

Haven seeks financial help from city

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

A representative from an Oakland County domestic abuse shelter made a plea for money from Farmington City Council. But council members said the city's pockets are empty.

Kevin Walker of Haven made the request during a public hearing on the city's application to Community Development Block Grant Program Monday. A public hearing is required before council submits the application to Oakland County.

If approved, the city would use the allo-

cated \$32,570 for senior citizen programs. The money would be spent on interior improvements, as well as buy a TV, VCR, slide projector and furniture for the Senior Center.

Walker asked the city to contribute \$2,000 to Haven's domestic abuse prevention and shelter programs.

A lack of funding has led to recent cutbacks at the agency, including the lay-off of two counselors, Walker said.

"Haven needs to help to close those gaps," he said.

Councilwoman Mary Bush said that though the program is worthy, she wasn't sure if Haven fit the criteria of block pro-

gram, which requires the primary beneficiaries to be low or moderate income people.

"I'm not sure everyone they (Haven) serve falls within that category," Bush said.

People who have the financial resources don't need to use Haven, Walker said.

"We tend to see low- to moderate-income people taking advantage of our services," Walker said. "This is the last place they have."

The agency has a sliding fee scale for its services.

"We have some clients slipping 50 cents inside an envelope," he said.

Haven, which receives United Way funding and government grants, provided emergency shelter for 344 women and 496 children last year. The agency offers counseling to victims of sexual assault, child abuse and domestic violence.

Mayor Jo Anne McShane said she supports Haven's efforts and offered to participate in any fund-raiser for the non-profit organization.

"We're pulled in so many directions with seniors and the teen center," McShane said. "We have everyone who wants a bit of the small piece of pie we can dish out."

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