

# Arena rates, times OK'd

BY BILL COUTANT  
STAFF WRITER

Although it took months of planning, research and a campaign to convince voters that an ice arena was a good idea, the battle is not over.

The Farmington Hills City Council unanimously approved an ice rental rate and a tentative schedule, but not without some disagreement over who will skate when. And after two new members were appointed to the Ice Arena Advisory Committee representing the Farmington Hills Hockey Association, two other members said they were concerned that whatever influence they had on behalf of figure skaters and other groups had been crippled.

"What we fear is that we'll have a hockey arena," said Nancy Rice, who represents figure skaters on the committee.

Rice and fellow figure skater Susan McKendrick were joined by Councilman Larry Lichtman in their concern that putting two members of the hockey association, which will be the arena's largest user group in terms of time and members, would be a conflict of interest.

"You have a conflict of interest when they (hockey association) represent both the seller and

buyer of ice time," Lichtman said.

But Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi said that since the hockey association will be the largest renter of prime-time ice (\$145 an hour), has done the most work in organizing and recruiting for youth hockey and has the most expertise and direct affiliation with youth hockey, having representatives on the committee makes sense.

"It's an advisory committee (to the city council) only," Vagnozzi said. "We make the final decisions."

Councilman Jon Grant agreed, pointing out that the council had directed arena manager Gerald Nelson to amend the tentative schedule to include more after school and evening hour skating for teens.

"They (hockey association) belong on the committee," he said. "They are not a self-seeking interest. They are working for Farmington Hills kids."

The council approved the rate schedule of \$145 an hour from prime-time ice use (4 a.m. to 12 a.m. Monday to Friday and 5 a.m. to midnight Saturday and Sunday), \$120 for non-prime time along with rates for individuals, shift hockey and senior hockey.

Councilwoman Cheryl Oliverio made it clear that the schedule

did not include enough times for open skating for teens and others, especially after school and in the evening.

"This schedule doesn't really accommodate kids, especially with single or working parents who can't come another time," she said. "This arena is for the community."

Nelson said he would adjust the schedule for two afternoon and two evenings to accommodate youth programs.

After rejecting a proposal made by committee member Byron Siegel that would allow Detroit Country Day to contract ice time for its hockey team at prime-time rates, the council directed Nelson to tell the school, and if possible, work out an arrangement whereby the school could use the arena at unbooked morning hours for practice.

The council appointed Mike Hand and John Davidson of the Farmington Hills Hockey Association to the Ice Arena Advisory Committee.

The council also made it clear that the resident rate would apply only to Farmington Hills and not Farmington.

"Our taxpayers are the ones supporting the arena," Lichtman said.

## City law has dogs by the leash

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER

Shilawassee Park has gone to the dogs — literally. And the tail has the city manager wagging a leash ordinance.

City Manager Frank Lauhoff was granted approval by the Farmington City Council to follow through with a leash law at Shilawassee Park.

Dogs are running around unattended, Lauhoff said. The problem has increased with the warmer weather.

"The park is for everybody," Lauhoff said. "If people are not going to be courteous and let their

dogs run loose . . . and frighten people out of there, something needs to be done."

Owners would be fined anywhere from \$50 to \$75 in the yet-to-be-amended ordinance. A leash law would be easy to enforce, Lauhoff said.

Unlike Heritage Park in Farmington Hills, dogs are allowed in Shilawassee Park. The city does have an ordinance that requires owners to pick up after their dogs.

"And they're not doing that," Lauhoff said.

As a result, people are slipping around and finding it difficult to picnic.

The city is renovating the comfort station and adding a concession stand this summer.

Also, the city has applied for a \$47,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. If received, the money would pay for new volleyball courts and improvements to tennis courts and the parking lot.

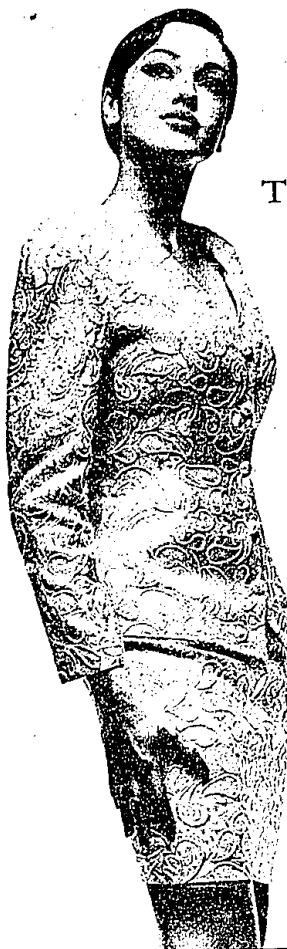
A leash ordinance will be unpopular with some, Lauhoff said.

"They say no one else is down there," Lauhoff said. "When you pull up and see three or four dogs running loose, you're not going to get out of your car."

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