

Fact finder supports C'ville millage hike

By Kevin Brown
staff writer

The move to seek a millage increase in the Clarenceville School District is backed by a state fact finder.

Fact finder Gerald Granadier — in his report made after meeting with teachers and administrators in January to help resolve contract talks — recommended "that the board request at the earliest possible moment the scheduling of a special election for the approval by the community of an increase in the millage in an amount not less than 3 mills."

The board voted Jan. 28 to ask voters for a 3.5-mill tax increase in an April 24 special election. The district, includes part of southeast Farmington Hills.

GRANADIER, ASSIGNED by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission, suggested a 6-percent pay increase for teachers over each year of a three-year contract.

There was a compromise, between the board-proposed, one-year contract wage freeze, and the Clarence-

ville Education Association's proposal of an 8-percent pay raise over each of the next three years.

The district's 106 teachers — and 59 other school employees — have been working under terms of contracts that expired Aug. 31.

Negotiations between teachers and administrators were scheduled to resume this week. Both sides have settled non-wage items of the contract.

"THE BOARD wants to see wage adjustments," Superintendent Michael Shibley said. "I would like to see employees paid at a comparable rate with employees in other districts."

Because state financing to the district is not keeping with inflation, the only way for the district to afford pay raises is through a millage increase, Shibley said.

The district could lose good teachers to other districts if Clarenceville teachers' wages fall far behind those of their peers, said Jim Carlson, chief negotiator for the teachers union.

If administration accepts the pay increase suggested by the fact finder, Clarenceville teachers' pay "is still less than the median salaries in Wayne and Oakland counties," he said.

Two outstanding teachers hired by the district had to be laid off last spring when the district cut \$400,000 from the schools' budget, Shibley said.

"They both found jobs in neighboring school districts," he said. "We don't want to be put in the situation of hiring people nobody wants."

SHIBLEY SAID \$600,000 would be raised through a millage increase.

The 6-percent pay raise over each of three years suggested by the fact finder would cost the district an estimated \$336,000 per year, if made part of the contract.

Besides financing wage increases for teachers and other employees, a millage increase — and voters' approval of a Headlee rollback override — would:

- Head off cuts in K-12 instruction and extracurricular activities.

- Lower class size in grades K-3 from approximately 31 to 26 students per teacher.

- Allow for a full-time librarian in each elementary school and the middle school. This also would boost teaching of computer skills at both levels.

School employees received a 6-percent pay increase in the 1987-88 school year.



Snowy encounters

Thanks to Monday's snowfall, these Livonia youngsters got a chance to try out the sledding hill behind Farmington Public Schools' Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, at Shiawassee and Farmington Road, in Farmington. Megan Williams (left) and Jacob Norwood are both 4.

RANDY GORSTAFF photographer

26 arrested in gambling raid

By Bill Casper
staff writer

Twenty-six people were arrested early Sunday morning in a police raid on a gambling operation in a Redford Township apartment, where beer and cocaine were allegedly sold.

Fourteen local officers, assisted by Livonia and Southfield police, arrested without incident all 26 persons, including 12 Redford residents. All were in the converted apartment casino at 27300 Grand River east of Inkster Road during the 4:30 a.m. raid, Redford Police Chief David Parker said Monday.

"We didn't know how many were inside and we wanted enough officers to shut down the operation quickly before anything got out of hand," said Parker, who joined the raid.

"We acted on information gathered by officers on the midnight shift and raided the after hours nightclub after obtaining a search warrant."

MIDNIGHT SHIFT officers, particularly patrolmen Gary Pogoda and Anthony Tomasi, should be credited with good police work in the investigation that produced sufficient evidence to stage the raid after obtaining a search warrant, Parker said.

The warrant was signed by Redford's 17th District Court Judge John Dillon, Parker said.

Others arrested in the raid, including three women, reside in Livonia, Farmington, Farmington Hills,

Officers seized seven decks of playing cards, two folding card tables, at least one pair of dice, a coin-operated video poker and bowling machines and a pool table.

Dearborn, Detroit, Clawson and Walled Lake, Parker said. They range in ages from the mid-20s to 40, he said.

Most were charged with disorderly conduct, loitering, a misdemeanor offense that carries a maximum of 90 days in jail and a \$100 fine, Parker said. All but three were released on personal bonds and will be arraigned at a later date, he said.

Three persons were turned over to other area police agencies that had misdemeanor warrants for their arrests, Parker said.

Mark Allen Bleicher, who manages the small apartment building, was charged with possession of cocaine with intent to deliver and selling alcohol without a license in violation of state liquor control commission rules and regulations, Parker said.

"My initial understanding is that he (Bleicher) owns and runs the apartment building, where he lives in one apartment and converted another into an after-hours nightclub,"

Parker said. "Preliminary reports indicate that the illegal club had operated for at least two months."

THE CLUB generally was in operation nightly from about 1:30 or 2 a.m. until 7 a.m. sometimes, he said.

Bleicher stood mute Monday at his arraignment before Judge Dillon, who entered a not guilty plea on behalf of the defendant.

Bleicher, who was lodged in the Redford jail after he failed to post \$10,000 cash bond, faces a district court preliminary examination on the charges Tuesday.

Police seized more than \$700 in cash, with most of the money taken from the those arrested. Also seized were \$80 in quarters in an electronic card video game, Parker said. No weapons were found, he said.

Officers also seized seven decks of playing cards, two folding card tables, at least one pair of dice, a coin-operated video poker and bowling machines, a pool table, a juke box, a refrigerator stocked with assorted brands of beer, a bottle of whiskey, several small packets of suspected cocaine and assorted narcotic paraphernalia, Parker said.

More than 14 cases of beer, 317 cans, were confiscated by police, Parker said. Officers also counted 67 empty beer cans, he said.

SUNDAY'S RAID culminated a month-long investigation after Redford Police received numerous telephone calls from residents living near the apartment building, reporting an unusually high level of activ-

ity during early morning hours, Parker said.

Redford Police had watched the activity intermittently for three or four weeks before unformed officers Pogoda and Tomasi changed into civilian clothing and went into the after hours club shortly before 3:30 a.m. Saturday, about 25 hours before the raid, he said.

The officers reported that they walked into the apartment casino through an open front door. They saw about 25 to 30 people, including four persons playing cards for money at a table, and others, who were seen playing pool and an electronic video card game.

The officers also saw a sign that read, "This is not an open bar. Donations for beer are appreciated."

They walked to a refrigerator in a corner of the room, where they stood in line behind two persons, who ordered two cans of beer for which they were charged \$4 by a man, the officers said.

The man asked the officers who they were, and they told him that a friend told them about the club. He told the officers that it was a private party and he wouldn't sell them any beer.

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