

Use surplus to balance budget

Applying the surplus to the economy. Daniel T. Murphy, executive director of the Michigan Department of Treasury, said the state's surplus of \$11 million in 1977 is the largest since 1973.

Optimistic about further recovery in 1977, Murphy said the surplus is a "good sign" for the state's economy. He said the surplus is a result of the state's conservative budgeting.

His own view is somewhere in between, but he noted that the rate of economic growth had slipped from an annual rate of 9.2 percent in the first quarter of 1978 to 4.5 in the second quarter and 4.0 in the third.

PROPERTY TAXES will provide \$369 million or 57 percent of the revenue. This is a decrease because of implementation of the state single business tax, which removed business inventories and equipment from local property tax rolls.

But Murphy found aid from the federal and state governments will be up 20 percent to \$110 million. These "inter-governmental" sources include federal shared revenue, state shared income tax and the child care subsidy.

County charges for services will bring in \$23 million or 11 percent of the total. This item is up 13 percent in 1977, said Murphy, primarily due to the inclusion of the sheriff's township patron contracts in the budget for the first time.

BIGGEST EXPENSE item will be law enforcement and the courts. They will cost \$169 million, a \$2.1 million or 16 percent increase over 1976. This item includes the sheriff's department, the prosecutor's office and the district probate and circuit courts.

New in the budget are the prosecutor's organized crime task force, incorporation of the sheriff's township patron contracts and full county funding of the youth assistance grant program.

General government will cost \$10 million, down \$200,000 due to reduced clerks' election expenses. Other programs in this category are the transfer, drain commission and the county board of commissioners.

Programs which the county executive controls directly are pegged at \$23 million, the same 12 percent of the total budget as in 1976.

County board majority shifts

A Democratic-dominated lame duck board of commissioners has about one week left to decide what to do with the 1978 County Executive Daniel T. Murphy's proposed \$110 million budget.

The board has a 11-11 Democratic majority. The new board takes office when Murphy's term ends in January 1979.

There is no disagreement about the budget, but the board has a dispute over the county's spending plan.

Some board members want to see the county's spending plan reduced by 10 percent. Murphy has been told that the county's spending plan will be reduced by 10 percent.

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Thursday, November 11, 1978

F43A (10/8A)

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