

the farmington enterprise & observer

YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Wednesday, October 24, 1973 • 15¢ a Copy

The Hills' First Manager Looks Ahead

By DAN MCCOSH

George L. Majors is an old hand at new cities. Farmington Hills' new city manager, after two weeks on the job, sees some of the challenges and problems of the new city taking shape from his perspective. Although cityhood is new for Farmington Hills, it is the third time Majors has been the first to sit at a city manager's desk. He comes to Farmington

Hills from Webster Groves, Mo. "It's sort of the Grosse Pointe of St. Louis area," he said. "Webster Groves is completely built up, and in the '60s and '30s it was the place to live in St. Louis." Majors, 41, graduated with a degree in civil engineering from the University of Michigan in 1964. He received a masters of public administration degree in 1965. He worked with the U.S.

Navy on a road-building program in the service, and with the Michigan Municipal League as a graduate intern while completing his graduate degree. In contrast to his previous job, where he faced "middle aged city" problems of urban renewal, traffic control and maintenance, Farmington Hills didn't even have a seat or a nameplate for the new manager when he attended his first council meeting. Roads are the top priority

he sees for the new city, but he doesn't expect a crash program. "First we need to get a DPW head, someone capable of organizing the department," Majors said. Setting up a DPW department would entail a careful study of equipment and manpower needs, the first thing the new DPW chief would be expected to do. He anticipates the new city doing at least some of its

own road work by next summer. County contracting will handle street repair in the meantime. "I was used to a comprehensive recreation program," he said, referring to the 250 part-time recreation employees which he used to supervise in Webster Groves. He said his initial impression is that Farmington Hills doesn't have the recreational

demands, mainly because so many families provide it for themselves. But at a personal level, one of his first moves was to enroll his three sons in the Junior Hockey Assn. He found they had to go to Westland for their games. "A lot of the work of a city manager doesn't have much interest for the general public," he continued. He complimented Robert McConnell, who was township supervisor before the in-

corporation, on establishing good office procedures. He expected to continue modernizing the office routines, getting monthly cash balance reports and establishing a cash investment program. A similar change in Webster Groves added about 20 per cent to the interest from cash balances, he said. "I think a city manager should feel when he leaves a city it is a little better than it was before he came."



GEORGE L. MAJORS

White Motor Finance Package Approved By Hills Council

By DAN MCCOSH

A new research facility planned for Farmington Hills by White Motor Corp. may be the first local industry to be financed under industrial development bonds. The city council narrowly approved the proposal Monday. The financing arrangement would finance the purchase and expansion of the old Star Cutter plant for White. The municipal bonds are exempt from federal income tax, which gives White a lower interest rate. A 45-day waiting period is still necessary before the deal becomes final.

A petition from five per cent of the voters in Farmington Hills would make a referendum necessary on the issue, according to Stratton Brown, attorney for Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, representing White. The council split on the issue. With Mayor Robert McConnell, councilmen Earl Oppenheimer, Joan Dudley and Keith Deacon favoring the idea. "While William Ortman, Margaret Schaeffer and Frederick Lichtman voiced opposition, Lichtman was the only one moved to put his feelings on record as a "no"

vote. The other two abstained. Attorney Brown explained the financial arrangement to the council. The Star Cutter property, already purchased by White for \$1.1 million, would be refinanced along with approximately \$1.2 million in improvements. The city would approve the sale of \$2.3 million in municipal revenue bonds, which would be backed by the company, not the faith and credit of the city. The property title would go to the city, and it would then be leased back to White. When the bond issue is paid

off, White would then be given title to the property for a "nominal fee." Similar transactions were authorized by the state in 1963 and upheld in the courts in 1966, according to Brown. The benefit to the company is a reduction of interest rates on the financing, from approximately eight per cent to six per cent, reflecting the tax-exempt bonds, according to John Curran, vice president of White. The savings are about \$40,000 per year for the company. Lichtman argued the conditions outlined in the state act did not appear to be met.

Preserving tax base, adding pollution control equipment, and attracting employment to the area were the main reasons listed in the act for issuing bonds. Lichtman pointed out since the facility already exists, taxes were being collected, and the jobs would be mainly transfers from other locations, not new positions. B.F. Dittman, president of White's advanced products division, said eventually about 200 research people would be employed in the division. Russ Gilbert, chairman of Farmington's industrial development committee, said

"Eventually we will have to offer something like this to attract industry." He added, "We won't be deluging the council with these requests - we will be screening them. Only AAA industries will be considered." During the discussion, Curran said White was prepared to relocate elsewhere if the financing couldn't be arranged. Later he indicated White had never entered into a similar deal in its international operation, although revenue bonds were being considered in for a new plant in Utah.



FARMINGTON HIGH homecoming queen was Terri Kibbey, picked before Farmington beat Livonia Stevenson at the Friday afternoon football game. (Photo by Ralph Evert)



FARMINGTON FLOAT--The juniors dumped the seniors with this winning float at the Farmington High homecoming. (Evert photo)

Developer Is Denied Zoning Change Hearing

A zoning request from Pulte Homes for a 200-acre planned residential development was unanimously turned down by the Farmington Hills council Monday. The developer, John Shaheen, was asking for a public hearing after a denial by the planning commission. Shaheen wanted 50 acres zoned for multiple family use (RC-1), with the remainder zoned as "PRD-1". The developer was proposing 1,350 units - townhouses surrounded by single-family homes in a single, massive development. Shaheen said the rezoning of a portion of the parcel was necessary to increase the density of the total project. The density was needed to make the large amount of open space incorporated in the design feasible. The planning commission recommended "PRD-1" for the entire area.

He Always Wanted To Be A Policeman

By KATHY MORAN

Carl Swanderski has done what a lot of people wish they had the courage to do. He took a 50 per cent cut in salary to switch careers in midstream. Swanderski, who is 39 and married with two children, decided that life is too short to be trapped in an unsatisfying career. So two months ago he left his \$20,000 a year management job at Ford Motor Co. and took one as a police officer in Farmington. "I felt that if you weren't completely satisfied with what you are doing and life is so short, you might as well do something you enjoy and want to do," he said. "Since I did it, I've had more people come up to me and say 'I can't believe you did it. I wish I had had the guts to do it years ago.'" Swanderski's interest in police work goes back several years. He was accepted for the Pennsylvania state police when he was 21 but was put on a waiting list for training. Before his name came up on the list, he moved to Michigan and was trained in management at Henry Ford Community College. He worked more than eight years as supervisor of finishing operations in Ford's steel division in the Rouge plant until he decided that "I didn't get any self-satisfaction out of the job." For the last four years, Swanderski has been a civilian volunteer in Farmington's police auxiliary where he was available for



CARL SWANDERSKI

special assignments and spent at least two four-hour shifts riding in a police car each month. "I really enjoy this type of work," he said. "It wasn't like I jumped into an area which I wasn't familiar with. After being in the auxiliary for four years I understood what the job was about." His wife agreed "100 per cent" with his decision to make police work his full time position, even though it meant cutting back their budget and living on a salary of \$9,200. It meant that they "can't afford the luxuries we were able to afford before," he said. "The fortunate thing for us is that we're not in debt except for the house." "But where there's a will, there's a way," he added. "I couldn't have done this without my wife's support." As a police recruit, Swanderski attended Oakland Police Academy for two months until he graduated Friday. That meant late night studying and limited time for his family. In addition, his wife, Patricia, typed his work for him. "My wife knows as much about law as I do after typing my notes," he said. Swanderski was elected president of his 36-member class and narrowly missed winning the trophy in shooting after getting 244 shots of 250 in the center of a target. The winner had 245. Swanderski began his police work in Farmington this week and will be studying local ordinances and practices for the next few weeks. He's excited about his new career, Swanderski said. "In a sense you are helping people. I think it will be satisfying."



HARRISON HIGH named Jan Larson homecoming queen during halftime of the game with Plymouth-Canton. (Photo by Ralph Evert)



HARRISON FLOAT--The junior class put together the winning float at the Harrison High homecoming. (Evert photo)

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Jaycees Hold Haunted House

Farmington area Jaycees will hold their sixth annual haunted house at 3374 W. 14 Mile Road from Oct. 24 through Oct. 30. The old farm house with ghosts, skeletons, witches and ghouls will be open from 6:30-10:30 p.m. weekdays and from 1-10 p.m. on weekends. The admission donation is 35 cents per person.