

SIGN

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the city code. There's also an issue that involves another jurisdiction.

"Oakland County roadway right of way extends to the actual building at this location," Richards said.

"Typically city council has permitted outside seating for eating and drinking establishments on private property only," he added.

Mariani has had outdoor seating and signage in the past. During the Farmington Road construction this year, Farmington officials acknowledged they looked the other way when business owners violated city codes to draw attention to their stores.

Councilwoman Mary Bush saw Mariani's chairs and, as recently as Jan. 5, her A-frame sign. Council always wants to assist businesses, but Bush said she can't this time.

Councilwoman JoAnne McShane voiced similar views. "We looked at the businesses and what went on during the Farmington Road construction and it's definitely true that we looked the other way," McShane said.

"We let things go, things we would normally have seen the code enforcement officer over for. We knew businesses were hurting as it was. We didn't enforce it as strictly as we've done in the past. But now that the road is open, it's back to normal. We have to do it for the well-being of all."

Councilman Arnold Campbell suggested looking at how other communities handle this issue when there is a limited amount of sidewalk.

"Maybe there is an alternative that we don't think about," Campbell said to Farmington Downtown Development Authority Director Brent Morgan.

"Making an exception for one business can set a precedent," Campbell said.

"The city's concerns are based on the fact that Farmington Road and Grand River are two major corridors in the district. Traffic there travels at a higher rate of speed," said Kevin

Gushman, public services director.

The sidewalk is more narrow than in other locations where requests for tables and chairs were granted, McShane said.

Sidewalks adjacent to the main roadway are more heavily traveled by pedestrians, bicyclists and handicapped people.

Outside seating in these areas presents more of a problem by restricting the sidewalk width.

These are public sidewalks and officials worry that if someone was injured, the city could be liable for damages.

Dino Mariani, Anna's husband, said a city-placed bench on Grand River and Farmington Roads is only about a foot away from the curb.

"If kids sit on the bench and a car jumps the curb, it is a lot faster to get hit on that bench than on my chair," Dino said. "There's a bench outside the ice cream parlor and there's a bench outside of the Civic Theatre."

Gushman said permission was granted in the areas Dino mentioned. An obstacle at the Mariani business could make pedestrians and bicyclists go around and into the road, he said.

A sign provides exposure and improves business.

"I'm in a center unit of Village Mall," Dino said. "If you catch the red light, you will see me. If you don't catch the red light, you won't. I have people behind the police who don't even know I'm there. They ask, 'Have you just opened?'"

"No, I haven't just opened," he added. "I've been here a year."

Though sympathetic, Mayor Jim Dunne believes the Main Street program may provide a solution to the problem the Mariani's face in trying to get the word out. This week, about 15 local residents attended meetings in Pontiac to learn more about the program, which will provide three years of technical assistance for developing and marketing the downtown business district.

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BOARD

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so this is pretty extraordinary."

As commission chairman, Law said he will have to help the incoming commissioners get acclimated to their new positions in a hurry, because the county faces a serious budget crisis. He said the county had to trim \$13 million from this year's budget to balance it, and will be forced to do the same for the next couple of years.

The county is in the midst of an early retirement program, and needs about 250 senior employees to take advantage of



County Commissioner Mike Rogers makes light of his wife's absence Thursday night during a swearing-in ceremony. She arrived with his two children while he was still at the podium.

it. If they don't, the commission might have to lay off employees to cut the budget.

"We're going to be dealing with some difficult and challenging times, mainly with the budget. Obviously with so many new members, it is going to be a challenge. Anytime you come to a new job, there's going to be a learning curve, because you've not done the job before," Law said. "But it's not like we have people coming in with no political or business experience. We have some real talented people joining us. As long as we work together, we'll form a good team."

New District 16 Commissioner Mike Rogers (R-Farmington) thinks having an infusion of new blood will actually be beneficial as the body battles the looming budget crisis.

"I think this is a good thing. You have people that haven't been here, so we're going to ask questions that the people who have been here a while might not ask. We're going to look at the issues a little differently. We have some fresh ideas," said Rogers, a civil engineer serving in his first elected position.

Commissioner Eric Coleman (D-Southfield), in his fourth term, said the best advice he can give new members is to "hit the ground running." But he



County Commissioner Mike Rogers bows his head during prayer before he takes his oath of office Thursday night during a swearing-in ceremony.

said even the returning commissioners will have to go through a learning process, as they develop relationships with new members and understand the issues they are interested in.

"This is history in the making. This is going to be a learning experience for all of us," he said.

"Over a period of time, you

get to know your fellow commissioners and what issues they are involved in. You almost know how they are going to vote. But this is a different ballgame. Every two years is a different ballgame, but when you have 50 percent new faces, you are going to go through a learning period."

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CHAMBER

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Wilson is general manager at Bob Sellers, where he has been employed for 23 years. The walls of his office are crowded with plaques expressing appreciation for his and the company's volunteerism and contributions.

"Mr. Sellers and I have the same philosophy. We really enjoy helping people."

Wilson said the company's partnership with the chamber has been a two-way street. By getting involved, Bob Sellers Pontiac-GMC has had the opportunity to network and keep the company's name in the public eye. While also investing in regular advertising, Sellers and Wilson see an even greater value in contributing to the schools and other worthwhile causes.

"The chamber is a vehicle that we enjoy belonging to and feel it has a lot of value."

A volunteer mentor with the Winning Futures program for high school students, Wilson is also involved with the Novi Rotary, Farmington Schools Vocational Advisory Board, Southeast Michigan Vocational Board, the Call to Action Coalition and the Exchange Club. He serves on the President's Advisory Council at Walsh College.

The dealership received a "Friends of Education" award after hosting classes of fourth and fifth graders in an activity that gave them a glimpse of adult life. Students filled out a credit application, learning the value of protecting their credit rating, then visited the service center to learn the importance of maintaining a car and the collision shop — to see what happens when people don't drive carefully.

"Keith has been for me the prototypical business partner," said Farmington Schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield, "because he really understands this is a mutual kind of thing."

Maxfield described Wilson as "genuinely nice" and someone who has been very generous with his time.

"He's just one of those guys you can always count on," he said. "He knows it's good business, but that's not the point."

The Bob Sellers dealership, in business 31 years, has consistently been ranked among the top five in the nation in sales volume and has won awards for customer service and satisfaction.

The Farmington Hills location opened in 1978.

"It's just been a wonderful area," Wilson said. "We take care of the community, and the community takes care of us."

Keith and his wife, Kathy, have been married 33 years and

have a blended family of three daughters. They are grandparents of eight and in June became great-grandparents. A five-generation family picture taken last year included Keith's father, who is 85 and lives in Florida.

Speaking on behalf of the Farmington Observer, Observer & Eccentric Executive Editor Susan Kosiek said, "We're as always happy to support the chamber and the Farmington/Farmington Hills business community. The awards honoring the Good Partner and Partnership are one of the highlights of the evening because they reflect the hard work and good will that local businesses and businesspeople extend to the community. The awards honor the local effort, and that's what the Farmington Observer, the community local newspaper is all about."

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WOODLAND LANES

Mid Season Leagues Starting in January 2003!

MENS LEAGUES

- MON. 6:25 pm LIVONIA TROPHY or ST. EDITH-5 man teams
- MON. 9:15 pm ODBALLS-4 to 1 team-Battle of the sexes-Any combo of men or women
- TUES. 6:25 pm FIBR PARTS-5 man teams
- WED. 1:45 pm 5 MAN TEAMS-Any average
- FRI. 9:15 am MIDNIGHTERS-Night shift workers-Ladies welcome TOO!
- FRI. 6:40 pm GRANDALE-5 man teams-1000 team maximum average

LADIES LEAGUES

- MON. 9:15 pm ODBALLS-Any combo of men or women-Any average welcome
- WED. 12:30 pm AFTERNOON DELIGHTS-Any average-FREE BABYSITTING
- WED. 7:10 pm WOODLAND ROLLERS-Any average-EARLY TIME
- THUR. 5:00 pm ALLSTATE LADIES TRIO-Any average

MIXED LEAGUES

- MON. 9:15 pm ODBALLS-Battle of the sexes-Any combo of men or women-Any average
- MON. 9:30 pm PICKUSTERS-Any combo of 3-SHORT SEASON LEAGUE
- WED. 9:30 pm DBL FOURSOME-Any combo of 4-SHORT SEASON LEAGUE-STARTS FEB. 5th
- FRI. 12:45 am MIDNIGHT MIXED-Afternoon shift workers
- SAT. 8:30 pm EVERY OTHER WEEK-Two couples
- SUN. 3:30, 6:00 or 8:30 pm EVERY OTHER WEEK-Any combo of 4

INDIVIDUALS AND TEAMS NEEDED FOR DAYTIME LEAGUES • LADIES...FREE BABYSITTING!
MON. 9:30 am • TUES. 9:30 am • WED. 12:30 pm or 1:00 pm • THURS. 9:15 am

SENIOR CITIZEN LEAGUES
MON.-12:00 pm & 12:45 pm
TUES.-12:00 pm
THURS.-1:00 pm
FRI.-12:15 pm

KIDS BUMPER BOWLING
MON.-After School-4:15
TUES.-12:30 pm
SAT.-9:45 am
SAT.-12:00 noon

YOUTH LEAGUES
MON.-After School-4:15
FRI.-After School-4:15
SAT.-9:30 am
SAT.-12:00 noon

SUPER BOWLIN' KIDS CLUB!

FREE Bowling Ball & Bag For Each Youth Bowler!
(at the end of the league)

EVERY MONDAY
After School at 4:15 pm
(16 weeks starting Jan. 13th)

\$8.95 per wk.

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