Sentiments split on fire mergers

By MARY LOU CALLAWAY

Public optimism and private skepticism are greeting preliminary suggestions of consolidating fire departments in a 140-square-mile, seven community area including West Bloomfield Township.

The township, along with Commerce, Wixom, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Novi and Walled Lake, are expected to decide by the end of July whether to hire Public Administration Service Center in Chicago to study the proposal.

Exploring the possibility of combining fire personnel and equipment "hasn't even gotten off the ground yet," according to West Bloomfield Fire Chief Earl Benson.

But Township Supervisor John N. Doherty is enthusiastic about the possibility. He said the seven communities involved have fire protection budgets totalling $1,810,508 for 1976-77.

Purpose of such a merger would be for more efficient and economical service.

Under the current system, Doherty said West Bloomfield firefighters have to pass through Orchard Lake, Keego Harbor and Sylvan Lake, which have their own Tri-City Fire Department, to serve northern areas of the township.

He said duplication of fire stations and equipment now costs thousands of dollars more than an areawide service might. Salaries could also be saved, Doherty thinks, with a sub chief for each community.

Other advantages, he added, could be a larger basis for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and tornado alerts.

SOME OF THE problems, he outlined, would be the need for central dispatching and the diversity of fire department fire structure. Doherty said, "No way I am against more layers of government."

Financing could be handled, he said, on a population and state-equalized-evaluation (SEV) basis.

TRI-CITY FIRE Department personnel said it had not been contacted about the proposal to consolidate.

"We have no problems," said Fire Chief Daniel Miller. "The only thing we might need is another fire station. We have four trucks and a rescue boat. Of our 22 volunteers, we have 12 to 14 men to a run.

"There is no negative attitude among the chiefs," Benson added, "but first we have to see what they can do. I don't think it will save any money."

He asked, "How can it be made fair to all budgets?"

Tri-City Fire Commission Chairman Richard Brown of Orchard Lake said, "We've got a live-wire fire department, but we would be interested in anything that improves fire prevention."

THE WHOLE PROCESS of study and implementation of a merger could take as long as two years, Doherty said, but costs of the study have not even been submitted yet and each municipality will have to consult its board at each step.

The idea itself challenges the traditional provincial attitude of governmental units.

According to one observer, "It'll never happen. Every government wants to control its own department. I've seen this happen before, talk of merging departments.

"If the city managers and supervisors could put aside petty jealousies, it could strenthen the services."

All departments spoke of the cooperation between different units during the March ice storm and tornado in citing examples of how working together can be beneficial.

Humbarger receives naval training

Navy Fireman Recruit Walter J. Humbarger, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Humbarger of 30611 Arnbeth, Farmington, has completed recruit training at the Naval Training Center in Great Lakes, Ill.

He joined the Navy in March 1976.

REPORT OF CONDITION

Consolidating domestic subsidiaries of the

Metropolitan National Bank of Farmington of Farmington Hill, Michican
Name of Bank / City

In the state of Michigan at the close of business on June 30 1976
published in response to call made by Comptroller of the Currency, under title 12, United States Code, Section 161

Charter number 15049 National Bank Region Number

NAME OF BANK: Metropolitan National Bank of Farmington CHARTER NUMBER: 15049

BALANCE SHEET at the close of business on June 30 1976 (month, day, year)

INFORMATION ABOVE LINE NOT TO BE PUBLISHED

Statement of Resources and Liabilities		Thousands of dollars
Cash and due from banks		2,201
U.S. Treasury securities		2,605
Obligations of other U.S. Gov't. agencies and corps		625
Obligations of States and political subdivisions		1,233
Other bonds, notes, and debentures		None
Federal Reserve stock and corporate stock		20
Trading account securities		None
Federal funds sold and securities purchased under agreements to resell		2,400
Loans, Total (excluding unearned income)	14,074	
Less: Reserve for possible loan losses	130	
Loans, Net		13,944
Direct lease financing		None
Bank premises, furniture and fixtures, and other assets representing bank premises		655
Real estate owned other than bank premises		None
Investments in unconsolidated subsidiaries and associated companies		None
Customers' liability to this bank on acceptances outstanding		None
Other assets		135
TOTAL ASSETS		23,818
Demand deposits of individuals, prtnshps., and corps		6,341
Time and savings deposits of individuals, prtnshps., and corps		12,054
Deposits of United States Government		168
Deposits of States and political subdivisions		3,202
Deposits of foreign govts. and official institutions		None
Deposits of commercial banks		None
Certified and officers' checks		376
TOTAL DOMESTIC DEPOSITS		22,141
Total demand deposits	6,975	
Total time and savings deposits	15,166	
Total deposits in foreign offices		None
TOTAL DEPOSITS IN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN OFFICES		None
Federal funds purchased and securities sold		None
under agreements to repurchase		None
Liabilities for borrowed money		None
Mortgage indebtedness		None
Acceptances executed by or for account of this bank and outstanding		None
Other liabilities		241
TOTAL LIABILITIES (excluding subordinated notes and debentures)		22,882
Subordinated notes and debentures		250
Preferred stock a. No. shares outstanding ______ (par value)		None
Common stock a. No. shares authorized ______		
b. No. shares outstanding ______ (par value)		522
Surplus		160
Undivided profits		504
Reserve for contingencies and other capital reserves		None
TOTAL EQUITY CAPITAL		1,186
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY CAPITAL		23,818
Average for 15 or 30 calendar days ending with call date:		
Cash and due from banks		2,156
Fed. funds sold and securities purchased under agreements to resell		2,713
Total loans		14,550
Time deposits of $100,000 or more in domestic offices		3,167
Total deposits		22,485
Fed. funds purchased and securities sold under agreements to repurchase		None
Liabilities for borrowed money		None
Standby letters of credit outstanding		None
Time deposits of $100,000 or more in domestic offices:		
Time certificates of deposit in denominations of $100,000 or more		3,167
Other time deposits in amounts of $100,000 or more		None

I, Edmond O. Dodson (Name)
Sr. Vice President & Cashier (Title)
of the above-named bank do hereby declare that this Report of Condition is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

(Signature)
Edmond O. Dodson
July 6, 1976 (Date)

We, the undersigned directors attest the correctness of this statement of resources and liabilities. We declare that it has been examined by us, and to the best of our knowledge and belief is true and correct.

Thomas A. Duke
Olar H. Henry
William J. Conroy
Directors