

## ON THE AGENDA

Below are highlights from the agendas of meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

**Farmington Hills City Council**  
Farmington Hills City Hall  
474-6115  
7:30 p.m. Monday, May 9

Council chambers  
Agenda items include:  
■ Consideration of adoption of resolution regarding State Revenue Sharing.

■ Consideration of possible options for language of alternative ballot questions concerning arena bonding proposition or early Parks and Recreation renewal.  
■ Consideration of naming Mercy Center.

■ Consideration of possible ballot question for August 1994 primary ballot concerning amendment of city charter to provide for direct election of mayor. (requested by councilman Sever).

■ Consideration of approval of request to transfer liquor license with dance, outdoor service and Sunday sales permits located at 32350 W. Eight Mile (Clancy's Bar and Grill) from Burton-Charest Co. to Sandra Klaus Enterprises, Inc.

■ Consideration of final approval of preliminary plat for Pinecreek subdivision, Section 25, on the south side of 10 Mile east of Middlebelt.

## 9th-graders play with proposed budget

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington Public School District has a budget ninth-graders can play with.

For the first time in three years, the proposed \$101 million school budget for 1994-95 calls for additional sports programs.

The budget was presented at the Farmington Board of Education meeting May 3.

A public hearing will take place at 6:15 p.m. Tuesday, May 17, at the Lewis Schulman Center, Shalwassee and Farmington roads. The board can adopt the budget June 7.

Ninth-grade athletics would be restored under the budget covering July 1 through June 1995. They were cut in 1992 to cope with the loss of money after state aid recapture.

Money allotted for additional programs also include: seventh-grade team teaching, Reading Re-

covery, replacement of high school computer labs and high school building management. New programs will cost \$800,000.

Those additions make up less than one percent in what amounts to a 14-percent increase in spending.

A bulk of the increase is due to the state shifting FICA and employee pensions (\$4.8 million) into the school districts.

Also, the rise in spending is affected by putting building and site expenditures (\$3.5 million) into the general fund. Building and site projects were paid from allocated millages, which were eliminated with the passage of Proposal A.

Another factor in the spending increase is \$3 million allocated for additional staff to handle more students coming into the district.

"It's a whole new world," said assistant superintendent for Finance Bruce Barrett.

From now on, Farmington schools will look to Lansing.

Last year, state aid made up only 2 percent of revenue as Farmington was an out-of-formula district. Most of the money came from local millages voted on by homeowners.

With Proposal A passing, though, which cut local property taxes, Farmington schools will count on the state supplying 60 percent of revenue. The district is now in-formula.

Other money, approximately 47 percent, will come from property tax through hold harmless mills.

With state control of finances comes curriculum and building improvement mandates. Districts must comply or be fined up to 5 percent of state aid, Barrett said.

"If you compare where we are today compared to July through September last year when I was

popping Tums, we had no outlook," Barrett said.

"Only on Christmas Eve in a marathon session were we saved. It was only a few months after that before we could get a handle on what happened."

Board members don't sound relieved.

Already, there's an \$800 million gap in state expenditures and revenue. Another \$304 million in lost revenue is possible through pending legislation.

The state is providing money to districts to offset FICA and employee pensions costs this year. Next year is uncertain.

Trustee Helen Prutow said she remembers when Farmington was an in-formula district during the early 1970s. The state didn't have enough money then, she said.

"I haven't seen anything that they will fund this fully," Prutow said. "That frightens me."

## DDA brews up ways to keep residents informed

By LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington residents who want the lowdown on downtown might now find the process easier.

For starters, the Downtown Development Authority had meetings agendas available and coffee brewing for visitors at its May 3 gathering at Farmington City Hall.

That was in response to a resident's complaint at the April DDA meeting that the sessions are not "user-friendly," citing the lack of agendas and an offer of coffee as examples.

Seldom do more than three residents attend the 8 a.m. meetings

on the first Tuesday of each month. Starting time is considered one reason why.

"The more people know about some of the things that are going on, the more people feel they are being informed," said DDA director Judy Downey. "We want to keep people informed. We feel we have a lot of positive things going on."

DDA people know that includes more than a pot of coffee and a handy agenda.

Evening informational forums have been scheduled for those who can't make it to the morning meetings. The first one is set for 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 14, in council chambers.

The DDA has also started publishing a monthly newsletter, which is being sent to merchants and city commissions. Copies are available in city hall.

The April edition brings people up to date on new businesses downtown such as Mrs. Lovell's Tea Cozy, a women's lingerie shop called Touch of Romance, and Carnival Shoes.

Also included in the green sheet is news about street and sidewalk improvements in the district, as well as promotions. Some 18 promotions are scheduled year-round for downtown, Downey said.

A new Summer Concert Series

begins 7:30-9 p.m. Fridays, June 17 through July 22, in the Pergola Gazebo near Farmington Place on Grand River. A planned mini-prize go-cart race has been rescheduled for Aug. 14.

Downey said residents can also call her office if they have questions or concerns. She said starting time of the 8 a.m. business meetings is not likely to change.

"I think in the morning, and justifiably so, many people have to go to work," Downey said. "So do the people who volunteer to serve on the board. We try to have the meetings before the stores open so the merchants can come to the meeting."

## 2 years later, life sentence still looms in drug case

By BILL COLTANT  
STAFF WRITER

More than two years after his arrest on drug charges, a Walled Lake man faces charges in Oakland County Circuit Court for drug dealing.

Gordon Erickman, 43, was bound over by 4th District Court Judge Fred Harris on charges of possession with intent to deliver more than 650 grams of cocaine. If

convicted, he could face a mandatory life sentence with no parole.

Erickman had originally been arrested on March 20, 1992, and charged with buying almost a kilogram of cocaine during a Oakland County Narcotics Enforcement Team sting operation.

Hills police detective Pat Monti testified at Erickman's preliminary examination Friday that Erickman had paged him four dif-

ferent times and negotiated a drug deal of \$22,000 for the drugs, which police had obtained from the Wayne County Sheriff's Department where they were evidence in another case.

Erickman's attorney, Larry Kalutny, asked Monti if police had tried to pressure his client into buying the drugs.

"No," Monti testified. "In fact I told him that if he didn't like the

price, not to call me again."

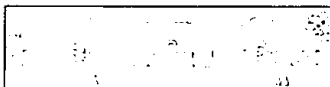
Monti said Erickman drove a white van to the Clarion Inn parking lot on 12 Mile to make the deal at about 7 p.m. Monti said Erickman gave him cash in a shaving kit in exchange for the drugs.

Erickman remains in custody in the Oakland County Jail after failing to make the \$1 million bond. He will be arraigned at 8:30 a.m. on May 18 in 6th Circuit Court before Judge Robert Temp-

lin. Oakland County assistant prosecutor Reid Rose said the Michigan Supreme Court's ruling striking down the life sentence for the state's "650 law" only applies to possession. Erickman is being charged with delivery, which still carries a life sentence.

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- Item No. 9402: Looking for a place to rent or someone to share an apartment with? Get a listing of our rental classifieds. Cost: \$5.95.
- Item No. 9700: Collectibles: Auction sales, Antiques crafts, rummage sales. Cost: \$5.95
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- Associated Press news - local and national.
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