

CABLE CONNECTION

The city of Dearborn won a major victory in U.S. District Court Friday, Aug. 14.

"It is likely" said Dearborn's Mayor Michael Guido, "That it may help set national precedent for the way telecommunications companies can use public rights-of-way."

This is important to you, as a taxpayer, because had the case been decided the other way, you may have been expected to subsidize the use of public rights-of-way by a private, profit making company.

The case involved TCG, a telephone company, that sued the city of Dearborn insisting it shouldn't have to pay to obtain a franchise or pay a franchise fee to run cable through the public rights-of-way.

This is one of the first court decisions interpreting Section 253(c) of the 1996 Federal Telecommunications Act. It is

quite favorable to municipalities on compensation and rights-of-way matters by recognizing that municipalities are entitled to charge rent for the use of public rights-of-way.

Franchises are necessary. Simply stated a franchise is protection. Franchises are designed to manage growth. This is necessary because many utility poles are already at or near capacity.

More importantly, franchises protect local jurisdictions and their residents from enormous financial losses associated with the costs of digging up and repairing roadways, damage to existing utilities, the safe diversion of traffic at a construction site and the resolution of priority disputes between different users.

And, while fees associated with franchises may be passed on to the end user, these fees are minimal in comparison with the cost of reacting to the many



Caren Collins, SWOC executive director.

problems encountered in an environment of unmanaged growth. The bottom line is that we simply cannot expect taxpayers to subsidize the use of public rights-of-way by private, profit-making corporations.

Caren Collins is the executive director for the Southeastern Oakland Cable Commission. The next SWOCC meeting is at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 29, at Farmington Hills City Hall.

OBITUARIES

ROBERT J. BYRNE Robert J. Byrne, 81, of Westland, died Sept. 16, at St. Mary's Hospital in Livonia. Mr. Byrne was an insurance inspector and a World War II Army veteran.

Funeral services were held Sept. 18 at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. William Hale officiating.

BARBARA J. HALE Barbara Jean Hale, 61, of Farmington Hills, died Sept. 19, at Sinai Hospital in Detroit. She is survived by daughter,

Betty Ward; sons, James (Kimberly) Harkins and Lucas Hale; brother, William Hale Jr.; and grandson, Kevin Harkins. Funeral services were held Sept. 17, at Heenev-Sundquist Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Wayne Parker officiating.

Mahle Inc. expands with new technical center in Hills

Gov. John Engler congratulated Mahle Inc. on its decision to expand in Farmington Hills by opening a new technical center. The new 30,000-square-foot center will employ 65-70 people.

The Mahle Group, headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, has approximately 20,000 employees worldwide, 2,000 of whom are in America. "I am pleased that Mahle has seen the advantages of locating in Michigan, and I welcome them as our newest corporate citizen," Engler said.

Added Wolfgang Rein, Mahle director of engineering: "The proximity of our automotive customers and the availability of all the necessary infrastructure for our industry makes Farmington Hills a premier location for our Technology Center." The company expects to move into its new facility in late September.

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Sealed proposals will be received by the City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan at the Clerk's Office at 31555 Eleven Mile Road until 10:00 a.m., Monday, October 5, 1998, at which time and place all proposals will be publicly opened and read aloud. This project consists of installing a 450 foot long passing lane on Drake Road south of 12 Mile Road for the Oxford Estates. Subdivisions at the intersection of Hampden Boulevard. The approximate quantities of major items of the work are as follows:

Bituminous Road Paving..... 200 Tons Aggregate Base..... 200 Tons Concrete Curb and Gutter..... 600 Linear Feet Tree Removal (6"-16")..... 15 Each Plus miscellaneous items necessary for a completed project.

SPOTLIGHT ON Orthodontics by Josephine Finazzo, D.M.D. AN EARLY LOOK By having your child's teeth examined while he or she still has baby teeth, the orthodontist can get an indication of how the permanent teeth will come in. Unless there is adequate space between primary teeth, there is approximately an 80 percent chance that the permanent teeth will be crowded and, therefore, crooked.

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