



On the line: School Superintendent Michael Flanagan (left) and Farmington city manager Frank Lauhoff (right) pay attention as Hills city manager Bill Costick talks of taxes and other issues.

SHARON LEMIEUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Taxes from page 1A

tion." But Bates, who works in Lansing as an aid to State Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills, said a mere 2 percent projected growth in Farmington Hills' general fund revenues this year coupled with uncertainty over state property tax reform plans were cause for concern.

"There are a half a dozen tax proposals being discussed," she said.

Mike Flanagan, Farmington superintendent of schools, reminded those attending the breakfast that despite the school funding crisis, citizens should not lose sight of the progress the city's schools have made and the high level of achievement of its students.

"In the 1950s, high schools had a 50 percent dropout rate," he said. "So much for the good old days."

Flanagan praised the district's accomplishments including that 86 percent of the district's students go on to college and that only 2 percent of students dropout with half of those returning to eventually earn their diploma.

Both city managers pointed to progress on public works programs including Farmington's sewer separation project and new retention basin, and land acquisition.

Hills City Manager Bill Costick also reminded those attending that the cities and school district have worked well together on the 47th District Court, the cable TV system and library system.

Cable from page 1A

Flanagan's worries.

The commission immediately passed a resolution allowing an agenda item for a schools representative to speak. Novi is also represented by SWOCC.

Representatives from MetroVision addressed Flanagan's other complaints.

They seem to come to an understanding. Things were a little testy, though.

Bob McCann said MetroVision had not received tapes of Flanagan's show in a timely matter. For example, McCann added they did not get a copy for March.

Flanagan said the letter canceling the show was dated in February.

McCann said technical difficulties were a result of switching problems. Channel 10 is also used to cablecast high school videos and other programming, he said.

MetroVision representatives

said they were not aware of the problems until recently.

Tom Bjorklund, vice president and regional manager, stressed better communication is needed between the schools and the cable company.

Bjorklund said he never received a call, adding there were two — not three — delays not lasting more than three minutes.

"This is not unlike the typical customer problem," Bjorklund said. "If a customer has a problem with a drop (cable line) coming into his house or HBO was not working well that night, our technician knows about it and the next day we go out and fix it."

Flanagan said a letter was sent after the first delay Feb. 9. He also thinks the schools are more than a customer.

"The reference to customer, I think, is a bit misleading," Flanagan said. "Officially, I know we are a customer. Beyond under-

standing that, Tom and I had a meeting along those lines. At our meeting, I thought it was understood that we were not like an HBO customer."

Flanagan pointed out the Farmington Schools are "big users" of the system. The district has 10,000 students and many parents who watch cable, he said.

Afterward, Flanagan said he was satisfied with the meeting.

"I was really appreciative of the commission and their response in getting this on the agenda . . .," Flanagan said Friday. "And I was really appreciative of the cable company in the end because I'm sure we'll work out those other issues now."

Added Bjorklund Friday: "Our goal has been to do a very good job with all our customers and all the groups, including the schools. We'll make every effort to continue to do that."

TV firm from page 1A

"These parameters still have to be established by the FCC," said SWOCC chairman William Hartsock.

MetroVision raised basic cable rates \$1.50 Feb. 1. The cable company rated three points below the national average on fair and reasonable rate increases in the survey.

The survey was conducted prior to the rate increase.

Overall, though, the survey was positive. MetroVision rated above the national average in performance, basic cable, premium channels, pay-per-view and programming.

Respondents gave the company high marks for customer service. In one question, 79 percent said MetroVision is doing fairly well to very well in keeping appointments for installation, change of

service or repairs.

Some 5,700 people were surveyed in MetroVision's service area in metropolitan Detroit. Some 40 percent of the respondents were from Oakland County.

Commission member Ben Marks was pleased with the results.

Staff writer Tedd Schneider contributed to this story.

Harrison jazz band, ensemble do concert

The jazz concert at Harrison High School at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 31, will feature both the Jazz Band and Club Jazz Ensemble.

Both groups will be performing pieces which they will perform at the state jazz festival the following weekend.

Sophomore alto sax soloist Jenny Cannon will play the ballad "Rebecca" with the Club Jazz Ensemble. The Jazz Band will play "Sunday Morning" by Todd

Carlin. It was written for the Maynard Ferguson Band when Carlin played with them.

Carlin, originally from Lansing, was the first person to receive a B.A. in Contemporary Media in 1983 from Wayne State University. He is currently a recording artist at a top Los Angeles studio, according to his friend Mark Phillips, music director at Harrison.

More than 1,000 instrumental jazz students from 56 Michigan junior and senior high schools

will perform in the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Jazz Festival scheduled for April 2-3 and 17.

Ensembles are judged by 16 experts in panels of four in performance ability and sight reading. There will also be a small Jazz Combo Festival featuring groups of two to eight musicians. The focus of that is on improvisation.

Harrison High School is entering a Jazz Combo and two Jazz Bands.

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