

Oops! Redistricting plan backfires on GOP head

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

Remember that adage against assuming?
It goes something like this: "Never assume. It makes an ASS out of U and ME."

James Alexander, chairman of the Oakland County Republican Party, temporarily forgot it when he was drafting his proposal for redrawing boundary lines for county commission districts — and it came back to haunt him.

He talked about that forgetful Wednesday when asked about his proposal that calls for, among other things, two popular Republican commissioners to run against each other.

Alexander's plan would have commissioners Nancy McConnell and Marilyn Gosling, who both live in Bloomfield Hills but now represent adjacent districts, in the same district.

"I assumed Nancy was going to win," he said, referring to last week's Republican primary for state representative in the 65th District.

In that race, McConnell and political newcomer John Jamian were the front-runners in a hotly contested race. Had McConnell won, of course, she would have been a heavy favorite to beat the Democratic challenger and a likely bet to vacate her county commission seat before moving up to the state Legislature.

But McConnell lost in an upset to Jamian, and will likely seek reelection as a commissioner next fall.

"I GUESS THAT'S why they say never assume anything," Alexander said.

That isn't the only matching of incumbents included in Alexander's plan. His proposal also calls for Democrats Ruel E. McPherson, Hazel Park, and Rudy Serra, Farmington Hills, to run against each other.

It also calls for Democrat Teresa Krause, Troy, to run against Republican Charles E. Palmer, Clawson.

Nobody expects Alexander's plan to be the one finally adopted. The final product could be a composite of the four plans submitted.

But Alexander's plan raised some eyebrows.

Gosling, for example, said she doesn't expect to run against McConnell in 1992. "But if it turns out that way, I'll do my best," she said.

McConnell chuckled about the possibility of running against Gosling. "I think Jim assumed I'd be doing other things," she said. "I don't think he intended that. But his plan won't be the final version anyway."

THE DEMOCRATIC PLAN — submitted by Birmingham attorney Donald Tucker, chairman of the Oakland Democrats — also calls for McConnell to run against Gosling.

Furthermore, it calls for Roy Rewold, R-Oakland Township, to run against Donald E. Bishop, R-Rochester Hills, and Donn Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, to run against David Moffitt, also a Farmington Hills Democrat.

In drafting their plan, Democrats consulted with lawyers and respectation experts at every step, according to commissioner Lawrence R. Pernick, D-Southfield. "So, we're ready to go to court to defend it," he said.

County execs like solid waste plan

Oakland County business executives expect an improved business climate a year from now, but don't anticipate that their companies will add employees the remainder of 1991, according to a recent survey by Deloitte & Touche.

The survey also found that the business community favors the county's proposed \$500 million plan to build an incinerator, recycling and composting centers, and new landfill space.

But businesspeople aren't not convinced a proposed "mega-mall" in Auburn Hills will benefit local businesses.

CONDUCTED IN July, the survey polled the opinions of more than 400 executives from manufacturers, service firms, distribution companies and retailers. More than 80 percent of those surveyed held top management positions.

Asked to look ahead 12 months, 75 percent said they expect local business conditions will be improved. Large companies tended to be the most optimistic while retailers were the most pessimistic.

"Based on these results, we can't declare the recession over, but this is the first of our surveys over the last 18 months that shows strong optimism among businesses in southeastern Michigan," said Bill Rauwerdink, partner in charge of

Deloitte & Touche's Middle Market Group.

"The optimism in Oakland County has to be characterized as cautious, however, because only one company in five expects to hire additional employees this year."

THE SURVEY found:
• 56 percent of companies think the local business climate has deteriorated from a year ago.
• 59 percent have reduced the scope of their operations or cut prices.

• 84 percent have been directly or indirectly affected by the decline in auto sales.
• 70 percent of companies expect 1991 sales to increase or remain level with 1990. Sales increases which do occur are unlikely to result from foreign trade because few companies surveyed are involved in

international business.
• 73 percent support the county's plan to build an incinerator, recycling and composting centers, and new landfill space.

• 38 percent believe the elimination of tax abatements by municipal governments will have no effect on development in the county and 9 percent think it will help.

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OAKLAND COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION WE WANT YOUR HELP

Your Board of Road Commissioners for Oakland County wants you to help decide on the

1992 BUDGET

FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1992

AND

1992 ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Board of Road Commissioners for Oakland County invites all interested citizens and elected officials to present comments prior to adoption of the 1992 Budget and 1992 Road Improvement Program. For this purpose, we have scheduled a Public Hearing.

Date: Thursday, August 22, 1991
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Place: Oakland County Auditorium
Oakland County Service Center
1200 North Telegraph
Pontiac, Michigan 48341

WHAT THE BUDGET IS

The proposed Budget sets forth the revenue anticipated to be available to the Road Commission and the sources of that revenue. The Budget also designates the proposed use of these funds, including the Operating Expenditures of the Road Commission and the proposed Road Improvement Program.

ADVANCE COPIES ARE AVAILABLE

Copies of the proposed 1992 Budget and related information will be available one (1) week prior to the Public Hearing. They may be obtained by contacting the Finance Department of the Road Commission for Oakland County, 31001 Lahar Road, Birmingham, Michigan 48019 (Telephone 645-2000, ext. 2327).

Copies of the proposed 1992 Road Improvement Program will be available one (1) week prior to the Public Hearing. They may be obtained by contacting the Engineering Department of the Road Commission for Oakland County, 31001 Lahar Road, Birmingham, Michigan 48019 (Telephone 645-2000, ext. 2315).

WE HOPE YOU WILL PRESENT COMMENTS

The Board Meeting and Public Hearing will be held in accordance with the Provisions of Act 2, P.A. 1968, as amended by Act 821, P.A. 1978, Act 43, P.A. 1983 (2nd executive session), and Act 287, P.A. 1978, as amended.

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