

Packing baskets



To help the needy: Salvation Army Capt. Homer Smith (left) and volunteer Matthew Greshaw prepare one of 199 food baskets that help 623 people in the Farmington area have a happier Thanksgiving. The food was delivered from the Salvation Army facility in Farmington Hills.

ON THE AGENDA

Below are highlights from the agendas of meetings this week. All meetings are open to the public.

Farmington City Council
Farmington City Hall
8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 7
Agenda items include:
■ Public hearing on 1993-94 community development block grant program.
■ Report from Girls State Representative Tammy Allen.
■ Report from the city manager on a temporary operating agreement with Oakland County DPW for new pumping and retention basin facilities.

Farmington Hills City Council
Farmington Hills City Hall
7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 7
Agenda items include:
■ Presentation of 1846 historical

map to the city council by Kathryn Briggs, chairwoman of the Historical Commission.
■ Proclamation — St. Alexander Church remodeling/expansion dedication.
■ Request from Vernon Klepinski that the city council adopt a resolution regarding a children's bill of rights.
■ Request from Ruth Rycroft that the city council consider creation of a payback program for a water main program on Biddleston.

■ Request for appointment of members of the city council to serve on the "Name the Park" contest committee.
■ Resolution for sale of \$1.15 million in special assessment bonds.
■ Approval of collective bargaining agreement for fire fighters.
■ Recommendation for entering

into executive session to discuss pending litigation.

■ The city has also scheduled a special meeting for Wednesday, Dec. 9, beginning at 6 p.m. The council will review the Kendallwood storm drain issue.

Farmington Hills Zoning Board of Appeals
Farmington Hills City Hall
7:30 p.m., Dec. 8
Agenda items include:
■ Request for a variance of a property at 25780 Middlebelt owned by The Kroger Co.

Farmington supports local role in regulating cable

By SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER

The city of Farmington joined other municipalities recently in passing a resolution that asks legislators to ensure that local government continue to play a regulatory role in the provision of cable television, franchise renewal and consumer protection.

The resolution asks that any future telephone industry entry into cable television service be on the condition that the telephone industry be subject to the same requirements as are imposed on cable television operators. Local government cable franchising, payment of franchise fees and the provision of other public benefits under all conditions, including video dial tone service.

"With video dial tone, you can create a network to distribute video (made) by others," said Dave Ellis, a Michigan Bell spokesman. "We're currently banned from providing cable TV programming."

Video dial tone provides an alternate means for customers to obtain videos, and will reflect the law of supply and demand, Ellis said.

The telephone company cannot own more than five percent of a cable company, Ellis said. A recent FCC rule has preempted local governments by ruling that with video dial tone, neither the local telephone company, nor the programmers using the conduit must obtain a local

franchise in order to provide cable-like video services to consumers.

The resolution states that the telephone industry supports the video dial tone concept without local franchising and the payment of franchise fees, therefore bypassing local governments' consumer compensation for the use of the rights of way.

Farmington joined communities like Oak Park and Berkley, which are asking legislators to support preservation of city consumer protection powers in cable television.

In the last decade, camcorder services, local programming, sports, entertainment and access to government for America's cities.

The rapid growth of cable service has met difficulties in some communities, including substantial rate increases and customer service problems, some officials say.

Mayors and City Councils have sought solutions to these prob-

lems by working with Congress for legislative relief, restoring some of the regulatory authority cities lost in 1987 under the Cable Act of 1984.

Congress has responded affirmatively to the efforts of local governments, with passage of a bill in 1992 that would return some authority to local officials.

The concept of paying franchise fees to local governments for the use of the public right of way has not been challenged by the cable television industry and has become a source of needed revenue, officials say. Cities have benefited from provisions of its franchise mandating financial support by the cable company of municipal access channels and certain city functions, officials add.

The FCC has initiated a rule that allows telephone companies to provide video dial tone service to television programmers who would use the telephone conduit to offer consumers television services.

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