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THE

Observer & Eccentric

NEWSPAPERS

Diversity from page 1A

Such guidelines would also establish a procedure in responding to isolated racially-motivated incidents. Community support was overwhelming after the home of an African-American family in Farmington Hills was vandalized last May.

That's evidence of how awareness has grown during the past five years, officials said.

"We shouldn't rest on our laurels," said Hills Mayor Aldo Vaccaro. "I think the next 10 years we'll either continue to progress or go the other way. We got to keep working at it."

Along with the how, officials discussed who should be involved. A more diverse group is needed to manage it, they said.

Civic leaders have driven multicultural efforts. Evolving beyond that core group has been the problem, though.

"Sometimes you sit with a group at a table and say, 'What's wrong with this picture?'" said Farmington Schools' Trustees Cathy Webb. "We're not diversely represented."

Realtors are key, said Farmington Councilman Bill Hartsock. School board President Joe Svoke suggested service organizations should be included, too.

"What I see here is a small segment of our community and not the broad scope of it," Svoke said.

Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield brought up the topic, saying the community needs something of a "manifesto" to buy into.

Cleveland Heights has succeeded because officials there have used community building strategies rather than focusing on differences, they said. The multicultural council will try to tap into that theme.

Mylena Carr of the Multicultural Council sounded up to the task. She was pleased with the support from officials.

"The hard part?" Carr asked rhetorically. "The hard part is if we didn't already have this down the line."

Bouchard from page 1A

Bouchard said she's spoken to Superintendent Bob Maxfield about the situation.

A few years ago, the district began sending newsletters by first class to West Bloomfield instead of bulk mail because of the delay.

Her interest in Farmington schools and education extends beyond those concerns, she said.

"I think I come from a different perspective," Bouchard said. "I think there are some kids who are falling through the cracks . . . I think there are those kids who don't have a category. They're just your average kids."

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