

Governor names area residents to boards

Gov. John Engler has appointed the following area persons to state positions:

■ James Safran of Birmingham to the Bi-lateral Trade Team to Israel. Safran is owner and CEO of Safran Printing in Sterling Heights. His term expires May 30, 1999.

■ Joseph H. Casiglia of Troy to the Board of Boiler Rules. He is a mechanical engineer for Detroit Edison Co., where he has worked since 1968. His term expires May 30, 1999.

■ Anne Mervenne, a Birmingham native who lives in Royal Oak, as special advisor to the governor and first lady Michello Engler, managing her office and assisting her on civic boards. Mervenne vacates the post of director of the governor's southeastern Michigan office in Detroit.

■ Susy Heintz to her old job (199-95) as director of the governor's Detroit office. A former Northville Township supervisor and Wayne County commissioner, Heintz had been working for the Michigan Jobs Commission since losing a 1996 congressional election Macomb County, where she now lives.

■ Laura Mendoza of West Bloomfield and Barbara VanDusen of Bingham Farms to the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs for terms expiring Sept. 1, 2000.

Mendoza is an artist who exhibits paintings throughout the state. VanDusen has been a Detroit Symphony Orchestra board member for more than 20 years.

■ Scott R. Jacobson of Birmingham to the Residential Builders and Maintenance Alterations Contractors Board, which licenses residential builders. Jacobson is owner and president of the S.R. Jacobson Development Corp. His term expires March 31, 2001.

■ Michael G. McCabe of Rochester Hills and Douglas J. Williams of Troy to the Occupational Health Standards Commission for terms expiring Aug. 5, 2000. McCabe is deputy chief of staff for the Oakland sheriff's department and will represent public employees.

Williams is deputy county executive and oversees the management and budget division, among others. He will represent public employees.

■ Melanie Myers of Lathrup Village and Elizabeth Pezzetti of Bloomfield Hills to the Michigan Women's Commission for terms expiring July 15, 2000.

Myers is first vice president of First Chicago NBD. Pezzetti is a partner in the law firm of Dickson Wright.

Mental health care draws fire

BY PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

A call for the mass resignation of 11 members of the Oakland County Mental Health Board, which oversees a \$100 million-plus budget, followed a no confidence vote approved late Tuesday by the Public Services Committee of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

Tuesday's committee meeting drew an overflow crowd. An estimated 200 people showed up for the meeting in a committee room designed to accommodate fewer than 60.

Currently there are 11 volunteers who make up the Oakland County Mental Health Board, with one vacancy. The board is made up of county commissioners, mental health care providers and consumers.

The Public Services Committee's action has no impact, at least until it is approved by the entire board of commissioners — something that may or may not happen at next Thursday's meeting.

PSC members were named in a lawsuit — along with Oakland County commissioners — that was filed by a mental health agency that was denied service contracts.

"It was a slap in the face," county commissioner Charles E. Palmer, R-Clawson and Troy, said Wednesday. "But nobody's talking about resigning."

Palmer is also on the CMH board that met late Tuesday, less than two hours after the Public Services committee voted for their immediate resignation

— along with that of Community Mental Health director Sandra M. Lindsey.

Palmer said he and his colleagues were not particularly concerned about the committee's call for their resignation.

"It carries no weight as far as I'm concerned," said John P. Garfield, a county commissioner and CMH board member. "They (other commissioners) can't force me to resign. I and other CMH board members are appointed for a specific period, they can't force us out before the end of our terms."

More worrisome, Palmer and Garfield acknowledged, is the suit filed Monday in circuit court by Training and Treatment Innovations (TTI) of Oxford. The suit seeks damages as a result of the decision to deny the company any more mental health contracts.

Five contracts — totaling \$1 million in mental health services — are scheduled to expire at the end of this month. The suit challenges a decision not to allow TTI to bid on any new contracts.

The suit is merely part of a series of problems that has plagued the Community Mental Health Board, according to county commissioner Daniel Devine Jr., R-Bloomfield Hills, a member of the Public Services Committee who introduced the resolution of censure and the mass resignations.

"CMH has been plagued by bad decision and mismanagement," he said. "Today's vote gets us moving in the right direction — addressing the problems plaguing mental health."

"But I know one thing for certain," Devine said. "We can't address those problems with the current director (Sandra Lindsey)."

While Devine was vocal in his criticism of Lindsey, other commissioners were not as emphatic. "Some of the problems associated with the CMH board point to the director," said commissioner Thomas A. Law, R-West Bloomfield. "But I can't say all the problems are her responsibility."

Lindsey was unable to be reached for comment Wednesday; however, she is expected to issue a statement later.

Commissioner Lawrence R. Pernick, D-Southfield, said the resolution calling for CMH board members to resign was the first time he ever considered censuring a colleague on the board.

"This is indeed a sad day," he said. "But there are problems within Community Mental Health, and we must address them."

While many of the visitors supported Devine saying "I support TTI," others were critical of the CMH board.

"We support the motion requesting the immediate resignation of the Oakland County Community Mental Health Board," said Joseph Erwin, a Bloomfield Hills resident who is president of Association for the Macomb Oakland Regional Center (AMORC).

His organization represents 1,600 parents and guardians who support and monitor group homes directed by the Macomb Oakland Regional Center.

Utility hearings set

Area residents will have two chances to sound off on telephone, electric and natural gas costs when the Michigan Public Service Commission holds public hearings next month.

Area hearings are scheduled for 6 p.m.:

■ Tuesday, Oct. 14, in Pontiac City Hall, 460 E. Wide Track Drive.

■ Thursday, Oct. 16, in the Ann Arbor Municipal Building, 100 N. Fifth.

MPSC chair John Strand said consumers at other hearings have raised the issues of electric rate deregulation, telephone and electric outages, costs of electric and gas serve in new developments, and switching of telephone service without customer permission.

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