

County eyes decision on solid waste program

By Pat Murphy
staff writer

There's growing sentiment among Oakland officials to fish or cut bait on the county's solid waste program — even if it means putting the plan on hold for a year.

"It's time to make some decisions," summarized County Commissioner Lawrence R. Pernick. "We should move forward, or turn solid waste back to local communities or the state."

Pernick made his comments prior to the 5:30 p.m. special county board meeting called on relatively short notice by chairman Roy Rewold, R-Oakland Township. It's at the commissioner's auditorium in the county complex at 1200 N. Telegraph in Pontiac.

The meeting is billed as an "informational" meeting, with no published agenda. But Pernick and others — frustrated by the snail's pace at which the county is progressing — are anxious to make some decisions, or at least take a few concrete steps in that direction.

Commissioner Nancy McConnell, R-Bloomfield Hills, put it this way. "It's time to go forward. If we have to split the program, let's split it."

THE COUNTY'S OPTIONS are relatively simple:

- Go ahead with the \$500 million plan as approved last year, with massive recycling and a waste-to-energy incinerator in Auburn Hills.
- Kill, or at least postpone, plans for the controversial incinerator — an option that appears more and more likely — and proceeding with recycling.

• Abandon the solid waste program entirely, leaving the problem to individual communities or the state. Existing law mandates that state officials formulate plans for handling solid waste if county governments can't.

"County government doesn't have to come up with a plan," said Pernick. "We would lose control, but the county can leave it to the communities or simply let the state do it."

Each option presents a separate set of questions and problems. If the county decides to go ahead with the existing plan, should the plan be put on a countywide ballot?

If that ballot fails — as many

predict it will — what options would the county have left? Could Oakland then implement any solid waste plan?

Rewold Wednesday declined to say what, if any, recommendation he will make at today's meeting. "It's just an informational meeting, and I want to see what other commissioners think," he said.

Even so, Rewold said he personally favors either abandoning the incinerator or going full steam ahead on the existing plan, even if that means putting the program on a ballot as proposed by Commissioner

'It's time to make some decisions. We should move forward, or turn solid waste back to local communities or the state.'

— Commissioner Lawrence Pernick
D-Southfield

John E. Olsen, R-Huntington Woods. More and more commissioners say they favor abandoning the incin-

erator — at least temporarily — so the county can implement recycling. Commissioner Marilyn E. Gost-

Commissioner Donna L. Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, said he is anxious for today's meeting. "We're faced with a lot of questions," he said. "But I think some answers will be coming out."

Asked about the likely outcome, Wolf said, "I personally favor taking the solid waste issue to the people."

Some commissioners have suggested putting the issue on the ballot in the upcoming special election, June 19, to pick a new state senator in the 16th District to replace Doug Cruse, including the Troy and Birmingham areas.

IT MAKES SENSE. NOT JUST MONEY.

OU program plugs classics

Classics of Western Tradition, a cultural program offered by Oakland University for great literature lovers, begins spring term on Tuesday, April 23, with discussion on Ernest Hemingway's "The Sun Also Rises."

Co-sponsored by OU's Division of Continuing Education and College of Arts and Sciences, the lecture-discussion program is presented 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays, April 23 through May 21 at Sunset Terrace on Oakland's Rochester campus.

Brian Murphy, OU professor of English, will talk on the Hemingway classics on April 23, 30 and May 7, followed by discussion of Alexis de Tocqueville's "Democracy in America" on May 14 and 21 by Charles McCabe, OU protestant chaplain Saint John Fisher Chapel.

Tuition is \$45 for the Hemingway three-lecture series, \$30 for the de Tocqueville set. To register, call 370-3120, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

The classic literature program, led by OU faculty members, is designed simply for enjoyment without the burden of exams or grades. Class size is limited to encourage free exchange of questions and interpretations.

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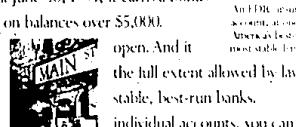
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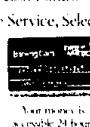
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