

# Patterson expects to cut 125 Oakland County jobs

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Oakland's financial outlook is bad, but not so grim that 125 employees face the imminent loss of their jobs as predicted by executive L. Brooks Patterson.

That's the view of several key county commissioners who Friday took issue with Patterson's recommendation that 125 positions within county government should be eliminated because of a budget shortfall.

"I just don't see us laying people off," said commissioner Marilyn E. Gosling, R-Bloomfield Hills, who is chairman of the county board's personnel committee. "We certainly won't lay off that many."

Board chairman, commissioner Larry Crake, R-Waterford, agreed. "That's premature. I think Brooks is preparing for worst-case scenario, and I don't think it will be necessary to eliminate positions."

Gosling and Crake were responding to questions arising after a special edition of an internal publication in which Patterson recommended 64 positions be eliminated within the executive's office and 61 be axed under the departments of other elected officials such as the drain commission and sheriff's department.

Patterson made that recommendation in "The Telegraph," an internal newsletter that circulates to county employees. A special mailing went out late Thursday, reportedly over the objections of commissioners who are concerned it would add to the ru-

more and misinformation already circulating about how the county would meet its budget crunch.

The county has already initiated cost-cutting measures and commissioners recently approved an early buyout program for senior employees, hoping the money saved by replacing some of them with lower-salaried workers would save as much as \$3 million.

"We don't know how many workers will take advantage of the early buy out," Patterson said Friday. "But there's a definite link between that number and the number of jobs to be deleted."

While the jobs to be deleted will be upper echelon jobs, the executive said the people in those positions "won't miss a paycheck or benefit." That's because of the county's personnel policies and labor agreements that permit more senior employees to "bump" workers with less seniority.

Patterson predicts a budget shortfall of about \$8.8 million this year and \$21 million in 1994, most of which he inherited when he took office in January.

Commissioners, however, dispute the exact amount of the shortfall.

The extent to which they disagree is underscored by a special meeting of the county board's finance committee scheduled for Saturday. The meeting was called

after James M. Brennan, program analyst for the county board, and Robert J. Daddow, Patterson's budget director, expressed sharp differences about the size of the shortfall.

Daddow insists the projected deficit is alarming and has ranked some commissioners in his approach to dealing with it.

Brennan, a former commissioner himself, maintains the budget imbalance is much smaller. "I can't say what it is," he said, "but it's much smaller than what Daddow projects."

Commissioner Gosling, in the meantime, said the meeting was primarily aimed at her colleagues, including Republicans, who dispute any budget shortfall exists at all.

## Exec defends mayoral endorsement

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Scotting at claims it was an abuse of power or a violation of his ethics policy, Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said he refuses to apologize — or back away — from an endorsement for Pontiac Mayor Wallace E. Holland.

"Politics is part of my business," the executive said Friday after Democratic commissioners criticized him for using county stationery to endorse Holland who, according to some critics, is fighting for his political future in Tuesday's primary election.

The most vocal critic of Patterson's endorsement was one of Holland's primary rivals, Walter Moore, a former Pontiac mayor who was also a Democratic county commissioner from Pontiac from 1969 to 1975. Moore attacked Patterson's

endorsement during the public comment session of Thursday's regular meeting of the board of commissioners. He claimed the endorsement — on the executive's official stationery — constituted a violation of public trust and an abuse of power.

Moore demanded that Patterson apologize. He also asked his former colleagues — as part of the checks and balances built into government — to sanction the executive.

Democratic commissioners, with Lawrence R. Pernick of Southfield in the forefront, insisted Patterson had violated his own code of ethics which prohibits, among other things, using county resources for non-public use.

"If he (Patterson) used one sheet of paper," said Pernick, "he violated the rules. It's the principal of the thing."

were not so outraged.

"What rule or code did he violate?" asked commissioner Donald W. Jensen, R-Birmingham.

"Common sense," responded commissioner Dennis Aaron, D-Oak Park, "common sense."

Commissioner Thomas A. Law, R-West Bloomfield, said Democrats were "kiss-picking and grasping at straws." "Brooks is the county executive. He has a stake in who wins the Pontiac mayoral race."

"I don't see any abuse of power or breach of ethics from using one sheet of county stationery," said commissioner David L. Moffitt, R-Farmington Hills.

Inform of what Republicans consider a tempest-in-the-teapot controversy, Patterson chuckled. "Wallace is a friend," the executive said Friday.



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