

The Farmington Observer

HOW TO REACH US

Susan Roslok
Publisher
(734) 953-2100
roslok@homecomm.net

Hugh Gallagher
Managing Editor
(734) 951-2149
gallagher@homecomm.net

Joanne Mallazewski
Editor
(248) 477-5450
mallazewski@homecomm.net

Tom Smith
Reporter
(248) 477-5450
smith@homecomm.net

Mary Rodriguez
Community Life Editor
(248) 477-5450
mrodriguez@homecomm.net

Anna Lipar
Ad Representative
(734) 953-2167
lipar@homecomm.net

Bill Bresler
Photographer
(248) 477-5450
bresler@homecomm.net

Michelle Austin
Home Delivery Manager
(734) 953-2242

Dan O'Meara
Sports Editor
(734) 953-2141
omeara@homecomm.net

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The Farmington Observer

A HomeTown Communications Network™ publication
33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335
(On the southwest corner of Grand River and Farmington Rd.)

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One year (Rest of State).....\$60.00	One year (Rest of State).....\$60.00

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Marathon

City council sets goals for year 2000

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
tsmith@homecomm.net

Farmington won't need surgery, just regular check-ups and an occasional prescription. That seemed to be the gist of the Monday, Nov. 29 marathon goal-setting/strategic planning session of the Farmington City Council. The goals for 2000, to be drafted by the administration and submitted to council for adoption in early January, virtually mirror last year's list — with mostly only changes in wording.

One key deletion from the list of six major categories is to "continue increasing administrative efficiency," including renovations to the Public Safety Department and standardization of computer procedures and software applications at city hall. Those goals were achieved in 1999.

"It's an important step for us to take each year," said Mayor Bill Hartsock on Tuesday, Nov. 30 about the strategic planning and goal setting. "We look at the things we've done in the previous year, see how well we did,

and set it up for the next year. (In 1996) we did accomplish a lot. But we're taking a snapshot here. Our projects don't begin on January 1st and end on December 31st."

City Manager Frank Lauffoff reiterated why the annual planning sessions are necessary. "It helps highlight those important things in the community that the city council will focus on."

One of the biggest things is the Civic Theatre, which this summer changed ownership from Greg Hobler to the city.

Hartsock said efforts with Civic manager M.K.A. Inc. to renovate the theater will continue well into 2000. And then, there will be the ongoing issues of bringing in a variety of programming and ensuring the theater will be fiscally solvent.

For nearly three hours, goals and objectives were discussed by the council, along with Lauffoff and Assistant City Manager Bill Richards. A variety of other topics — such as city council assignments and a parking-traffic study — were then talked over for

an additional two hours. The first portion of the evening was spent combing over a strategic planning guide (looking at various strengths and weaknesses, for example). Initiated in 1996, the exercise proceeds actual goal-setting to help define and understand what those goals should be, Lauffoff said.

"It's a tweaking (being done)," Lauffoff said. "Now, for a stable community, modifying the objectives annually is about all that's needed."

During the goal-setting portion, it was decided that the remaining five major categories will stay the same, although there will be language changes made to the sub-categories. The goals will be listed as follows:

1) Maintain public properties in good repair and in an aesthetically pleasing manner, and manage the aging infrastructure in the city.

2) Maintain a program of community maintenance, beautification and environmental efforts in areas outside downtown.

3) Continue intergovernmental cooperation efforts.

4) Maintain the economic vitality and pleasing aesthetics of all commercial areas in the city, especially the downtown area, preserving its historical character and charm.

5) Implement the results of the recently completed planning processes.

Meanwhile, Richards asked whether a category should be added to reflect forthcoming recommendations from Southeast Michigan Council of Governments' Toward Walkable Communities September audit of the downtown area. The half-day audit was done to determine whether Farmington is "walkable, bikeable and pedestrian friendly."

There were lots of good ideas there, Richards said to the council. "They can be implemented quickly and inexpensively."

But the council opted to wait until the actual report is delivered before adding it to the official list.

Mansion to host reception

The Governor Warner Mansion Development Committee is hosting a reception Sunday for "Friends of the Mansion." The reception, not open to the public, is from 1-3 p.m. and will take place at the Warner Mansion, located on Grand River.

Elks host Hoop Shoot Saturday

The Elks National Free Throw Contest, the "Elks Hoop Shoot," will be at 9 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 11 at O.E. Dunckel Middle School in Farmington Hills.

This contest is the largest and most visible of the many youth activities sponsored by Elks lodges throughout the country. More than three million boys and girls between the ages of 8-13 will participate this year.

The "Elks Hoop Shoot" has served to highlight the Elks national commitment to youth. But the program started originally as a local Elk activity in Corvallis, Ore. in 1946.

Out of that local program grew the national program, now in its 28th year. Each of the more than 2,200 lodges were encouraged to establish its own local contest involving boys from ages 8-13. From the local area contestants would advance through district, state, regional, and national competitions.

In the first year, 1971, boys from 19 states participated. Two years later in 1973, over 750,000

boys from 42 states took part in the contest. In the following year girls were added to the competition, and the program has continued to expand ever since. All 50 states and the District of Columbia are represented.

From the millions of youngsters who participate, six champions are named — one boy and one girl — in each of three categories: ages 8-9; 10-11; and 12-13.

The winners each receive a trophy and their names are inscribed at the Naamith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in Springfield, Mass.

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