

County will cut support of policeless townships

By ROBERT KIPPER

analysis

OAKLAND COUNTY—Does the county have an obligation to help pay for police protection in townships that lack their own police departments?

That was the question again before the Oakland County Board of Commissioners Thursday. To a larger degree than ever before, commissioners answered that the days of the county helping less developed townships with the costs of police protection are ending.

AT PRESENT, all but 11 townships in the county have their own police departments, supported with local taxes. The 11 departmentless townships contract with the Oakland County Sheriff's Department for police protection.

It is estimated that each of the sheriff's deputies on contract to a township costs \$20,500. The townships are asked to pay \$17,850 per deputy. The county pays the remaining almost \$3,000 per deputy.

The original justification for this county assistance that the towns needed financial help in providing basic police protection seems to be giving way to a new attitude on the commission.

As Commissioner Gary Dearborn, (R-22), of Birmingham, put it: "It's time townships take on the responsibility of providing police protection."

AS ANOTHER commissioner explained, when the county agreed to provide deputies on a contract basis it was understood that townships would be asked to pay more and more of the cost. Eventually, he said, the day would come when townships assumed the full expense.

Thursday's action by commissioners brought that day closer.

Actually, commissioners considered only a related matter: How much the county should charge to five townships who wished to increase their number of deputies. However, their decision set something of a precedent for how the commission may deal with existing deputy contracts when they expire.

THE FIVE TOWNSHIPS—Avon, Commerce, Highland, Independence and Orion—asked for a total of nine new deputies, expecting the cost of \$17,850 per man would be continued. The men would be hired with a federal funds supplied through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).

Several commissioners saw the request as an opportunity for the county to begin charging more for deputy service. The county personnel practices committee recommended that all new deputy contracts should cost the full \$20,500.

The full board approved a compromise measure Thursday after more than an hour of debate. The townships would be charged only \$17,850 per deputy this year. But, within three years, the townships would be expected to pay the full \$20,500.

MUCH OF Thursday's debate followed familiar lines. The two most popular views:

• Crime prevention is a county-wide obligation. The county has a duty to help less-equipped townships

provide basic police service. Even citizens from other areas can benefit from crime-free outlying areas, where many of the county's recreational facilities are located.

• If townships want police protection, they should pay for it. It is the responsibility of the township residents, not county taxpayers, to pay for police.

Part of this second argument holds that taxpayers in areas that have their own police departments are being taxed twice for police protection. With their city or township taxes they support local police departments. Then, some of their county taxes help cover expenses in areas without departments.

Still, according to many commissioners Thursday, the county's share in the subsidy to townships is comparatively low.

"IF THIS COUNTY can't absorb \$27,000 (the anticipated cost to the county for the nine new deputies) for crime prevention in the township," said Commissioner Bernard Lennon (D-18), of Ferndale, "then there's something wrong."

Commissioner Patrick Nowak (R-23), of Farmington, said it would be unfair to suddenly raise the price for

deputies, especially after townships participating in the CETA program expected the same contract price to prevail.

However, Commissioner Paul E. Kasper (R-23), of Bloomfield Hills, argued that it's time townships are asked to pay more of the full cost. Commissioner Dearborn added that, if not discontinued, the subsidy would "come back to haunt" the board.

Finally, it was the attitude of Commissioner Wallace Gabler (R-12), of Royal Oak, that prevailed. He offered the compromise measure that passed the board by a 16 to 8 vote.

"LET'S MOVE to provide police protection that's necessary," Gabler said, "but let's do it realistically."

If the commission eventually raises the charge for deputies under regular contract, many tight-budgeted townships may be forced to cutback their number of deputies or, at least, to postpone immediate plans to get more deputies.

On the other hand, the move could make townships more self-sufficient. They may be forced to ask their residents for special millage to increase police patrols or even to begin meeting the expense of creating police departments on their own.



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Group encourages ecology interest

By CAROL HASKIN

The energy crisis and the sluggish economy have cooled the fire under the once-hot ecology issue, but the East Michigan Environmental Action Council (EMEAC) is trying to fan the flames.

One of EMEAC's most popular services is its Speakers Bureau. Church, social and service groups interested in a certain area of environmental protection can call EMEAC who will design a program for them on the subject.

EMEAC coordinator Mrs. Anita Novak explained that the 15-member board of directors, many of whom are experts in the biological and legal professions, are well-educated in general environmental areas. A group is interested in a specific environmental problem, from household ecology to energy to pollution. It can be provided with a speaker.

FILMS AND PRINTED material are also used in these programs, as they are in the presentations EMEAC has specially prepared for schools. Slide shows for elementary school classes, Mrs. Novak said, are designed to give children a picture of the general environmental situation. For example, children become acquainted with the air pollution problem by symbolically filling a balloon with dirty air.

A booklet called "Kids Can," which comes in the form of a well-known red soup can, tells children what they can do to help clean up the environment.

EMEAC and the Birmingham Junior League have teamed up in an effort to reach every elementary school class in the Birmingham and Bloomfield school districts with this program in the 1974-75 school year.

On the secondary level, EMEAC conducts environmental "teach-ins" and offers the film, "The Gifs," a half hour, color exploration of environmental issues narrated by Lorne Greene.

A SERIES of public meetings for adults is also planned, the first of which is to be held at 9:30 a.m., Nov. 4. The subject will be the Southeast Michigan Transportation Authority's proposal which will be on the ballot the next day and which, said Mrs. Novak, the group supports.

Legislation the group does not support is the Off Road Vehicle bill now on the governor's desk. They are doing their best to prevent its being signed.

Legislative lobbying is another of EMEAC's major activities, and they take particular interest in bills on land use (as does the ORV bill), energy, pesticides and what they term solid waste resource recovery (recycling).

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water minerals tend to reduce the cleaning power of the detergent.

Your dishwasher won't do its best job with hard water. During the drying cycle, spots of hard water minerals can dry on your dishes or flatware and be almost impossible to remove.

Hard water minerals hurt you.

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