

Patterson ready to 'clean house'

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

Newly elected county executive L. Brooks Patterson said plans to cooperate fully with Detroit and other municipalities, but not at the expense of Oakland County.

"I would never sacrifice the interests of Oakland County for some regional plan," Patterson said Thursday in his first press conference since Tuesday's election when he won the county's top political job with 58 percent of the vote.

The conference was called so Patterson could publicly announce key staff appointments. He also, sometimes in response to questions, talked about his priorities as Oakland's chief executive.

He named John L. Grubba, managing director of the Road Commission for Oakland County, and Douglas J. Williams, the county's chief deputy treasurer, as deputy county executives. He also named 10 members of a transition team, including Grubba and Williams.

"I'm cleaning house," said Patterson, who takes over the office vacated by outgoing county Executive Daniel T. Murphy on Jan. 1. "And I'll draft the best talent available."

The former Oakland County prosecutor said he is demanding letters of resignation from each department head. After some evaluation, he said he would respond to them and let others go.

As his management team takes

shape, Patterson said he intends to "flesh out" some of the ideas he touted in the campaign, namely the business roundtable and employee suggestion program.

As described during the campaign, the business roundtable is a group of business people, possibly as many as 125, appointed to advise on policies to enhance the county's business climate.

The employee suggestion program offers incentives — the top one being a trip for two to Hawaii — to those within the county's 4,500 work force who come up with meaningful ways to reduce waste or improve efficiency.

His priorities, Patterson said, is to manage the growth projected in Oakland, encourage economic growth while preserving the economy and streamlining government.

In response to questions about the future of SMART (the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation), Patterson characterized it as a "failing economic system," but pledged to take a close look at it.

"The Detroit bus system is also a failing economic system," he said. "If we combine them (as some propose) we'll simply have a bigger failed system."

Patterson said he is opposed to a suggestion, from Wayne County Executive Edward H. McNamara, that sales taxes be increased to provide funds for SMART. The amount paid by Oakland County residents would be disproportionate to the benefit they would

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L. Brooks Patterson
county executive-elect

realize, Patterson explained.

Also in response to a question, Patterson said his new administration — unlike his transition team — would include minorities. "They will have an important role," he said.

His transition team included three women and seven men, none of whom are minorities.

During the campaign his Democratic opponent Elizabeth Howe criticized Patterson as quintessence of the old boy network she said dominates county government.

In addition to Grubba and Williams, Patterson's transition team includes Carmen V. Talbot, Patterson's secretary/executive assistant at the Auburn Hills law firm; Patterson, Potter, Carnick & Anderson; J. David Vander-Veen, manager of aviation for the 19 years, most of a Pontiac and Troy; Jack C. Hays, corporation counsel; Neil Wallace, an attorney; Joseph Joachim, the county's former director of economic development who is currently a deputy executive to Daniel Murphy; Al Dietrich, owner of a Pontiac auto dealership; Debbie Joslin-Menke, Patterson's former campaign manager; and Deborah Haus-Turner, an account executive with

Merchandising Incentives Corp. of Troy.

Although he is not yet an official member of the administration, Bob Dustman was Patterson's press secretary during the campaign, and he had the same role at Thursday's press conference. Speculation is that Dustman, a news anchor with radio station WXYT-AM, will be the county's next director of public information.

Mindful of public annoyance with old campaign signs, Patterson offered a bounty for old yard signs from the recently concluded executive campaign. He offered to pay 50 cents for each of his signs, and 10 cents for those of his opponent, Democrat Betty Howe. The offer expired Sunday.

Throughout the press conference, Patterson lived up to his reputation for humor and off-the-cuff wise cracks.

When introducing his deputies, for example, Patterson quipped, "These are the guys who will take over when I run for the U.S. Senate."

Although he has repeatedly said he will not run, Patterson is frequently mentioned as a possible candidate in 1994, when incumbent Democrat Donald W. Riegler Jr. is up for re-election.



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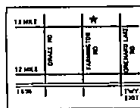


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No quick action to replace Grubba

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

The Road Commission for Oakland County will take no quick action to replace managing director John L. Grubba, who is leaving the post to become a deputy Oakland County Executive.

"I'd rather be right than fast," said Lawrence E. Littman, chairman of the three-member commission that will pick a successor to Grubba, the agency's chief executive officer since 1975. Grubba and Douglas L. Williams, the county's chief deputy treasurer, were named deputies Thursday by Oakland's newly elected executive L. Brooks Patterson. Patterson said his staff officials take office Jan. 1, but Grubba and Williams are also part of the new executive's transition team and will presumably leave their current jobs before then.

Littman lauded Patterson's ap-

pointment of Grubba. "John did a tremendous job at the road commission. He'll be a big asset to the county."

The road commission took no action to begin selecting a replacement when it met for its regular meeting Thursday afternoon.

"We haven't had much discussion," Littman said Friday. "We don't know if we'll go outside, or promote from within. John did a very good job of developing his staff. . . so there probably are several qualified people available within."

"I personally don't think a nationwide search is necessary," said Littman, an executive recruiting service in Troy. "I think a knowledge of Michigan and its inner (governmental) workings would be an important consideration."

Patterson has known Williams and Grubba for some time, and he

had high praise for both.

Williams, who turns 50 Wednesday, came to the county 19 years ago, after being district supervisor for the Local Audit Division for the State of Michigan.

It was as a state auditor that Williams first became acquainted with Oakland County government. "I audited most of the county departments," he said. "And I've audited many governmental agencies in Oakland."

That's a distinct advantage, he said. "Auditors see organizations from the bottom up. They also tend to see the big picture."

Williams and his wife, Sandra, live in Troy. They have two children.

Grubba and Patterson have been friends for nearly two decades. Both graduated from the University of Detroit Law School and both have been in the inner circles of GOP politics.

Grubba brings to the executive's office an extensive knowledge of county roads — and how to finance their construction and maintenance.

One off-the-record proposal during the campaign was the call for a reform of county government, specifically bringing the road commission under direct control of either the executive or board of commissioners.

Patterson never called for making the road commission answerable to the county. But he did advocate closer coordination between the entities to more efficiently address gridlock and other road problems.

In addition to being an expert on Oakland roads, Grubba is knowledgeable about so-called Intelligent Vehicle-Highway Sys-

tems (IVHS). He masterminded installation of embryonic IVHS network in Troy that supporters say can be expanded to a county-wide system.

Besides knowing about IVHS systems, Grubba knows how to procure federal dollars to support them. The system in for Oakland is financed with \$2 million in matching funds from the county and as much as 90 percent with federal funds.

Grubba, 58, was the county's legislative assistant in Lansing before joining the road commission. He is divorced and lives in Milford.

Your job in tough times

Not everyone suffers in a tight job market.

The Oakland University Continuum Center is offering a workshop that explores the opportunities available to those who have

survived downsizing and cutbacks.

Called "How To Progress On The Job in Tough Times," the workshop will be 7-10 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 12, on campus.

Judith Hopkin will be the host. Students will learn about the politics that surround jobs at every level. Then they'll explore ways to become more valuable to their employers.

The fee is \$39. Registration deadline is Nov. 10. Call 370-3033.

CLARIFICATION

In a Nov. 5 Eccentric story the supporters of Oakland County executive candidate Elizabeth Howe should have been identified as "gentle."

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