

Trustees' credibility faces crucial testing

By STEVE BARNABY
Farmington Observer

See Crackerbarrel Debate, 12A

The Farmington School District risks defeat of its request for a 24-mill increase next month because of diminishing credibility among residents.

That's the word board members got this week from Mrs. Beatrice Keener, a member of the recently formed Citizens Reaction Committee. In her presentation, Mrs. Keener said she was speaking for herself and not as a committee spokesman.

The committee was appointed by the school board to study future school closings. The board already has voted to close Farmington Junior High School for the 1976-77 school year.

"Both the administration and the board show too little concern for their own commitments—and therefore their own credibility," Mrs. Keener told the board members.

"This very lack of credibility is what leads to public suspension of responsibility and public backlash at millage time," she said.

MRS. KEENER'S discontent was based on what she says is a lack of planning by the board. She said she has been told by her committee by the board, public confusion on what schools might be closed and board actions which seemed to force the committee into "rubber stamping" administration recommendations.

"For the board to be so politically naive as not to recognize the danger to the children of this district which lie in public dis-

trust seems insensible of the duties of a school board," she said.

The committee, which first met on May 10, has been requested to have its recommendations turned into the board by May 28, an inadequate time to make sound recommendations, said Mrs. Keener.

Originally, the board had requested the committee's recommendation by July 1.

"Either two-and-a-half-weeks or seven-and-a-half-weeks compared to one-year of study appears to me to be setting up the committee to be a rubber stamp of the administration proposed by the very lack of time in which to research the proposals thoroughly," she said.

The administration has been studying the proposal for one year before making its recommendations to the board. The committee's limited time, said Mrs. Keener, disallows the opportunity for "independent" proposals.

The board appeared to be going against its commitments in considering, as an option the transfer of former Bond school students from Woodcrest to another school, she said.

"It's my own personal opinion that neither the committee nor the administration is inclined to recommend that particular change."

Nevertheless, the fact that the administration included it in the proposals and the fact that the board referred them intact to

the committee is the basis for the second problem (credibility), I see," she said.

At the time of the Bond student transfers, two years ago, the board said those children starting in the first grade would be able to continue through the sixth grade at Woodcrest, according to Mrs. Keener.

BESIDES INSUFFICIENT time, the committee lacks needed information to make the decisions requested, she said.

Committee members were without the recent demographic study, costs of repair work for schools in question, busing costs and costs savings in closing schools.

"It appears to me that the administration hasn't given sufficiently complete study to these matters before making recommendations. I don't understand how it was possible to come up with plans and recommendations without these figures," she said.

"I have to think that, while the administration obviously gave serious thought to neighborhood cohesiveness and patterns of friendship, their conclusions appear to be based on educational theory and gut feelings, rather than upon the proper combination of these and the needed cost data."

Mrs. Keener also would like the board to be better prepared for future cuts in curriculum and building closures.

"A formula should exist, with mechanics for yearly update, in which the order of

possible cuts could be known in advance, could be listed as contingency plans, could be available to voters and the general public."

This would help students to plan, parents to adjust and the board to avoid those all too frequent eleventh hour agonies.

which, in my memory, have occurred nearly every time budgets were planned, deficits discovered and millages forced.



Getting to know you

Sterling Heights Mayor Anthony Dobry (right) discusses the problems of running a city with (from left) Farmington Area Chamber of Commerce President Pete Prokop and Farmington Hill City Clerk Floyd Cairns. Dobry was in town this week for Mayor Exchange Day. A luncheon was conducted at the Roman Terrace (Staff photo)

They're off — 5 file for school board race

Two incumbents are pitted against three newcomers as they vie for two seats on the Farmington Board of Education.

The four-year terms of Board President William Corliss and Secretary Dr. Myron Ross are up for grabs in the June 14 school board election.

Both Ross and Corliss filed for reelection in their previous year, but Corliss was defeated by Monday's deadline.

Joining the race are Bud Pickett, a self-employed manufacturer; agent from the West Bloomfield section of the district, Helen Prutow, president of the community's PTA Council, and Larry Lichtman, the 18-year-old son of Farmington Hill Councilman Fred Lichtman.

CORLISS, 42, of 2340 Wilmarth in Farmington, believes that during his four years on the board, he had been instrumental in improving reading programs in the junior high schools, expanding services for the learning disabled and instituting programs for the academically talented.

"Farmington, as a community, supports its schools and I have actively supported them and I don't regret participating in the election making of the board," Corliss says.

"I am running on a voting record that shows consistent support for expanded and improved education for the young people in the Farmington schools," he continues.

Corliss was elected to his first term on the board in 1972 and has served as vice president, treasurer and president.

He is the owner of a local contracting firm and has spent six years as a manager in the Farmington industrial park. He also is active in federal and state legislative programs and is the Metropolitan Detroit Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors.

Corliss served with the United States Air Force and presently is Deputy Commander for the Michigan Division of the Civil Air Patrol.

He is an 11-year Farmington resident, is married and has three children attending school.

ROSS, 41, of 31152 Carriage Hill in Farmington, believes that in seeking a new superintendent, the district should anticipate a period of adjustment.

"I would like to see more communications and community involvement between the board of education and the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills," Ross explains.

"As a school board member, I'll try to improve these relations because each of the boards could benefit from this cooperation for the betterment of the community," Ross continues.

"I also think we need to increase interest in the Farmington industrial park. I have taken advantage of it in the past," he says.

"There is more need for textbooks in the district and I believe that each student should have a textbook for every class he takes," Ross says, explaining several of issues he will stress in re-election.

Ross was appointed to the board in 1971 to fill a vacancy and in 1972 was elected to a four-year term.

Dr. Ross practices internal medicine in Farmington Hills and is a graduate of the University of Toronto Medical School. He is a member of the Wayne County, Michigan and American Medical associations. He also is a clinical instructor for the Wayne State University Medical School.

He is involved with the chamber of commerce in Farmington. Corliss is a member of the Michigan Association for Children With Learning Disabilities.

He is married and has four children attending school in the district.

MRS. PRUTOW, 25, of 2174 W. Thirteen Mile in Farmington Hills, is running for the board because she wants to have a say in the district's budget cuts.

"I am running for the board because I feel I have something to offer the district," she says.

"I am dedicated to getting residents involved in school policy and I want a say in what will be eliminated from the school budget," Mrs. Prutow says.

"I feel the board and community should lobby more in Lansing. The district and state have to set better priorities and commitments must be met by the state in the area of school funding."

"I like to see the board open up more of its meetings and I feel confident that my community involvement in the PTA and other groups qualifies me to be on the board," she continues.

Mrs. Prutow is a housewife and mother of two sons attending Kentbrook Elementary School.

Her husband, William, is a member of the personnel planning department at Ford Motor Co.

She is a graduate of Coker High School in Detroit and involved in the League of Women Voters, Michigan Association For Children With Learning Disabilities and the Kentbrook Elementary PTA.

She has lived in Farmington Hills for five years.

LIGHTMAN, 18, of 2844 Kensington in Farmington Hills is a graduating senior from North Farmington High School.

"I have experienced everything this school district has to offer. While much of it is good, there are many changes that need to be made," Lichtman says.

"Curriculum changes must be brought about. Students are being seriously short-changed in the area of college preparatory classes."

"Counseling services also are inefficient and need revision. It is not a matter of spending more money, but merely a matter of reorganizing the system," he continues.

Coming right out of school, I have a better conception of where the inadequacies are than anyone presents on the board," he says.

Lichtman will attend the University of Michigan in the fall, but he doesn't see conflict between that and serving as a board member.

He is a life-long resident of the district.

and honor student at North. He was captain of the varsity football team, a member of the track team and the announcer for varsity basketball games.

A three-time district champion in formers he served as president of the senior class.

PICKETT, 44, of 2122 Springdale in West Bloomfield co-chaired the 1975 Kids Coast millage committee and this year's millage renewal election.

"The present has served in an advisory capacity on equipment purchases for the school district."

"I am dedicated to the proposition that all young people are entitled to the best well-rounded education that they are capable of achieving and the district is able to finance," Pickett says.

"We must be responsive to the needs of the students and the community. We must not let the quality of our educational standards decline. At the same time, we must be dedicated to common sense spending of tax funds and the operation of our school district," he continues.

Pickett attended Purdue University and the University of Akron. He has a B.S. in industrial engineering and management.

He also has served as both president and treasurer of the Franklin Valley Association.

Watch out rowdy kids, police are fighting back

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

In Farmington, your age may mean the difference between a warning and a \$150 fine for drinking an alcoholic beverage on public property.

An emergency amendment to the city's alcoholic consumption ordinance was passed by the city council May 17. It prohibits the possession of any opened alcoholic beverage in a vehicle or on public property.

The old ordinance was worded to prohibit consumption in those circumstances

but didn't explicitly rule out possession.

Farmington Public Safety Director Dan Byrnes said the ordinance was used to prevent large gatherings of youths. "I'm talking about persons under 21," he explained.

"There is an amount of discretion in the enforcement of any ordinance. The ordinance is primarily to prohibit large crowds," City Manager Robert Deadman said.

"We've used discretion in the city's parks for years," Byrnes said, explaining that drinking alcohol in the parks was prohibited by a separate ordinance.

"THE ORDINANCE is used to prevent rowdiness," Byrnes explained.

"If someone is at a wedding reception and they stray into the street to say goodbye to someone while holding an alcoholic beverage, we might give them a warning," Byrnes said.

"If we see a party of adults having a reunion in the park and they happen to be drinking an alcoholic beverage, the police officer may look the other way. Home owners said that the use of discretion is a difficult and delicate decision."

The problem faced by police is that crowds of youths tend to congregate in the city's park and parking lots during warm weather to drink.

Citations for possessing alcoholic beverages have controlled youthful gatherings in the park and have prevented the city from contending with the same sort of situation as there is in the Edward Hines Parkway, Byrnes said.

A few years ago, youthful crowds gathered around Green's Restaurant. Police surveillance caused the group to move to the parking lot behind the Stratus.

"We really can't remove them altogether. We cause them to move from place to place," Byrnes explained.

"We aren't giving out warnings behind the Stratus," he said.

THE AMENDMENT was passed to patch up a loophole in the existing law, said city officials.

"OUR PRIME problem in the parks, and under the present ordinance, we have to observe the consumption of alcohol," Byrnes said.

Isabella Houghton dies at 100 years

One of Bedford's oldest citizens, Mrs. Isabella Houghton, died May 14 at the age of 100. Her birthday was April 2.

Mrs. Houghton had been living with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. G. Glad Stuckey of Farmington, but considered Bedford her home.

Mr. and Mrs. George J. Houghton managed a farm until 1919 at corner of Five Mile and Fenwick. The couple was married in 1883 until George's death in 1908.

Interviewed by the Observer & Eccentric last year, Mrs. Houghton said her philosophy was to "live my life one day at a time." At that time, she talked about how the land in this area has changed from rural to residential, but said she welcomed

progressive change and didn't yearn for the past.

Mrs. Houghton is mentioned in the book, "Bedford Township—Its Heritage and History" due to be released the end of May.

She was a lifetime member of the Women's National Farm and Garden Association.

Services were held this week at the McCabe Funeral Home and burial was in Grandview Cemetery.

She is survived by two sons, Raymond and Lester of Farmington Hills; a daughter, Mrs. Gladys (Grace) Stuckey of Farmington; six grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

Ethnic festival sets schedule

A total of 31 acts, drawn from the entire metropolitan area, will be in Farmington tomorrow to provide continuous entertainment during the center's three-day festival, "Gateway to the World."

Simultaneously, 15 ethnic booths will serve food continuously under outdoor tents and imported gifts and hand-crafted articles will fill the house.

MAY 21

6:30 p.m. "The Ventana," an Italian orchestra led by John Smolts with soloists Dino Vale and Maria Louisa Eltero, and an accordion duo from the Modern Accordion Studies.

7 p.m. George Zeff, charmer.

7:15 p.m. "Majadah," belly dancer.

7:30 p.m. Opening ceremonies.

8 p.m. Armenian folk dancers, under the direction of Dorothy Altanian.

8:15 p.m. Ukrainian folk dancers.

MAY 22

1:30 p.m. Latvian singers, "Edoos."

2 p.m. Chinese dancers.

3 p.m. Mexican Pinaria (for children only).

4 p.m. "Sunflowers," an Ukrainian vocal trio.

5 p.m. Middle Eastern dancing and fashion show with Aisha.

5:15 p.m. Middle Eastern dancing with Aisha.

6 p.m. Israeli dancers with Uri Sagal.

6:15 p.m. The Croatian Tambourine Combo.

6:45 p.m. Greek dancers.

7 p.m. The Armenian Folk Dancers.

7:15 p.m. "Starfires," German dancers.

7:30 p.m. "Sarisan," Slovak dancers.

7:45 p.m. "Sisane," Lithuanian dancers.

8 p.m. Ukrainian folk dancers.

MAY 23

2 p.m. Mexican Pinaria (for children only).

2:30 p.m. Shanyu Zedek singing group.

3 p.m. The Celtic Sound.

4 p.m. Polish dancers.

4:30 p.m. "Holjaks," Finnish dancers.

5 p.m. "Sarisan," Slovak dancers.

6 p.m. Croatian Kolo Group Zagreb.

6:30 p.m. Chinese fashion show.

7 p.m. Armenian folk dancers.

8 p.m. Ukrainian folk dancers.

In addition, the festival committee promises a few surprises.

Complete story and more pictures of "Gateway to the World" in this issue's Farmington Life Section.

A nice girl like you
lets only the barest
of bikinis come between
herself and the sun.
A slice of color
with skinny straps by
Bobbie Brooks to
show off sun-glossed
shoulders and a
golden sash of midriff.

Here, the barest little bandeau bikini
in yellow or green, 5.13, \$17. From
a collection, all in nylon. For A Nice
Girl Like You at Hudson's Northland,
Pontiac and Oakland stores.

hudson's

