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Carrboro bus service doubtful



The C bus: Carrboro may again be without public transportation this fall.

Orange D.A. to investigate Libertarian petition drive

by Dave McKinnon
News Editor

Orange County District Attorney Wade Barber, Jr. confirmed reports Tuesday that his office will conduct an investigation of complaints by Orange County voters who said that they had been misled in signing petitions supporting the Libertarian Party.

The Libertarian Party was recognized July 5 as a legitimate political party eligible for a place on the ballot on North Carolina's November elections after representatives collected the required 10,000 signatures from registered state voters. The party plans to conduct a convention in Greensboro July 29 to nominate candidates for state offices in the November elections.

The complaints from Orange County voters stem from allegations of discrepancies between the contents of the party's petitions and the explanations of their contents by the party's representatives. Some voters said they were asked to sign the petitions with the understanding that the petition merely supported the right of the Libertarian Party to appear on the ballot, but that they actually signed a petition which, without their knowledge, said that they would support the party's candidates in the fall elections.

Barber could not say how many complaints had been received.

But officials of both the state elections board and the Libertarian Party said that the procedures in the petition drive had been perfectly correct.

State Elections Board Chairman Alex K. Brock said Tuesday that he "could not imagine what the grounds for any such investigations could be."

"The Libertarians have misinformed no one," said Brock. "In fact, I would have to say that they are the most meticulous and attentive to these sorts of details of any group we've dealt with in the last fifteen years."

Brock said that the petitions, which he had reviewed prior to the Board's approval of the Libertarian Party for the November elections had been in the proper form. The Libertarians used the same wording in all their petitions, and the same wording used by every other party seeking recognition from the Board in recent years, Brock said.

He added that this type of petition, which states that the signer supports the petitioners, in no way means that the signer must support the party's candidates. "(N.C. Attorney General) Rufus Edmisten ruled four years ago that this type of petition does not carry with it any commitment to vote for the party's candidates, and that a voter in no way affects his previous party registration by signing," said Brock. "Beyond this, there would simply be no way to enforce a requirement like that."

by Bernie Cook
Staff Writer

With the fall semester only 6 weeks away, the fate of bus service for Carrboro remains in doubt.

Last year, an experimental "C" route was added to the Chapel Hill bus system which linked Carrboro to the town and University. Carrboro paid \$20,500 for the service. UNC contributed \$30,200. Rider response to the line required an increase in the originally planned service.

The contract for the "C" route expired May 10. Since then, Carrboro, Chapel Hill, and UNC have been negotiating over the amount of funds each unit should spend for the bus line in the coming academic year.

Chapel Hill proposed a \$52,000 price tag for Carrboro for the same level of service that was provided last year. Carrboro made a counter-proposal to pay \$23,000. This amount has not been accepted by Chapel Hill. Meanwhile, Carrboro approached the Asheboro Coach Co. which estimated that it could run two routes between the towns for \$99,000. Carrboro anticipated having to pay between \$35,000 and \$40,000 after receiving a payment contribution from UNC and revenue from riders.

However, to run buses from a private company on the streets of Chapel Hill, Carrboro needed permission from the town for a franchise. The Villages Apartments has a similar franchise which allows them to operate a bus link between the town and the apartments.

Last Monday, the Chapel Hill Board of Aldermen voted 6-1 not to allow the franchise. The Chapel Hill Board of Transportation had recommended against permitting the franchise.

The board raised questions over having a second bus system in what is essentially one community. A method of providing transfers between systems would have to be devised.

Terry Lathrop, transportation board chairperson, said there was also some concern that having private buses operating in Chapel Hill might affect government aid for the Chapel Hill bus system.

Alderman Gerry Cohen voted to allow Carrboro the franchise. "I was in favor of the franchise as long as it was safe," he said.

He said the private bus company was able to charge a lower price because it paid its drivers less than Chapel Hill drivers were paid. "It's not that the Chapel Hill system is inefficient," he said.

In response, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen voted in a meeting Tuesday to cut off negotiations should not resume unless certain principles were agreed to by Chapel Hill and UNC.

Up to now, Carrboro has not negotiated directly with UNC. One principle stated that all future negotiations should include representatives from both towns and from UNC.

Another principle called for negotiations which are directed toward adopting a formula with which to allocate costs and revenues. This formula could be used in future years as well as this year.

Several Carrboro aldermen expressed frustration that Chapel Hill presented a flat rate instead of a formula upon which future costs could be estimated.

Alderman Doug Sharer, Carrboro transportation committee chairperson, said, "Chapel Hill has established itself as a monopoly in transportation in this community."

Further principles stipulated that the formula must assign revenues collected by the system based upon the usage and relative efficiencies of each town. The formula would also apply adjusted gross costs to the "C" line in calculating Carrboro's share of

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Board rejects Carrboro bus, okays parking, block party

by Pat Daugherty
Staff Writer

The Chapel Hill Board of Aldermen Monday night turned down Carrboro's request for a franchise to operate a public transit system in Chapel Hill.

In other action, the Board approved the request by Delta Delta Delta Sorority for modification of a special-use permit allowing changes in their parking lot. Also approved was a resolution closing a portion of McCauley Street on July 15, 1978, for a block party.

The Tri-Delt Sorority, whose new house is located near the corner of Franklin and Hillsborough streets, requested that they be allowed to remove a shed located at the northeast corner of the property and replace it with two parking spaces, in addition to altering the layout of the off-street parking area to save two

gardens, a tree and to move a bulk trash container.

The Board approved the modification request provided the property was adequately screened from adjoining property and if the immediate neighbors had no objections.

Although it had been rumored that New York Yankees baseball team owner George Steinbrenner planned to purchase the sorority house, Mrs. Phillip Ben, house director for the Tri-Delts, reported that their old house at 210 Pittsboro St. was bought by the University two weeks ago. The new residence should be ready for occupancy by August 19.

In other action, the Aldermen approved the closing of the portion of McCauley Street between Ransom Street and Pittsboro Street on July 15 to allow a block party.

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