# Commissioners want state to thin their ranks

### 9-member, full-time board eyed

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Only five days before the general election, members of Oakland County's board of commissioners said they would like to see their ranks reduced.

The board last week, in a rare bi-partisan effort, approved a resolution asking the state legislature to replace the current 27-member part-time board with a nine-member full-time

The vote was 14-13. Six Democrats joined eight Republicans in passing the resolution.



ROBERT PAGE aven't beard the last

# County plans big hike

The irony is that the Oakland County Road Commission had opposed the tax bill because it would allocate some funds to public transit. Road Commission Chairman John R. Gnau Jr. said the 1979 budget calls for \$18.3 million in proposed construc-tion, up from this year's level of \$11.8 million. The construction program will be

million.

The construction program will be subject to a public hearing at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 15 at the same time as the public hearing on the overall budget.

Place will be the Bloomfield Township Hall. 4200 Telegraph (south of long lake Read).

taxes will be available for construction purposes.
"That is almost double the amount of state gas and weight taxes programmed for 1978 construction." In effect, construction will receive about three-quarters of the increase in gas and weight tax revenue coming to the most commission from the tax

the road commission from the tax increase."
He said the proposed construction program calls for 11.8 miles of paving two-lare gravel roads, 6.1 miles of widening existing pavements to four or five lanes, 20.4 miles of resurfacing existing paved roads, 24 intersection improvements, general safety and pavement marking projects and about the same level of subdivision street improvements as programmed for 1978.
"Also increased in the 1979 construc-

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tion program as compared to 1978 is the amount of funding from federal programs, at \$5.3 million compared to \$5.3 million. Most of that increase is, however, merely carrying over from 1978 to 1979 the \$2.1 million allocated last year for widening of Orchard Lake Rd. which could not be completed in 1978 but is expected to be constituted in 1979. 'said Gradu to the constraint of 1979.' said Gradu to the constraint of 1979.' said Gradu to 1979. at \$4.1 million compared to \$2 million. About half of the increase is due to inclusion of \$50,000 allocated by the Oakland Board of County Commissioners in 1978 and \$446,000 allocated by local units of government for a triparty construction program already underway. The road commission's \$50,000 share will be paid in 1979. Grans noted that \$560,000 being contibuted by a developer is wholly new for 1979.

tributed by a developer is wholly new for 1979.

He said remainder of the program involves \$2.1 million that will be contributed to projects but not paid to the road commission. This includes \$3.8 million of subdivision street improvement special assessments and city's stares of projects they will be concent special assessments and city's stares of projects they will be concent special assessments and city's stares of projects they will be concent special assessments and city's stares of projects they will be concent special assessments william M. Richards, Fred D. Houghten and myself believe the staff has put toget there a good construction program, considering the funding limitations. But we also believe the public should have a clance to review and comment on the proposal before we officially adopt it. "As a result of last year's public input, three projects were added to the TMR construction program and several others were were placed in consideration for this year and duture years.

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The new-size board could not be set up,commissoners said, until 1982 when district boundaries are redrawn to bring them in line with the 1980

ensus. Observer & Eccentric area commis-Observer & Eccentric-area commis-sioners voting for the reduction were: Paul Kasper (R-Bloomfield Hills), Robert McConnell (R-Farmington Hills), John McDonald (R-Farm-ingotn), Lillian Moffat (R-Bloomfield Township) and Joseph Montante (R-Orchard Lake). Orchard Lake).

Ormarisoners voting against the resolution included: Raiph Moxley (R-Birmingham), Dennis Murphy (R-Novi), Robert Page (R-Birmingham), Alexander Perinoff (D-Southfield), Lawrence Pernick (D-Southfield), John Peterson (R-Rochester) and Henry Hoot (R-Troy).

THE DEBATE was fast and hot as commissioner after commissioner stepped up the microphones and declared his or her allegiance.

Commissioners supporting a reduced board cited these reasons:

The 27-member board has proven itself to be too large and unwiedly to efficiently deal with increasingly intricate and complex county government.

county is run.

The cost of the board could be

reduced.

Tose arguing against a smaller board cited these reasons:

"The cost of a smaller, full-time board is "potentially immense." They said full-time commissioners would demand more office space staffs and a county-owned get representation instead of representing about 55,000 persons, each commissioner would represent more than 100,000 persons.

would represent more than 100,000 persons.

"The commissioners should be part-time "overseers" of the county's activities. "If the part-time University of Middisgan Board of Regents can successfully oversee a \$500 million person. The part-time body cannot do the same flective job in Oakland County, "read one committee report.

"Diversity has been one of the baard's great strengths. The 27 part-

time commissioners, they said, bring input from a wide variety of businesses and professions. With one foot in their respective occupations and one foot in government, they have a better perspective.

FOLLOWING THE amouncement of the vote total, at least one commissioner had harsh words for his counterparts who voted for the strunken board.

"Of those that voted for it," Birningham's Page said, "most would like to make it (the job of commissioner) a full time career for themselves." Page, however, refused to rame names.

selves." Page, however, refused to rame names.
He added, though, that County Exec-tive Daniel T. Murphy and his admin-istration were backing the proposal. "The administration warts a smaller bard." he said. "That way it'll be easier for the administration to get its way." he said.

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RAYED WELL QUALIFIED BY

Despite his harsh words. Page said it would still be unlikely for the resolu-tion to ever be enacted. "You haven't heard the last of this resolution." Pgae said, owing to have the matter reconsidered in the future.

the matter reconsidered in the future. Page and opponents of the plan would have to change only one com-missioner's mind. That task would not seem insurmountable as several com-missioners who had previously sup-ported the plan voted against it last

eek. One factor that could sway commis-

One factor that could sway commis-sioners in future weeks would be the status of a reconstituted board. Some commissioners had assumed that the rine-member board would be a full-time commissioner Richard Wilcox (R-Orthorwille). Who introduced the pro-posal more than a month ago, how-ever, said last week that he never meant for the smaller board to be full-time.

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ship Hall. 4200 teeterant to Long Lake Road).

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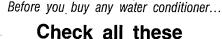
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