

# Bond

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Board members will likely draft a proposal at Tuesday's study session to go ahead with the proposal, which includes asking for a millage renewal.

A March 23 or 24 election date is being considered.

Some trustees said they wanted to pare the \$110 million figure, but found no place to do it. Linda Enberg said she looked hard but couldn't find a way to trim even \$3 million.

"I don't think \$3 million is going to make the difference between a yes or a no vote," she said.

The board did find a way to reduce the necessary millage levied by 0.2.

Initially, the bond issue — if approved — would increase the millage rate by 2.5 mills.

By issuing bonds in two series, officials would save the owner of a \$150,000 home \$14 a year.

# Headlee

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ways. When the former president of Alexander Hamilton endorsed a millage renewal in 1992, it passed 4-to-1.

He moved to Utah with wife Mary in 1995.

"I think people do appreciate someone analyzing and evaluating tax issues," said Headlee from his home in Park City. "They've got their own pressures on them, working to earn money to pay taxes. It's very hard to get accurate information."

The architect of the 1978 Headlee Tax Limitation amendment and gubernatorial candidate criticized district officials for going to voters when it had \$12 million in surplus — not to mention a \$3 million from a land sale to Little Caesars — in 1988. "The land sale was not part of the annual report," he said.

"They had money in the bank and they were still going out to borrow more money," Headlee said. "They had money in the fund equity account stashed all

over. They really misled the people to the amount of surplus they had."

Headlee's staunch opposition to a 1991 millage increase request included full-page newspaper ads.

As one of the community's largest employers and taxpayers, Headlee said he was doing his duty. School officials felt he was unduly singling out the Farmington district.

"They were angry," he said. Former trustee Jack Cotton recalls Headlee showing up at a board meeting a week before the election to raise concerns about the 1988 proposal. He also invited the media along, Cotton said.

"It was the timing of the issue; he raised questions that were (already) very thoroughly answered," Cotton said.

"Things had been fairly well sold to the community. That whole shadow of doubt that he brought up and plus him bringing his press people, we weren't prepared for that. We were just a little school board to face that kind of stuff at that time."

Trustee Jack Inch, who was on the board at the time, agreed. "He carried some prestige," Inch said. "He caused some

doubt against the bond issue. It was very difficult to go up against."

If still living here, Headlee said he'd be combing the budget, especially the fund equity. Bonding is prudent when districts have used up other resources, he added.

"Fund equity is nothing but a way to cover up the word surplus," he said.

A financial strategies committee recommends the district maintain a fund balance of 8 to 12 percent of expenditures. This school year's budget has a \$20.1 million fund balance, which is 17 percent.

His children attended Farmington Public Schools and each received a good education, he said.

"Taxpayers have to realize there are a lot of well-intentioned people in the educational establishment who are there to do a good job," Headlee said.

His absence is noted privately by some school officials. Others downplay his significance.

"I don't know if it will have an impact or not," Trustee Joe Svoke said. "It's been my experience when that person drops off, someone else comes in."

# Beat

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"Every time I think about you, you come to see me," she says from her wheel chair.

The two discuss their holidays and Esther pulls out a Christmas goody or two for the officer.

"Esther is very active here," the officer says. "She lets me know what's going on."

"One day I had her handuff me to the chair," quips Esther. "They thought she was taking me in."

All kidding aside, the community policing concept is aimed at reversing a trend of many years where police officers patrolled their communities, but had little contact on a routine basis.

"I think it has been well received by the officers and the community," said Farmington Hills police Chief Bill Dwyer. "I think it is going to make our job easier and keep us ahead of a lot of potential problems."

Farmington Hills has long advocated programs that involve the community. More than 37 of them, including the Neighborhood Watch Program, the Citizen's Crime Prevention Advisory Board and the School Liaison Program, have aimed to give the police and community more tools to prevent and solve crime.

But the personal touch seems to work well in informal situations. Veteran officers as well as

the "Romper Room Shift," the nickname some veterans give Swanderski and other young officers, seem to have taken to the new way of policing.

"I think this is just what most people think of when we say community policing," said Lt. Chuck Nebus, the department's public relations specialist. "It's the cop on the beat."

Thanks to the November 1995 voter-approved public safety millage, which allowed the department to expand to eight police districts from five, and because most officers assigned to a district will remain on that particular beat for at least a year, residents will be more likely to know their officers, said Patrol Division Commander Capt. Dennis Rochford.

"A lot of time our officers were just going from run to run," said Rochford. "This allows them to take the time to get to know residents. People like the concept."

Some district officers, like school liaison officer Duane Fox, who works out of North Farmington High School much of the year, are already well known in their areas, Rochford said. But the department expects residents to get to know their officers to get a better sense that the new district plan is in effect.

"So far the feedback has been good," Dwyer said.

# Here's new district officers

Farmington Hills instituted its new eight-district plan in January.

The officers assigned to the new districts are:

■ Officer Mike Mandorachia on days and Officer Paul Nicholas on afternoons in District A, which includes Sections 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 on the city's northwest side.

■ Officer Kevin Cronin on days and Officer Douglas Muller on afternoons in District B, which includes Sections 30-33 and parts of 28 and 29 in the southwest portion of the city.

■ Officer Larry Fetherolf on days and Officer Stacey Swanderski on afternoons in District C, which includes Sections 25 and 28, 29 and 30 on the city's west side.

■ Officer Mark Meredith on

days and Officer Eric Bueckerry on afternoons in District D, which includes Sections 1, 2, 12 and 13 in the city's northeast.

■ Officer Jim Skrzycki on days and Officer Evan Warachee in District E, which includes Sections 14, 16, 22, 23 and 24 on the city's east side.

■ Officer Jon Haupt on days and Officer Damian Woodmore on afternoons in District F, which includes Sections 7, 16-21 on the city's west side.

■ Officer Gary Lavin on days and Officer Dan Rodriguez on afternoons in District G, which includes Sections 9-11 in the center-north side of the city.

■ Officer Dave Glowacki on days and Officer Mark Mostek on afternoons in District H, which includes Section 35 and parts of 34 and 26.

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