

Shuffle: Engler says he'll split Jobs Commission

BY TIM RICHARD

STAFF WRITER

Gov. Engler's administration continues its shuffle of state departments with the governor's announcement that he'll split his creation — the Jobs Commission — in half April 1.

First, he'll take out the Office of Workforce Development, rename it the "Department of Career Development" and give it cabinet status, with its own director.

That office started out as part

of the Department of Education, was turned over to the Labor Department in 1994 and then folded into the Jobs Commission (along with most of the Department of Commerce) in 1995.

Second, what's left of the Jobs Commission will become the "Michigan Economic Development Corp." It will have a board drawn largely from business who will hire the CEO — presumably Doug Rothwell, who heads the Jobs Commission.

The corporation will give us greater flexibility, continuity and

focus, while allowing for the consolidation of all economic development functions," Engler said in his State of the State address. Since most legislators didn't understand it, the plan drew no applause.

"I'll have to apply for the job with the new bosses," Rothwell said in an interview.

The new Career Development Department will have nearly 1,100 employees and a budget of \$456 million. It will house rehabilitation services, workforce development, job training, the

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employment service agency, and career preparation.

This was the office that processed the \$5 million grants that Oakland Community College received in January for an M-TEC building to do information technology training and Henry Ford Community College will get for industrial training.

The new Economic Development Corp. will house Travel

Michigan (the old Travel Bureau, now headed by Susy Holton Avery), the Michigan Strategic Fund, the Michigan Economic Growth Authority, and other business attraction services.

It will be smaller than the career department with just 224 employees and a budget of \$110 million.

With a chief executive appointed by a board rather than a director appointed by the governor, MEDC won't be disrupted by election changes in the office

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of the governor. "This is important because business client typically take 5-7 years to site new or expanded facilities," Rothwell said.

It will also work more closely in partnership with local units of government.

"No state workers lose their jobs, benefits or other civil service protections," the governor added.

Farmington area Dems score big

DEMOCRATIC STATE CONVENTION

Democrats also elected Rose Christoph of Farmington Hills to serve on the party governing state central committee while Paul Blizman and Mark Steckloff, both of Farm-

ington Hills, will serve as alternate state central committee members. Farmington and Farmington Hills representatives on the 11th District's executive committee are Marie Weigold, Jim Nash and Ken Murray.

Mark Bruver was re-elected as state chair and Flora Walker and Woody Woodrow as vice chair.

Hills-based A&W featured in TV series

A&W Restaurants, Inc., this country's oldest franchise restaurant chain, was noted for its drive-in restaurants during the '60s, a decade to be featured in NBC-TV program about the 1960s.

This year A&W Restaurants turns 60 years old and will continue to introduce an evolution of the once popular drive-in concept.

Founded in 1919, A&W Restaurants, Inc. franchises continue to operate a shrinking

number of the popular order-from-your-car-type restaurant which is being replaced by concepts in a variety of traditional free-standing restaurants and non-traditional sites such as:

- Gas stations and convenience stores
- Military establishments
- College student centers
- Hospitals
- Indian reservations

The order-from-your-car-by-intercom concept is being replaced by intercom-phones at

each table inside the restaurant. A&W, which was acquired in 1995 by Sidney Felsenstein, current chairman, president and CEO and a group of investors, currently has nearly 1,000 restaurants in 46 United States and 17 foreign countries.

Like the '60s, A&W Restau-

rants continues to maintain an All-American menu of hamburgers, coney island hot dogs, french fries, its signature brand of A&W Draft Root Beer and root beer floats. Modern additions include chicken sandwiches, chicken strips and onion rings.



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