Voters reject tax proposals

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when the issue of secondary school boundary changes is on the agenda for discussion. Details on the cuts must be determined by April, when the district must handle layoff notices for the 1991-92 budget year and firm up budget numbers.

Tax cut proponent and Farmington Hills businessman Richard Headlee, who fought against the millage proposals, was out of town Wednesday morning, but Alexander Hamilton Life Insurance Co. spokeswoman Mary Sawyer said Headlee called to find out the results. "He's very happy," she said. "He was pleased so many people came out to vote."

Alexander Hamilton assistant vice president Patrick Anderson called the defeat a "major victory for the taxpayers" and said, "I really hope the school board gets the message that belts need to be tightened."

Organizers of the Friends of Farmington Schools, a pro-millage parent group, could not be reached for comment.

Record crowds were reported at the district's four polling places Tuesday, with some voters having to wait close to an hour to cast their ballots.

Hills resident Dennis Rupprecht called Precinct 2 at O.E. Dunckel Middle School the "Dunckel Debacle," and voter Mort Sterling said he thought the crowds caused some voters to get discouraged and go home. "So many people came in . . . took a look at the line and decided not to vote," he said.

Tuesday's proposals were to make up $5.8 million recaptured by the state last summer; the district is using the remainder of its cash reserves to handle the budget pinch until July.

Staff writer Joanne Maliszewski and editor Tom Baer contributed to this report.

Farmington Public Schools Special Feb. 5 election results

Proposition 1 for 2.7 mills

Precincts	Yes	No
1. Farmington Training Center	1,018	1,692
2. O.E. Dunckel Middle School	1,086	1,732
3. Warner Middle School	1,002	950
4. East Middle School	759	1,061
5. Absentee votes	333	704
Totals	4,198	6,139

Proposition 2 for 1 mill

Precincts	Yes	No
1. Farmington Training Center	902	1,780
2. O.E. Dunckel Middle School	935	1,848
3. Warner Middle School	885	1,061
4. East Middle School	644	1,174
5. Absentee votes	306	734
Totals	3,672	6,597

Vote counts are unofficial.

Registered active voters 50,194; actual number of voters, 10,515; turnout percentage 20.9.

Complaint filed

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quired Headlee or Ritter to file as a political action committee, or PAC.

"All this publicity he's been able to buy without filing — it's like buying an election," Jensen said. "That's really serious to me. I do not believe he should get away with this."

Ritter said since the company identified itself visibly in ads and letters, it complied with the "spirit of the law." He also denied the company's ads were anti-millage, but said they were "informational" in nature.

"We think our ads were informational and did not promote a 'yes' or 'no' vote," he said. "We don't believe we are in violation. We are confident we have conducted an above-board campaign conducted in compliance with the spirit of the law.

HEAD OF the Oakland County elections division, Jan Stickley, said individuals and companies which "advertise for or against a ballot issue," are governed by the Campaign Finance Act and should be registered.

She said Tuesday, since her office had not yet received a copy of the complaint, that she was unsure what action would be taken, if any. The complaint was sent to state election officials in Lansing.

She confirmed that the pro-millage Friends of Farmington Schools had filed proper paperwork with her department as a PAC, and that Citizens for Quality Schools, an anti-millage group, filed as a PAC the day after Farmington school superintendent Michael Flanagan raised the issue at a Jan. 28 public forum on the issue. Neither Headlee, Ritter or Alexander Hamilton had filed, she said.

Since the board decided in December to go to voters for more operating money, forces both for and against the measures have divided the community in an emotional and bitter battle.

More than 200 hood ornaments recovered

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There was no rhyme or reason," Cook said.

In addition to taking the ornaments, emblems and decals — ranging in price from $30 to one from a luxury car that's valued at more than $1,000 — the youths reportedly caused hundreds of dollars in damage to the cars and trucks from which the items were removed.

A gas cap and pony emblem was taken off a 1967 Mustang a Farmington Hills resident was restoring, for example. Removing those items caused an estimated $400 damage to the classic car, Cook said.

Police believe the items were removed with screwdrivers and a sort of wire cutter, which is "the tool of choice," Cook said.

The youths reportedly used them more as collector's items, as well as key chains and belt buckles. "Someone was saying girls are making earrings out of the smaller ones," Cook said.

In mid-January, Cook got an anonymous tip that a youth was involved in stealing hood ornaments and emblems. Cook contacted the family and interviewed the youth. "The families (of the youths) have all been cooperative. They have been instrumental in the recovery (of the stolen items)," Cook said.

POLICE INTEND to return the items to the rightful owners. But they must have proof from owners — either a police report or receipt showing an item has been replaced — before emblems or ornaments can be returned.

"Generally, people don't report these things to the police because the chance of getting them back is slim or none," said Sgt. Charles Nebus of the detective bureau.

When Cook checked department records he found only seven complaints of stolen ornaments or emblems. Some of the items have already been returned to the owners after he matched the item with the complaints on file.

Anyone who believes their car or truck ornaments, emblems or decals have been stolen in the last six weeks should call Cook between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at 473-9660.

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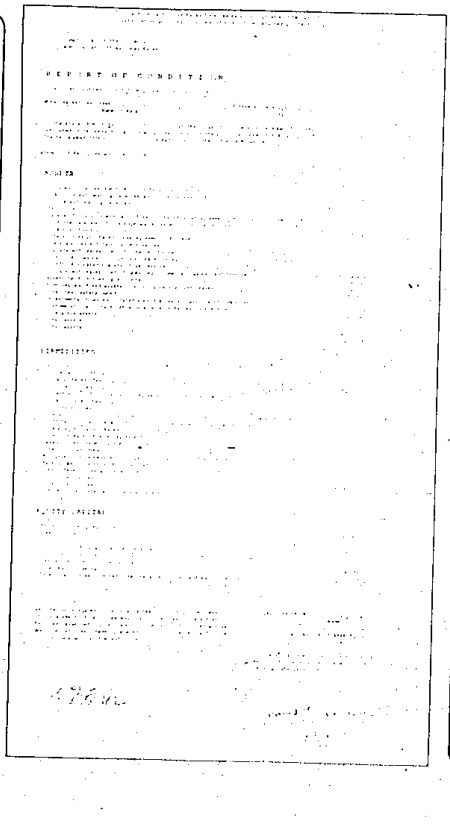

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