

Oakland keeps tax rate level, despite boom

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Despite a still booming economy, Oakland County officials are approaching 1989 cautiously, levying the same 4.84 mill tax rate as in 1988.

The Board of Commissioners passed the rate 14-9 last week, rejecting two reduction attempts by lame duck commissioners James Doyon, D-Madison Heights, and James Lanni, R-Royal Oak.

"We found new expenses. We have a different jail. We have a solid waste program," said finance committee chairman G. William Caddell, R-Walled Lake.

That summed up the reasons Oakland will use the entire 13 percent increase in its property tax base. That increase — a combination of higher valuations and new construction — will boost property tax revenue \$10 million to \$98.7 million.

THE OWNER of a house with a market value of \$100,000, assessed at \$50,000, will pay \$116 for county government next year; for county parks, 0.33 mill or \$11.50; and for Huron-Clinton Metroparks, 0.24 mill or \$12.

Seven Democrats were joined by two lame-duck Republicans, Lanni and Robert Page, R-Birmingham, in opposing the rate. The minority preferred Doyon's proposed cuts to 4.4 and 4.5 mills.

"Give the taxpayers a break," said Doyon, who will leave the board after 14 years to go into teaching full time.

"This county is going to have a surplus. The county executive has a tax-and-spend philosophy. A number of services are becoming historic — and some hysteric," said Doyon.

Lanni, who lost his primary in August, said the 4.5 rate "would be something we could live with . . . If we collect the taxes, we seem to

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— John King
in public hearing

spend it."

Democratic caucus leader Larry Pernick of Southfield proposed savings he calculated of nearly \$5 million. He would consolidate the executive's public safety division into the Sheriff's Department, \$500,000; consolidate the two units' communications systems, \$200,000; consolidate

the drain commissioner's and public works offices, \$500,000; count income from renting excess space in the new jail to other counties, \$500,000; add interest earnings from the treasurer's office, \$1 million; settle a suit with the state over Sheriff's secondary road patrol funding and pick up \$700,000 in state aid; and

count \$1.2 million of delinquent taxes that are underestimated.

COUNTY EXECUTIVE Daniel T. Murphy and board Republicans found an unexpected ally in their harshest critic, Bloomfield Township retiree John King, as usual the only speaker at a public hearing.

"I have been notorious for opposing unnecessary taxes. But today I join forces with the executive and join the big spenders," King said.

"You're going to need more money before you're out of the woods on solid waste," King said, predicting a costly new plan for recycling trash. "Incinerators, landfills, transfer stations and recycling are going to run into money I can't even dream of. Neither candidate (for executive) has said a word about it."

IN OTHER business, the board of commissioners:

• Voted 19-3 to upgrade the \$24,500-a-year job of law clerk,

filled by law students, to circuit court research attorney, with base pay of \$20,305 and three step increases to a top of nearly \$35,000.

Personnel committee chairman John Calandro, R-Norw, opposed the change, saying lawyers will want to make it a career and predicting the 14 circuit judges will be back in future years for more money and steps. Court administrator Jody Cunningham said Oakland must compete in the market for better law school graduates, adding too many with "C" grades are applying.

• Added three dispatchers to the Sheriff's Department in preparation for the E911 emergency telephone system due to be in effect in mid-November. Sheriff John Nichols anticipates a drastic increase in calls, at least in the first six months.

Under E911 a person can call the number from any point in Oakland County and be routed to the proper police, fire or ambulance agency.

House bill aims to chill textile imports

Here's how area members of Congress were recorded on major roll call votes between Sept. 23-30.

TEXTILE IMPORTS — By a vote of 248 for and 150 against, the House passed and sent to the White House a bill (HR 1154) limiting the growth of textile and clothing imports to 1 percent annually. It also will freeze imports of non-rubber footwear at current levels.

President Reagan vetoed the bill as overly protectionist.

Supporter James Quillen, R-Tenn., said, "All we are asking for is fair trade. We must keep American jobs."

Opponent Sam Gibbons, D-Fla., said "the price we are paying to protect the jobs in textiles and apparel is appalling."

Members voting yes wanted to further limit textile, apparel and

Roll Call Report

non-rubber footwear imports. Voting yes: Democrats Dennis Hertel of Harper Woods, William Ford of Taylor and Sander Levin of Southfield. Voting no: Republicans Carl Purcell of Plymouth and William Bloomfield of Birmingham.

ABORTION POLICY — The House voted 228 for and 188 against to restrict the District of Columbia's use of public funds to pay for abortions for the poor.

The vote gave instructions to a House-Senate conference on the fiscal 1989 D.C. appropriations bill (HR 4778), urging a tougher stand on

when D.C. can use its own revenue — as opposed to its federal payment — to provide abortions for the poor.

Under present law, the District of Columbia may not use federal funds for Medicaid abortions except in cases of rape or incest or when the mother's life is at stake. This vote sought to add the same or stricter qualifications on the use of locally-raised money for abortions.

Members voting yes wanted to further restrict the availability of public money for abortions in D.C.

Voting yes: Bloomfield, Ford and Levin.

DEFENSE BUDGET — By a vote of 359 for and 46 against, the House approved the conference report on the \$299.5 billion defense authorization bill (HR 4481) for fiscal 1989, which began Oct. 1.

The bill was slightly different from a version that drew President Reagan's veto in August. The main changes lifted a proposed congressional ban on testing low-flying "depressed trajectory" missiles and shifted funding priorities for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) anti-missile system and the MX and Midgeman missiles.

Members voting yes supported the fiscal 1989 defense authorization bill. Voting yes: Purcell, Hertel, Ford, Levin and Bloomfield.

SENATE

PENTAGON BUDGET — By a

vote of 91 for and 4 against, the Senate approved the fiscal 1989 defense authorization bill (see preceding House vote) and sent the \$299.5 billion Pentagon budget to President Reagan for his signature.

Supporter Lawton Chiles, D-Fla., said the bill focuses "on strategy and policy issues rather than on micro-management of the Pentagon's programs."

Opponent Ken Conrad, D-N.D., said the bill "authorizes more spending for defense than this country can afford."

Senators voting yes supported the 1989 defense bill. Michigan Democrats Carl Levin and Donald Riegle voted yes.

FEDERAL DEBTS — By a vote of 54 for and 33 against, the Senate tabled (killed) an amendment creating a private sector panel to advise

the government on how to collect the estimated \$83 billion it is owed in overdue payments from individuals, businesses and other domestic debtors.

The amendment was proposed to a bill designed to make the government pay its bills on time, a measure (S 328) later cleared for the White House.

Jim Sasser, D-Tenn., who voted to kill the amendment, said it was opposed by the Office of Management and Budget as duplicative and would keep S 328 from becoming law this year.

Amendment sponsor Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said, "That hole you call unpaid debt owed to the federal government is becoming bigger and bigger."

Senators voting yes wanted to kill the amendment. Michigan's Levin and Riegle voted yes.

Court alternatives are seminar topic

There are alternatives to traditional courts that can save the public time and money. They will be discussed in a one-day seminar, Mediation and the Legal Assistant, on Oct. 28.

The seminar runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Meadow Brook Hall on Oakland University's campus near Rochester.

The seminar is geared for legal assistants, but is open to the public. It will cover avenues for resolution of disputes other than the traditional court system. They afford savings for both the client and the judicial system.

Cosponsored by OU's Division of

Continuing Education and the Legal Assistants Association of Michigan, the seminar will feature these speakers: Jon H. Kingery, attorney, past president of Oakland County Bar Association; Marilyn J. Kelly, attorney, past president Women Lawyers Association of Michigan; Joan E. Young, court administrator and judicial assistant, Circuit Court; and Carolyn Chavez, assignment clerk, Circuit Court, graduate fellow of the Institute for Court Management. Registration deadline is Friday, Oct. 21. Tuition of \$95 includes luncheon at Meadow Brook Hall, refreshment breaks and materials. To register, call OU at 370-3120.

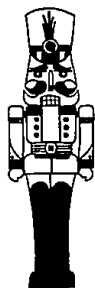
OU enrolls 12,254, slight drop from '87

The fall headcount for Oakland University is 12,254, down 278 students from 1987, said president Joseph Champagne.

There are 4,052 fiscal year equivalent students (FYES), down 71 FYES from last fall, and OU officials said enrollment management is "on target" for the 9,100 FYES budgeted for the year. This is a planned drop of 276 from last year.

Admission headcount figures show:

• 2,277 freshmen, up 178 over last year.
• 2,145 sophomores, down 125.



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Friday, October 21 4-9 p.m.
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Sunday, October 23 11-4 p.m.

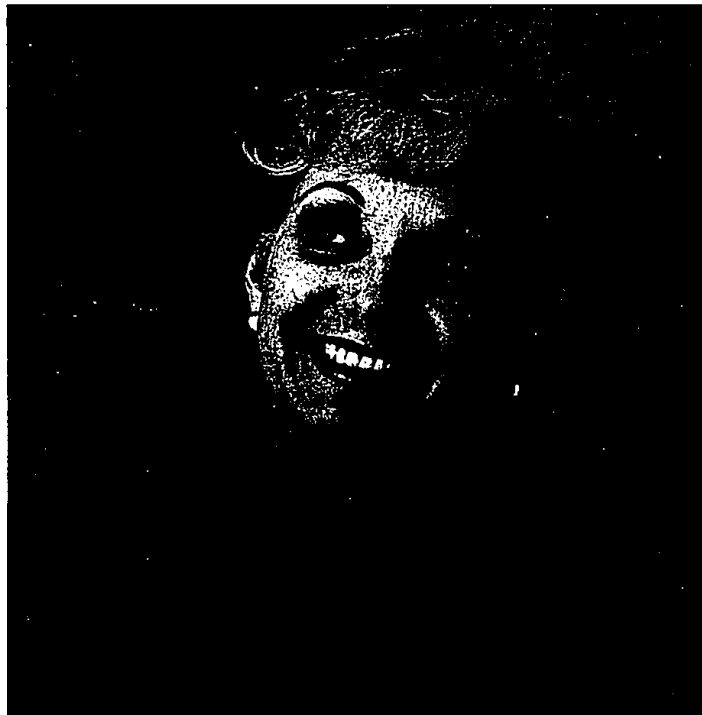
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