

Suburbs cool to judge's water board seat plan

By TOM LONERGAN

U.S. District Judge John Feikens has proposed suburban communities participate in choosing the three suburban representatives on the Detroit Board of Water Commissioners.

He got a cool reception from an Oakland County spokesman.

And Detroit officials may oppose Feikens' having approval over the appointment and dismissal of suburban water board members.

Feikens, chief U.S. judge for eastern Michigan, proposed this week that Oakland, Wayne and Macomb counties nominate three persons each for their respective seats on the seven-member water board. Detroit Mayor Coleman Young would select three of the nine suburban nominees, subject to Feikens' confirmation.

Young now appoints all seven water commissioners without consulting the suburbs. The board sets water and sewer rates for the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD). Feikens' proposal would not affect the appointment of the four Detroit commissioners.

OAKLAND COUNTY Drain Commissioner George Kuhn, long-time critic of DWSD management, said Feikens' proposal "could be tokenism."

He added: "We're going to try to work within the (water board) framework. . . . I don't think it's going to resolve the problems."

Kuhn has organized a petition drive that seeks a popular vote to replace the water board with a regional board that would diminish Detroit's control. He failed to gather enough signatures to place a referendum on the November ballot, but has set a 1982 deadline.

DWSD has nearly 100 suburban community water customers and more than 70 suburban sewer customers.

Feikens' proposal would become part of an amended court agreement between the city, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

That agreement — first reached in September 1977 — has been revised to give the Detroit sewage treatment plant more time to meet federal anti-pollution guidelines. The EPA sued De-

troit over pollution of the Detroit River and Lake Erie.

OAKLAND COUNTY objects to the revised agreement, which was signed Monday by Feikens.

The county, represented by Kuhn and Atty. William Hampton, of Farmington Hills, wanted Feikens to appoint a review or "watchdog" committee, which would have monitored DWSD's budget and rate-making decisions.

Feikens had considered such a committee earlier this year, but later dropped the idea. He said Monday that a review committee would only duplicate

the role of the current board of water commissioners.

Feikens granted Hampton's request to delay immediately ordering suburban water board nominations. The judge scheduled an Aug. 13 hearing on the issue.

"We have to work the mechanics out," Hampton said.

It hasn't been determined whether the county board of commissioners, county drain commissioner or (in Oakland County) the county executive would propose the suburban nominees to Young.



GEORGE KUHN: critic of DWSD management

Barrons commission sculpture for OU

Florence and Brooks Barron, founders and active supporters of the Meadow Brook Art Gallery program since 1970, have commissioned an outdoor sculpture by Michael Hall entitled "Sabbath Day" for Oakland University.

The Barrons hope their donation furthers the Meadow Brook Art Gallery's planned exhibition entitled "Meadow Brook Invitational: Outdoor Sculpture" scheduled for early 1981.

The primary purpose is to offer artists a vast space in which to exercise their ambitions and to expose contemporary sculpture to the captive audiences of the festival, Meadow Brook

Hall visitors, and patrons of the golf course, which total more than 250,000 people yearly.

The painted silver and reddish brown "Sabbath Day" is an embracing form that reaches out to welcome the viewer. The 20-foot-high and 37-foot-wide structure is reminiscent of the 18th century Shaker church construction, thus symbolically evoking a spiritual aura.

The sculpture is to become an integral part of the campus life and may encourage other individuals and corporations to donate art works to a sculpture garden on campus.

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