

# Dixon favored as next treasurer

## Carroll delegate offers extensive background in finance, pensions, budgets

By THOMAS W. WALDRON  
SUN STAFF

State Del. Richard N. Dixon, a cigar-chomping former paratrooper and political anomaly from Carroll County, is the odds-on favorite to succeed retiring Maryland Treasurer Lucille Maurer.

Mr. Dixon, 57, holds several distinctions. He is a black elected official in an overwhelmingly white district. He's a Democrat in a county that is staunchly Republican.

Now he hopes his colleagues in the General Assembly will decide

that his extensive background in finance — both as a stockbroker for the last 26 years and as one of the legislature's experts on pensions and budgets — qualifies him to serve as state treasurer.

"That's a wealth of experience," Mr. Dixon said yesterday.

Mr. Dixon ran unsuccessfully last year for treasurer, a post with a current annual salary of \$100,000 a year. The treasurer is chosen by a vote of the 188 members of the General Assembly.

Mrs. Maurer, 73, was elected easily to a third four-year term last January, but announced yesterday that she would step down because of failing health.

Mr. Dixon is supported for the position by House Speaker Casper R. Taylor Jr., which immediately makes him the favorite because of the large number of legislative votes the speaker can influence.

"I'm sure there will be other challenges, but I believe I have enough votes to win," Mr. Dixon said.

Mr. Dixon, a native of Westminster, traces his family back six generations in the area.

For 12 years in the segregated 1940s and 1950s, he attended the all-black Robert Moton School in Westminster and received a bachelor's degree from what was then called Morgan State College in Baltimore.

In 1960, he joined the U.S. Army and was a paratrooper in the 101st Airborne Division. He served a year in Vietnam and earned a Bronze Star.

He left the Army as a captain in 1968, earned a graduate business degree from Morgan and went to work as a stockbroker at Merrill Lynch's office in Baltimore, where he serves today as an assistant vice president.

His political career began on the Carroll County school board, where he served from 1970 to 1978. That year, he lost in a run for the House of Delegates, but he won four years later. Mr. Dixon has beaten the odds and won re-election three times since.

"They've elected me, I think, because they've recognized my abilities and talents and the fact that I represent the people in my county," he said.

Mr. Dixon has a generally conservative record in the legislature, pushing, for example, a proposal to abolish the parole system.



BARBARA HADDOCK-TAYLOR: SUN STAFF

**Experience:** Delegate Richard N. Dixon has worked on the Appropriations Committee for 13 years and is a longtime stockbroker.

Last year, he drew fire from Democrats when he supported a cut in the personal income tax being touted by Republicans. Mr. Dixon has a simple explanation for his tax vote.

"That's the way most of my constituents would have wanted me to vote," he said.

He has been co-chairman of a committee that oversees arcane pension issues and another panel that oversees audits of state agencies. Last year, Mr. Taylor rewarded him with a plum assignment as chairman of a subcommittee that oversees state building projects.

"He's extremely well qualified, professionally and personally, and he has the willingness to serve," Mr. Taylor said of his support for Mr. Dixon as treasurer.

Del. Howard P. Rawlings, chairman of the Appropriations Committee on which Mr. Dixon has served for 13 years, says his colleague's conservative tendencies make him well suited to handle public money as state treasurer.

"He brings clear competencies and a fiscally conservative nature to the job," said Mr. Rawlings, a Baltimore Democrat.

Mr. Dixon, who is married and has two sons and one grandchild, said he would give up his job at Merrill Lynch if he becomes treasurer.

"This is an excellent opportunity for me to make an additional contribution to the state of Maryland," he said.