

Pontiac fights Oakland land purchases

If they want to "let George do it," George Kuhn is willing.

The Oakland County drain commissioner has thrown his hat into the ring for appointment to the three-member Oakland County Road Commission.

And he presented a new twist in his application to the County Board of Commissioners — "a closer working relationship between the road commission and the drain commissioner's office."

"THE ROAD Commission is responsible for road drainage problems," Kuhn said, "which are often

related to drainage from adjacent properties and county drains which intersect with the county road system.

"Accordingly, I would like to propose that the board of commissioners consider the appointment of the county drain commissioner as a member of the County Board of Road Commissioners."

An elected countywide official, Kuhn is in his fourth four-year term as drain chief.

The 27-member County Board of Commissioners makes the appointments of three persons to the semi-autonomous road commission.

City officials fear loss of property tax revenue, loss of taxable private sector jobs and a sociological black mark from a planned county incinerator.

If appointed, Kuhn said he would serve on the road commission without pay (\$7,500 a year) and without a road commission car since he already has a full-time salary and a county car.

Kuhn, of West Bloomfield, said he would work to see that road commission funds are handled by the county treasurer instead of separately.

KUHN SEES such an appointment

as tying together at least two of the county's three public works agencies.

The agencies are: 1) the drain commissioner, who sets up rural drainage districts and some urban sewerage districts; 2) the road commission, which functions mostly with a cut of the state gasoline and weight taxes; and 3) the public works department, which reports to the elected executive.

In Wayne, a home-rule county, voters in 1984 abolished the road commission and in 1986 the drain commissioner, placing all three public works functions under the executive.

Oakland has no home-rule charter and cannot unify those departments without changing its state law — changes the Legislature has been unwilling to adopt.

Oakland officials are at an impasse over what to do with the public works department. Kuhn would like to consolidate it under himself. County Executive Daniel T. Murphy would like to consolidate Kuhn's function under the executive.

ALTOGETHER, 14 people now have applied for the road commission vacancy, created when John Gnuu Jr. of Bloomfield Township was convicted of unrelated federal influence-peddling charges and resigned.

All applications have been referred to the board's general government committee due to meet Dec. 1.

Chairman of that panel is John E. Olsen, R-Huntington Woods, who was defeated for re-election Nov. 4 and is himself a candidate for the road commission post.

Murphy vetoes funds for Boyle

District Judge Martin Boyle of Walled Lake will proceed with his Court of Appeals case despite the county executive's veto of his legal funds.

County Executive Daniel T. Murphy last week vetoed a \$5,000 appropriation on behalf of a higher court appeal by Judge Boyle. He seeks to reverse County Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson's effort to disqualify him from hearing cases involving anti-nuclear protesters in Commerce Township.

Murphy shot down the Oakland County Board of Commissioners' effort to give him county money for his attorney's fees to fight Patterson.

"IN THIS case," said Murphy's veto message, "Circuit Judge Alice Gilbert ruled that (District) Judge Boyle is disqualified from hearing any criminal cases concerning nuclear weapons protests or protestors at

Williams International Corp. or elsewhere."

Contending Boyle is politically biased toward the anti-nuclear cause, Patterson obtained a writ of superintending control. Boyle is seeking money to appeal the writ.

"This matter is inappropriate for appeal," said Murphy, "as it does not have precedent-setting significance and does not have a monetary impact upon Judge Boyle or Oakland County."

"Further, this is not a judicial action of the judge. It is a personal matter and for the pleasure of the judge, not for the people of the county. The court ruling was not directed to any ruling of the judge," the executive said.

THE MONEY for Boyle's appeal passed the board 16-5 two weeks earlier. An override would require 16 votes.

Boyle is a judge in the county-funded 52nd District Court.

"I will continue the appeal," Boyle said Monday. He has hired Birmingham attorney James Hand to represent him.

"I was unprepared for a veto," Boyle added. "I disagree with his (Murphy's) reasons. I don't think

they're factually or legally accurate."

He estimated it would take the Court of Appeals six months or more to decide the case.

Williams International is a subcontractor that makes parts for the low-flying cruise missiles the United States is deploying throughout Europe.

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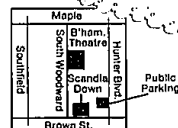
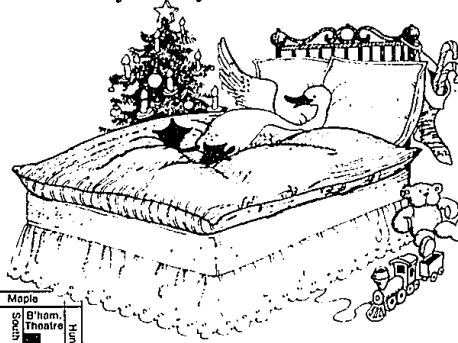
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