

Oakland seeks drug prosecution grant

By Tim Richard
Staff writer

Oakland County will seek a \$170,000 grant for prosecuting drug cases.

The county Board of Commissioners last week approved the request, promising to put up 25 percent, or \$45,000, as its matching share.

For 1988 it would mean Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson can hire a senior trial attorney (\$47,211) and two assistant prosecutors (\$38,300 apiece) and provide them office space.

The money will come from the Federal Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1986 and is administered by the state Office of Management and Budget.

THE BOARD authorized the county executive to take bids for an asbestos abatement program, removing the fireproofing material asbestos from several county buildings because of its danger to human lungs.

It found \$535,000 available in the 1986 budget surplus to start work on the \$927,000 project.

And it retained Asbestos Management Inc., an independent testing company, to prepare bid documents for contractors.

COMMISSIONERS split 16-7 over K mart's request for a 42-foot easement on county land for an earth berm to separate it from the department store's property on Telegraph Road in Pontiac.

It was a rarity in county government — a vote that split not only the parties but the geographical sections of the county.

"I have no objection to selling this land to K mart and Wolverine (its shopping center partner), but I have problems with dedicating this land," said commissioner James Doyon, D-Madison Heights.

Doyon was joined by Democrats Dennis Aaron of Oak Park, Russ McPherson of Hazel Park and Larry Pernick of Southfield and by Republicans Don Jensen of Birmingham, David Moffitt of Bloomfield Township and Richard Skarritt of Milford in opposition to granting the easement.

K mart and Wolverine requested approval for construction of a

landscaped berm in a 42-foot-wide section of county land south of the S-shaped service drive leading to the county complex on N. Telegraph Road in Pontiac.

But the majority of commissioners agreed with the planning and building committee that "the county would benefit (because) the berm would provide an effective screen from viewing the rear of the Builder's Square Home Improvement Center, which will be constructed north of the existing shopping center."

OAKLAND IS agreeable to writing a five-year update of its county-wide solid waste management plan, the board told the state Department of Natural Resources.

It empowered county Executive Daniel T. Murphy to write the update, provided DNR picks up 80 percent of the \$125,000 cost as provided under the existing 1978 state law. Murphy's deadline date is Jan. 6, 1989.

Commissioner Hubert Price, D-Pontiac, won approval of his amendment asking efforts to increase public awareness of recycling as an alternative to burning trash. It asked that the plan underscore tax incentives for recycling, particularly as they affect retail product packaging.

"Superfluous," said commissioner Ane Hobart, R-Waterford, chair of the Planning and Building Committee. "We're already doing this." But she offered no objection to the Price amendment.

ANOTHER PUBLIC hearing on the 1988 property tax rate will be held when the board sets its budget public hearing, probably about Dec. 10.

Last week's public hearing collapsed in confusion when commissioners found they didn't understand why a "truth in taxation" hearing was even scheduled.

Three Orion Township women — Christy Mitchell, Virginia Piluras and Mary McMasters — showed up to object, waving a legal notice that made it appear a tax rate increase was in the wind.

Commissioner Dennis Aaron, D-Oak Park, argued last week's public hearing was premature because commissioners hadn't received the proposed budget from county Executive Daniel T. Murphy until that morning.

Murphy proposes keeping the property tax rate at 4.64 mills (\$4.64 per \$1,000 of state equalized valuation). One commissioner calculated the rate would drop to 4.35 mills because of new construction in the county.

Every mill of property tax raises about \$18 million in revenue for county government.

GOP squabble heads to court

AP — More than 60 Republicans have gone to court to fight their state party — the latest round between backers of Vice President George Bush and a conservative coalition led by Pat Robertson supporters.

David McKeague, the Lansing attorney who filed the suit in Kent County Circuit Court, said the Republican State Committee has five days after it's served with the lawsuit to decide whether to hire an attorney to fight it.

McKeague said the lawsuit asks for a hearing as soon as possible.

The lawsuit asks Judge George Boucher to strike down a party rule adopted Sept. 15 that bars about 11,200 GOP officeholders and unsuccessful candidates from serving as at-large delegates to Jan. 14 county conventions.

"MY COMMENT is that it's strictly

political. It's the Bush supporters trying to salvage the Bush campaign here," said David Waiters, who heads Robertson's Michigan effort.

"They will not be successful. What else can I say? The party has made its decision. Precedence is on our side. I believe state law is on our side."

The lawsuit points out that the 1,200 nominees were told they would be seated automatically and the rule change unfairly takes away their ability to participate in the party's national nominating process.

McKeague predicted the lawsuit will end in a clear victory for his clients.

A BUSH spokesman said, "We have nothing to do with it."

"But the vice president and the Bush campaign stand foursquare behind the rights of the elected officials and nominees. We strongly sup-

port their position," said John Long, executive director of the Bush effort in Michigan.

State GOP chairman E. Spencer Abraham said, "The prospect of further litigation involving the Michigan Republican Party is unfortunate. However, this decision comes as no surprise, as the intention to follow through on this matter was made public following the action of the state committee on Sept. 15."

"On the advice of counsel, I have no further comment to make, pending a resolution of this issue."

The delegate dispute has split the Michigan Republican Party into warring factions. The moderates, mostly Bush supporters and party veterans, are squaring off against a conservative coalition of Robertson

backers and supporters of U.S. Rep. Jack Kemp of New York.

The coalition, which controls the 101-member state committee, prevailed in the delegate vote, dealing a setback to Bush's effort in Michigan.

The delegates to the county conventions will select about 1,800 delegates to the Jan. 29-30 state convention, at which the first 77 delegates to the GOP national convention will be chosen.

"Having not seen the actual document, we would say we would believe the suit is groundless," said Dick Minard, Michigan campaign manager for Kemp. "We would look forward to our position prevailing and possibly the case being dismissed."

PAYNE HICKEY Inc. of Livonia was awarded a contract for nearly \$96,000 to re-side the Youth Activity Center at Springfield Oaks County Park near Davisburg.

Money was budgeted in the 1987 capital improvement fund, according to finance chairman R. William Caddell, R-Walled Lake.

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