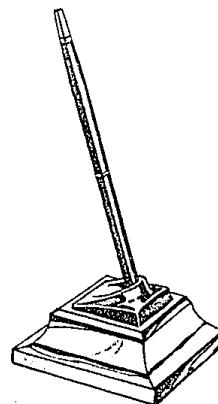
City financially fit — auditor

The city of Farmington is in good financial shape, according to auditors reporting to city council Nov. 6.

Representatives from the accounting firm of Plante & Moran said that as of June 30, the city had increased revenues overall of \$107,000, or 2.5 percent, because of increased property values.

The city received 52 percent of its revenue from local property taxes during the 1988-89 fiscal year.

And, although expenses were expected to exceed revenues by some \$200,000, the city ended up to be only \$30,000 over budget. Revenues totaled \$4,418,000, while expenses totaled \$4,448,000.



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