

# County Surplus With U.S. Aid

DETROIT — A proposed budget which projects a \$7.9 million surplus for Wayne County this year — thanks to federal revenue sharing — has been submitted to the Board of Commissioners by the County Board of Auditors.

However, the dramatic reversal of the county's bleak fiscal picture was described as "more apparent than real" by Robert E. FitzPatrick, chairman of the Board of Commissioners.

"In fact we will be lucky to have a balanced budget by the time we allocate money to cover a number of expensive

Items which the auditors did not include in their budget recommendations," FitzPatrick stated.

ONE ITEM likely to be altered by the commissioners, FitzPatrick said, is the auditors' recommendation that 10 per cent of the jobs in most county departments be eliminated.

In their recommended budget, the auditors cut 530 positions, including 361 jobs eliminated at Wayne County General Hospital due to transfer of state mental patients to state institutions.

But in their budget mes-

sage, the auditors said the cuts were made before revenue sharing became a virtual certainty, as it has in recent weeks, and recommended that "consideration be given to restoring some of the eliminated regular positions."

The auditors recommended that the commissioners "also consider reactivating some of the capital improvement (building) projects which have been denied on the basis of money prospects at the time of earlier hearings."

FitzPatrick said it was likely that some jobs would be restored as suggested by the auditors. He said it was un-

likely that any employees would be laid off because most eliminated jobs were already vacant due to economy measures, while others could be eliminated through transfers and attrition.

"STRINGENT" ECONOMIES imposed by the Board of Commissioners this year have saved about \$8 million," he stated. "But as a result of our freeze on hiring, many department heads say they are hard pressed to maintain decent public services. We will have to review the budget of each department during our budget hearings."

The commissioners imposed tight spending controls early in the year after projections indicated a potential budget deficit of \$12-\$15 million by the Nov. 30 end of this fiscal year.

In their budget estimates, the auditors anticipated receipt of \$15 million in federal revenue sharing this year (retroactive to last Jan. 1) and another \$15 million in the fiscal year starting Dec. 1, 1972.

Revenue sharing, coupled with the economies imposed by the commissioners, eliminated the anticipated deficit for this year and wiped out a \$1.8 million deficit from last year.

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