

Finance unit OKs high-tech drive

A committee of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners gave the green light to County Executive Daniel J. Murphy for a \$500,000 campaign to attract high technology businesses to the county.

"We have to put the money out front and let business and industry know we're serious about this," Murphy said. But Democrats objected that the \$500,000 plan amounted to giving the executive a "blank check" and voted against the plan.

BY A 7-5 vote, the Finance Committee gave Murphy the go-ahead to hire consultants and develop strategies for luring high technology employers.

Republican commissioners supporting the expenditure were: Robert W. Page of Birmingham, Lillian V. Moffitt of Bloomfield Township, Anne M. Hobart of Waterford Township, James E. Lanni of Royal Oak, Marilyn E. Gosling of Bloomfield Hills, Roy Rowland of Rochester and G. William Caddell of Walled Lake.

Republican Ralph Nelson of Rochester crossed party lines to join Democrats Alexander C. Perinoff of Southfield, Lawrence R. Pernick of Southfield, and Betty Fortino of Pontiac in voting against it.

Democrat James A. Doyon of Madison Heights abstained.

THE PROPOSAL has been approved

by the board's Public Services Committee. It will go before the full board May 5.

If the full board supports the project, most of the money will be used for "direct contact and promotion with target business and industry such as those involved in computer, electronics, materials processing and robotics fields," Murphy said.

High technology fields offer "the best potential to create the new jobs we need here in Oakland County," Murphy said.

DEMOCRATIC commissioners objected to the proposal because it would give Murphy a "blank check".

"It's (unfair) to ask us to set aside \$500,000 without detailing how the

money will be used," Pernick told Murphy.

"You're just asking us to give you a blank check with the hopes that the program will fly."

Murphy said he couldn't predict whether he will use the full amount allocated.

"I can't put a figure on consultant fees," he said. "But I'm laying before you the integrity of my office. I've always been concerned with the amount of money we spend."

FORTINO questioned how spending "that much money" would guarantee businesses would relocate in Oakland County.

"Businesses don't like a lot of government red tape," he added. "We have

to show them that we're willing to cooperate. That's an incentive for businesses to relocate here."

For example, Murphy said, when Comerica moved its bank holding company headquarters to Oakland County, "we were able to work with this building committee and (expedite) the zoning approval process."

Perinoff balked at Murphy's arguments. "We're not talking about red tape," he said. "We're talking about spending vast sums of money for something that's illusory. It sounds like a fairy tale."

"The top companies in the country are already in Oakland County," Perinoff said. "We have to do something to keep them here."

OCC registering for spring semester

Registration for the spring semester at Oakland Community College will be conducted from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. today and Tuesday. Classes begin at 8 a.m. Wednesday.

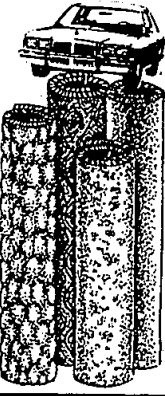
Students may register at any one of the following OCC campus locations: Auburn Hills, 2900 Featherstone, Auburn Heights, Highland Lakes, 7350 Cooley Lake Road, Union Lake, Orchard Ridge, 27055 Orchard Lake Road, Farmington Hills; and the Southeast campus, 739 South Washington, Royal Oak.

Classes offered at the Southeast campus include: creative problem solving, garment recycling, and dealing with anger. Conversational French,

pre-natal exercise, and motorcycle safety are among offerings at the Orchard Ridge campus.

A new business and professional institute includes several classes designed to assist members of the work force, the unemployed, employers and professionals who seek career development or retraining. Course topics include employee evaluation and motivation, financial planning, conflict management, time management and stock and bond investment.

For a complete list of courses and registration information, call Orchard Ridge at 471-7500; Auburn Hills, 853-4200; Highland Lakes, 360-3000; or Southeast, 987-5700.



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