

Murphy's budget cuts 15 Oakland County jobs

By Suzie Rollins Singer
staff writer

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners this week begins work on a general fund budget with 15 fewer jobs. County Executive Daniel T. Murphy proposed the budget Thursday, noting the \$114 million spending plan for 1983 is only 0.6 percent larger than the current budget.

Murphy said sound fiscal management allowed him to propose the new budget. The present budget is \$110 million. The proposed budget is also \$4.7 million less than requests submitted by department heads.

"DURING THE last few years, we really held down the new hires and replacements. We had 165 requests for new employees, and we only recommended five," Murphy said.

"The department heads know things are tough. They have enough people to get the job done. If someone shows they have a handicap to get the job done, then we'll give them the extra employees," he added.

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— Daniel T. Murphy

To keep his budget increase small, in light of inflation and higher contracts, Murphy was able to carry forward a \$4.4 million surplus from prior years.

"Good management and wise investing have allowed us to have a surplus. We're always concerned that department heads hold down costs. We also invested money when interest was high so we made more money."

Murphy said he was able to keep the proposed property tax rate of 4.63 mills to the same rate levied in 1982. In 1981 the county levied 4.70 mills and 4.90 mills in 1980.

THE PROPERTY tax levy continues to be the single major source of county

revenues. It raises 58 percent — \$86.2 million.

Revenues from intergovernmental sources including federal-revenue sharing, state-shared income tax, child-care subsidy, state reimbursement of revenue lost on inventories and state health subsidy — account for 16 percent, or \$18.6 million, down 3 percent from 1982.

Charges for services amount to 18 percent of the revenue, or \$17.7 million. That is \$1.5 million more than for 1982. Murphy attributed it to improved revenues from new programs in District Court probation, Emergency Medical Services, animal control and payments in lieu of taxes collected, as well

as renegotiation of Sheriff Township Patrol contracts.

Miscellaneous resources, such as interest earned on investments and land-transfer tax plus the \$4.4 million prior years' surplus, provide \$11.5 million, down \$1 million from 1982.

APPROPRIATIONS are to be increased over 1982 by \$3.1 million due to employee fringe benefit expenses, primarily retirement, hospitalization and dental insurance.

In addition, a 27 percent increase in the cost of natural gas and a 20 percent hike in the cost of electric utilities forced costs up.

"These increases are offset by freezing or decreasing user rates on all other internal services," Murphy said.

THE LARGEST chunk of the appropriations budget goes to departments

headed by the county executive.

These include institutional and human services, public services, central services, public works, personnel, computer services, management and budget.

That area accounts for 46 percent or \$52.3 million of the entire budget. It is up 7 percent over 1982.

Murphy said the reasons for the hike are the transfer of civil counsel from the board of commissioners' budget to his (by court order), the transfer of the Oakland County Communications Center to EMS/Disaster Control, additional animal control services to Southfield, additional data processing services for the reimbursement division, addition of the mail room to center services and several other small reorganizations.

THE LAW enforcement budget has a

proposed 12 percent, or \$2.3 million, hike.

The added money is primarily due to the addition of 41 positions to the Sheriff's department — 36 of which resulted from the U.S. District Court consent judgment to adequately staff the jail and six new deputies to patrol Lyon and Oakland townships. One position was deleted from the Southfield Detention facility.

Law Enforcement is comprised of the sheriff and prosecutor's office and amounts to 20 percent, or \$22.8 million, of the total budget, Murphy said. Another 18 percent, or \$20.8 million, is allocated to administration of the justice program including the circuit, district and probate courts. The \$1.3 million year-to-year increase resulted from higher defense attorney fees, particularly for the probate court, and greater expenses of maintaining the law library.



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