

Undersheriff may be out of job

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—Undersheriff Leo Hazen's job insecurity will likely continue until at least Nov. 21. Hazen, who will be replaced by former Detroit police commissioner John Nichols within the next several weeks, will likely have to wait until Nov. 21 to find out if a new job is being found—or created—for him.

That's the earliest date, given the administrative and committee tangles that have to be smoothed out, that the Oakland County Board of Commissioners can meet as a full board and make a determination on Hazen's status with the county.

There is a good possibility, based on committee discussions Friday, that Hazen will be out of a job in the interim period. If that happens, it would mark at least a temporary break in Hazen's 26 years of service with the Oakland County sheriff's Department.

AN ATTEMPT to resolve the situation in more speedy fashion failed Friday despite the urging of Sheriff Johannes Spreen before county commissioners on the Personnel Practices Committee, which is studying the issue.

During that committee meeting Spreen urged that the position of jail administrator be created for Hazen. Spreen and commissioners have been at odds over the need to expand the sheriff's department. Friday's encounter moved freely from the issue of finding Hazen a job to releasing old fights and repeating statements that have crossed for months.

In the end, committee members decided to follow standard process for filling county positions. Spreen has been highly critical of this process.

It will involve, first, more information about the proposed jail administrator, which will come at a committee meeting this week. Then, once

the committee chooses a course of action, it has to be reported to the full board (which next meets Nov. 7). It is then referred to the Finance Committee for approval, and then returned to the full board for a final decision—a process that, unless normal procedural rules are suspended, will take a month.

Criticizing the slow process ahead, Spreen, at one point, sighed, "If this is a system of government, I'm Mother Goose."

SEVERAL COMMISSIONERS criticized Sheriff Spreen's method of handling the department, and motives behind replacing Hazen.

This latest clash started last Monday when Spreen announced that old friend and former Detroit police associate Nichols would replace Hazen as county undersheriff.

Some interpreted Spreen's action as a ploy to get reluctant commissioners to approve a new administrative position in the sheriff's department—the alternative to allowing Hazen to be fired.

Although Hazen ran against Spreen for sheriff in 1972, Spreen argued Friday that political differences had nothing to do with the naming of a new undersheriff.

Undersheriff is the sole position that the sheriff can fill without approval. Spreen said he kept Hazen on as his undersheriff for two years because he wanted Hazen to qualify for pension benefits—a "magnanimous gesture," Spreen insisted, given he and Hazen had been political opponents.

Pleading for the creation of the new job for Hazen, Nichols called him "a good, hearted, sincere and decent man."

"I don't want to see Hazen out in the cold," Spreen said. "I'm trying to be humane and compassionate."

Approve the new job, Spreen argued, "otherwise, you'll force me to cut the man loose."

SPREEN SAID that he had a right to choose his own law enforcement team and that Nichols could bring special talents to the job of undersheriff that Hazen does not have.

County cited as attraction

Oakland County, with its vivid fall color and wide spectrum of things to see and do, is cited as a top fall travel destination in Automobile Club of Michigan's October Motor News magazine.

Oakland County teems with attractions for visitors. Auto Club's \$1 million reader-members are told in an article titled "Ten Things to Do in Southeast Michigan."

"Among Oakland County's top attractions are Cranbrook's six institutions, Meadow Brook Theatre and Meadow Brook Hall, music at Pine Knob, the Detroit Zoo and Oakland University," the article continues.

"In Pontiac, visit Pine Grove, the home of Moses Wisner, governor of Michigan from 1859 to 1887," the article suggests. "Restored to its mid-19th century, it is open to visitors. The home is now headquarters for the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society."

"Botsford Inn in Farmington once a favorite stagecoach stop, still offers lodging and fine food," the article points out. "The inn, built in 1836, was restored by automotive pioneer Henry Ford."

The theme of the October Motor News is "How to See Michigan in Autumn." A dozen articles, columns and features deal with subjects ranging from where to see the best fall color to fishing suggestions, backpacking and where and how to gather nuts and fall flowers.

Police donate equipment

The South Oakland County Police Officers Association—representing police and public safety officers in five area communities—made a donation this month to the Michigan Heart Association for the purchase of cardiopulmonary resuscitation equipment.

The equipment will be used by instructors to teach use techniques in Oakland County.

Association President J. L. Burden of Beverly Hills said the organization also plans donations this year to the Michigan Mongoloid Association, the Salvation Army and the Oakland County Society for Crippled Children and Adults.

BURDEN SAID the association raises the money annually by solicitations throughout Oakland County to stage an annual Christmas show at the State Fairgrounds.

This year's show has been set for Dec. 8, 9 and 10.

The South Oakland County association is composed of the Birmingham, Berkley, Clawson and Lathrup Village police officers associations and the Beverly Hills Public Safety Officers Association.

To support his claim that the jail complex is understaffed, Spreen read the findings of a recent survey taken by the Michigan State Department of Corrections.

Stating that "acts of violence and perversion" continue at the jail, Spreen said one inmate was injured

Bird breeders sponsor show

Motor City Bird Breeders Club of Detroit will hold its annual bird show Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 26 and 27, at the IOOF Hall, 3248 W. 12 Mile, between Coolidge and Greenfield, Berkley.

More than 200 trophies and awards will be presented to bird owners.

The show is open to the public from 10 p.m. Saturday and from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information contact Mrs. Ruth Ross, 10091 Dixie Ave., Detroit.

Mexican dinner

CLAWSON—The Oakland YWCA will give a Mexican dinner from 6-8 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 22.

Admission is \$2.50 for adults and \$1.50 for children 12 and under. Guitarists from the Flamenco Society of Michigan will perform followed by a slide presentation of Mexico.

Tickets are on sale at the Oakland YWCA on Crooks Road at Thirteen and One-Half Mile Road.

last Monday during a sexual assault by another prisoner.

The sheriff added that such incidents could be better handled with more jail staff and an administrator.

Among the things commissioners criticized Spreen for were his failure to specify the need for a jail administrator when he recently submitted next year's budget requests to county administrator.

He didn't ask for the position, Spreen replied, because he felt commissioners wouldn't approve it.

As the manpower argument continued, Spreen finally threatened to someday take his case to court if commissioners won't give him the personnel he needs to properly maintain the county jail.

ONLY ONE COMMISSIONER on the Personnel Practices Committee, who like Spreen is a Democrat, agreed that serious manpower shortages exist at the jail.

"The jail complex was built with the belief that advanced technology could replace personnel," said Commissioner Bernard Berman (D-19), of Oak Park. "Technology has not operated as it should."

"We have a jail facility that has never been fully staffed to meet its needs," Berman's motion that Hazen be approved as jail administrator without further study failed to find support on the committee.

After the meeting, Sheriff Spreen said he would wait for at least two weeks before terminating Hazen so Nichols could begin work.

Hazen has more than 50 leave days and part of his vacation to his credit, which could carry him through the period while a new job is readied. Pension benefits would not be affected by a break in employment.

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