



McCosh's Column

How Do You Sell Efficiency?

How do you sell a city? That problem has plagued the writers of the charter for the proposed "City of Farmington Hills" for several months now.

What it is boiling down to is that the biggest, most important selling point - administrative efficiency - is the toughest to get across to the public.

Mention taxes, and a crowd develops. The politicians are concerned with the method of selection of the council. But efficiency? Well, is the old system so bad?

It is unfortunate that many people equate "bad government" only with corruption, with politicians deliberately trying to make out for themselves; the public be hanged.

BUT AT A recent meeting of the Farmington Township Board, it became apparent that it is possible for many people to do exactly what they think they should do to serve the public, and you still get confusion.

A group of residents had what should probably have been a simple complaint: A sewer was built in front of their house, but the work had not been properly completed.

Faced with this kind of thing, they "called city hall."

Unfortunately, there is no city hall; there is a township.

And in Farmington Township, most people who work there know a wall of incommunication lies between the township clerk and supervisor's office.

Even more important, people familiar with township government realize that a supervisor is theoretically supposed to keep the assessment roll (a job done by an assessor in Farmington).

A clerk keeps records, and runs elections.

But over the years, in Farmington Township, the work has become more complex, and it gets done by whoever is willing and able to do it.

THE RESULT of the residents' complaint, which apparently went to both the "warring" township offices, was that both the clerk and the supervisor went to work on the problem.

When the confrontation at the board developed, a group of confused residents was left trying to figure out who was supposed to solve their problem.

Clerk Floyd Cairns was called "unresponsive," and Supervisor Earl Teeplees was attacked for being ineffective, mainly by Trustee Fredrick Lichtman.

Cairns finally said he would call the contractor, Teeplees protested that he would do it if someone would let him, and another administrative matter was finished, sort of.

WHILE THE POLITICS are another issue, what should have been demonstrated at the hearing was the confusion of not having clear lines of authority and responsibility in Town Hall.

With three elected administrators, who may or may not speak to each other, this is difficult.

As if to cap off the evening, Clerk Cairns unrolled a huge water main project he has been negotiating with developers.

The omen was clear—about a third of the land in the township is about to be developed. This kind of development could increase the work load at town hall tremendously.

Can even cooperation between the supervisor and clerk take care of this kind of work load efficiently? Obviously the charter commissioners don't think so.

Their problem is to convince the public.

Open Study Sessions --Are They Working?

By STEVE BARNABY

background

FARMINGTON After much prodding by many factions, including the Farmington Enterprise and Observer, the Farmington school board finally opened its study sessions to the public.

The first thing one can't help but notice is that the conference room on Shawwassee is devoid of the public.

In contrast to the regular Tuesday night meeting, the Tuesday night meeting, the spectator section is empty except for the lone representative from the Farmington Education Association.

THE WEARY board members and school administrators wander into the session after a tiring day at their own jobs. Some look at the empty seats and simply shake their heads.

The mood for the night is casual. The name plates have been removed from the table and many of the members wear sport clothes. First names predominate over the formal "Mr." and "Mrs."

Although a particular matter has been picked for discussion, the debate that occurs wanders to various subjects that concern board members, administrators, and the public.

The board and the administrators discuss these problems and concerns. The public is silent.

The announcement is made by board President Kenneth Perrin that after the discussion the "vast audience" will be allowed to ask questions and make comments about decisions being formed which will mold the education of Farmington's children. There haven't been any questions or comments from the parents yet.

THE OPEN study sessions last about two hours. Purpose of these sessions is to let the people know about plans being made for the Farmington education system.

Nothing is voted on, and no firm decisions are made. The decisions are made at the Tuesday night meeting. The people don't speak on

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Exchange Students Back From Europe

By RON KENDAL and GREG WORKMAN
Specials Writers

American way of life. Now I see how fortunate most Americans really are," she said.

Victi Swann and Denise Ulrich traveled abroad through the efforts of Youth For Understanding. The \$850

Merit Test Scheduled

FARMINGTON The three Farmington High Schools will be conducting the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test on Saturday, Oct. 28 from 8 to 11 p.m.

All interested juniors are urged to register in the counseling center at any of the high schools. Registration fee is \$2.50.

The PSAT NMSQT is designed to aid secondary

also found the people were more hospitable and opened minded.

Denise found Finland a country where family is very important. The high point of her trip was a brief visit to the USSR.

All three girls expressed a desire for further traveling in hopes of gaining more knowledge of our neighbors across the sea.

fee included a round trip ticket, insurance, and a family with which to stay in a foreign land.

Miss Swann found that the teens in Denmark "know a lot about the world scene." She

schools in counseling high school juniors as they plan for college and to serve juniors who wish to be considered for scholarships administered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

The test also provides an early measure of the verbal and mathematical abilities tested by the College Entrance Examination Board's scholastic aptitude test, which many colleges require of applicants for admission.

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