



(WWJ Photo - Protestor urges City Council to stop Cobo transfer)

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Cobo Authority Meets For 1st Time, Begins Work

Detroit (WWJ) -- Cobo Center regional authority meet for the first time Thursday to prepare for next month's transfer of power from the city of Detroit.

Authority Chairman Larry Alexander says there's a lot of work ahead of them to where they may still need the city's help through the transition. "This is a huge building. It's a very large footprint. There are a lot of moving parts to make this facility function and work on a daily basis," Alexander said.

The authority is to take over Cobo's operations on April 20. It is made up of representatives from the city, state, and Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

Although the transfer will be complicated, Detroit Mayor Ken Cockrel Spokesman Anthony Neely said they are on the right track. "What's really important is that this board will make it possible for Cobo to continue to function as a strong convention center and bring jobs into the city of Detroit," he said.

"It's all about jobs ... it's not about politics," Neely said.

Meanwhile, a committee of Detroit City Council voted Thursday to ask the full Council to consider hiring an outside attorney -- and seek an injunction to stop the Cobo Authority from moving forward.

The mayor wants the authority to take control, and vetoed a Detroit City Council move when it voted otherwise. Detroit City Councilwoman Albert Tinsley-Talabi hopes to stop the regional authority from taking any action until the legality of mayor's veto has been considered by a judge.

"I believe they're looking to appoint a director and a number of things, moving towards the Authority. And I'm just wondering if we can't file some kind of motion for them to cease and desist from this until there's been final court action," Tinsley-Talabi said.

Wayne County Circuit Judge Isidore Torres will hold a hearing on the veto March 26. Council is expected to vote next Tuesday on two requests -- whether to seek an emergency injunction, and whether to hire an outside attorney.