

# Candidate Sever endorses conservative fiscal approach

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Sever said. "The majority of the city council has had the authority for four years."

Other financing alternatives should have been considered before council moved ahead with a charter amendment proposal, he said.

Funding should have started five years ago, Sever said. The city, he believes, could accomplish the capital improvements, but now the public lacks confidence in the council.

In any budget year, Sever suggested, council could set aside surplus revenue and earmark it for capital improvements.

Possible sale of the city-owned San Marino Golf Course is an option council should consider as a means of providing revenue to the city for capital improvements, according to Sever.

"I believe last year's (city) budget showed an allocation (to the golf course) of at least \$300,000," Sever said.

Another financing option, offered by Sever, includes allocating money in the city's annual budget to begin development of a new police facility. Sever prefers building a new facility in phases and paid for on an "as-you-go" basis.

Before the August primary, Sever said council had not taken the time to determine if it is cheaper to build in phases rather than paying interest on bonds.

At that time Sever said the police facility would be completed in three phases. The size of the facility could be doubled with a smaller financial commitment.

As another financing method, Sever suggested the development of a plan that "would result in additional funding

from projected new development. All of the planned new development, for example, along 12 Mile Road, should pay a percentage of needed improvements along the thoroughfare. Sever did not suggest how that percentage would be determined.

In addition, Sever believes all new development in Farmington Hills should help pay for needed drains and sewers in the city. This would apply regardless of where the development is located within the city, he said.

ANOTHER OPTION would be to determine if there is a "viable way" that applicants approved for Economic Development Corp. financing could become contributors to the capital improvements plan.

"It would be fair for them to assume some of the responsibility in the community for improvements," Sever said.

"I do not feel the residents and homeowners should be paying a portion of improvements because new development is coming into the city," he continued.

In August, Sever said that while opposed to a charter amendment, he would support a special millage for capital improvements, under certain conditions.

"I would support a special millage for capital improvements but less than 1.5 mills with a time period," he said, prior to the August primary.

Paralleling his views on the proposed charter amendment and capital improvements plan, Sever believes more community input is needed.

What is needed is a citizens task force to review the capital improvements plan and determine which are the most immediately needed projects, Sever suggested.

"I am very much interested in involving more people in the community," Sever said.

ONE OF HIS CRITICISMS of the council is that the same people are always involved in commissions and ad hoc and standing committees, Sever said.

"The city is too selective in their involvement," he said. "They settle into a stagnant state. They involve the same people all the time."

"We need new blood, new ideas," Sever continued. "To be on a committee, you don't need to be an expert."

Instead, a person should have interest in serving on a committee or commission and "want to be a part of a growing community."

If elected, Sever believes he would "do what hasn't been done in a long time" — sell ideas.

That's one of the reasons he supports Proposal C, the Voter's Choice Amendment. "The bottomline is that the city council and the leaders of the city will have to go out and sell this community to the people," Sever said.

If elected, Sever said he would go

into the community to sell programs and ideas, such as capital improvements.

"I would go out and sell the ideas. If I can't sell the people, then maybe I am wrong (about a particular idea or program)," Sever said.

Planning to vote for the passage of the Voter's Choice Amendment, Sever said he is "not frightened by what it would mean to the city. I don't see it as a catastrophe to the city."

What Proposal C would do is put a restriction on leadership, Sever said. The quality of leadership will then have to improve so the public regains its confidence in its leaders, he said.

"Why shouldn't people who live here be sold on their community," Sever said. "Give people the opportunity to make those decisions (about taxes, for example)."

ON ANOTHER front, Sever supports allowing the Farmington Community Library system to become independent. It would be able to levy its own operating millage.

The library's independence, Sever said, would relieve the "personality influence the council has on the current library." Independence would also free up money in the city's budget that is now allocated for the library, he added.

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