

Resident says city's out of line on budget

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

The Farmington City Council adopted a \$5.8 million budget for 1994-95 and its accompanying 0.24-mill tax increase Monday, but not without one resident giving his two cents in protest.

Fairview resident Frank Valencio said he's tired of tax increases, no matter how small. The increase passed amounts to \$12 a year more in city tax for someone who owns a \$100,000 home.

City officials say the nearly quarter-mill is needed to partially offset a 1.16-percent increase in

spending to pay for the same level of services. A mill is \$1 for every \$1,000 of state equalized value of property.

"When is this going to stop?" Valencio asked during the public hearing on the budget Monday. "I have never heard the City Council say no to the city manager... It's always yes, yes, yes."

Councilman Richard Tupper noted that it's the first tax increase in four years, and the council has held spending in that time. Added Tupper: "I don't recall you coming here and thanking us for

that."

Said Valencio: "You got my vote."

The 0.24-mill increase puts the city tax rate at 13.91 mills, which includes 3.62 mills in debt service.

With the increase, Farmington still ranks below the Oakland County average of 14.97 mills. Revenue generated from the tax increase won't cover anticipated spending costs, though.

That prompted Farmington resident Bill Liba to ask if the city will need to dip into its

reserves to pay the rest. City Manager Frank Lauff said it will, for \$80,000.

"I don't know where you can cut," said Liba, defending the city's action. "You can't cut salaries. You can't cut fringe benefits... Where are you going to cut?"

Councilwoman Jo Anne McShane said she understood Valencio's concerns, but with rising costs such as health care, there's no other choice.

"What we have to do something like this, it's a difficult action to take," McShane said.

Public can put 2 cents in on Hills budget

By BILL COUTANT
STAFF WRITER

The public will have its say about the proposed 1994-95 Farmington Hills budget at Monday's regular meeting.

City manager Bill Costick said the final budget request will have few changes from the original request.

The city's final request will be to levy 9.1409 mills to pay for current operations that include few additions from last year's budget. The city would roll up the tax rate from the 9.0649-mill rate of last year.

That would translate to .076 additional mills or an additional

7.6 cents per \$1,000 of state equalized value on property in the city. That would change if the SEV on a given property were to change.

Even with only the 3.9 percent proposed increase, the city will be adding a police officer, authorizing, although the city council has not yet approved, a \$12,000 computer system to link the newly formed commission on children, youth and families to volunteer service agencies in the area; increasing its contribution to the Farmington Advisory Council by \$15,290; increasing library services (\$43,700), paying for an additional zoning inspector

(\$24,500), paying for more public relations (\$15,000); adding more subpoena service (\$9,000); increasing parks maintenance (\$50,000) and budgeting an additional \$33,000 for paid-on-call firefighters because of an increased number of calls.

An additional \$200,000 will go for computerized voting equipment as well. And there will be \$375,000 budgeted for sidewalk

improvements in the city.

The \$50,000 for the new school liaison officer will come from the capital improvement fund, and will not be part of the increase, Costick said.

The new budget includes about \$200,000 for an expansion of the department of public works garage. It also includes \$800,000 to complete the 12 Mile Boulevard between Drake and Halsted.

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