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Farmington board argues residents' interest in schools

By SUSAN AVERILL

It wasn't so much a question of whether to have a millage election, but "when and how much" which was discussed at the Farmington school board's study session on the 1975-76 budget and millage needs.

Although board Vice President William Corliss seemed resigned to defeat, other members were still willing to put up a fight.

Supt. Marinus VanAmejde said it would take at least an additional two mills to keep the system at its present level and prevent the closing of two schools and cutbacks in personnel and programs.

"All that does is maintain our present level. If we don't maintain that level, it will cost us even more to catch up," he said.

"It is necessary to make some prearrangements on opening schools next year—either with or without that millage," he said.

One of the necessary prearrangements includes advising teachers 60 days prior to the end of the school year if they are not to be rehired.

In order to bring the school system to the 1972-73 level of operation, an additional two mills would be needed, Business Manager William Prisk estimated. The 1971-72 level would require the levy of one and one half mills beyond that, he said.

Board Vice President William Corliss was not optimistic about the outcome of a millage election.

"I THINK there's another option we should be considering and that's no mills," he said. "In 1974, we asked for an increase of 1.6 mills twice. We were turned down twice, during a period of relative prosperity.

'I think it's an exercise in futility to ask these people to educate their children adequately.'

--Corliss

"I think it's an exercise in futility to ask these people to educate their children adequately," he said.

Although Corliss seemed resigned to millage defeat, other board members were still willing to put up a fight.

"We shouldn't assume people are going to say yes and then do our budgeting. We should give the people a chance to say no," said Trustee Anne Struble.

Board President Gary Lichtman agreed, but said he wanted to give the people only one chance.

"One time is all I want to ask—I do not want to ask twice. It costs us dollars to run a special election, when we have one already scheduled for June. I don't feel that I want to keep coming back until you people finally say yes," Lichtman said.

A JUNE ELECTION would be more likely to draw yes votes than an April election, partially because of the proximity of the federal income tax return date, he said.

School board elections are scheduled June 10.

Also discussed was the possibility of a ballot design which would allow the voter to vote for different millage increments.

The suggested ballot would ask a two-mill increase, with a request for another mill or two as a side issue.

Special millage vote proposed by board

"On a Tuesday, as late as possible, but as far from the June election as required, and no earlier than April 15" was the date set aside by the Farmington Board of Education Tuesday night for the next millage election.

A precise date was not fixed, as school officials were not sure whether a time period of 30 or 45 days was necessary between the millage election and the June school board elections.

Policy and procedure of building use was presented by Business Manager William Prisk.

"It has been the staff's intent and purpose to encourage the use of the school building by the community and to keep charges, when necessary, to the absolute minimum to recover only additional expense incurred by the district," Prisk said.

WHERE AND HOW activities are scheduled will affect the charge made to the organization using the facilities.

"If an activity can be scheduled so that it falls within the existing work schedules, and so that no additional custodial help is required, then no charge is made.

"If the activity must be scheduled so that additional custodial time is required, then a charge is made only for the amount of the additional expense," Prisk said.

The charge is prorated if two or more groups are scheduled during the same custodial time, he said.

Charges have been made for 180 permit-seekers during the 1974-75 school years, including one-time as well as multiple uses covered by one permit.

Labor rate for custodial and cafeteria workers during these times are revised annually to reflect current contract agreements, according to Prisk.

Prisk also reported an acquisition of \$11,712 in gifts for the school system during the present school year.

A QUARTERLY report given by Betty Arnold and Greg Young of the Farmington Area Advisory Council (FAAC) revealed a sharp upswing in the number of counseling contacts.

Police and school referrals were partially responsible for the trend, Young said.

A University of Michigan graduate student, an Oakland University student and a Livonia teacher with a masters in guidance and counseling

have joined the FAAC in efforts to help area youth.

A REQUEST for consolidation of the two FAAC facilities and a request for additional space at Cloverdale School for special education operations caused the board to charge Prisk with finding a greater, more permanent space for the FAAC.

Consideration to move a portable building to the Ten Mile Elementary School playground for the FAAC was scratched when objections were raised that playground area would be drastically reduced.

"Besides, the cost of moving the portable would now be \$3,500 or \$4,000," Prisk said.

In other action, the board voted to sell a 1968, 36-passenger bus to the Stoney Creek Free Will Baptist Church for \$280.

Four buses remain for sale, but no further action on their disposal will be taken until spring.

That's part of the reason we have two librarians at North Farmington High School, to keep our accreditation."

With the projected reductions, the district will be barely within the requirements, he said.

Also mentioned were previously made budget cuts for secondary schools, including two librarians, reading services, textbooks, extra-curricular activities, drivers education, field trips, vocal and in-

struction.

"We're at the bare edge of the North Central accreditation," said Lewis

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Basketball can't be all that serious, at least not for this group of elementary school students. They are enjoying one of the lighter moments at an area basketball clash. (Photographed by Craig Newman)

City gains interest on investment in unit

FARMINGTON — The city is getting more than its share of time from a federally-funded undercover police unit.

The unit, less than a year old, is a cooperative effort of the Farmington, Farmington Hills and Livonia police departments.

In the annual operations report to the city, Farmington Police Capt. Daniel Byrnes said that during the first six months the unit operated, the department received 12 per cent of the total manhours. According to the funds invested by the city, it is entitled to only nine per cent of the man hours.

That figure doubled in October. November and December when the city received 18 per cent of the unit's time.

"THERE can be little doubt that this community is receiving the most direct benefit from this program in addition to indirectly benefiting from the activities of the unit in other communities."

The unit sets up long-term surveillance to deal mainly with cases involving armed robbery, burglary and auto theft.

The unit was organized in May, but it didn't begin operating until July.

One officer is from Farmington, with the remainder of the 11-man unit coming from the other two departments.

"AS THESE men were all patrol officers from the three departments involved with no prior training in surveillance work, much of the first three months of operation were spent developing the necessary expertise to carry out their assignment," Byrnes said.

"In addition, they were hampered by delays in vehicle and equipment deliveries."

(Despite the start-up problems, the unit has made 42 arrests during the last three months of 1974, he said.

"When reviewing arrests it must be remembered that this is a specialized unit created to impact major crimes and spectacular arrest totals cannot be expected as much of their time is spent on surveillance of suspects involved in these crimes."

"Often many hours will be spent watching a suspect without results as the suspect is not currently active in criminal activity or at least not while being watched by the saturation unit," he said.

IN OTHER police department action, Byrnes said that the department logged a 14 per cent reduction in patrol time. He attributed this to the increased workload calls for service and officer leaves.

Over the past five years, we have decreased the number of patrol hours by 5,470 hours or 31 per cent, he said.

"As the community and surrounding areas continue to develop and grow, future demands on department operations can be expected to reduce patrol hours even more," he said. "The reduction in preventive patrol time will undoubtedly have some effect on our ability to deter the criminal element operating within the community."

In 1974 the department beefed up the public safety auxiliaries to 23 men.

THAT UNIT contributed nearly 6,500 hours to patrol assignments, training and volunteer fire program.

The unit also assisted at the Founders' Festival.

Ten men from the auxiliary formed a volunteer fire unit. The men were trained and equipped with fire gear and Plectron alerting units.

Since becoming operational in July, the men have responded to three fires in the city. The unit has now decreased to eight men.

In 1974, the department responded to 97 fire calls. This is a 21 per cent increase over 1973.

Largest increases were in residential and vehicle fires, Byrnes said.

Fire losses jumped from \$56,282 to \$148,643. Twenty-five per cent of the fires were extinguished by patrols prior to the arrival of pumpers.

Police department shows marked increase in crime

FARMINGTON — The police department logged a marked increase in crime in 1974.

In an annual report to be presented to the city council Monday night, the police department reported a 13 per cent increase in crimes, including armed robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny of more than \$50 and auto theft.

Aside from armed robbery, which showed a 100 per cent increase when it jumped from three to six incidents, the greatest increase (34 per cent) was reported in burglary.

Larceny showed an 11 per cent jump, aggravated assault, an eight per cent increase and auto theft a seven per cent hike.

The report also indicates that there was a nine percent jump in a category which includes fraud, malicious destruction of property, sex offenses, drunk driving and liquor violations. Offenses of a minor nature and calls for service were up three per cent.

IN A LETTER which accompanies the report, Capt. Daniel Byrnes said that adult arrests decreased six per cent as a result of a 64 per cent reduction in drug arrests. The department has a policy of releasing young adults and first offenders arrested with a small quantity of drugs to their parents without charge.

There was, however, a five per cent increase in juvenile arrests. Byrnes attributes this to an increase in liquor violations.

"Juvenile involvement with liquor is more prevalent today due to the lowering of the age of majority and the ease with which most juveniles can get an 18-year-old to purchase for them."

"I think we can safely say that this type of violations can be expected to increase in the future," he said.

Traffic accidents dropped two per cent. There were no fatalities recorded.

Byrnes said that there was a 51 per cent decrease in injury accidents and a 48 per cent decrease in the number of persons injured. Of the persons injured, only seven had serious injuries, he said.

"These figures represent a 'substantial change' over last year and is probably the result of the reduction of the maximum speed limit and increased traffic congestion of main streets tends to slow traffic, he said.

"DRIVERS SLOWING down on expressways also tend to slow down on surface streets," he said. "Speed is usually a contributing factor in accidents and is always a contributing factor to injuries and the severity of those injuries."

"While increased traffic contributes to an increase in property damage accidents, it also decreases injury accidents due to slower speeds that motorists are forced to drive."

He said that in 1974, patrol officers issued 15 per cent more hazardous moving violations and arrested 11 per cent more drunk drivers.

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May shut 2 schools

Cuts peril accreditation

Farmington Junior High School and an elementary school may be closed next year and several teachers and programs will have to be trimmed from the budget in order for the school system to make ends meet without an increase in taxes.

These announcements and a list of cuts were made at a study session held Monday night to review budget reductions and millage needs. Business Manager William Prisk estimated that nearly two additional mills will be needed to keep the system at its present level.

Secondary school days would be reduced by one period of instruction (45 minutes), leaving the senior highs with five periods per day and the junior highs with six periods.

Thirty secondary teaching positions will be eliminated, including a principal, assistant principal, librarian and resource personnel.

Additional cuts may be made in the B-1 (extra-curricular) schedule, which includes athletics and some music and art.

On the elementary level, 34 teaching positions, a principal, assistant principal, and custodial staff will be lopped from the budget. The number of reading specialists will be cut from 12 to four, who will have to cover four buildings.

ACCREDITATION for the schools is also threatened.

"We're at the bare edge of the North Central accreditation," said Lewis

Schulman, assistant superintendent of secondary education.

"That's part of the reason we have two librarians at North Farmington High School, to keep our accreditation."

With the projected reductions, the district will be barely within the requirements, he said.

Also mentioned were previously made budget cuts for secondary schools, including two librarians, reading services, textbooks, extra-curricular activities, drivers education, field trips, vocal and in-

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