

Kuhn angers Rewold with bond bill fight

By Tim Richard
staff writer

The chairman of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners publicly chastised drain commissioner George W. Kuhn for trying to block legislation that would expand county bonding authority for solid waste.

"You didn't have any objections last week," said chairman Roy Rewold, R-Rochester Hills, as he walked into the middle of a committee meeting Thursday at which Kuhn was speaking.

"You said you had reservations, but you weren't going to object. This upsets me, to say the very least," an angry Rewold said.

Rewold's story was backed up by commissioner Larry Crake, R-

Waterford. "It seems like every time we come to this point, George says no. What has happened since last Thursday at 4 p.m. to make George change his mind?" Crake asked.

REWOLD, AND Crake walked in as Kuhn, also a Republican, was telling the board's general government committee there is no need for a new state enabling law allowing the county to sell bonds for its trash incinerator and resource recovery program.

The committee will take up the matter again in a special meeting this week.

Committee chair Richard Skarritt, R-Milford, admitted "I was surprised when you (Kuhn) showed up today."



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— Roy Rewold
county board chairman

"I cannot in conscience support the bill," said Kuhn, adding his drain office already has authority to sell bonds for the \$850 million-plus program. "There is no crisis or need for this new legislation in order to sell bonds."

Kuhn also renewed his 15-year-old bid to take over the county executive's Department of Public Works.

"I'm not interested in heading up the solid waste operation," Kuhn said, denying any power bid. "I am only interested in effecting a merger

of the two departments into a single department."

Under Oakland's existing organization chart, solid waste is a function of the DPW.

THE BATTLE is an intra-Republican one in which Democrats have sided with Kuhn.

Kuhn wants the DPW and drain offices consolidated under himself with the new title of public works commissioner, an elected post. That could be done under existing law. Moreover, the drain office has bond-

ing authority. Macomb County has such an office.

County Executive Daniel T. Murphy insists the voters chose a unified administration when they created his office in 1974. But he lacks bonding authority, according to some lawyers, and he would need special legislation to absorb the drain office. Wayne County has consolidated the two.

The argument has never been resolved. A board majority has voted in favor of the drain commissioner, but Murphy has vetoed the resolution, and Kuhn's friends were unable to win a two-thirds vote to override it.

REWOLD AND Crake themselves took heat from committee Democrats for seeking the new legislation. "You cut some kind of deal and went to Lansing," said commissioner Dennis Aaron, D-Oak Park. "How could you speak for the Board of Commissioners?"

Rewold said he discussed the bill with three senators and said he had no intention of going around the board. The chairman said the bill could move within three weeks.

The bill is modeled after Public Act 185 of 1957 under which the former public works board sold bonds. It would allow the executive to sell bonds.

AT LEAST TWO Republican commissioners were cool to the bill.

"I'm not certain the DPW is well run now. I'm not so sure I want a solid waste department under the county executive," said Thomas Law, R-West Bloomfield.

Donn Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, disliked the bill as drafted because it would allow a simple majority (50 percent plus one) of the county board to approve the bond sale. Many bonding acts require a 60 percent super-majority to pledge a governmental body's full faith and credit.

Landfill panel to start work

Members of a newly formed Landfill Siting Advisory Committee will hold their first meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday in the basement cafeteria of the Oakland County Courthouse in Pontiac.

The 25-member panel will advise county officials on location of a landfill to hold ash and unburnable wastes from the solid waste plant.

Nicholson recovering

Chancellor R. Stephen Nicholson is expected back to work at Oakland Community College at least part-time this week after a Feb. 2 operation for removal of a kidney.

A complete recovery is expected

"We're on target and moving well on this project," said County Executive Daniel T. Murphy. "The committee has a lot of hard work ahead of it, but I'm confident that the committee members will meet any challenges."

Consultants on the solid waste program will advise the committee on techniques for ranking candidate sites.

for the chancellor, 62, who is recovering in his West Bloomfield home, a college spokesman said. Nicholson was discharged Feb. 9 from Providence Hospital.

A complete recovery is expected

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