

County board puts the pinch on sheriff's patrols

By Mike Scanlon
staff writer

Eleven townships pay Oakland County a total of \$1,988,446 for police protection — and the county may not give them a nickel's more worth of protection than that from now on.

A County Board of Commissioners committee Thursday voted 5-4 to prohibit Sheriff Johannes Spreen from continuing what had been the routine practice of providing townships with 56 hours of patrol for every 40 hours paid for.

The action came after Spreen and Undersheriff Robert Nyovich were grilled by committee members on what

James Brennan, director of management and budget, said was some \$22,000 in unauthorized overtime payments this quarter.

Brennan also said another \$7,000 in overtime was questionable. Some \$70,000 in authorized patrol overtime payments were made in the same period, he said.

Meanwhile, overtime at the overcrowded county jail reached \$100,000 in the same period but was not discussed by the finance committee.

THE 5-4 VOTE on a Brennan-submitted resolution to limit overtime split cleanly along party lines, with the outnumbered committee Democrats

opposing it. An amendment was added that the overtime limit would not be allowed to reduce contracted hours below 40.

The 99 deputies assigned to road patrol duties are split in two groups. Some 53 deputies are contracted out by 11 townships at the annual rate of \$37,716 each. Avon Township, with 17 deputies on contract, uses the most.

Another 46 deputies are assigned to at-large patrols, or "circuit cars" in sheriff jargon.

Brennan contended that Spreen assigned overtime, circuit-car patrolmen to contract patrols.

"There are enough people over there to fill the positions on straight time," Brennan said. "To expand the road patrol by the use of overtime is in violation of the (county and state) overtime provisions."

"If the sheriff wants to use his 46 (at-large) men to provide 56 hours of service when we have a contract for 40 hours, that's fine. But he cannot use

those contracted people somewhere else and replace them with overtime."

SPREEN, who began the meeting by announcing his withdrawal from the race for governor, criticized the cut-back.

"I imagine this was going on just before Rome burned," said Spreen.

The overtime limit combined with 24-hour shifts will leave each circuit car patrolling 100 square miles, said

Spreen, who had some allies on the committee.

"I'm not going to stand here and watch this sheriff pilloried and castigated," said Commissioner Alexander Perinoff, D-Southfield. "We're the ones who created the problem. He (Spreen) didn't create the problem. We've got such waste in this county it's abominable."

Perinoff was not specific.

Spreen quits governor's race

Oakland County Sheriff Johannes Spreen has dropped out of the governor's race charging that "political vultures" opposed to his candidacy were harming the sheriff's department.

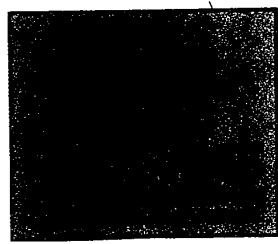
Spreen said the "vultures" were trying to hurt his chances to run for governor and were harming the department in the process. Spreen did not name any of those he said were trying to hurt his chances.

A Democrat, Spreen made the same announcement twice Thursday, once at

the beginning of a morning Board of Commissioners committee meeting and again at an afternoon news conference.

"I'm not going to let the department get picked apart by political vultures," said the third-term sheriff, adding that he had asked that a committee formed for his campaign be dissolved.

Spreen, of Farmington Hills, also dropped out of the 1978 race for the statehouse after he failed to collect enough petition signatures.



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For a \$10 fee, you will get a complete inspection of your home by an energy specialist from your utility. You will learn how effective your present insulation, weatherstripping, caulking and other energy cost saving measures are, and you will be provided with information on specific things you can do to reduce energy waste.

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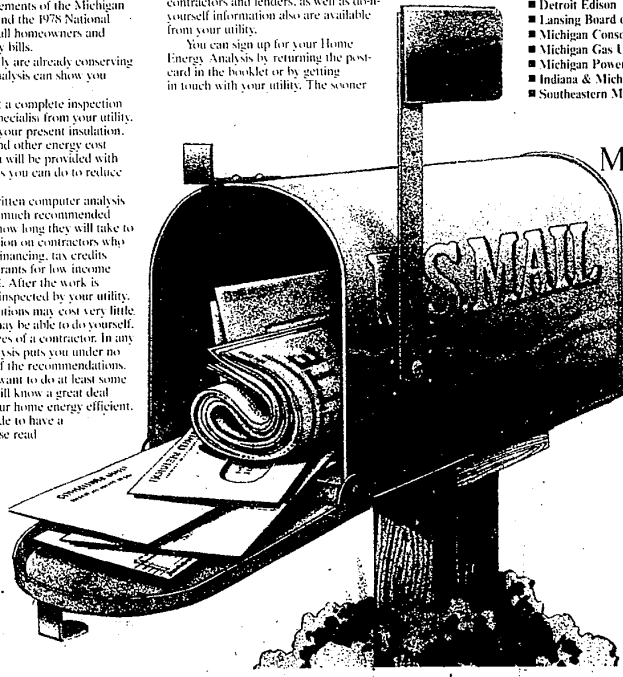
the booklet that comes with your June bill or by a separate mailing. It lists many things you can start doing right now to save energy and money. The booklet also tells you about assistance you can get from your utility to help you make your home more energy efficient — with or without the Home Energy Analysis. Lists of contractors and lenders, as well as do-it-yourself information also are available from your utility.

You can sign up for your Home Energy Analysis by returning the postcard in the booklet or by getting in touch with your utility. The sooner

you sign up, the sooner you can start reducing energy waste in your home.

The Michigan Residential Conservation Services program is conducted through the utilities listed below. You can select any one of which you are a customer to perform your Home Energy Analysis.

- Consumers Power Company
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- Southeastern Michigan Gas Co.



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