

Murphy to 'streamline' government

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—Barely relaxed from a hard fought campaign to be elected county executive, Daniel Murphy is busy doing one of the things voters chose him to do: Streamlining county government.

Within 30 days, Murphy said he plans to offer his reorganization scheme to county commissioners for study.

'We're not doing away with anything. There will simply be fewer department heads on the top level.'

—Daniel Murphy

No speeches, press conferences or fanfare. The reorganization plan will be sent to the commissioners on the Personnel Practices Committee, which will then determine when it will be reported to the full board of commissioners for further action.

Murphy's first task is to recommend ways of consolidating the number of county departments, reducing the number from 33 to something more workable—maybe less than 11 departments, Murphy said.

Although none of the current department heads will be unemployed or even have their salaries reduced, many will be given new or less responsibility.

Likewise, none of the existing services and functions will stop, Murphy said.

"We're not doing away with anything," Murphy said. "There will simply be fewer department heads on the top level."

IN TIME, through a process of gradual attrition, the number of county chiefs will give way to more Indians—and the goal to have a less administrator-heavy county operation may be achieved, Murphy said.

"Over the long haul, we'll shake this thing down," the county executive added, although the process could take 4-10 years, he said.

In August, Oakland County voters became the first in the state to approve the elected executive form of government. This was recently made possible by Public Act 139.

Although the thrust of this enabling legislation was to streamline county operations and make it more accountable, most of the specifics of this reorganization was left to county decision makers.

Based on Murphy's recommendations, county commissioners will determine how many departments will be needed at the county level and how the existing department heads will be reclassified.

All departments at the county level except those of elected officials—the sheriff, prosecutor, clerk and treasurer.

Bishop named senate 'whip'

Sen. Donald E. Bishop (R-16) was elected whip by the Republican caucus Tuesday.

Bishop will serve for the next four years as one of the top three Republican leaders in the Michigan Senate.

He is replacing Sen. Bob Davis of Gaylord who was elected Senate leader.

Bishop was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1966, re-elected in 1968. He was first elected to the Senate in 1970 and re-elected this year.

His district includes all of Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, most of Troy, Rochester and the townships of West Bloomfield, Bloomfield, Southfield, Avon, Pontiac, Brandon, Oxford, Orion, Oakland and Addison.

urer—and autonomous groups like the road commission are subject to re-shuffling.

However wide ranging the changes will be, Murphy said he considers them essentially inside matters.

TO THE PUBLIC, he guessed, the biggest apparent change come January will be the executive himself. No longer an insider, the county executive will be in a position to answer publicly for most of what goes on at the county level.

The position of the executive, more than all the organizational shuffling below him, will tend to make county government appear more accountable, Murphy said.

However, although administrator's titles will change and departments will be merged and realigned, Murphy said great improvements in county services are not in store.

This is because great changes are not needed, said Murphy, who defends his record as chief administrator of the county under various titles for the past 11 years.

"The county board has never gone off the deep end," Murphy said. "They're pretty responsive already."

"When you've never operated in the red and when you've always planned programs far enough ahead so that there were dollars on hand, I don't see what areas need improving."

Even in his handling of the new job, Murphy plans to make only small waves at the beginning.

He said he will address a full board meeting after he officially takes office in January. However, one of his primary functions—proposing programs to the board—will be subordinated at least in that speech to general observations about how he wants to work together with the board.

"There will be 10 new board members," Murphy said. "I don't think it would accomplish much to come on strong right away with new programs."

'Giftoorama' at Kensington

Kingswood School Cranbrook will hold its annual "Giftoorama" this weekend.

The school will be transformed into an arcade of shops and boutiques offering antiques, art, jewelry and toys and a variety of other Christmas gift items.

In addition to the gift shops, there will be Santa's playroom for children.

a sandwich shop and convenient shuttle service to and from the parking area.

Giftoorama opens Friday with a champagne-cocktail party from 6 to 9 p.m. and continues Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The school is located at Lone Pine and Cranbrook roads, Bloomfield Hills.

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