

# Hills council weighs ballot issues

BY HEATHER NEEDHAM  
STAFF WRITER

Farmington Hills City Council Monday will decide which ballot issues voters will have to vote on Nov. 2 — and how exactly they will be presented.

“One of the most significant changes involves increasing the mayor and council members’ pay by more than double.”

“Our salary has not changed in 26 years,” Farmington Hills Mayor Aldo Vagnozzi said. Under the proposal, his salary would increase from \$2,700 to \$7,500 annually and individual council members’ salaries would jump from \$1,800 to \$5,000 annually. Subsequent pay increases would be based on the United States Consumer Price Index.

Vagnozzi said council attends

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Aldo Vagnozzi  
—Farmington Hills mayor

roughly 60 meetings per year, meaning he makes roughly \$45 per meeting and council members \$30 per meeting. This doesn’t account for attending city functions, handling voters’ concerns, unscheduled meetings and many other duties of council, he added.

To prevent some voter confusion, the eight ballot proposals likely will be put into groups, Vagnozzi said.

“They’ll probably be grouped

on the ballot,” he said. This means related items would be put together rather than listing each item individually.

The city is planning a public education campaign, involving putting information into the city newsletter and on channel 8, the city’s cable channel.

“We’re trying to get out as much information as possible,” Vagnozzi said.

Farmington Hills was incorporated into a city in 1973, meaning some items in the original charter need updating, Vagnozzi said.

Ballot items to be discussed Monday include:

- Requiring signatures from at least 10 percent of the electorate for petitions, based upon figures from the most recent city election. Signatures must also

- Requiring city employees who are relatives of present employees to work not more than six months without council approval.

- Requiring sealed bids for purchases or contracts involving the expenditure of \$10,000 or more.

- Establishing a salary increase for council members
- Amending the charter to permit council to create administrative departments

- Amending the charter to provide for managerial audits no more frequently than once every 10 years

- Establishing a two-year waiting period for repealing ordinances, dating back from the date they were adopted.

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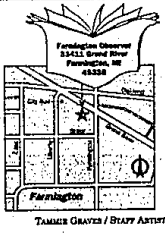
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## Refugees from page A1

the engine. We have a huge engine,” said Unick, who is a woodworker by trade. “They have been a remarkable group.”

Volunteers know “remarkably little” about their first family, Unick said.

Apparently, the family has relatives in Connecticut but they are already besieged with an influx of refugees. Both adults have university degrees, but it’s unknown in what

fields.

Temporary summer work will be available through Farmington Hills Department of Public Works. Other businesses have offered jobs, too.

Organizers have raised enough to cover a security deposit and two month’s rent, Unick said. The goal is to have families self-supporting within two to three months.

Volunteers are still asking for donations, especially serviceable cars refugee families can use.

To help in the transition, “doctors” will be on-call, too.

“I hope they’re not bashful about saying, ‘back off Bucko.’ We could kill them with kindness,” Unick said. “I hope the family can be vocal about what they need.”

## Mural from page A1

Standing on a foot stool, Fisher took 10 days to complete what probably is the biggest still-life painting in Farmington. She used

latex exterior paint and so far, “it’s held up under all of these storms we’ve had.”

The mural was done by Sunday, June 6. Fisher said she used different colors, height and styles to create something visually stimulating. “Colorful and showy is what I was going for.”

Meanwhile, there is room for the mural to be extended further south along the wall if necessary. Cassidy is to soon open her salon, in the rear portion of her business; the mural is near the front of the building, where the gift shop already is open. “I trailed this one off so I could either leave it or continue it.”

Fisher and her husband, Kenneth, have an 11-year-old daughter, Emily, who attends Gill Elementary School.

“And I’ve always done a lot of handwork since I was my daughter’s age,” Fisher said. “A little bit of everything.”

That includes crocheting, cross-stitching and scrimshaw (carving

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