

## today's hot line

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### Close For Tre-Ore

The Observer Newspapers general offices at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia, and the Southfield editorial offices at 20999 W. 12 Mile Road, Southfield, will be closed Friday for business from noon to 3 p.m. Good Friday to allow employees to attend services in the churches of their choice.

## what's inside

### Recall Or Rollcall?

Amidst threats of being recalled, the Farmington Board of Education has been receiving communications of support including letters from 39 residents and support from the teachers, PTA Council and Farmington-Southfield Vicariate.

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### New Post Office

The City of Farmington may yet gain the prize of having the new post office locate within the city. The council Monday night approved a variance on parking requirements leaving the next step up to the feds.

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# School Board Tells Need For 4.5 Additional Mills

By MARTHA MAHAN

The Farmington Board of Education will ask voters to approve 4.5 mills of added school taxes for four years at the June 14 election to help meet a projected \$17 million 1971-72 budget.

"This is what we're going to take to the County Tax Allocation Board and say this is what

we would like in funds to operate next year," Business Administrator William Prisk told the Farmington Enterprise and Observer. "But we don't believe we're going to get that much, no way."

**INDEED, THERE IS** "strong indication" that the county allocation will be reduced a half-mill for next year, Supt. Roderick J. Smith said.

The board voted unanimously Monday night to place the additional 4.5 mills (\$4.50 per \$1,000 equalized valuation) on the June ballot which also will carry candidates to fill one four-year term opening up on the school board.

The term of President John M. Washburn III expires this June. He is "not prepared to say at this time" whether he will seek another term, Washburn said.

**THE \$17 MILLION** figure includes restoration of "some" programs cut from the current budget, money for wage negotiations and for such increased operating costs as a \$54,000 hike in Blue Cross-Blue Shield premiums, Prisk said.

Expenditures this year will come to \$15.5 million, he reported, with the schools ending the year about \$100,000 in debt.

To operate schools next year just as they are now would require \$16 million, Prisk said. This would restore more of the \$400,000 cut this year by eliminating some athletic activities, some music and art consultants and by shortening work periods for counselors and librarians.

It also would not include any salary increases beyond routine increments for teachers and automatic step-ups for maintenance help.

If the district "reduced its sights somewhat" and whittled the projected \$17 million to \$16.8 million, Prisk said, the additional 4.5 mills would represent the difference between the reduced budget and anticipated state and local revenue.

**PRISK ESTIMATED** state aid would bring in roughly \$5.5 million and local taxes \$9.5 million, leaving the district about \$1.8 million short. An additional 4.5 mills would bring in about \$1.4 million, he said.

"I'm no miracle worker, but if I can save, I will," Prisk declared.

"The facts before us clearly indicate that the known revenue as of this date, will fall significantly short of anticipated expenditures for continuation of the present educational program," Dr. Smith said in a statement read to the board.

"There are four very important variables over which we have little control," he went on.

"One is the revenue which comes from the tax levy determined by the county allocation board. This levy has not been set but there is a strong indication that the school allocation may be reduced by a half-mill.

"The second revenue item is the state aid resource," Dr. Smith continued. "The news from the Legislature does not give any encouragement for substantial help from that source."

**THE TWO VARIABLES** on the expenditure side, Dr. Smith said, are the inflationary increases in supplies, materials and services purchased outside the district and "cost of operation which is related to collective bargaining privileges."

"The board of education has the responsibility to plan for the resources to carry on the quality of education which the community expects," Dr. Smith's statement added.

"It is in line with this responsibility that the board now presents to the community the only action which is plausible, that of increased operational support of the general education budget."

Continued on Page 4A



**FIRST MEETING**--Melody Dotson, 16-month-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Dotson of Farmington, doesn't look overly excited about her first meeting with the Easter Bunny (John Finerty). Melody met Bunny at the annual Easter Egg Hunt held Saturday morning by the Farmington Area Jaycees in City Park. (Fran Evert photo)



**HEAD START**--The small fry were given a head start to collect goodies before the older children were turned loose at the Easter Egg Hunt Saturday in Chatham Hills subdivision. (Evert photo)



**BOOTY DISCOVERED** -- Tommy Ellis watches big sister Linda Ellis pluck an Easter egg off the grass during the Easter Egg Hunt held Saturday afternoon for residents of Chatham Hills subdivision in the City of Farmington. (Fran Evert photo)



**THE SCRAMBLE**--A mass of youngsters, assisted by anxious parents, scrambled in all directions when released at the annual Easter

Egg Hunt held in City Park on Shiawassee Saturday morning under sponsorship of the Farmington Area Jaycees. (Evert photo)

## City May Hike Tax

By EMORY DANIELS increased only by \$16,850 over the current budget.

Operating costs may hit the \$1 million mark during 1971-72 for the first time in the history of the City of Farmington, and it is expected to require an extra one-half mill levy to reach that peak.

The budget drawn by City Manager John Dinan was proposed to the City Council Monday night for review and adoption before May 17.

DINAN'S proposed budget shows a need for \$51,000 more operating funds than what is currently budgeted.

The extra \$51,000 would be raised, if Dinan's suggestions are followed, through an increase in the city's participation in the city's hospitalization insurance plan for a levy of \$9 per \$1,000 equalized valuation.

A home valued at \$20,000 and assessed at \$10,000 would pay an additional \$90 in city taxes in 1972 if the extra half mill is approved.

**THE CAUSE** for the increased budget was attributed by Dinan to the difference between the city's projected 11,000 population for 1970 and the 1970 census figure of 10,090.

The difference between city projections and the Census Bureau's count, Dinan explains, represents an accumulation over two fiscal year periods of a loss of \$50,000 in state returns.

Dinan speculates that the Census Bureau, when it finalizes the preliminary count, may come closer to the city's projected population and thus avert the necessity of the tax rate increase.

**AN ACCOUNTING** change in the budget switches \$37,000 from the traffic safety grant, previously set up as accounts receivable, to an operational cost.

If the accounting method for the federal grant remained the same, Dinan reports, the income would have

Dinan described his proposal as an austere budget with an increase in actual expenditures of less than 2%.

The city levied 12 mills in 1960; 11 in 1967-68; 10 in 1969; 9 in 1970 and 8.5 in 1971. The city's estimated taxable base for 1971-72 is \$59 million.

**PAY INCREASES** for city employees will range from 7-9% during the next year, Dinan adds.

In addition, the city's share in the retirement system for employees will increase by 33%, and the city's hospitalization insurance participation will increase by more than 15%.

The proposed budget tightens up on capital outlays with departments being told to spend less for equipment for the coming year.

One budgeted expansion is \$11,000 in improvements to the Drake Road Park including fencing, bleachers, parking lot, restrooms, storage building, picnic tables and outdoor barbecues.

The public safety department has been restricted to replacement of existing police vehicles and purchase of 1,100 feet of fire hose.

The public works department was limited to replacing a dump truck and purchase of a used Jeep and mower, truck radios, garage hoist and a new salt spreader.

"Each year it becomes more difficult to operate within the framework of a stable tax rate," concludes Dinan. "We consider this a very austere budget and one that does not provide for any reserves or capital improvements of any major consequence."

The council received the proposed budget without comment Monday night but at a future meeting will establish a public hearing date.

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