

Election — finally

After months of political campaigns, North Carolina voters will finally be heard at polls on November 6

By Ed Miller

Three of the four candidates vying for the Hoke County Board of Education, who were interviewed, agree a strong school system is an essential ingredient needed to attract industry to the county.

Strong schools "will play a big part in attracting industry," local store manager and candidate Eddie McNeill said.

didates, the amount of money spent by the state on each student should be raised to meet the level of other counties in the state.

McNeill is calling for the equalization of the rate state wide. "We need to work more with state legislators on getting help for the schools," said McNeill.

The sentiments were echoed by Gibson.

All three of the candidates interviewed also agree that involvement by parents with the Board of Education is of great importance to keeping the public abreast of situations in the schools.

"The main thing I would do is make visitors feel welcome at board meetings," Gibson said.

"I would want the public to know that I am there representing them. Honesty and being above board is going to be my policy," she said.

"All parents with children in school should be encouraged to attend board meetings two or three times a year, Kelly said.

"Parents should contact board members on issues they do not understand and on changes in policies they would like to see," she said.

McNeill is supportive of keeping parents informed through students.

Parents and even uninformed people should be kept informed through the P.T.A. and the media, McNeill said.

Improving schools

On improving the schools, each candidate said:



Eddie McNeill

"First I would try to work with the community in making the schools move forward as quickly as possible and is economically feasible," said McNeill.

"Board members need to lead them (the schools) in the right direction in as much as we can afford," he said.

"The one thing I would love to see us do is to produce students to become self-sufficient and to reach potential," Gibson said.

"That is the ultimate." "If a person's potential is to be able to tie his shoe, that is what he should be able to do. If a person has potential to be a doctor, the schools should prepare him for that," she said.

"I will base my decisions on how they will affect the whole community including teachers, students and administrators," Kelly said.

The basic premise would be how decisions effect children, she said.

Open meetings

In response to a question concerning the high number of closed sessions held during board meetings, Kelly said: "I believe the meetings should be open as much as possible

and as much as allowable by law." "If a matter is to be brought up in closed session, I plan to ask the chairman why," said Kelly.

"I do feel that the public should be informed, but there are some things that need to be done in private," said Gibson.

"If personnel matters have to be discussed, put it off until the end of the meeting so as not to keep the public waiting. All executive



Shirley Gibson

business should be taken care of at one time and not have two or three executive sessions in one meeting," Gibson said.

Committee of 11

Three candidates had comments on the recommendations of the School Facilities Committee.

McNeill and Gibson agreed with the recommendations. Kelly differed.

"The majority of the recommendations were valid. I wish they could have come up with a better plan for funding," she said.

The candidates all agree that public education to the needs of the school system is the only way to get a proposed bond issue passed to make needed repairs and additions to the school buildings.

Open houses and such could be part of making the public aware of the needs of the schools, said McNeill.

There were differing opinions as to when the bond issue should be raised.

Kelly called for the question to be "considered as a possibility in the near future" while Gibson said that the issue should be raised when the money is needed.

Candidate background

Charlotte Kelly is in her 30's and has two sons, both of whom attend Hoke County schools.

She is a graduate of Laurel College in Connecticut.

She worked in the school system for four years.

"I get feed back from the community, students and administration," she said.

Gibson is also a former employee of the county's school system.

She has lived in Hoke County for 29 years, she said.

Gibson has a Masters Degree in guidance from Appalachian State University.

She is 48-years-old.

Life time Hoke County resident Eddie McNeill is 35-years-old and has a B.A. Degree in History from Pembroke State University.

He is married and has children in the Hoke County school system.

Ruth McNair is seeking reelection to the board. She is a life-long resident of Hoke County and is recently retired from McCain Hospital, where she worked as a nurse.

All four candidates will be seeking the two vacant seats on the board.

SAMPLE BALLOT
OFFICIAL BALLOT

FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION SUPERVISORS

(Non-Partisan)

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- a. To vote for a candidate on the ballot, make a cross (x) mark in the square at the left of his name.
b. If you tear or deface or wrongly mark the ballot, return it to the registrar and get another.

FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION

(You may vote for two)

- [] SHIRLEY T. GIBSON
[] CHARLOTTE R. KELLY
[] RUTH S. McNAIR
[] EDWIN (EDDIE) McNEILL, JR.

FOR SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION SUPERVISORS

(You may vote for one)

- [] G. RAZ AUTRY, JR.

State of North Carolina
General Election
November 6, 1984

J. Scott Poole, Chairman
Hoke County Board of Elections



Charlotte Kelly

"Our vocational program is already strong and perhaps it should be upgraded more to meet the needs of the whole county," he said.

McNeill, along with Department of Social Services worker Shirley Gibson and incumbent board member Ruth McNair are vying for two seats on the board.

All, but McNair, agreed to be interviewed on the issues facing the campaign.

"Employers coming to the county will most definitely want a good school system," Kelly said.

"An industry is not apt to come to Hoke County unless the school system is adequate. I believe in the Hoke County school system. I think Hoke County has a better school system than we are given credit for," candidate Shirley Gibson said.

"Sometimes, Hoke is looked on as a poor county, but we are not poor. We have done well with the money and facilities we have," she said.

Selling the schools

All three candidates also agree that making people more aware of the positive aspects of the school system will discourage negativism with relation to school issues.

In the effort to get the public more involved with schools, Kelly said: "Parents should be encouraged to become involved by visiting schools and joining the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

"We are one of the lowest in the state, and I would like to see that figure raised," said Kelly.

"There needs to be more community involvement," said McNeill.

According to two of the can-



Ruth McNair