

County approves budget

(Continued from page 1A)
 assistance that will make the blow not as critical as it sounds," said Commission Chairman John Balfour.
 "They'll just have to bite the bullet," said Hunt.
 In their original request from the county, the Board of Education asked for \$1.21 million for the general fund, said Cowan.
 That figure was cut to \$1.15 million in the recommended budget by Cowan.
 Commissioners then trimmed another \$31,280 from the budget which gave the schools an increase

of about \$23,000, said Cowan.
 Also reduced in the budget was a 5% cost of living increase for county employees.
 The increase was left at 3%.
 Board of Election capital outlay was cut by \$1,350 in the county general fund account.
 The money was for a typewriter, Cowan said.
 Also, \$795 was cut from Hoke County Public Library's budget.
 The money was also slated to be used for a typewriter.
 Finally, cutting under the assumption that special "pork bar-

rel funds" from the state general assembly will make up for losses, commissioners cut \$5,000 from the Hoke County Literacy Council.
 To be transferred into the general fund budget from federal revenue sharing money is \$35,900, according to Cowan.
 That money will be used in the general fund for non-recurring expenses, said Cowan.
 In other action, commissioners passed a motion asking that the City of Raeford keep books on the Raeford-Hoke Airport.

School board appeals funds

(Continued from page 1A)
 official passage of the budget by the county.
 "I'm not looking for confrontation. I'm seeking discussion. This first step does not compel us to go through with a law suit," Coley said.
 With recent emphasis put on improving the county by widening US 401, establishing extended area telephone service and improving education, the budget adopted by the commission seems to be regressive, board Chairman Bill Cameron said.
 "We're not doing anything but going backwards," Cameron said.
 Other county departments received personnel. The schools are being asked to cut. "I don't see the equity in that," Superintendent Dr. Robert Nelson said.
 Prior to voting against the joint meeting, Gibson said she would not support the start of the law suit procedure.

McNeill did not comment on his negative vote.
 Prior to going into public session which lasted until 11:30 p.m., the board members met in a 49 minute executive session to "discuss personnel."
 Board attorney Bill Moses met with the elected officials.
 Under the state's current Open Meetings Law, the board is allowed to meet with their attorney for a legal briefing.
 Budgetary matters are not allowed to be discussed in private, unless they concern the contractual negotiations.
 In a vote prior to the general budget discussion, the board decided to live with the county's granted \$117,600 revenue sharing budget.
 Gibson voted against setting aside \$13,200 for tennis court repairs at the high school.
 Those funds will be reserved un-

til estimates of the work are taken. The funds should have been used to treat termite damage in the schools or for a fixed asset inventory, Gibson said.
 "I just think there are more important things than tennis courts," Gibson said.
 Tennis courts are essential to a well rounded program at the school and for the overall competitiveness of Hoke High School, board member Bobby Wright said, pointing out that schools in surrounding counties have "excellent" courts.
 "It's embarrassing," Wright said.
 In other action, the board also agreed to begin a revision of the school's attendance policy.
 A meeting to begin discussion of the schools' facilities plan was set for July 23 at 8 p.m. at the board room.

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