

Township Will Seek Legal Clarification On Police Rules Barring Political Acts

By EMORY DANIELS

FARMINGTON

Farmington Township will seek a declaratory judgment from Oakland County Circuit Court on the validity of the regulation in its police manual prohibiting political activity by a policeman.

Monday night, the township board instructed its attorney to continue with the lawsuit in an attempt to get an interpretation on that rule — is it a proper regulation? does it apply to the Teepees campaign? and was it violated?

JOSEPH T. BRENNAN, township attorney, had asked the board Monday night what instructions the board had regarding the lawsuit, Earl Teepees vs. Farmington Township, in light of the Republican primary results which saw Teepees defeat incumbent Supervisor Curtis Hall.

The suit was filed by Teepees, who wanted an

injunction preventing the township from taking any action to interfere with his running for township supervisor.

An injunction was never issued. Instead, a trial date was set with pre-trial conference waived. "There is still a question on whether the departmental rule has been violated. I could probably negotiate a termination of the lawsuit, but we still have the rule in our police manual barring political activity," said Brennan.

Trustee Margaret Schaeffer commented that the interpretation of that rule taken by Teepees' attorneys was different from the township's, clarification from the court would be in order.

"You can interpret from the results of the election that the rule doesn't mean much," quipped Brennan. "But we still have a lawsuit pending against us."

"We have a book of rules. It's if it's usable and good, let's find out or let's throw the book out," commented Trustee Tom Nolan.

BRENNAN ADDED that there are factual questions on whether Teepees actually campaigned for office, but the township's real position being tested is: Does the mere filing of petitions for office constitute political activity?

"Let's carry the lawsuit through or throw out the police manual," said Hall. "You'll have problems in the police department unless each man in the department follows all the rules.

"If this rule isn't any good, then you might as well throw the whole book out," added Hall. "Oakland County uses this rule as do many other communities, and it's been upheld all around."

Brennan commented: "The officer (Teepees) is still a member of the police department regardless of the fact he's been nominated to office."

Nolan said: "This goes beyond one police officer but involves the very basic question: Does the township have the right to make rules and enforce them?"

IF THE COURT decides the mere filing of petitions does not constitute political activity, Brennan explained, the board could then decide if the rule should be amended to prohibit specifically the filing of petitions.

Or the rule on political activity could be changed in some other manner or dropped entirely, added Brennan.

"Some limitations of the Hatch Act (preventing federal employees from seeking office) in other states have been upheld," observed Brennan, "but I've found no cases where a policeman cannot be prevented from engaging in political activity."

Brennan then stressed: "We have never tried to prevent anyone from running for public office."

THE OUTGROWTH of the Teepees upset resulted in another request to Brennan, this one from Trustee Fred Lichman.

During this past campaign, certain statements were made that some people's jobs are in jeopardy and there would be changes made, he began.

"The board must know what its responsibilities and authority are and what our new supervisor's responsibilities are," he continued. "Not that I anticipate any difficulty, but I would like to know exactly what our authority is."

Lichman asked Brennan to prepare a memo to the board outlining the lines of authority for the board and the supervisor. He also asked for clarification on who had authority to hire or fire department heads and general employees.

Advises Wives On Gas Use

FARMINGTON
Miss Linda J. Warriner, 22, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis E. Warriner of 32600 11 Mile, Farmington Township, has joined the Columbia Gas of Ohio, Inc. as a home economics service advisor.

She will be known professionally as "Betty Newton" and will visit homemakers in

During this discussion, Hall suggested that an employees' policy manual should be established.

"I have had this on the front burner for three or four years, now, but it's never been turned on."

Hall suggested the board authorize Lt. William Kelly of the township police department to work with the personnel department of Oakland County to develop an employees' manual.

"It's all been kinda mental now, but we should have a manual developed so all will know just where they stand."

Nolan agreed: "We have been consulted in the past, but we don't know what the situation will be in the future and should know."

Dog-Tired

It's a good idea to give the family dog a good workout before taking him on a long car trip so that he'll sleep during the ride.

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FLANDERS FOSSILS — Bill Harmon shows Donna Fardo, Karen Pardo and Lech Desjardin (left to right) how to make impressions of a fossil in clay. Flanders Elementary School and its PTA offer a summer program.

of science and art activities besides opening the school's library. The science program was added this summer to the free, five-week operation. Harmon is art consultant. (Everett photo).

Democratic incumbents were unseated by Mrs. Marguerite Simson, of Pontiac, and Joseph L. Barakat, of Madison Heights.

Mark W. Harrison Jr. was nominated to the 27-member Board in the Democratic primary to seek the seat being vacated by successful state Senate nominee Carl W. O'Brien (D-Pontiac), who won the 17th District primary race.

Philip Mastri, (D-Detroit), Park, won the Democratic nomination in the 58th House District, to succeed Daniel Cooper, who won nomination for the State Senate.

Thomas O'Donghue (D-Ferndale), senior member of the Board of Commissioners, did not seek renomination.

ALL 12 Republican members of the board were reominated, while only 10 of the 15

Democratic incumbents were successful.

Oakland County voters overwhelmingly approved renewal of a one-quarter mill tax for recreation, parks, and maintenance of parks and recreation areas in the county.

"Yes" votes totaled 54,963 to 34,067 negative votes. The millage will be in effect for

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