GOP packs county committees with their own

By MICHAEL MATUSZEWSKI

Democratic Oakland County Com-missioners can count on more frustra-tion in 1979.
Republicans, who increased their majority to 16-11 in the Nov. 7-election, last week decided to pack the board's committees decided by in their favor. The Republicans decided on their lead-ership, and reship and committee appointments last week at a caucus meeting at the Northfield Hilton hotel in Troy. The GOP has had a 15-12 majority for two wars

GOP has had a 10-12 majority on the years.

Republicans decided to elect Commissioner Wallace Gabler of Royal Oak as chairman, the third year in a row they have done so. Commissioner Lillian Moffitt of Bloomfield Towrship, for the third consecutive year, will be the board's vice-chairman.

Commissioner John McDonald of Farmington, who stepped down as GOP caucus chairman, will be replaced by Commissioner Robert Gorsline of Milford.

MUCH OF THE afternoon, however

MUCH OF THE afternoon, however, was spent deciding how the Republicans could best minimize the effect of the board's Democrats on their programs and proposals.

The arrangement finally agreed upon will cut the number of Democrats on the commissioners' six committees—finance, general government, bealth and human resources, personnel, planning and building, and public services.

Republicans decided to increase the size of the finance committee from 11 to 12 members. They will have an 84 majority. Over the past two years, Republicans outnumbered Democrats on that committee, 74.

On all other committees, Republicans will have six seats while the opposition party will have three. Previously, Democrats held four seats.



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Some Republicans offered other proposals that would have cut the Demorats' influence even further. Those proposals were initially adopted, but the caucus later reconsidered those beavy-handed decisions. "WEV'E GOT TO have control." said Commissioner Demis Murphy of Novi, who favored a plan to give his party an 83 majoristy on the important finance committee and 7-3 majorities on the other committees." I would like to not give them any

ities on the other committees.
"I would like to not give them any toommittee seats), but we've got to keep faith with them," he added.
Murphy won an unexpected ally in Mrs. Moffitt. "When you get right down to it," she said, "we can come

they can still get defeated in committee.

"We have to talk practical politics and I never thought I'd get to that point. But from experience, I feel we can no longer afford to be that gracious," Mrs. Moffitt said.

Some commissioners, including Farmington's McDonald, balked.

"I've get this deep-down feeling o? fairness," McDonald said. "Maybe I shouldn't talk about fairness, but the Democrats have as much of a right to attend committee meetings and be involved in discussions as we do," he said.

ULTIMATELY, THOUGH, the

caucus' decision to increase their numbers was an admission of the Republicans' inability to control the committee process.

"We have a problem of keeping geople around to vote," Commissioner Ralph Modey of Birmingham said.

"We've got an attendance problem to begin with, and then commissioners start drifting away.

"When the parties are tied 33, they the Democratis) will kill us every time. Sometimes we even get out-rumbered," he said.

The decision to increase Republican ranks on the finance committee and decrease Democratic ranks on the other committees is designed to solve

that problem.

Other commissioners who agreed with Mookey's assessments said they were counting on the increased Republican majority on the finance committee, through which nearly very important proposal passes, to quell any Democratur proposal passes, to quell any Democratur proposal posses to the finance committee and after that to the full board." said Commissioner Robert McConnell of Farmington Hills. "If we can't get is votes on the floor, it's our own fault," he said.

"We've got a clear majority on the floor, it's our own fault," he said.

"We've got a clear majority on the floor is a clear majority the full board." McConnell said. "If we can't get some-

thing through, it's not worth getting through, 'he added.

REPUBLICANS also made it clear that they will control the tempo of county government. They agreed once again to reserve committee leadership posts for themselves. The last time the bemocrats controlled the board of commissioners, they appointed some Republicans to vice chairmanships.

Chairing the finance committee in Republicans Mosdey will be vice-chairman. Others on the committee include Robert Page of Birmingham's Henry Hoot of Toy, Anne Hobart of Pontiac, John Pelerson of Hochester. Mat Dunaskis of Lake Orion and Mrs. Molfitt.

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