

# Parks millage may go on May 18 primary ballot

By MARY LOU CALLOWAY  
 Voters in the May 18 presidential primary will be asked to approve a five-year

millage request of 25 cents per \$1,000 equalized valuation property tax for the continuation and operation of county parks and recreation facilities.

The millage request will not put a deeper dent in taxpayers' pockets because the one-quarter mill is a renewal request—it is approved by a 2-1 margin in 1975.

Recommendation for a millage renewal was made Feb. 12 by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission.

"THIS ACTION is contrary to recent discussions with Dan Murphy (the county executive)," said E. Frank Richardson, chairman of the parks and recreation commission. "However, in talking to Dan about it, he indicated that if we decided to go to the people, he would support our action."

Murphy opposed putting the millage on the ballot and has proposed putting the

parks under his control with the power to veto any appropriations.

OFFICIALS of two parks commissions opposed putting the renewal on the May 18 ballot, the majority agreed.

We recommended the millage renewal be placed on the May 18 ballot because we feel there will be a minimal number of proposals on that ballot. For lack of clutter, voters will be able to make a better choice in contrast to the expected number of proposals to be placed on the August primary ballot, Richardson said. If the millage does not pass in May, most of the commissioners said they felt they could go back to the voters in August.

Betty Fortino, a Democratic parks commissioner from Waterford, said she opposed putting the question on the May ballot because "We would get better bipartisan representation in August and I'm not sure coming back a second time works."

THE MILLAGE is expected to raise \$18 million in revenues in 1976. Grants and fees will bring the total 1976 estimated budget to \$24 million.

"Presently, the combination of the 1/2 mill tax and state fees helps generate income to cover about one-half our operational costs. This will continue to improve as we develop self-supporting facilities," said R. Eric Rackel, parks commission director.

While admitting that only the White Lake-Oak Hills golf course is self-supporting, Rackel cited the construction of the wave action pool at Waterford-Oak Hills, expected to generate net revenue in 1978.

"Our golf course facility at Springfield Oaks Park is expected to be self-supporting by 1978. A golf course at Red Run Drain in Madison Heights is also expected to be self-supporting once it is completed," he added.

SINCE THE parks commission was begun in 1968, county parks have grown into a 1,200-acre, no park complex, reported Linda Winc, vice chairman of the parks commission. He added that 70 per cent of the millage in the past 10 years has been used for land acquisition and capital and building improvement.

MURPHY'S PLAN involved using the county's statutory property tax to support the parks. He also wants to eliminate autonomous commissions like the road commission and the department of public works, both of which are run by appointees of the county board of commissioners. Democrats now dominate the board of commissioners. Murphy is a Republican.

Murphy's supporters say he wants to consolidate to save money. The Democrats agree with parks commissioner Fortino who said, "He's just grabbing. He's opposed to the merger between the drain commission and the department of public works."

"He can do anything now," said Dr. Joseph Montano (R-West Bloomfield), a county commissioner who also sits on the parks commission.

## County beer distributor sponsors parks film

The generosity of an Oakland County resident and businessman has put the county parks and recreation system in the movies.

The Beverage Company, Inc., an Oakland County wine and beer distributorship, has agreed to underwrite the production of a film about the parks system. Harold A. Cousins, Co.-in-charge, recently presented a check for \$10,000 to the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission at its Feb. 12 meeting.

Co.-Manager's general manager, John Harnick of Farmington and sales manager G. David Ayler of Bloomfield Hills also participated in this presentation.

The film, to be produced in conjunction with the commission's 10th anniversary this year, will be used to spread the

word about the six county parks and their related activities.

The parks offer Oakland County citizens an opportunity for family-oriented recreation. Hopefully, sponsorship of this type of film will help them spread the word about the recreational facilities that exist in our county, said Cousins of Bloomfield Hills.

The 12-15 minute film combining film footage and slides will also be edited into 14 public service announcements for television use.

This film will be used extensively, said Eric Rackel, Commission director. "We are currently in the process of developing a speaker's bureau for the Commission. The film will serve as an ideal visual aid and educational tool for the bureau."

## WSU alums plan party

The Wayne State University Alumni Association has planned a "cocktail party for alumni and friends at the Windsor Raceway Friday, March 5.

Tickets for the include club house admission, cheer and a racing program and choice of a chicken steak or wildfish dinner. Dinner will be served at 7 p.m. and post-race at 8 p.m.

One race will be named for Wayne State University. Reservations may be made with the WSU Alumni Relations Office by calling 577-2186.

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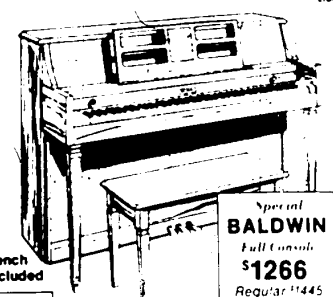
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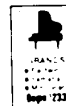
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