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Fifteen Cents



Bored meeting

Bud Pickett of Farmington Hills looks a little tired after sitting through the board of education meeting Tuesday night. Pickett and a dozen other people listened to the board discuss plans for the upcoming school year. (Photo by Craig Newman)

Board sifts budget for possible excess

FARMINGTON—Added costs in utilities and contractual items, together with this year's deficit of \$80,000, have left the Farmington school board with a tentative budget tagged with a \$130,000 deficit.

Board members sifted through the budget Tuesday night to find areas where allotments could be decreased. State law prohibits school districts from adopting a budget with a deficit.

Discussion centered around girls' athletics, hiring of additional teachers, expanded athletics, and outdoor education.

Business manager William Frisk said the district will have a deficit of nearly \$80,000 at the close of the year. This amount is reduced from an earlier projection of \$97,000.

Frisk attributed the savings to reduced expenditures in contracted services and replacement equipment. However, much of the actual reduction was offset by the increase in the cost of utilities and necessary supplies and services.

"WE EXPECT OTHER increased costs in the areas of heat, light and other utilities," Frisk said. "Our hospitalization plan will cost us about \$120,000 more than we budgeted, but our bargaining units may decide to accept less and we could reduce it to \$80,000."

compensation is not going to renew their contract which expires at the end of this school year. The district is seeking a new carrier.

Much of the discussion involved athletics, specifically girls' sports which board members felt had been largely ignored.

"No girls basketball again—this is hard to believe," said board trustee Anne Struble.

However, Farmington High School will have girls' basketball next year. The course will not be in addition to the regular curriculum, for the girls are giving up gymnastics to do it.

Farmington High will be the only high school offering the course. Both Harrison High School and North Farmington High School have decided to keep their girls' gymnastics instead.

Supt. Marius VanAmeyde responded to criticism that the administration is dragging its heels on girls sports.

"We have more activities for girls than most any other high school in the state of Michigan. If a girl is proficient enough, she can try out for the boys' basketball team."

BOARD PRESIDENT Gary Lichtman turned the discussion away from girls' versus boys' athletics to a strict view of the district's financial capability.

not the thing. We're not talking about apples and apples here, we're talking about apples and oranges.

"I'm not sure we have the right prerogative and obligation to think of additions. We have the right prerogative and obligation to get back to what we had then," Lichtman said.

The stern view on money uncovered other problems for the proposed athletic budget.

"It appears we have an expanded athletic budget here," board vice president William Cortis said. While the money was allotted on the basis of what was available during the 1973-74 school year, Cortis said he saw several discrepancies.

The tentative athletic budget had been prepared on the basis of money allotted it during the 1973-74 year. Part of that money, however, had been emergency funds granted by the board to continue several athletic programs which had unexpectedly run short.

By including that money in figuring next year's percentage allotment, the board would be committed automatically to giving the athletic department the additional money.

BY DOING SO, several board members, including Cortis and board secretary Emma Mahren, said they might be slighting the music depart-

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Arts Council denied designation

Hills may form new arts commission

By WYLAIE GERDES

FARMINGTON HILLS—A new commission, rather than the Farmington Community Arts Council, apparently will be Farmington Hills' official representative in the arts field.

Joseph T. Brennan, city attorney, will meet with an ad hoc committee of residents to propose a new commission. Brennan objected to a format proposed by the ad hoc committee because it was a private non-profit corporation. City councilmen agreed.

Mayor Frederick Lichtman led opposition to naming the arts council

the official representative of Farmington Hills in arts matters. The arts council had asked for the designation so it could apply for federal and state grants for arts, Lichtman said.

"THE ONLY reason the city got into this was this private non-profit organization came to the city and wanted a budget," Lichtman said. The arts council asked for \$1,800, he said.

Whether Farmington Hills can endorse a private organization and whether money should be given are the questions, Lichtman said. "A commission, unlike a private

non-profit organization, would be accountable within the practices of the community," Lichtman said. That includes auditing of its books and general administration.

The arts council would not be needed if a commission is created, the mayor added. The council now acts as a broker to funnel funds from the grants to different organizations.

"You don't need any intermediate broker between the grant and the organization," Lichtman said.

If the arts council wants to continue as a private organization, he added, it

shouldn't come here asking us to fund them."

Whether the arts council continues to exist is up to its members, Brennan said.

"IT'S ENTIRELY to be decided by the people who originated the council."

A commission could continue to work closely with the arts council, Brennan said. The arts council would be much like the Friends of Belle Isle or the Detroit Institute of Arts Founders Society, he said. They are "inter-

ested groups of citizens who wish to support... a city department."

Alternatives available are to contract with a private group to perform certain services, or create an arts commission, Brennan said. Farmington Hills contracts with the Farmington Area Advisory Council (FAAC), for example, to provide consulting services.

CONTRACTING would be more difficult with the arts, Brennan said, because of the more diverse program. The city would be "much better off creating an arts commission."

Councilman Mrs. Joan Dudley said the ad hoc committee needs legal advice to create the commission. The committee "blew it" because of lack of legal advice, she said.

"Actually there is no way for them (arts council) to receive financial recognition from us," she said.

The city attorneys of Farmington and Farmington Hills should meet with the committee, Councilman Robert McConnell said. The problem is that federal and state grants for the arts could come to the community if official recognition is given to a body.

By CORINNE ARATT

If Michigan Bell's ears were ringing Tuesday night, it was no accident. The company's proposed rate hike and charges of 20 cents for the fourth directory call per month were the subject of a public hearing held on the Oakland Community College-Orchard Ridge campus.

Administrative Law Judge William Austin and Michigan Public Service Commissioners Lenon Skulthorp and William Ralls conducted the hearing.

For a while, though, it looked like a continuation of the Sunday evening Lou Gordon show.

Gordon had promised his viewers he would personally attend the hear-

ing and challenge company executives by citing economic inequities.

The promise produced a half-mile long traffic jam at the campus entrance and a standing-room-only audience.

GORDON'S FOLLOWERS cheered him as he lashed out at Bell executives who have free telephone and long distance service, the money which the company takes out of the state and gives to AT&T, the parent company; an executive investment plan in which Bell pays half of every dollar invested; and what Gordon labeled "the wild squandering of taxpayer's money."

He questioned the increase in the number of Bell executives making

over \$40,000 per year—from 34 in 1973 to 94 by the end of last year. He compared this to Detroit Edison's 22 executives in the same salary bracket and Consumers' Power with 21.

There was loud applause as he mentioned pay to the millionaire members of the company's board of directors (industrialist Max Fisher and retailer Joseph L. Hudson Jr. were specifically mentioned) had been doubled since 1973.

Gordon went after the three main Public Service Commission, and particularly Chairman William Rosenberg, who was not present. He alluded to "wheeling and dealing" between the company and certain commissioners and produced a list of 15 private meetings.

The proposed 30 cent charge for information calls was another Gordon gripe. Many who followed him to the microphone complained about the same thing.

Gordon told the three-man panel that a person would need 37 phone books to avoid calling for numbers in the 313 area code district.

Ralls answered Gordon. "It is our obligation to respond to every question you have raised this evening on economic matters."

Later in the hearing he said he would follow up on the questions raised with a public forum in Lansing.

Lynn Ehrlich, Westland school teacher and energy spokesman for Consumers Alliance, demanded the Public Service Commission open their public hearings and publicize them so more people can be heard.

"A WEEK AGO at a similar meet-



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Most of the audience at the Michigan Public Service Commission's hearing on a Michigan Bell rate increase came to complain. The audience overflowed an Orchard Ridge meeting room in Farmington Hills.