

FORWARD

The Official Newsletter of The Dearborn Federation of School Employees

1107 Washington Street, Dearborn, Michigan 48124 313-274-5900

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Happy Leap Day! The FORWARD has been this union's publication for about 60 years, and this is the first edition ever released on February 29th of a leap year.

Well, bravo, congratulations and thank you! The millage passed. The results were quite impressive with the yes vote garnering 14,132 votes to 5,592 no votes. So, what does this mean for us and Dearborn homeowners? For us, it means that our wages will not be affected, nor will there be a need for layoffs. In other words, our jobs will remain the same as they currently are. Regarding Dearborn homeowners and businesses, it is important to understand how our operational millage works. It is a tax that is voted on every 10 years, and it is made up of two components: One is the 18 mills that are levied on non-homestead properties. These are properties that are not your main household like small businesses, rental homes and even Ford Motor Company. These 18 mills are the same in every district throughout the entire State of Michigan, and we are no different in that respect. The second part is what is referred to as the "hold harmless" portion. This is the part of the millage that relates to your homestead or the home that you live in. In 1994, this portion was 6.85 mills, and in recent years, it was reduced to 6.17 mills. The millage we just approved on Tuesday, will reduce it further to 4 mills. This 4 mills is the cap on this millage meaning it cannot be increased above 4 mills. This tax is not an arbitrary number that our local leaders choose but rather it is a tax that is determined every year by the State Legislature through a formula and then sent to the school districts to implement. Currently, our millage rate is 2.05 mills which is about one-half of the 4-mill cap, and this is because it is based on the student population of Dearborn. The student population could rise or fall but if it increases, the district cannot go above the 4-mill cap. So, in short, by approving this millage measure, we have secured a lower

tax rate for our future, and we are still adequately funding our district and its employees. Again, thank you to all who voted and helped pass this measure. We will not have to visit this millage again for 10 years.

Now that the millage is passed, we will turn our attention to the growth of our membership and the training of new members to take the future leadership roles of our union. AFT Michigan holds regular training sessions that will be made available to interested members once the dates of the training are announced. If you are interested in learning more about leadership roles in our union, stay tuned for future announcements.

If you wish to contact us, please see below:

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Our next *General Membership Meeting* will be on March 14th, in room #12 at the ASC building, located at 18700 Audette Street in Dearborn. This meeting will begin at approximately 6:30 p.m.

If you are interested in joining our union, please contact Kathy Rabadi or Al Lerini through their contacts listed above or call our office at: 313-274-5900.

They are our go-to board members for enrollment and will help you through the process. If you are already a registered member and

know others that may be interested, please encourage them to contact us.

Check out our website! The website address is dfse4750.mi.aft.org