

Tax from page A4

years later. All money raised would be spent solely on school repairs and improvements, not on salaries or employee benefits.

If approved, the two questions would cost the owner of a home worth \$100,000 and with a taxable value of \$50,000 an extra \$100 a year.

Absent from Monday's meeting was Annette Bowden and her husband, "Butch" Bowden, a former Clarenceville trustee who opposes the two tax questions and who formed the grassroots' group, "Pro-Clarenceville Citizens Against Broken Promises."

A Bowden family member Tuesday said "Butch" Bowden has been hospitalized with pneumonia and was unable to attend the meeting.

Bowden previously said the district should stick to the plan approved by residents in 1996: Spend the approximately \$225,000 gained yearly from the current 0.75-mills on building improvements, let the tax expire, as planned, in 2004, and then go back to residents and ask for more money to keep the repair momentum going.

Former school trustee Gary Gasser, who served on the board when residents passed the 1995 "sinking fund" millage, attended Monday's meeting, but didn't speak publicly.

Confusing voters?

"After the meeting, when asked, he said he is leaning toward Bowden's position."

"We never promised we would not come back and ask for more, but we may have implied or suggested it," Gasser said. "I would have liked to see the present 'sinking fund' millage run its course (until 2004). I think we're losing sight of our original objective, which was to repair the most critical areas. If we ask for more now, it's confusing to the voter."

The district's most critical needs cost \$4.4 million; the district now wants to keep the momentum going and move to the next level of improvements.

"These are still things that need to be done, not luxuries," said trustee Matthew Boettcher. "If we keep the \$225,000 we're now getting, we'll have to be frugal. We're stuck with what we got. If that's the judgment of the district. Then we won't be able to do the things that need to be done."

Costly repairs

To show the gap that exists between need and cost, Tattan pointed to the \$295,000 cost to replace windows in Clarenceville Middle School when the district only gets about \$225,000 yearly from the current "sinking fund."

The 41-page "sinking fund" proposal contains five pages of projects that could be done in the next few years if both tax proposals pass in June.

In 1999-2000, the following projects would be done:

- Complete Clarenceville Middle School window replacement.
- Begin Clarenceville High School window replacement.
- Create a bus loop behind Grandview Elementary.
- Resurface parking lot at Botsford Elementary.
- Replace and improve Clarenceville High boilers and heating system.

In 2000-2001, the following projects would be done:

- Continue window replacement at Clarenceville High.
- Repair roofs as needed.
- Begin renovating plumbing in restrooms.
- Add security lighting at buildings.
- Make playground improvements.

Schools from page A1

School elections. She ran unsuccessfully for state last year.

"I think it's a good idea to have a year of voter involvement with the schools," she said, "standing for school board." Since this is the second time in running, it shows her commitment to public affairs.

She was out of the state and was unavailable for comment at press time.

Important issues to Jaske include increased parental involvement. She has suggested the school board take one meeting monthly to local schools and hold annual "town hall" meetings.

There are approximately 69,000 voters in the Farmington Hills area. The average school election draws roughly a 2.5 percent turnout, or about 1,450 voters, according to Judy Stoinhob, executive secretary to Cheryl Cannon, assistant superintendent for business and operational services.

May 17: Last day to register to vote for June 14 election.

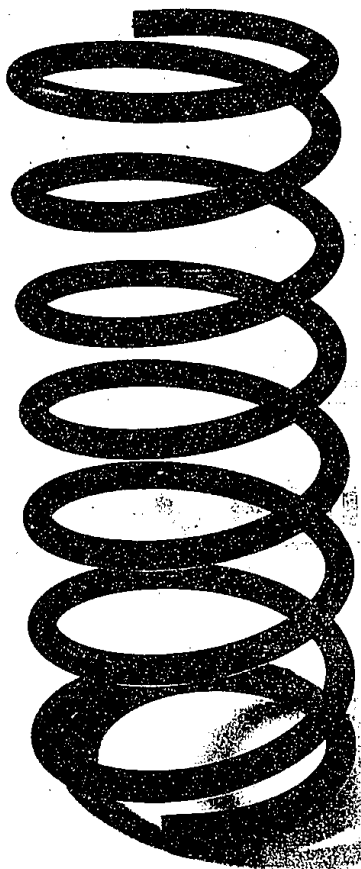
May 25: Absentee ballots available.

June 9: Public accounting law at school in Farmington Hills.

June 14: Election day.

June 15: Results must be delivered to county Board of Canvassers by 10 a.m. The Board must convene within five days to make the official determination as to the election results.

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