

# Budgets are adopted for a new fiscal year

By Casey Hans  
Staff writer

Budgets for the coming fiscal year were adopted this week by the Farmington Board of Education and Farmington City Council.

Due to increased property values, both taxing units will receive a larger chunk from local taxpayers. The city will levy the same millage, while the schools will decrease millage.

The Farmington school district is, by far, the largest local taxing unit in terms of budget, compared with surrounding cities.

The district adopted a \$74-million operating budget Tuesday, an \$8-million increase even though the district lowered its operating tax rate by 1.15 mills to 30.65. Debt levy will be at 1.2 mills. Last year's operating budget totaled \$66 million.

School officials say they are not only funding increased enrollment in the district, but building a buffer against the probability of school finance reform in Michigan, which could impact wealthy districts like Farmington. In addition, the district won't add any new staff positions.

In light of this, the district will carry an \$8.9-million surplus, or 12 percent of the budget, into the new fiscal year.

levy of 10.65 mills for a general fund budget of \$4.1 million, according to action taken Monday by the city council. The debt levy will be .98 mills. Including water and sewer, and highway funds, the city will operate with \$6.1 million revenue.

Although the millage will remain the same, it will be worth more because of higher property values.

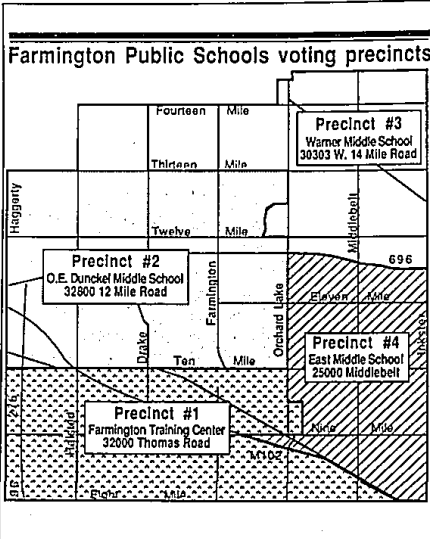
City officials explain they need the additional money because of a projected 3.7-percent increase in expenditures and declining revenues from state and federal sources. Revenues from other local sources, including permit and service fees, are also expected to decline.

The city of Farmington will also levy an additional 2 mills within the boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority district, as approved last year. This 20-mill tax is being used in conjunction with tax increment financing to fund the rejuvenation project which began downtown this spring.

The largest expenditures for the city include: the public safety department at \$1.3 million, followed by \$939,000 for general government, \$652,600 for insurance and fixed expenses, and \$642,500 for public services. Large capital projects for the coming year include a remodeling of city hall, a new roof for the building and implementation of the countywide E-9-1-1 emergency dispatch system.

The city of Farmington Hills is expected to adopt its budget at next week's meeting. All three governmental units operate on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year.

THE CITY of Farmington will retain the same opera-



# 3 seek 2 posts Monday

Monday is election day for voters in the Farmington school district.

Newcomer Bruce Jacob is challenging incumbents Helen Prutow and James Abernethy for two four-year terms on the Farmington Board of Education.

Falls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at precincts as noted on the accompanying map. Absentee ballots will be available during regular business hours today and tomorrow, and on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, Shlawassee and Farmington roads, Farmington.

The seven-member, non-partisan school board considers recommendations from the salaried administration and sets all district policies. Trustees are paid \$30 per meeting attended.

Farmington Public Schools include all of Farmington, most of Farmington Hills and a portion of West Bloomfield Township.

# Propane explosion on truck leaves man severely burned

Continued from Page 1

dell parking lot at 11:20 a.m. — 1 1/2 miles from his home at 11 Mile and Power — the two propane tanks on the truck bed flipped. When he looked back, he saw a white vapor cloud.

"He yelled run and I ran," Rhea said. "I left my purse, jumped out of the truck and ran as fast as I could toward the dell."

to run, the tank exploded, burning him.

"The tank succeeded in exploding and exploding and exploding until nothing was left of the two-month-old truck," Rhea said.

Rhea said Lady Luck rode with her and her husband Saturday. "If he hadn't smelled something, we both would have been inside the truck when it exploded."

SINCE THE truck's fuel tanks caught fire, firefighters used foam to extinguish the flames. A second propane tank in the truck bed remained intact.

It's not known if the propane tank, which had just been filled in Southfield, was defective or had a loose valve.

It's possible the valve loosened when the tanks became unsecured and flipped, said fire investigator Al Ellis.

Propane is heavier than air so the leakage stayed inside the truck bed until it came in contact with an ignition source, such as exhaust or a brake light, Ellis said.

The truck, valued at \$15,400, was destroyed. Other property loss was estimated at \$500.

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