

Rules Do Apply to Politics

We're happy to see that the incorporation campaign is picking up its pace in Farmington Township.

We aren't happy to see some of the tactics and attitudes, however.

Three fact examples:

- The fact that the Holly Hills Farm Civic Association scheduled a discussion on the matter, but neglected to invite any of the proponents of the issue. Representatives of the Committee for the Preservation of Farmington Township, Inc. reportedly made their points and added to their sum score. Why not hear both sides of the question?
- The fact that representatives of the Committee refused to speak at the Briar Hills Civic Association on the theory that there would be many open meetings on the subject.
- The fact that the Vote No on incorporation signs carries the slogan "Save Our Schools". We don't like the innuendoes from both sides that financial gain is the only reason for the other side's position, either. If they think this is so, then prove it.

Holly Hills doesn't deserve any bouquets for its handling of the discussion. But why would the committee consent to speak to that group and not to the residents of Briar Hills? Don't both have an equally important interest and stake in the election?

As for the "Save Our Schools" slogan it must be pointed out again that the Farmington School District is completely separate from the local government, units. Its finances and elections are separate.

In addition to that the school district includes the City, part of the Township (excepting the southeastern corner), and a portion of West Bloomfield. So whether or not Farmington Township is incorporated into a home rule city is academic as far as affecting the schools.

We know that the answer to this is "That's politics." We don't agree.

Public Property, Keep Out!

Who owns public records?

The public, naturally.

Does a hired superintendent, city manager, township supervisor, or mayor own certain records?

Yes, if they pay for them out of their own pockets.

Does the city council, the township board, or the school board own certain records?

Yes, if board members pay for them with their own money.

Do citizens own public records?

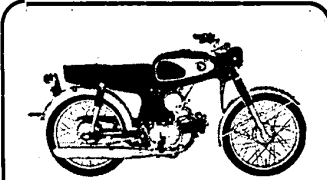
Yes, if they pay for them out of their own pockets which they do through their taxes.

These questions are raised because there is a strong tendency for public agencies to consider many public documents not available for public scrutiny.

Two examples of this have shown up in the past several weeks.

Supt. Ben Yates of the Livonia Public Schools refused to supply a copy of a letterhead memorandum for the school district by the school's attorney.

Did Yates pay for this opinion himself? Did the school board?



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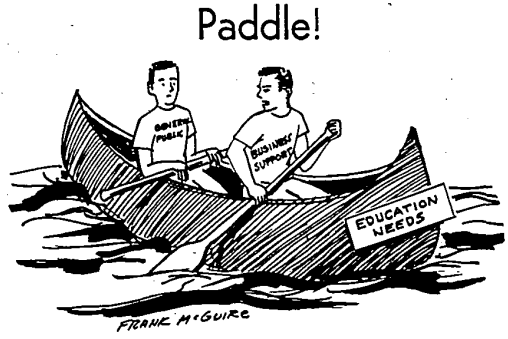
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The Reader Speaks Up:

Points for Incorporation

Editor:

Several, probably well-meaning, but nevertheless, misguided individuals have recently formed a propaganda organization called the "Committee for the Preservation of Farmington Township, Inc." which somehow immediately found enough money to print and circulate letters to the residents of Farmington Township attempting to scare them away from voting in favor of considering the "Committee for the Preservation of Farmington Township, Inc." as a home rule city.

These people are misguided by two officers and one director who are probably concerned about losing income from jobs that they, or their spouses hold with two villages that are included in the incorporation. It is a little hard to understand why these scare tactics are being used? Is it any wonder that in this propaganda letter they stated, "I question."

Unlike the promoters of incorporation we will not pretend to be objective. We stand to lose nothing if we do not.

I think it is time that these people are unmasked and some very basic truths are made known to the people of Farmington Township who can decide the issue of home rule intelligently, and without the scare tactics, such as "loss of jobs" and "loss of income" which have happened to taxes in Livonia when they incorporated - type of false reasoning.

First of all, these are basic facts about incorporation:

1. If the vote is "YES" for incorporation, this does not mean that a city is formed. It only means that the charter commission members, who are elected at the same time, draft a charter and present it to the people for approval. A city is not formed until a charter is approved by a majority vote of the people at another election.
2. Tax limitations must be included in any city charter. This means that all the people will have the right to say what the tax limit will be in any new city.
3. The charter can also limit the amount and type of services that the city can give and can be drafted to preserve the rural type atmosphere which has brought, and is continually attracting, high class people, businesses and light industry to our area.

Only a city can protect its territory from being grabbed piecemeal by other cities, or from being cut out from within by small special interest groups. When an area is not a city, only the people who live in the area to be annexed or incorporated have a right to question. When it is a city, all the people must vote their approval.

One of the members of this committee, (David Milby), has been publicly misleading our citizenry by claiming that people in the Township have voted against annexation to the City of Farmington "at every such annexation election in the past." The truth is that two of four such elections have succeeded, and the last one that failed (November 1965), did so by only 25 votes.

Even the title of this group, the "Committee for the Preservation of Farmington Township, Inc." is most misleading. There are only two things that voting against a home rule city can preserve - they are:

1. The vulnerability of our area to becoming another Nankin Township where surrounding tax producing industrial areas have absorbed the good and left it looking like a gerry-mandered fugitive from the poor house.
2. The vulnerability of our area to becoming another Royal Oak Township where total incorporation failed and then small incorporations resulted in

Observing the Scene...

By MYRA CHANDLER

Never in the history of a school election have so many high-powered groups been behind an increase in millage. The Livonia Chamber of Commerce, City Council, Human Relations Council, League of Women Voters - have all passed resolutions acknowledging the fact to continue properly educating Livonia School District's 30,145 kids, an additional five mills is needed now.

All of these groups - and more. But what about the parents? I have had more arguments with friends who are parents and are against the millage. They don't want to pay more taxes - not another cent, let alone 35 or 40 dollars a year - no matter how many in their family.

There is one active couple I know - intelligent, interested in their community, with two bright young children. They have fly-specked the budget right out the window.

They want the school district to get along on the money it has, regardless of what has to be cut - and they are highly suspicious about careless spending - but without fact. One thing they do not want is to be repudiated with facts.

The hard fact is they have two children the law says they must educate and it costs money to do it.

My sympathy is with them in the fact they are young, are broke, want vacations, maintain two cars, have a nice home and garden, want to go to dinner, enjoy nice clothes and position in the community. All of this costs money - but the responsibility of educating their child is an obligation - real - like time and tide.

The time has come for legislators in Lansing to face the crisis that is upon us in the suburbs - stop paying expedient politics and supporting the fact faces of earning school money - fiscal reform.

The only legislator to come up with a concrete plan is Senator William Robinson from Dearborn. He has received little support for his 23 dollars over the State tax bill. So it may not be the key to the gate of heaven - but just who in Lansing has suggested anything lately for relief - not one. Personally I think Senator Robinson should be commended, particularly in view of the fact his own district would be one that would be paying more than they do now. But he saw the problem and tried to do something about it.

The Human Relations Council in Livonia is sponsoring a panel this Sunday night at Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church at 9 p.m. with legislators to discuss a change in taxation in Lansing and what the prospect may be. It should be an interesting panel to ask questions. Besides Senator Robinson, Representative Marvin Stempfen from Livonia and State Representative Raymond Baker from Farmington will be present.

In addition to tax reform, it behooves all school boards in the suburban area to think about changing their way of life. It doesn't say anything in the Bible or in the Constitution of the United States that schools can't continue on a 12 month basis - it doesn't say schools can't be run on a 15 hour swing shift day - WE MUST USE OUR SCHOOLS MORE EFFECTIVELY. People with young families might jump on this band wagon and help change the habits of the old thinking. They can do it.

Tribute should be paid this week to the most unique endowment ever to come to Livonia. When the businessmen of the City of Livonia - most of whom do not live there to reap the benefits, but do pay taxes - when these men, through their Chamber of Commerce, say we need the additional five mills - this is a miracle.

This must call for recognition.

Remember they are not looking at 40 dollars a year like most of us, but thousands of dollars. Their feeling is summed up in part of their statement: "We cannot as (business) citizens refuse to accept the responsibility for maintaining the level of service required by the only means currently at our disposal. We must provide the means to maintain this service in the community."

Can we as parents do less?

Let's Get Going With I-96

After reviewing the Observer's news article concerning the proposed 1966 freeway route, I've concluded that we stop haggling and proceed with the Livonia citizens, or a poll taken by this newspaper, would provide our Mayor and Council-Freeway along the eastern boundary of Schoolcraft College in this matter.

This route will cost \$65 million less, will not affect Schoolcraft's present plant, and allows the college to proceed with its planned expansion program.

The City's argument that the freeway route, east of the college campus, would separate a portion of the city, seems ridiculous. Does the same argument hold true for the freeway's east-west route which separates the northern and southern portions of the city? Actually, Hines Drive which is similar, also divides members a portion of Livonia with no adverse effects, that I am aware of.

Our city officials also suggest it is a disadvantage having the

proposed route going through a future development of custom-built homes. On the contrary, they are to be a blessing. It provides some of the "open space" that so many of our recent candidates advocated.

With the help of additional letters from Livonia citizens, or a poll taken by this newspaper, would provide our Mayor and Council-Freeway along the eastern boundary of Schoolcraft College in this matter.

J. LEVINE  
Livonia  
Ed. Note: Will take a poll in next week's issue.

Thanks to Mayor

We wish to express our thanks to Mayor Ed Frech and to the city councilmen for their prompt and just action on the amendment pertaining to unlicensed vehicle behind while they are serving their cities with honor.

ED ADJUT  
Garden City V.F.W.

Student's Plea

In regard to the proposed millage increase; I would like to take the opportunity to express my opinions as a student interested in higher education. A five mill increase would permit us, and future students, to keep the present high standard of education we have in Livonia.

The defeat would mean half days for elementary schools, no sponsored activities for any child from high school to elementary.

It would like to point out that if a child has to walk to school isn't that dangerous? Isn't it worth a few dollars to prevent the loss of one life?

JAN DRISCOLL  
Livonia

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