

# THE NEWS RECORD

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Vol. 84 No. 14

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE COUNTY SEAT AT MARSHALL, N.C.

WEDNESDAY, April 4, 1984

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## Marshall Approves Block Grant Request

By ROBERT KOENIG  
Marshall town officials gave their approval to the recommended proposal for a Community Development Block Grant request presented by the town's planning board. The aldermen approved the proposal at a public hearing held Monday prior to the start of the regular monthly meeting.

the package would provide many improvements recommended for Main Street by the Tennessee Valley Authority's Town Lift planners. Also included in the request will be three smaller projects that will be lumped in as local option projects.

Myra Grant of the Land of the Sky Regional Council, who has coordinated the efforts of the town officials and planning board in writing the grant request, explained the several projects at the hearing. Although some of the figures aren't finalized, Grant presented figures for the proposed request at Monday's hearing. Some last-minute adjustments will be necessary before the formal grant request is submitted to the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development on April 16.

Plans for the Island Rd. housing rehabilitation call for refurbishing four homes at an average cost of \$13,000 each and demolishing two vacant homes at a cost of \$2,800. Water lines and fire hydrants will also be installed at an estimated cost of \$29,000. Total cost of the Island Rd. project, including engineering and administration, is \$108,700.



DISTRICT ENGINEER EARL McENTIRE and Madison County Commissioner Zeno Ponder, left, outlined the proposed plan for secondary road improvements at Monday night's meeting of the Madison County commissioners.

## Gibson And O'Brien Are Acquitted

By ROBERT KOENIG  
After two days of testimony in Madison County District Court, both former Mars Hill football coach Claude Gibson and the college's dean for student development, R. Michael O'Brien, were found not guilty of charges of assault, District Judge Alexander Lyerly acquitted both men of all charges during a rare Saturday session of the court.

In announcing his verdict, District Court Judge Alexander Lyerly told both defendants, "It is obvious to the court that something happened between Dec. 10 and Dec. 13, 1983, but the law requires of me a test that requires proof beyond a reasonable doubt. The law doesn't allow me to speculate or fill in gaps as to what happened or did not happen. It is not my job to preach to you, but it occurs to me that gentlemen of your ages and educational backgrounds should be able to find more constructive things to do with your time than to run around Madison County behaving the way you have."

Testimony in the case began on Friday morning. Prior to the start of the non-jury trial, Gibson's attorney, Forrest Ball, asked for and received a probable cause hearing. Ball requested the hearing because Madison County magistrate E.Y. Ward had declined to issue warrants against Gibson on the day of the incident when O'Brien appeared at the magistrate's office in Marshall.

that his conflict with Gibson began on Dec. 10 at a basketball game on the Mars Hill campus. O'Brien said that Gibson said, "There's that son of a bitch" as O'Brien was entering the stands with his son. The confrontation came to a head at the halftime intermission of the game when Gibson and his wife confronted William Walker, the athletic director of the college. O'Brien told the court that he saw Gibson standing over Walker and called Pat Sams, coach of the Mars Hill women's basketball team over because he thought Gibson was threatening the athletic director.

## Secondary Road Proposals Are Outlined

By ROBERT KOENIG  
North Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT) officials presented the Madison County commissioners with a list of proposed secondary road projects at Monday night's meeting of the board. The proposals were outlined at a public hearing held prior to the start of the commissioners' regular monthly meeting.

McEntire told the hearing that Madison County will receive an estimated \$710,022 for secondary road projects during the 1985 fiscal year. Final approval of the funds will not be made until the July meeting of the state Board of Transportation.

The engineer said that secondary road funds for the coming year should total about \$44 million. Chief among the secondary road projects McEntire recommended to the commissioners were several projects that are already underway, but which will require additional funds in order to be completed.

complete the project that began in 1982. The project to improve SR 1138, Sweetwater Rd. from U.S. 25-70 to Sweetwater Gap needs an additional \$295,000 in order to be completed. The project is designed to connect with a road to be constructed from N.C. 63 at Trust at Payne's Chapel. McEntire said that the Sweetwater Rd. project was only partially funded in the 1982-83 budget. He also reported that an additional \$40,000 is needed to complete paving of a one mile

## Faircloth Visits County Promises Laurel Road

Democratic gubernatorial candidate D.M. "Lauch" Faircloth visited Madison County on Saturday, accompanied by county Democratic chairman Zeno Ponder. Faircloth addressed gatherings in Marshall, Revere and Mars Hill during in campaign swing through the county.



## ELECTION '84

### Voter Registration Deadline Nears

Madison County Supervisor of Elections Vernie Lunsford has announced that the Board of Elections office on Main Street in Marshall will be open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. The office will also be open this Saturday, April 7, for residents wishing to register to vote in the May 8 primaries. On Saturday, the office will be open from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.

April 9 is the final day for residents to register to vote in the May 8 primary elections. Lunsford also announced that the Madison County Board of Elections will meet on each Tuesday and Thursday in April to approve or reject applications for absentee ballots. The board will also meet on May 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7 to consider the absentee ballot requests. The board will meet each day at 10 a.m.

## Taylor Blasts Hunt, Democrats And Press



CHARLES TAYLOR

The political temperature in Madison County was raised several degrees Saturday night at the annual Lincoln Day dinner held by Republicans at Madison H.S. In his keynote address to the gathering, former State Senator Charles Taylor of Brevard lashed out at Gov. Jim Hunt, the press, Democrats and multi-member districts.