

As deadline nears, board race sparks interest

By Casey Hane
staff writer

The open school board seat to be left by trustee Janice Rolnick when she vacates office this June has apparently generated interest among Farmington-area residents.

But school officials are not releasing the names of those who have, thus far, taken out petitions for the Monday, June 11, school board race. They say that information won't be available until the filing deadline at 4 p.m. on Monday, April 9.

Twelve packets including petitions and information have been picked up at the school

board offices, according to business support services supervisor Betal Dushlaka.

Some residents have taken out packets on behalf of others, while some said they might copy information, which could increase the number of interested parties beyond 12, she said.

"Some wouldn't tell us who the potential candidates would be," she explained. "We think we have 12 sets out, but we've had comments that they might possibly be duplicating (the information) for others."

"We're not in the position to give you any names."

THE TERMS of two 12-year board incumbents, Rolnick, 47, and Jack Inch, 58, will expire this June. Rolnick has said she will not run again, while Inch said he will try for a fourth term. Each school board term runs for four years.

It has been five years since the Farmington school board had an open seat because an incumbent chose not to run. Since 1985, the board has had the same trustees, who include Rolnick, Inch, Helen Prutow, Susan Renney, James Abernethy, Jack Cotton and Helen Dushlaka.

This year, there will be at least one new member.

Residents taking out nominating petitions have until the filing deadline to gather the signatures of a minimum of 20 registered voters who live within the district in order to qualify as a candidate. Those turning in completed petitions by April 9 have until Thursday, April 12, to withdraw from the race; otherwise, their names will appear automatically on the ballot.

ELIGIBLE TO be candidates are those people who are residents of the Farmington school district, are at least 18 years old and are registered voters. They need not be property owners. Petitions continue to be

available at the district's Lewis Schulman Administrative Center, 32560 Shilawasee, between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The district of the Farmington Public Schools encompasses the city of Farmington, most of the city of Farmington Hills except for a portion in the southeast corner, and a portion of West Bloomfield Township north of 14 Mile between Inkster and Middlebelt roads.

To cast a ballot in the June 11 election, residents must register to vote by Monday, May 14.

Hundreds appeal tax assessments

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es. Everything I do is in some fashion or other dictated by state law. I did not make that law and I cannot change that law," he added.

Robert Schulkins, a long-time Howard Road resident, was a member of the old Farmington Township board of review. Then, he said, the board made a decision on every appeal on the spot. Babb said his board does not operate that way.

This year, Schulkins appealed his

42-percent assessment increase. His son, Hugh, who also lives on Howard Road, had a 47-percent increase. Howard Road Homeowners Association president Randall Winston saw more than a 100-percent increase.

"We're just concerned because a lot of homeowners are being singled out," said Ann Schulkins, Hugh Schulkins' wife.

JUNE PAVLIC of Pinckney showed up at the March 15 board of review session to appeal the 27-percent increase on the home on Lundy, near Nine Mile and Orchard Lake Road, she's trying to sell. "We're being overtaxed on all of our houses," she said.

Gerry Jackson, who lives in the Randlewood subdivision near 14 Mile and Halsted, protested her 9-percent increase, which, she believes, was the result of a new tack, putting her ahead of her neighbors' assessment.

Richard DeVries of the Hunt Club subdivision, near Halsted and 11 Mile, came to appeal his 12-percent increase.



Bob Schulkins, in the back yard of his house on Howard Road in Farmington Hills.

He believes he's being taxed on an unfinished attic because it's considered available space. But when he built the house, he said, he was told

he couldn't finish the attic because it was against the building code. Babb said he'll probably arrange for two boards of review next year.

"I have no choice," he said. "The city has outgrown one."

Staff writer Bob Sklar contributed to this report.

Trustees split vote Tuesday

Removal of asbestos flooring in seven Farmington schools this year drew criticism from two trustees Tuesday who voted against the projects.

Trustees James Abernethy and Jack Inch cast no votes on the projects for Highmeadow, Kenbrook, Longacre, William Grace and Wooddale elementary schools, O.E. Dunkel Middle School and Farmington High School.

Abernethy was concerned about getting information on the projects in a timely manner, while Inch said he was opposed to the federally mandated abatement projects, for which the district will pay \$404,567.

The asbestos tile in all seven buildings will be ripped up and new floor coverings installed. The board approval came Tuesday on a 5-2 vote.

The floor projects will likely be done on a late shift, during non-school hours, said Don Cowan, director of students services and operations.

There was a question as to whether to recommend removal of the tile, or to just carpet over it. Removal of any materials with asbestos are required, by law, to be handled in a special way and can be costly.

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Wolf wants county association board job

Oakland County commissioner Donn Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, received the unanimous support of his fellow commissioners for a position on the Michigan Association of Counties board of directors.

The 13-member board establishes policy in the best interests of the 83 counties statewide.

In its endorsement resolution, the

Oakland County board noted that Wolf would follow in the footsteps of commissioners Delos Hamlin, Richard Wilcox, Joseph Montano and Roy Rowold, all of whom represented Oakland County on the MAC board. Rowold's term of office ends this year.

The resolution emphasizes Wolf's leadership abilities and pledges its

active assistance in support of his candidacy.

The election will be held in August at MAC's annual meeting.

In accepting the board's endorsement, Wolf said, "I am pleased that the full Oakland County Board of

Commissioners, Republicans and Democrats alike, have pledged their support and assistance in this important endeavor and are already active in our campaign.

"I will do all I can to represent Oakland County well."

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