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expansion was "another promise made and another promise kept."

In his opening remarks, Oliverio recalled that the mayor told him at the last debate to put up or shut up. "She wants to take us down fantasy lane, so I've got to respond," he said.

Oliverio said he supports the youth program, but said an honest accounting of attendance is required. "It's incredible. It's claimed to be a national model despite no proof it works."

Of the \$4.5 million borrowed by the city from the water fund to pay for 11 Pines, Oliverio said, "I would never have taken money from the water fund to put a down payment on a golf course when people's basements are flooding."

Council candidates speak

In the forum devoted to council candidates, the challengers tended to stress a need for fresh ideas, while the three incumbents stressed council's record.

Councilman Jerry Ellis, seeking re-election, asked, "Before voting for a challenger, what are their new ideas? I haven't heard any. Only Cheryl, Jon and I have proven records."

Ellis related his accomplishments during his public service and said 11 Pines "was acquired to keep it out of the hands of developers, to be used specifically as a golf course." He said golf course fees are needed to pay for the land buy.

Challenger Randy Bruce touted his experience as city zoning board chairman, and laid into the incumbent elite: "One must understand that when you're dependent on each other financially and politically, there's a loss of representation for citizens."

Jess Elson talked about his experience dealing with small and large businesses as president of the Michigan Promotional Products Association.

He said some park area should be set aside for a dog park, because dogs need exercise and resident dog owners want it. He suggested community service workers could clean up unsightly buildings on Eight Mile Road, if business owners approved.

"I've been listening to the voices in our community," he said.

Jon Grant stressed his service with a variety of community organizations, saying this is a valuable connection to the council. He supports controlled development, senior and youth programs, maintaining open space and sound fiscal judgment.

Ken Massey related his background as a former paramedic, as president of the Old Homestead Homeowner's Association, and as a scientist trained in critical evaluation. Massey said he stood for "advocacy, accountability and respect for our environment."

He said the council needs to maintain open space while pursuing redevelopment, and 11 Pines should accommodate recreation uses residents want, like hiking and biking trails.

Oliverio said that to buy 11 Pines, council had to choose to borrow (from the water fund) or

raise taxes. We made the right decision. She said the current council has not raised taxes. "People can come and talk to me about anything. I have the ability to look at all aspects of a problem."

Robert Monroe Webster, a former Army intelligence officer, said the Hill council "should have business savvy comparable to any Fortune 500 company."

"I work for a Fortune 500," he said, adding that such leadership is important to "increase your Farmington Hills stock."

Webster said his training helped prepare him "to catch the things that need to be caught by the legislative arm...to maintain homegrown government." On 11 Pines, Webster said there has been debate and a decision needs to be made, "so we can move on to the next issue."

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three days. Wednesday's audience included about a dozen people, many of whom were board members or had volunteered.

"By all accounts, everywhere we went and everybody we talked to, we did a pretty good job," Stark said, adding, "Financially, it was very successful. We have a starting point we haven't had in a number of years (for the 2002 festival)."

That will give the board opportunities to improve and enhance the event, said festival director Suzanne Lichtman, who was hired in February.

"Now that I have a year under my belt, we can identify things we have to have for the festival...specific components," she said.

The board is close to signing an agreement with Suzanne and Gary Lichtman to run the 2002

event. Gary Lichtman said one important change has already been made, in contracting with a different firm to provide portable toilets, which weren't emptied or removed promptly.

Stark said the "Ox Roast" tent, Art on the Grand and "The Magical History Tour" hosted by Brian Golden all went better than expected. Lichtman said she approached the bands and sound technicians about lowering the volume, an issue that will be addressed next year.

Golden said 214 people took his tour, which meandered past historic sites in Farmington and Farmington Hills, ending at the Governor Warner Mansion on Grand River.

"More people wanted to take the tour, and I had to turn them away," he said. He hopes to expand the hours for the tour or the size of the buses next year.

Golden and others with the historical commission are also interested in doing something similar to the Dickens Festival in Holly, where costumed volunteers mingle with festival-goers and perform or provide historical information.

Parade chairperson Dick Tupper asked whether the board could come up with a parade budget earlier in the year, so his committee could book acts that perform for a fee. Stark expected the financial planning to be done later this year.

Other proposed improvements include pursuit of a dedicated festival line with multiple voice mail boxes for various aspects of the event and better coordinating all events and activities through the festival office.

To help sponsor or volunteer, visit the festival Web site, www.foundersfestival.org

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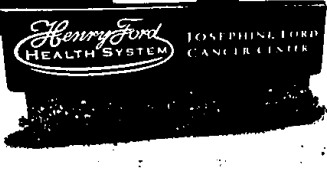

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