

METRO

"All I ever wanted to be was a police officer."

KARYN RISCH, a police officer who says she has been passed over for promotion six times since 2002

OAKLAND BRIEFS

COUNTY-WIDE

Contract talks for Children's Village school to continue

A contract for educational services at Children's Village, an Oakland County facility for abused, neglected and criminally charged youth, will come up again Thursday.

On Monday, the county board's General Government Committee rejected a three-year extension of a contract with the Waterford School District to provide educational services at the facility. The contract expires July 1.

As a result, Waterford is preparing to cancel summer school at Children's Village this year.

A provision in the facility's license says it must provide educational services for the children who stay at Children's Village, which is located in Waterford. It has been run by the Waterford district for more than 20 years. About 1,500 students go to the school each year, though daily counts fall between 200 and 240 students.

The General Government Committee rejected the contract because it wanted more cuts in the \$489,000 county subsidy to the facility.

The panel will tackle the contract again at 9 a.m. Thursday before the full board meets at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting will take place at the county courthouse, 1200 N. Telegraph Road in Pontiac.

Patterson gets honorary degree from Baker College

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson received an honorary doctorate in humane letters Friday from Bak-

er College.

The award came after Patterson delivered the commencement address in front of about 80 graduates at the college's Casa City campus. Baker College has about 34,000 students at its 12 campuses around the state.

NOVI

Proposal to expand library will be shelved for now

Plans for a \$16-million expansion of the Novi Public Library are on hold while the library board launches a public relations campaign to convince voters to pay for it.

Chances are good that a bond proposal will appear on a ballot next year rather than in November.

The board asked the Novi City Council on Monday to place a bond proposal on the November ballot that would help to expand the building on 10 Mile.

City Councilman Kim Capello said a library bond proposal probably wouldn't fare well with voters in an uncertain economy and would get buried on the ballot in a gubernatorial election year.

He suggested going to voters in an off year.

Library Board President Bob Cutler said the board will likely wait until next spring or later to go to voters, who would pay by bonding \$30 and \$70 a year for 20 years for the expansion.

He said the plan is to expand the library from 200,000 square feet to 600,000 square feet.

Compiled by Julie Edger and Kathleen Gray

WAYNE BRIEFS

PLYMOUTH

Father's Day Run

Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility.

The school's charter con-

She accuses department of gender bias

BY DAVID ASHENFELTER
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

A Royal Oak police officer is suing her department, charging that she has been passed over for promotion six times because she is a woman.

"The command of the Police Department — everyone above the rank of officer — is 100% devoid of any female representation," Richard Lippitt, attorney for Officer Karyn Risch, 40, said this week. "How can you have a department with nearly 100 positions and not one management position occupied by a woman? This defies coincidence."

A lawyer for the city disputed the charges.

"We believe the allegations are completely unfounded," said attorney David Gillam of Farmington Hills. He declined to elaborate.

The lawsuit, filed June 5 in U.S. District Court in Detroit, said Risch had been passed over for promotion a half-dozen times since June 2002 for detective and sergeant positions, even though she had more seniority and better test scores than the men who received those jobs.

Lippitt said that because Risch is female and gay, she apparently doesn't fit police officials' profile of what a female police officer should be.

Risch said the department has 61 officers and 16 supervisors. During nearly 17 years at



PHOTO BY BECK/DETROIT FREE PRESS

Officer Karyn Risch, 40, is suing the Royal Oak Police Department, alleging that she has been passed over for a promotion despite having seniority and better test scores than her male counterparts who were promoted.

the department, she said, only women graduates as expected, she said, someone on the squad suggested that she had tipped off patrons — a charge Risch vehemently denied.

Although an investigation cleared her, Risch said the stigma remained. She said a personality conflict with her supervisor on the squad finished her off, and she was sent back to the Royal Oak department three months into the assignment.

Over the years, she said, she has complained to her supervisors about her treatment, including being passed over for promotion, but to no avail.

"All I ever wanted to be was a police officer," she said. "But after all of this started, it became obvious that my police career was over. What a horrible thing to realize."

Risch said she is hoping to get a promotion as a result of the suit or to be compensated for a supervisory salary she feels she should have had.

Although the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission could find no evidence that the city discriminated against Risch, it nevertheless authorized her in February to file the suit.

A hearing date has yet to be scheduled.

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