

Trash plan debate: which consultant?

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Oakland's top administrator and top legislator, both Republicans, are trying to work out peacefully their differences over who should be project manager of the county's solid waste program.

"I think we've got a conflict," Democratic commissioner James Doyon of Madison Heights said, putting it bluntly.

County Executive Daniel T. Murphy has hired the Detroit law firm of Miller, Canfield, Paddock & Stone as bond counsel for the solid waste pro-

gram, which plans to build a trash incinerator on county property in Pontiac.

But county board Chairman Roy Rewold, R-Rochester Hills, fears the program is bogged down and wants to hire the Washington, D.C., law firm of Bishop, Cook, Purcell & Reynolds, which he said is more experienced in project management.

AT REWOLD'S urging, the board's planning and building committee last week reported out, 6-1, a resolution to hire Bishop Cook "as consultants, project managers and coordinators for the implementation of a

Board Chairman Roy Rewold fears the county's trash incinerator plan is bogged down and he's pushing to hire a Washington law firm as project manager. The Murphy administration already has hired a Detroit firm.

countywide solid waste program."

The resolution goes to the finance committee, whose chairman, G. William Caddell, R-Walled Lake, promised it would be the first item on this Thursday's agenda.

Time is critical, said L. Jean Willoughby, Murphy's legislative liaison.

"Aug. 25 is the absolute deadline to file for a \$300,000 grant from the Department of Commerce. If you

change this (manager), you change the grant application."

"MILLER CANFIELD is not qualified to do this," Rewold said, though acknowledging the Detroit law firm is an excellent bonding counsel. He said Bishop Cook sought only the management work, not the bonding work.

"Bishop Cook can write the specs (specifications for an incinerator),

invite in vendors like Westinghouse — people that would handle the equipment needed in an incinerator," he said.

Bishop Cook estimated its legal fees would run \$400,000 to \$800,000 for those tasks and evaluating bids, negotiating contracts, establishing a reporting system, coordinating environmental permits and negotiating energy contracts. James K. Jackson, a member of the firm writing to Rewold, estimated 2,200 to 4,400 hours of work at \$200 an hour.

MILT HANDORF, the executive's public works director, said Murphy was "favorably impressed" by the firm but hadn't made a recommendation on whether to hire it.

Rewold said Murphy would join him and other officials on an ad hoc committee to explore the situation.

"It's very obvious we need a program manager," said Anne Hobart, R-Waterford, who chairs the plan-

ning and building committee and supported Rewold's views.

Things began to bog down, she said, with the retirement of George Schutte, the county's solid waste expert.

The county had had inquiries from SOCIA (South Oakland Incinerator Authority) communities and the Southwest Oakland County Consortium about joining the county's program, Hobart said.

The SOCIA incinerator has been shut down by state order due to odor problems. SOCIA serves Troy, Birmingham, Beverly Hills, Lathrup Village and the 10-community complex in Royal Oak.

The Southwest pact includes Southfield, the Farmington area, Novi, Walled Lake and South Lyon.

A plan is required by PA 641 of 1978, the Solid Waste Management Act. When work started in 1981, Murphy saw a nearly countywide plan to build three incinerators.

Witt to head OU engineering school

A veteran Oakland University professor has been named dean of the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

Howard R. Witt of Rochester assumes his new responsibilities immediately, announced Keith R. Kleckner, senior vice president for university affairs and provost. The appointment was approved by the board of trustees July 25.

A member of the OU faculty since 1967, Witt had been serving as interim dean. He replaces Robert M. Desmond who has resigned to accept a

position at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Provost Kleckner said Witt is a senior engineering faculty member with solid academic credentials and extensive administrative experience. "He has served the university well in a variety of roles over the years, and we feel he will make a fine dean," Kleckner said.

Witt received his undergraduate degree from the University of Toronto, his master's from Princeton University and his doctorate from Cornell University.

The new dean has held teaching and administrative positions within the School of Engineering and Computer Science. In addition to professional publications, he has served as a consultant to Westinghouse Electric and other corporations. He is a senior member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, Tau Beta Pi, and the Engineering Society of Detroit.

Weil chosen for econ staff

Oakland County Executive Daniel T. Murphy has appointed Cynthia Weil marketing coordinator for the county Economic Development Department.

In her county position, Weil will oversee advertising and marketing along with publishing the Oakland Focus Quarterly newsletter.

Well previously worked at Electronic Data Systems, where she was marketing and promotions specialist for the dealers systems division.

Bar panel covers lawsuits over jobs

Legislators, business leaders and employee rights advocates will talk on employment litigation — one of the fastest growing areas of the law — in a program sponsored by a committee of the Oakland County Bar Association.

The Aug. 11 symposium on "Pending Legislative Reform in Employment Issues" focuses on state legislative bills that seek to expand the scope of handicap protection and litigation and to narrow or eliminate contract claims.

Lawmakers will discuss their prognosis for passage of these bills and their impact on Michigan's business climate. Advocates of business, employers, employees, and the handicapped will react.

The symposium will be held 1-5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 11, in the Board

of Commissioners' Auditorium, Oakland County Courthouse, 1200 N. Telegraph. Pontiac. Fee is \$7.50 in advance; \$10 walk-in.

Registration deadline is Tuesday. For registration information, call the Oakland County Bar Association at 398-2100 or 398-3937.

FEATURED speakers will include:

• State Sen. John Engler, R-Mt. Pleasant, Senate Majority leader, on the problems and the legislative prognosis of SB 780, which seeks to eliminate Toussaint-type employment contract claims except when

based upon written statements.

• State Rep. David M. Gobow, D-Huntington Woods, on HB 5250, which seeks to legislatively reverse the Michigan Supreme Court's interpretation of the Handicappers Civil Rights Act.

• State Rep. Gordon R. Sparks, R-Troy, on experiences chairing Michigan's Job Competitiveness Task Force.

• Miriam King, certified consultant and labor educator, Eastern Michigan University and vice chair of the Michigan Commission on Handicapper Concerns.

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