

4 aldermen block reappointment of city finance board

by Scott Williams

DeKalb aldermen are clashing with Mayor Greg Sparrow over aldermanic membership on one of the city's most important committees, the Finance Advisory Board.

Aldermen who have never been appointed to the board on Monday night temporarily blocked Sparrow's appointments of the same three aldermen who have served on the board for four years.

Fourth Ward Alderman Rita Tewksbury led the fight to keep 1st Ward Alderman Ron Matekaitis, 2nd Ward Alderman John Guio and 3rd Ward Alderman William Hanna from being appointed to their fifth consecutive term on the board.

The seven aldermen must approve by a majority the mayor's appointments to such boards and committees.

After lengthy and heated debate over the finance board appointments Monday night, Sparrow agreed to reconsider and try to "negotiate a vacancy" on the board among the three aldermen. He said he will report back to the council at its March 12 meeting.

All four aldermen never appointed to the board — Tewksbury, 5th Ward Alderman Bessie Chronopoulos, 6th Ward Alderman Steve Brody and 7th Ward Alderman Jay Stein — argued that they should be allowed to have a hand in the budget-making process, which is the prime duty of the finance advisory board.

"Nobody else has gotten a chance to be on that committee," Tewksbury said.

The issue came up last year when Sparrow reappointed the same three aldermen to the board. At that time, the mayor promised to make a change in the aldermanic membership this year.

However, Sparrow argued Monday night that, because of the many complicated budget issues facing the city this year, the same experienced membership should be retained.

"I don't feel that I want to see major changes at a time when we might experience troubled waters," he said.

The deciding vote on the issue apparently will be cast by Brody, who said he feels strongly on both sides of the issue.



Bessie Chronopoulos



Greg Sparrow



Jay Stein



Steve Brody

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