

AGENDAS

Farmington Hills City Council
City Hall, 474-8115
7:30 p.m. Monday, Feb. 9

ing membership in the Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative (MUSEC) and participation in Cooperative Purchase Program.
■ Approve sale of Parkhill Property.
■ Award critical bids for Dunkle Middle School and North Farmington High School.

Special Joint Meeting
Farmington School Board
Farmington City Council
and
Farmington Hills City Council
7:30 p.m. Feb. 12
Farmington Training Center
33000 Thomas Street,
Farmington

Agenda items include:
■ An update from the Multi-cultural/Multiracial Community Council by Jim Hall and Karen Bolson, Co-Chairs.

■ A celebration of collaborative efforts: Where We Are and Where We're Going.

■ Reports on Preventing Teen Substance Use and Abuse by Estralee Michaelson, safe and drug free school coordinator.

■ Reports on Community-wide efforts to prevent negative behavior by youth by Don Cowan, executive director of Instructional and Student Services.

■ Reports on Youth and Family/ Warner School Model by Todd Lipp, Youth and Family Services director.

■ An overview of School District Facility Enhancement Projects.

■ Sister Cities Project.

Agenda items include:
■ Consider request for tax abatement from Robert Bosch Corporation.

■ Consider criteria for approval of an industrial development hearing on tax abatement.

■ Public hearing on establishing industrial development district on property of Robert Bosch Corporation, 38000 Hills Tech Drive.

■ Public hearing to consider approval of industrial facilities exemption certificate for property of Robert Bosch Corporation.

■ Consider approval of new and: reappointments to the boards and commissions.

■ City manager report on transmittal of Farmington Hills Mobility Study.

■ Consider approval of Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project Grant Service Agreement.

Farmington School Board
Regular Meeting
7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 10
at the Lewis Schulman Administration Building
32500 Shilohwasee, Farmington

Agenda items include:
■ Approve Elementary Study Committee recommendations.

■ Approve Educare Program continuation.

■ Approve School-to-Work Grant Award.

■ Approve resolution authorizing

Elementary shifts face board

BY TOM SMITH

STAFF WRITER

Finding extra planning time for teachers is the key component of a comprehensive elementary education restructuring plan to be decided Tuesday night by the Farmington Board of Education.

But innovations such as multiple classrooms and bringing first, second and third graders into "companion schools" stand little chance of becoming reality anytime soon, even though both could be agreed to in theory as part of the plan.

Cathy Webb, school board vice president, said all or part of a special committee's recommendations could be adopted in theory at Tuesday's meeting, set for 7:30 p.m. at the Lewis Schulman Administration Building. She stressed that individual schools will have the power to determine which components best fit their needs.

Concurring was Lanigan Elementary Principal Marva Turner, who chaired a sub-committee on planning and collaboration

time.

"Schools will have the option to look at the total plan and move forward with what they're comfortable with," Turner said.

"... There's no mandate. But there is an expectation schools will look at the plan and much their (existing) improvement plan."

Some of the other subcommittees making up the study included those for technology, assessment, enrichment, core curriculum and the multi-grade classroom companion school concept (which ranked at the bottom of the teacher survey).

Turner said board approval Tuesday could prompt implementation of parts of the research-driven plan in 1998-99.

"Once it's approved, as early as the fall, you'll see schools looking at the plan and see where they can go with it," Turner said.

'Schools will have the option to look at the total plan and move forward with what they're comfortable with.'

Marva Turner
—principal, Lanigan School

many elementary teachers in the district.

During the board's Feb. 3 meeting, a report by Assistant Superintendent Judith White said nearly 60 percent of the district's elementary teachers participated in a survey to gain their response to the overall plan.

By and large, their input was consistent with the findings of the 70-member special elementary education study committee, chaired by Hillsdale Elementary School Principal Jan Colliton.

"The big one for us is time for planning, research and collaboration," White said to board

"Bits of it are already cropping up."

The Mission 2007 recommendations, more than three years in the making, apparently have the blessing of

members. "That's the number one priority. We need to develop, plan and figure out a way to get this time."

For time shifts to take place, however, employee union groups will need to agree contractually. Farmington Education Association President Tom Chranowski is a backer of the elementary study and finding more time for employees to do better jobs. He also was part of the planning/consultation time sub-committee.

Chranowski, during last week's meeting, said he was "delighted our staff was given an opportunity for their input" toward creating a "blueprint for many years to come."

Webb said: "Time is the major issue and challenge facing our school district in everything we want to do. I am very optimistic we will come to a good solution on how to make more time in our day for teacher and administrative planning time."

The willing participation of employee groups will be a plus during those efforts, she emphasized.

DDA raises business loan limit to \$50,000

BY LARRY O'CONNOR

STAFF WRITER

A sum of \$25,000 just doesn't buy what it used to.

With that in mind, the Farmington Downtown Development Authority is doubling the amount business owners can borrow — to \$50,000 — from its loan program with MetroBank. DDA members voted the change at its monthly meeting Feb. 2.

The program is intended to help new or existing businesses with partially subsidized loans. Borrowed money is used for start up costs such as signs or renovations.

"What it's going to allow them to do is a more thorough project," said DDA trustee Robert Heinrich, Metro Bank president, "which is what we encourage them to do."

Businesses are interested in

applying in the program, said DDA Executive Director Judy Downey.

A downtown attorney wants to use loan money to renovate the interior of his office and found the cost was \$40,000 — \$15,000 more than he could borrow through the program.

The DDA has \$2,000 in its annual budget to cover interest subsidies. Raising the limit is not expected to overwhelm the

fund, Downey said.

So far, the authority has issued three loans: Eyo Spy Eye Care, Farmington Bakery and Attorney Richard Wilmering.

"In reality, \$25,000 doesn't do much these days," DDA trustee Jody Soronen said.

The DDA subsidizes 1 percent of the interest while MetroBank covers another half-percent on the loans, which are granted at 1 percent over the prime rate.

Council date change

The Farmington City Council will next meet at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 17, instead of the previously scheduled date of Monday, Feb. 16, due to scheduling conflicts among some of the council members, said City Manager Frank Lauhoff.

The meeting will still be held at council chambers, 23600 Liberty Street.

NOTABLES

Peace Corps position

Jeffrey Sanchez of Farmington Hills has accepted a position with the Peace Corps. He departed for Paraguay for training on Feb. 3. Sanchez graduated from the University of Michigan in 1997 with a bachelor's degree in

chemical engineering.

As an environmental sanitation volunteer, Sanchez's work will include striving to improve the sanitary waste disposal systems, the protection of portable water supplies and the prevention of parasites.

Hills property taxes due by Feb. 17

The City of Farmington Hills winter property taxes must be paid on or before Tuesday, Feb. 17.

All late payments will incur a 4 percent penalty charge. Residents may pay their taxes

at the Treasurer's Office in Farmington Hills City Hall. However, city hall will be closed on Monday, Feb. 16, in honor of Presidents' Day.

For more information, please call 473-9552.

Farmington Observer
Published every Sunday and Thursday by Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Farmington, MI 48335-0915. Periodic postage paid at Farmington, MI 48335-0915. Postmaster: Send address changes to Observer & Eccentric, Farmington MI 48335-0915. Telephone 474-1100.

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