

Hills council candidates share the podium

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TALK OF THE FEDERAL PROGRAM continued with another audience question. Candidates were asked if they would allocate money from the city's general fund budget for housing rehabilitation and capital improvements for low-income residents in the event the federal government stopped providing CDBG money.

"At the moment, I don't know," Soronen said. "That would be a tough decision because there aren't many spare dollars (in the city's budget)."

Providing local tax dollars for federally funded programs means other programs or services the city offers would have to be dropped or reduced, she added.

Before council decides how the CDBG money will be spent, public hearings are scheduled for residents to offer their suggestions. And other than the true-blue council watchers, the media and council members few attend the hearings. "There is no hue and cry out there to see what we are doing with these funds," Dolan said.

The CDBG money has not been "frittered away," Dolan continued. But with the money it has, council would complete improvements that have the most permanent benefit to residents, she added.

MARKS SUGGESTED that council would have to look at the budget before any decision was made about using local dollars to support programs paid for with federal funds. "To make any kind of unilateral promise would be facetious," he said.

Grant agreed with other candidates. "I don't know. I personally can't determine the benefit of the program," he said. But, he added, programs such as housing rehabilitation would have to be funded with other programs now funded by local dollars.

Whether the city would continue to help low-to-moderate-income residents if the federal government stopped providing CDBG money also was a topic of debate.

Grant, former Farmington Community Library Board of Trustees vice president, said he was unfamiliar with the CDBG program.

Silky Sullivan set to talk about books

Elementary school age children are invited to meet and talk with local author Silky Sullivan — known for the "Henry and Melvin" series of sports books. 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 5, at the Farmington Hills branch of the Farmington Community Library, 32737 W. 12 Mile.

The library is sponsoring the evening in recognition of Children's Book Week, Nov. 11-17.

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