O'Brien will oversee WC charter writers

By TOM LONERGAN

Rather than make policy, the new executive director of the Wayne County Charter Commission says his job will be to "keep the show going."

"With 27 commissioners, there's plenty of policy makers," said William H. O'Brien, 60, of Detroit, who was hired last week. "They don't need me to interject my thoughts there."

O'Brien, an attorney, is executive secretary of Civic Searchlight Inc., an on-partisan group that rates political candidates' qualifications. He received I votes, a bare majority, Thursday to win the charter commission's top administrative job at an annual salary of \$42,000.

The commission, which will propose county government reorganization, has untill mid-June to draft a charter. The full-time executive director will hire the commission's staff, oversee research, prepare materials for the commission and, according to O'Brien, "keep the show going, as it were."

mission alto, accounting to Obries, as it were."

O'BRIEN WAS chosen on the third halot over Ligens D. Moora, 38, of Detroit, a lawyer for the Detroit Board of Education Moore received four votes, all from Detroit commissioners. Eight commissioners. Sight was the sight of the sight

tee co-chair Darneau Stewart, Thomas Watkins, George Orzech and John Fitzpatrick.

O'BRIEN SAID Friday he was "at first, a little taken aback" with being elected by the bare minimum vote.

"This is politics," he said. "You expect things like that. I'm not distrubed by that.

"I feel the abstentions were not nec-essarily anti-Bill O'Brien votes."

While he hasn't held a prior govern-ment job, O'Brien said he's "always been on the fringe" of local govern-ment. He has served on Detroit school board and city task forces.

O'Brien wrote in his job application that county reorganization has been "at the top of (Civic Searchlight's) list of priorities for many years."

Charter commissioners voted 24-2 to demand that during his year as execu-tive director, O'Brien sever all ties with Civic Searchlight, Neighborhood Taxpayers Alliance, a Detroit clizens group, and any group taking positions on or doing business with the county. O'Brien said he expects to receive a leave of absence from Civic Search-light's Board of Directors on Wednes-day.

day.

CHARTER commissioners also approved an interim \$\$40,000 budget for the year. The charter group's funding is entirely from the state legislature.

The budget provides for 10 staff members under O'Brien, including a research director, three research assistants, and office manager, three clerical employees, an administrative assistant and an account clerk. Salaries for the research director and office manager cub the \$25,000 each.

O'Brien, with the commission's personnel screening committee, will recommend staff hiring. Commissioners voted Thursday to restrict the staff to Wayne County residents.

Included in the budget is \$157,950 for charter commissioners, the maximum state law allows for 90 meetings at \$55 per commissioner per meeting.

In winter

Dead batteries and home heating fuel costs gone over-budget are reduced to minor nuisances when on the backroads one finds reminders that the world didn't always exist with bended fenders and salt and its eventual unnecessary mush. The woods and some brush become fodder and shelter for this trio going about its unrehearsed role in a still life. (Staff photo by Bill Bresler)

State helps with bills

A program providing low-income households up to \$200 to pay overdue utility bills or buy fuel began in Michi-gan in mid-December.

gan in mid-December.

According to the state Department of Social Services (DSS), administrator of the federally funded Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP), the emergency help will be paid only once this fiscal year to eligible applicants.

ALLOWABLE ANNUAL income for ALLOWABLE ANNUAL income for applicants ranges from \$4,738 for one person to \$12,500 for a family of four and \$17,330 for six persons. Liquid assets (currency, savings or checking accounts, stocks and bonds) are limited to \$2,000 or less per household, except when one member is age 65 years or older.

older. Qualifications for the program are based on the household's income and assets and demonstrated need for immediate help. The program is not limited to welfare clients.

ed to welfare clients.

According to federal policy, emergency payments will be considered to two household categories:

- Those out of, or indicating a need for, a deliverable heating fuel such as oil, coal, wood or propane.
 Those with an overdue (by at least 30 days) natural gas or electric bill.

Energy aide added to aging agency

The six-county Area Agency on Ag-ing Region 1B has appointed a senior energy advisor to assist those 60 years old and older with heating and other related problems.

Road, Suite 100, Southfield, 48076.

The agency plans and coording the agency plans are agency plans

ing negion 1B has appointed a senior energy advisor to assist those 60 years old and older with heating and other related problems.

The agency plans and coordinates programs for senior citizens in Oakland, St. Clair. Macomb, Livingston, Washtenaw and Morroe counties. The per reached at 569-0333 or by writing the agency office, 29508 Southfield Health and Human Services.





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EMU makes budget cuts

Target budget cuts totalling \$1,127,270 have been announced by Eastern Michigan University.
The cuts will reduce the University's 1880-81 General Fund budget to \$89,937,614 from the \$535,73,923 aproved by the EMU Board of Regents Last June.

More than 40 percent of the reduce the Michigan State of the Company of the Com

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Dress slacks, originally, \$55 to \$80, now Raincoats, originally \$150 to \$350, now

S119-\$275 Overcoats, originally \$270 to \$530, now

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