

# Facts On School Operating Costs, Needs Given

(This is the first of two articles giving information on the school operating millage proposal to be voted on by citizens in the Farmington School District on December 10.)

Less than two weeks now remain for voters of the local school district to decide whether they are willing to pay the same school taxes they are now paying to permit continuance of the type of educational program presently being offered boys and girls in the community.

Monday, December 10, a special school election will be held to determine how the majority of the citizens of the community feel on this matter.

Only one proposition will appear on the ballot for voters to decide on.

This will be a proposition seeking approval for the continuance of a \$3 operating tax levy per \$1,000 state equalized valuation which is due to expire at the end of the current tax year. This special operating tax levy, one of three special operating levies approved by voters of the local community over and above the levy for operations allowed without approval, was approved in July of 1953.

Approval on the continuance of the levy is being sought for another ten year period. School officials have indicated

that they have no reason to believe that any less than this amount will be needed for at least this long. They are quick to add, however, that if the community's tax base is improved enough at any point during this time to require less in the levy rate would be made.

Any elector who is a registered voter and lives in the Farmington School District is eligible to vote on this proposition. Many have questioned why voting should not be restricted to property owners alone in view of the fact that it involves the taxing of property owners. Local school officials

have nothing to say on this matter since present state law stipulates that both property owners and non-property owners must be permitted to cast ballots.

THE SCHOOL district is divided into four voting precincts which have entirely different boundaries than the precincts for voting on other than school matters. Electors who have any doubts about what precinct they are in or where the polling place for their precinct is are urged to check with school officials prior to election day to make certain. The precinct polling places are: Precinct I - Farmington Junior High; Precinct II - Dunkle Junior High;

Precinct III - Eagle School; and Precinct IV - Middlebelt School.

Farmington School officials are not denying that the local public school system's taxes are high. But, they do offer some rather convincing information to substantiate their claim that it is not because of any extravagances in operating the system but rather because of the poor tax base that the local community has. Lack of balanced development causes this low tax base.

During the 1950-51 school year Farmington's school operating costs per child ran \$248.61. Like all other businesses, the local school system as

well as others throughout the nation are finding operating costs continuing to climb. The operating cost per child for the 1951-52 school year in Farmington jumped to \$365.04.

THIS SEEMS like a lot of money to spend every year to educate each child in the public schools here but when compared with state and county averages it is plain to see that these costs are not at all excessive. They are, in fact, very favorable.

During the 1950-51 school year the average operating cost per child for all school systems in Oakland County ran \$309.88 or over \$21 per child higher than the local per pupil costs.

The average operating cost per child for systems in the entire state for this same year ran \$328.36 or almost \$11 above the costs per child locally. When one considers that many of the school systems included in figuring this state average in rural areas of the state out of local operating cost figures look even more impressive.

WHILE Farmington spent \$365.04 in operations per child during the 1951-52 school year or over \$16 per pupil more than in the previous year it is an increase that is not out of line. The average for other school systems in Oakland County went up from \$309.88 per pupil to \$387.11 or more

than \$17. As of last year, therefore, Farmington spent over \$22 less per pupil to operate than the average district county-wide.

A figure on the average operating cost per pupil for the entire state for the past school year has not yet been released.

A question often asked by citizens is where does all the school operating money go. Some are critical of alleged extravagance in the kinds of equipment and materials being bought for school buildings and also in the amounts being spent for heating and lighting and like. Perhaps there are some

See SCHOOL FACTS Column 4, Page 8A

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### Feeling Strong Against Re-zoning Town Hall Site

A unanimous voice of opposition to the proposed re-zoning of the Town Hall site at the corner of Grand River and Farmington Road from residential and parking to commercial was registered at an initial public hearing before the City Planning Commission Monday night.

The eight or nine citizens who spoke out of the approximately 15 present at the hearing expressed strong sentiment for keeping the old Town Hall standing as a community landmark if at all possible. Two letters expressing opposition to the proposed re-zoning at this time were also read.

It was stated that the Town Hall, as a well-known community landmark, adds distinction and atmosphere to Farmington and should be preserved for its historical value if for no other reason. A suggestion was made that it might still

serve as a very suitable community meeting place if made available for this use.

ALL WHO spoke expressed concern about possible commercial uses the property might be put to and what, if any, steps might be taken to avoid an undesirable type of commercial development. City Manager John Dinan stated that deed restrictions could be placed on the property at the time of sale to limit its commercial uses.

It was pointed out by planners during discussion that no civic group has as yet come forward with any plans for renovation or use of the building.

Councilman Howard Thayer, in attendance at the meeting as an interested citizen, urged the planners not to act hastily in making a recommendation, but to give community groups a chance to see what they could do in coming up with a plan to preserve the building.

John Allen, local businessman and planning commission member, proposed the formation of a special committee with representatives of the Township Board, City Council and Masonic Lodge on it, to make a thorough investigation into any re-zoning action is taken.

IT WAS his feeling that the committee should concern itself with the town hall site.

See TOWN HALL SITE Column 7, Page 8A

### Hearing on House Move Set for Dec. 3

The public hearing on the proposed moving of a house from the corner of Farmington Road and Alta Loma to some vacant property on Cass Street in the City has now been rescheduled for Monday, Dec. 3. City Manager John Dinan announced this week.

The hearing which was started on this proposed house move at the regular City Council meeting last week was nullified on a legal technicality. Indications were given at that time it might take as much as a month to fulfill all legal requirements for rescheduling the hearing.

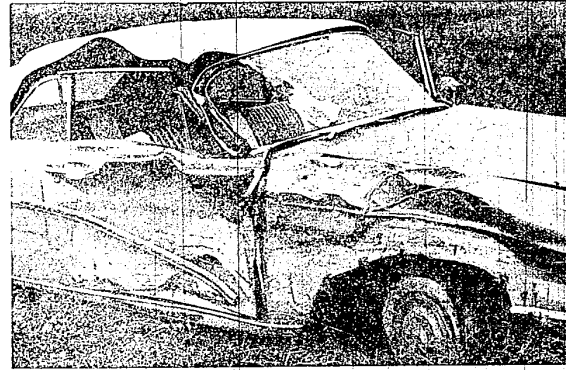


Town Hall site at corner of Grand River and Farmington Road.

The Township, through the cooperation of the Oakland County DPW, has applied for a federal grant to help finance construction of the Farmington Sanitary Sewer Arm in the Township's proposed Industrial Park Area.

Both projects appear to have good chance of qualifying for the newly released federal funds, according to Supervisor Hall.

A special meeting of the Board of Education will meet Monday evening, Dec. 3, or Wednesday evening, Dec. 5, to advertise for construction bids in the event favorable action is received on the grants.



A TROUBLESOME intersection in Farmington Township which has been the scene of frequent auto accidents in the past produced the above results last week. The scene, 13 Mile Road and Middlebelt, badly needs a stop-go traffic light as motorists do not have a clear

### Bribery Charges Fizzle But Twp. Board Steams

The Farmington Township Board has demanded, and apparently will get, a formal apology in writing from Emil Huck, Jr., who on Monday of this week leveled a blast at them when his application for the transfer of a SDM liquor license at Huck's Party Store 2014 Eight Mile Road, became complicated.

Township Board members fumed at their Monday evening, November 26, meeting when they learned Huck had threatened to "blow the lid off the Township" and expose officials who allegedly were bribed into approving transfers on liquor licenses.

"I know of at least two occasions where money changed hands," Huck reportedly stated in the presence of several Township employees on Monday.

HIS REMARKS WERE later reported to Township officials and Supervisor Curt Haver requested Joseph T. Brennan, Township Attorney, to obtain

an explanation of the charges immediately.

Brennan, who was contacted at his home by Huck, telephoned Huck to inquire about the charges. He later told Board members he received substantially the same accusations from Huck as were earlier reported by the Township employees.

The serious nature of the charges cannot go unanswered," stated Huck, "and I think we should pursue the matter with vigor."

The bribery charges were not pin-pointed to any of the Township Board members, but according to Brennan offered substantial grounds for a law suit against Huck based on slander.

TRUSTEE THOMAS A. Duke supported Hall's feeling in the matter. He said, "I have the utmost confidence in the integrity of this Board and believe he (Huck) should be held fully accountable for his statements, whether they be right or wrong."

Brennan suggested to the Board a formal written statement be obtained from Huck, who manages the Black Knight Lounge at 15131 Plymouth Road in addition to owning the party store on Eight Mile Road in Farmington Township, either repudiating or substantiating the bribery charges.

It was further suggested by Trustee Ray Wilcox that action on the transfer of Huck's liquor license be delayed until such a

See BRIBERY CHARGE Column 3, Page 8A

### Village Meeting Dates Changed

A change in the regular meeting dates for the Village of Quakertown has been announced.

### Another Wreck At Middlebelt & 13 Mile Road

A car-truck accident at the troublesome 13 Mile Road and Middlebelt intersection in Farmington Township sent two drivers to the hospital on Friday morning, November 23.

Miss Patricia Hildman, 19, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Russell Hildman of 3721 Bealwood in Farmington, was taken to William Beaumont Hospital for treatment of injuries she suffered when a car she was driving was struck by a gravel truck.

Farmington Township Police said Miss Hildman, a sophomore at the University of Michigan, was driving west on 13 Mile Road when the gravel truck entered the intersection from Middlebelt Road and a truck, her car, knocking it 175 feet off the highway.

THE DRIVER OF the gravel truck, Peter B. Mellesmoen, 31, of Troy, told police he thought he had stopped at the intersection but did not remember just what did happen.

Mellesmoen was also taken to William Beaumont Hospital for injuries suffered in the accident.

Miss Hildman told police an other gravel truck had made the stop at 13 Mile Road (a through street with an amber flasher traffic signal) and proceeded south on Middlebelt following the accident.

See AUTO ACCIDENT Column 1, Page 8A

### Xmas Display Contest Planned

The Farmington Junior Chamber of Commerce announced this week that they will be sponsoring an outdoor Christmas decorations and lighting contest for all City and Township homeowners to enter again this year.

The theme this year as last will be "Let's Put Christ Back Into Christmas."

### School Board to Delay on Change in Salary Schedule

#### Amendment To Close Door On Loopholes

Farmington Township Attorney Joseph T. Brennan submitted to the Township Board Monday evening, November 26, a draft of a proposed amendment to the Township's Connection Charge Ordinance which would prevent special assessment costs levied for capital improvements from being evaded by property owners.

The proposed amendment drafted by Brennan will safeguard against any possible loophole which may exist in the present ordinance regulating the Township's sewer and water program.

THE PROPOSED amendment will be acted on by the Township Board at its next regular meeting, Monday evening, December 3, or at a special meeting to be held next week either on Monday, Dec. 3, or Wednesday, Dec. 5.

Provided in the proposed amendment will be an additional connection charge for property owners making application to connect into Township sewer and water lines when in installments on special assessment payments outstanding against the property exist which are due and unpaid. Any special assessment installments which are unpaid but not due at the time application is made for connection will not be included in the additional charge.

Brennan told the Board the amendment would benefit the Township in both present and future bonding programs.

An instructional report on the newer programs being offered for handicapped children of the area through the special education department of the Farmington public school system was given at the Township Board of Education meeting Monday night.

Special education department director Hugh Watson and members of his staff outlined in detail the various new types of services being provided for children.

The role the special education department is playing in working with those children with handicaps who remain in regular classrooms was first discussed. It was explained how referrals on problem pupils are made by regular classroom teachers and the following through that results. Also discussed was the close relationship that exists between the regular classroom teacher and the counselor with regard to those children having handicaps but remaining in the normal classrooms.

THE INSTRUCTOR in the pre-school deaf room, opened this year at the Cloverdale School, outlined the work that she is doing with a small group of deaf youngsters in the 2½ to 4½ age group. Pointed out by her was the fact that some of the little ones she is now work-

Farmington Education Association members' hopes of getting a new salary schedule plan proposed by them put into effect yet during the current school year have been squelched.

A resolution was unanimously adopted by the Board of Education at its regular meeting Monday night expressing approval in principle with the type of salary schedule plan proposed by the FEA as opposed to the blanket increase plan now in effect. But, an important provision in the resolution adopted was that it was felt that more time was needed to study details of such a new plan and the impact it would have on the finances of the school district in years to come.

#### Name Director For Two Special School Depts.

Action was taken by the Farmington Board of Education Monday night approving the appointment of Richard Tyler to the newly created combination position of director of adult education and the summer school program.

The directorship of the summer school program, initiated this year, was under Tyler's charge and now the supervision of the adult education program is being added.

This will remain as a part-time job and Tyler will continue in his regular teaching duties at Farmington Senior High as well as directing the two programs. No details were given as to what the pay would be for this combination directorship position.

BOARD ACTION was also taken approving the rehiring of Donald Hossler as recommended by the administration. Until the current school year Hossler had served as an administrative assistant on the school system's staff. Due to his wife's health and a doctor's recommendation that a warm

See NEW DIRECTOR Column 5, Page 8A

### School Board Gets Report On New Special Ed Section

ing with have other handicaps as well as not being able to hear.

It was indicated by her that progress is being made in developing a feeling in these youngsters minds that they can make their own way in life despite their hearing handicap.

Work that is being done with a small group of boys and girls who are exceptionally disturbed emotionally in three separate classrooms at the new Flanders elementary school was also discussed. These boys and girls fall into two groups, it was explained. There are those who are prone to strike out against others because of their emotional problems and those who are withdrawn because of these same problems.

THE INSTRUCTORS in charge of this program explained that it was their job to work closely on a personal basis with each boy and girl. The long range goal is to eventually get these boys and girls adjusted to the point where they can again be coping with regular teachers and attend regular classes.

Information on what the total billing would be was made available.

The City's total school tax billing this year ran \$703,185.63 which is just slightly under \$22,000 more than the billing of a year ago. The City's total county tax billing ran \$121,238.30. This is a hike of \$4,812 in the county billing from a year ago.

#### Meeting Falling on Dec. 24 Canceled

The date for the second Board of Education meeting for the month of December this year falls on the 24th but the Board has no intentions of meeting on Christmas Eve. The regular Board meeting Monday night, cancelling the meeting for the fourth Monday of next month, was given that a special meeting might be called on a different day near the end of the month if the new program is not being given the go-ahead in the near future, business that cannot wait until after the first of the year.

See SALARY PLAN Column 4, Page 8A

#### City Out Early With Tax Bills

All county and school tax bills for the current year have now been mailed out by the City of Farmington treasurer's department and payments are already beginning to trickle back in.

Employees in the Township treasurer's office are now busy engaged in getting bills ready but are not expecting to have them mailed much before December 10, Treasurer Elise Avery stated. Normal operations in getting bills ready to go into the mail have been hampered some as result of the shifting around that has been necessary preparatory to making the move into the new Township Hall, she explained.

No information on what the total billing would be was made available.

See SALARY PLAN Column 4, Page 8A