

# Patterson stirs politics with 'kiss of death' endorsements

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Everybody else considers it a joke — or political tomfoolery — but Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson said he is "dead serious" about endorsing Sharon McPhail in the Detroit mayoral race over rival Dennis Archer.

"She's my candidate," Patterson said in a phone interview Friday. Presumably he kept a straight face.

The executive said his previous endorsement of Archer, a former Michigan Supreme Court justice, must have been a "slip-up."

"I tried to stay out of that race," Patterson said, although he's interested. "I will have to work with whoever is the next mayor."

The Oakland county executive kicked off something of a political storm Thursday with a one-page press release stating, among other things, "Ms. McPhail has my unqualified support and endorsement."

"I join with Coleman Young in urging all Detroiters to vote for Sharon McPhail on Tuesday, Nov. 2."

"I look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with Mayor McPhail. I am also looking forward to her invitation for a meeting at the Manogian Mansion after her inauguration."

The endorsement was reported in the media, although most newspapers and radio and television stations viewed it with great skepticism, if not an outright prank. The Detroit News, for example, ran a story with the headline, "Patterson endorses McPhail in deadpan announcement."

McPhail herself took Patterson's endorsement as less-than-serious. "We've had a day of laughs now, from L. Brooks Patterson's off-the-wall endorsement, but it's time to focus again on the problems of Detroit — and how to solve them. Patterson is part of the problem, not part of the solution."

McPhail has painted her opponent as the candidate of suburbanites who she says believe Archer, as Detroit mayor, would undermine black control of Detroit.

Archer said that claim is a diversion. The real issues, he insists, are crime and economic development.

On several occasions, Patterson has been asked his views on the Detroit mayoral race — especially after last November when he was elected county executive and placed in a position of presumably being expected to deal with Detroit's next mayor as well as other leaders in southeast Michigan.

On one occasion after he won election but before he took office, Patterson was asked his preference in the Detroit race. At the time incumbent Coleman A. Young was considered a probable candidate, but Archer had announced his candidacy.

Patterson said he liked Archer on a personal basis. "But I don't want to endorse him because that's the kiss of death," the executive-elect said.

Shortly thereafter, at a press conference to announce some of his appointees, executive-elect Patterson was again asked if he had a preference. "I don't want to jinx his campaign," he said with a chuckle. "But I've known Archer to be a professional" with a high degree of integrity.

That quote was reported in the Nov. 23 edition of *The Eccentric Newspapers*, along with a separate story about Patterson's appointments. McPhail advisors point to that story as evidence that Patterson is endorsing Archer.

Reminded of that story Friday, Patterson said he didn't remember it or the quote.

Asked if he denies the quote, Patterson said, "I'm not the kind of person who says something and later denies it."

"If (the quote) must have been a slip-up."

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# Republicans set McPhail fundraiser

BY PAT MURPHY  
STAFF WRITER

Oakland Republicans have scheduled a fundraiser on behalf of Detroit mayoral candidate Sharon McPhail to demonstrate L. Brooks Patterson is serious about endorsing her, according to GOP county chairman James M. Alexander.

The \$20-per-person program, a la David Letterman, will deal with the top 10 reasons suburbanites favor McPhail, according to a press release that says the event is from noon to 1:30 p.m. Friday at Duggans' Irish Pub on Woodward in Royal Oak.

Topics of discussion include regionalization of the Detroit water and sewer systems and repatriation of the Detroit Zoo (located in Royal Oak).

McPhail is a special guest, said the release, who is invited, but who has not yet confirmed her attendance.

"We're serious about this," Alexander said Friday from GOP headquarters in Birmingham.

Patterson started beating the drums for McPhail Thursday in a press release that stated, "I find Sharon McPhail to be an outstanding candidate for Mayor. She has great leadership potential, a vision for the future, and between the two candidates she certainly is the suburban choice for Mayor."

Most of the media viewed the endorsement with skepticism and

reported it as a joke or political prank.

McPhail characterizing Patterson's "off-the-wall endorsement" as a laugh.

"Thank you Brooks, but no thank you," she said in a press release Friday. "If you carry through with your promise to hold a fundraiser on my behalf, please send the proceeds to a place where they can help people: East-Side Emergency Shelter, 14320 Kercheval, Detroit 48215, care of the Rev. Ann Johnson."

Informed of McPhail's suggestion that any money raised by Patterson and the Republicans be sent elsewhere, Alexander said, "She doesn't want suburban support?"

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