

School Board Disagrees Over Temporary Teacher Placements

BY TERRY POPE

Disagreement over where three additional classroom teachers should have been allocated created the first split vote for the newly-elected Brunswick County Board of Education Monday night.

Following a lengthy debate, board Chairman James Forstner broke a 2-2 tie in favor of approving the personnel changes as recommended by Superintendent Gene Yarbrough.

The board also met in executive session for 1½ hours before unanimously approving a final contract for Assistant Superintendent Stephanna Tewey who was hired in January. The board also hired Diana Clark Smith as assistant principal of Lincoln Primary School. Ms. Smith has taught kindergarten at the school for 12 years.

Both James Clemmons and Doug Baxley voted against adding three teachers to temporary positions on a full-time basis, one at Shallotte Middle and two at West Brunswick High School. Yarbrough said the three state-funded positions are the last of five the state allocated to the schools based on overcrowded classrooms.

According to the changes, Rachael McNeill will be given additional duties on the seventh-grade staff at Shallotte Middle. Robert Pyles, a science teacher, and Lynn Cavanaugh, a reading-English teacher, will be also work at new positions temporarily on the staff at West Brunswick until the end of the school year. Clemmons questioned who had decided the teachers would be allocated to the two schools and asked why the board had not been informed of the "new program."

"The bottom line is we still have classrooms overcrowded," Clemmons said. The former Lincoln Primary principal then made a motion to approve the personnel changes "on the basis that it will not be done again without prior approval of the board," but his motion died for lack of a second.

Yarbrough said it would be extremely difficult to receive prior approval from the board every time a new teacher is hired. All teachers are hired by the administration contingent upon the board's final approval, a policy that has been followed for years, he added.

Yarbrough explained that the three



DIANA CLARK SMITH, a kindergarten instructor at Lincoln Primary School, was promoted to assistant principal of the school effective immediately.

teachers were already on the staff of the three schools and have been given additional classes to teach and been instructed to help other teachers since January 28. He declined to call the teacher allotments "a new program" the schools have just started.

"If you don't want these temporary teachers working out there, then we'll just drop the whole thing," Yarbrough said. "Then they can go home. There'll be no legal recourse and those people can go back to their classrooms."

Baxley suggested since there had been a change in the teachers' duties, then the board should examine the allotments more closely.

Since the positions were allocated, "rumors began popping up that there were new positions open at the central office," Yarbrough said. "Maybe someday we'll find out a reason for all the flack."

"I was never against the appointment of the teachers," Clemmons responded. "What I'm saying is, I'm not going to sit here and go along with what these teachers are doing. They (other board members) don't know what these teachers are doing. I'm not going to do anything that will hurt the other schools."

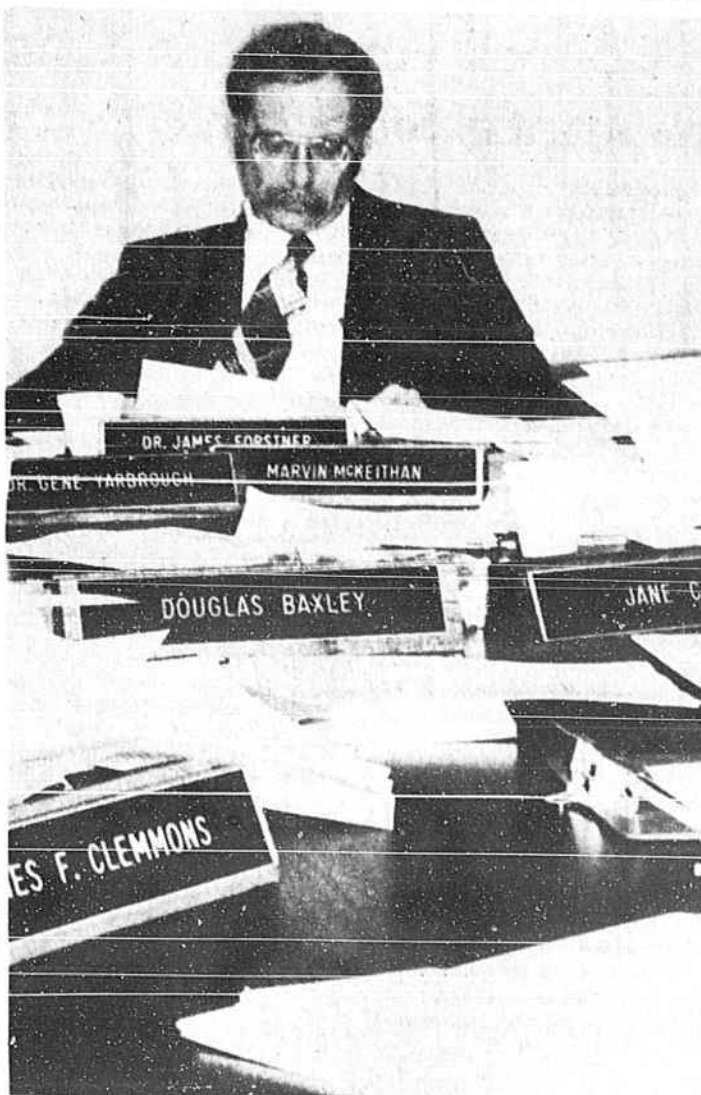
Forstner agreed there appeared to be a "change in program" in giving the teachers additional duties and asked Yarbrough to keep the board members informed, "so when we get phone calls we'll know what's going on."

Yarbrough said the change was not an attempt to "rush this on to the board." He added there had been "some concern expressed about the positions by the local NCAE and principals' association."

Marvin McKeithan's motion to accept the personnel changes was seconded by Jane Causey, but ended in a 2-2 tie that was broken by Forstner.

After meeting with attorneys E.J. Prevatte and Glenn Peterson for 1½ hours in executive session to discuss "pending litigation and personnel," the board approved a final contract with Ms. Tewey with two changes outlining a reason for discharge based on days absent due to disability and other reasons by law. Ms. Clark was hired as assistant principal at Lincoln effective immediately.

The board also hired Joan Skipper, aide Lincoln Primary; Audrey Miller, aide Bolivia Elementary; accepted leaves of absence from Jane Murray, reading North Brunswick; Penny Jones, aide Union Primary; Judy Auman, Southport Elementary; Laura Kimrey, Leland Middle; and resignations from Doris Holmes, aide Bolivia, and Rita Moffett, aide Bolivia.



CHAIRMAN James Forstner headed the conference table that was cluttered with plenty of paperwork at Monday night's Brunswick County Board of Education meeting. Forstner broke a 2-2 tie, the board's first split vote, to approve a number of personnel changes.

Tree Day Postponed

Annual tree day scheduled for Friday morning, Feb. 8, at the Brunswick County Agricultural Extension office in Bolivia has been postponed due to bad weather, said Extension Chairman Milton Coleman.

Snow and ice has forced the tree supplier to delay digging the seedlings from the ground. The free tree distribution to county homeowners has not been rescheduled, but will be held at a later date.

Approximately 10,000 dogwoods, maples, red maples, live oaks, red cedars, loblolly pines, slash pines and long leaf pines are scheduled to be distributed this year.

Tax Help Available

Residents needing assistance in filing out their state income and intangibles tax returns may receive help on Tuesdays through April 15 at the Brunswick County Courthouse in Bolivia, said J.C. Raines, local revenue officer for the N.C. Department of Revenue.

Personnel will be available to help at Room 112 at the courthouse between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Raines said.

Taxpayers should bring the pre-addressed forms received in the mail.

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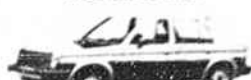
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