

Open 'Study' Will Promote Learning

By EMORY DANIELS

This newspaper would like to add its moral support to Farmington school trustees while they weigh the advantages of abandoning secret sessions and substituting public airings of school issues.

The board is studying a suggestion to replace twice-a-month private "study" sessions with committee-of-the-whole meetings open to the public.

BY CONSIDERING such a change, the district is keeping in line with what appears to be a national south-searching by government to conduct its affairs more openly.

The most recent example is the congressional decision to avoid use of voice votes and, instead, adopt legislation with each congressman's vote going on record.

A decision to end study sessions would not imply anything sinister has prevailed in the past. It would be an indication to voters the district is willing to do MORE to keep the public informed.

Open debate is an essential ingredient of democracy because the electorate MUST be informed on ALL issues and know where EACH legislator stands on those issues.

THE SAFE, COURSE is to conclude the affairs of government behind closed doors and save public meetings for the official, parliamentary passage of legislation.

With this method, dissent between members is sheltered, and advantages of alternative moves often left uncovered.

With much of the debate occurring in "study" sessions, public meetings become the decorum of efficiency with spectators debating the board and little exchange between trustees.

This newspaper believes the residents of the Farmington Area are intelligent and responsible

limited to schools trustees but are also employed on Liberty St. and 11 Mile Rd.

Residents attending township meetings are well aware trustees have hashed out debate in private and decided in advance which way to vote. The public meeting is just a show.

The City Council also holds "executive" sessions before each public meeting. The city, however, does provide a wealth of reports and written material to the press to keep its public informed — a practice not followed in the township.

Study sessions are just as unnecessary, and undesirable on Liberty St. as they are on 11 Mile and Shawwassee. Each branch of government should consider the wisdom of closed door debates.

Finally, this newspaper recognizes the necessity of discussing labor negotiations, land acquisitions and other sensitive questions in private before public action is taken.

But these "sensitive" items do not come up often enough to warrant twice-a-month secret sessions. It is our hope each governmental unit will re-evaluate its method of conducting business and decide if a change is needed.

Election Hard To Call But Will Mean Change

By EMORY DANIELS

FARMINGTON Farmington area politicians and community leaders are still stunned over Earl Teeple's easy victory over Curtis Hall in Tuesday's vote for Farmington Township supervisor.

A Teeple's victory would have been surprising regardless of the margin because of Hall's 10 years in office and five successive victories.

But the outcome left many shocked as Teeple took an early lead, kept increasing that lead as each precinct reported in, and finished unpredictably strong with a 3,220 to 1,500 victory.

TEEPLES' 1,320 vote victory margin was completely unexpected and stunned Teeple's usual supporters in every precinct except for one of the two absentee ballot precincts.

Hall's only edge was in the Delos Hamlin absentee precinct where he nosed ahead of his opponent with a 59:47 vote. Absentee ballots are divided among two voting machines according to the Oakland County commissioners' districts.

The other absentee ballot count, in Christian Powell's district, gave Teeple's a 2-1 margin with a 63-31 vote. Hall ran close to Teeple's in only four precincts and in the remaining precincts Teeple's enjoyed a 2-1 margin.

The voter turnout of 7,600 residents amounted to about 30 per cent of the total 25,000 registered voters in the township.

The turnout was about average for a primary although some precincts reportedly

experienced turnouts of about 50 per cent.

OF THOSE township residents voting Tuesday, it is interesting that 30 per cent did not cast a vote for either Hall or Teeple. The supervisor's contest attracted 5,100 votes.

Among those voting for supervisor, Teeple's garnered about 65 per cent of the vote. Those not voting in the supervisor's race, however, had no significant effect on the outcome.

If each one of the 30 per cent not voting for supervisor voted for Hall, a very unlikely possibility, the final tally would have been split 50-50. But Teeple still would've won if every resident voted for supervisor, assuming he could've gathered at least 10 per cent of those 2,500 votes.

The reason 30 per cent did not vote for supervisor, of course, is because the Democrats did not run a candidate in that race. Thus those voting Democratic in the primary could not vote for supervisor.

AN OBVIOUS BOOST to Teeple's victory was that he assumed the underdog role throughout the campaign. This underdog role was glorified even more by Hall's efforts to prevent Teeple from campaigning.

That move was probably the biggest blunder Hall made during the campaign. Hall looked bad by warning Teeple that campaigning would result in discipline. An axiom of politics is an incumbent should run on his record and not run "against" the challenger.

But Hall was aggressive in his battle against Teeple and his use of police regulations to silence the challenger hinted of personal animosity on Hall's part against Teeple.

This tactic underlined emphatically Teeple's underdog position and probably resulted in some surprising votes. The tactic probably also resulted in some anti-Hall votes.

And it must be recognized that Teeple is very personable, and his warmth and humor certainly drew votes. But there was more to it than differences in personalities.

THE WIDE VICTORY margin has to be interpreted as a call for change since it was a normal voter turnout. And change is predictable.

How much will depend to a great extent on the results in the November general election which will decide two trustee seats and the treasurer's post.

There's no way to call it except that township residents voting felt Teeple could do a better job and it was time for Hall to leave.

Other than observation, it was strange race and hard to call. There was no conservative-liberal trends and a lot of crossing by voters on party lines as well as philosophical outlook.

THE REAL REASONS for Hall's defeat cannot be found by examining tally sheets. The "why" may be known in future weeks and is likely to create a hot campaign for the general election.

The Teeple and Hall factions are now squared off for November. That will be an emotional, hard-fought, personal and possibly bitter campaign.

The real significance of the Teeple's victory will be known Nov. 4 and more explanations will unfold with that vote.

EDITORIAL

enough to sit in on a meeting at which full debate is aired without a circus atmosphere prevailing.

Certainly, debate will perk up and personalities might sometimes hide the real issues. But in the long run, residents will better know what's going on in the district.

IF A TRUSTEE is worthy of re-election, that trustee can reveal his stands in public and survive. In some instances, trustees might better survive with a full airing of their positions.

If public participation in government is going to be discouraged, then let's chuck the whole system. If the system of democracy is worth saving, which it is, then let's continue the long battle to better inform the real guts of democracy by getting the voter more involved.

This paper realizes the Farmington Board of Education has involved the public more than any other government agency in the Farmington Area. We recognize, too, that spirited debate has occurred at many board meetings. While frowning on study sessions held in private, we do commend the board for the degree of openness displayed so far.

It should be not too hard for the board to continue its policy of openness already established. We applaud their efforts and encourage this One More Step for democracy.

"EXECUTIVE" SESSIONS certainly are not

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Letters To The Editor

Teaches Good Sportsmanship

EDITOR: We would like to reply to the "Little League Mothers" whose angry letter in your August edition criticized Little League apparently because their sons' team lost a World Series game.

Our sons participated in the final game of a World Series also. It climaxed a season of their working with a dedicated, enthusiastic and fair manager; learning a lot about baseball from experienced and knowledgeable coaches who were concerned first and foremost with good sportsmanship, and most important, having fun all season. Little League was a rewarding experience for them.

However, at our final game we were amazed at how little the parents of the opposing team had learned about good sportsmanship themselves during the season. We were surprised, too, that they do not realize that children develop self-control and a sense of fair play to a great extent by observing the example set by their parents.

Following the game many of the parents loudly accused our boys of "cheating," subjected the officials to verbal abuse for "being unfair," and one parent was so angry that she was rendered completely speechless and had to resort to obscene gestures — all this in front of our little boys.

In spite of this embarrassing rude behavior, it would never occur to us to blame Little League for the actions of a handful of parents who cannot bear to lose.

Nor do we feel that Little League should be condemned

because it, like all competitive sports, is based on the principle that for every winner there always is a loser. There will always be spectators — a minority, thank Heaven! — who scream: "We were robbed!"

MRS. JAMES HAGUE
MRS. V. F. LENZEN
MRS. M. D. REYNOLDS
Mothers of players in North Farmington-West Bloomfield Baseball for Boys

Historians Appreciate Assistance

EDITOR: The members of the Farmington Historical Preservation Committee appreciate the assistance you and your staff have given our committee during the 1970 Founders Festival.

The inclusion of the historical map of the Old Village and the pictures of the historical homes made the people of Farmington aware of its fine heritage and why our group feels so strongly about preserving the past.

It is our hope that others will become interested in our historical past and join with us to give due recognition to those areas of history upon which our present and future are built.

SANDRA COLYER
Secretary
Historical Preservation Committee

City Gives Refuse Rules

The City of Farmington is presently distributing a memo card advising its citizens of the requirements for the storage and disposal of rubbish. At the same time, each household will receive a free sample plastic refuse bag liner of the heavy duty, two-mil type sold by the City Public Services Dept.

The colorful yellow card is designed to inform residents of the current rules for refuse handling to avoid misunderstanding and provide better service," said John Dinan, city manager. "This year we chose

a bright color for the card with the hope that it would be readily visible for reference when needed by the homeowner," he added.

The free, heavy-duty plastic refuse bag is being distributed to introduce the many and varied advantages of this type of refuse container over the rigid variety, reported the city manager.

Plastic refuse bags are available for purchase at the Dept. of Public Services office, 33720 Nine Mile Rd., in boxed quantities of 100 for \$5.

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