

College Prepares To Launch Public Campaign For Bonds

BY TERRY POPE

Brunswick Technical College officials have called for a "plan of action" to help get an \$8 million bond referendum approved by county voters on Nov. 19.

On that date, Brunswick County residents will go to the polls to vote on the \$8 million bond issue for construction of classroom buildings and an auditorium on the college campus. The proceeds would be used to consolidate college programs at three locations in the county to new facilities on BTC's permanent campus in Supply.

An audit recently conducted by the state treasury department to determine both the school and the county's ability to repay the bonds showed that "everything was clear," said BTC President Joseph Carter. Last Monday, county commissioners agreed to advertise an intent to hold a bond referendum to help finance classroom buildings at the school.

"The enthusiasm of the board of commissioners has been tremendous," said W.A. Stanley, chairman of the BTC Board of Trustees. "It seems they are doing everything they can to keep things progressing step-by-step. It seems like everything is just falling into place. I'm very pleased with the chain of events that have taken place."

To help build public support for the bond issue, the college board of trustees agreed last Wednesday night to a "plan of action" as recommended by Carter. He told the board that the timing of the campaign could be "critical" for the bond issue.

"We are planning to keep everything low key, up until about two weeks before the vote," Carter said, "and then make a big push."

The "big push" calls for a speaker's bureau, to meet and speak before county civic groups to educate them of the bond issue, Carter said. The school also hopes to contact several radio and television stations to see if they may be interested in holding a public forum on the bond issue.

The night before the referendum, college employees, volunteers and school officials will also call county residents to remind them of the vote. Sheets listing telephone numbers to call will be prepared ahead of time, Carter said.

On Sept. 18, the board of trustees will hold a joint-meeting with the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation board, which is interested in using the Southport annex gymnasium for county activities. The board voted to hold monthly meetings until the bond referendum is held rather meeting every other month.

Carter said the Southport gym is "in good shape now, but is not being utilized." The board has not made a formal request to use the building, he said.

Some board members added that perhaps the gym could be rented to the parks department for \$1 a year while others suggested donating the gym to the county.

Board members also agreed last Wednesday to purchase the additional 130 acres of land that the college holds an option on for \$1,500 per acre. Carter told the board that some of the land may be donated to the school as a tax-deductible gift.

The county has budgeted \$195,000

for the purchase that will include frontage on both sides of U.S. 17. However, when the new U.S. 17 is constructed the college will not be granted an access, Carter said. The bypass is scheduled for completion in 1992.

The school has already made an application with the N.C. Department of Transportation for a sign to be placed on the new road identifying the college. It will give the school a total of 180 acres.

Board member and State Rep. David Redwine said it is possible that the controlled access to the new highway could be broken if an early effort to do so is made.

Increase Of Absentees Concerns New BTC Board

BY TERRY POPE

In recent months, absentees have been steadily increasing at Brunswick Technical College—not in the classroom, but at the board of trustees meetings.

At the request of several members last Wednesday night, the board reviewed its policy on excessive absences and discussed ways to prevent scheduling meetings when no quorum is reached.

The board that was seated last week could be considered a "new" BTC board, since three of its members are new and members also voted on new appointments to board committees. Members Kelly Holden of Shallotte, David Kelly of Southport and Ms. Clarkie Munn of the Northwest community took the oath of office last week as new appointments to the board.

Holden is a farmer and income tax preparer while Kelly is the director of community relations at the Carolina Power and Light Company's Brunswick nuclear plant.

While on the topic of absentees, board member Lewis Stanley of Shallotte recommended that a record be kept on attendance at board meetings. If too many absences are noted, he said, then "the board should take some action."

"If I'm absent for two or three meetings, I think I should owe the board an explanation," Stanley said.

According to the board policy, if members miss at least half of all scheduled meetings without a cause, then the board can declare a vacancy on the board and request another appointment. The board is within its rights to set a new policy, BTC President Joseph Carter said.

"The key word is could," Carter said. "It didn't say the board would, but could declare a vacancy exists."

It would not be mandatory for the board to declare a vacancy exists if a member misses too many meetings, such in the case of State Rep. David Redwine who must attend general assembly sessions in Raleigh.

"The biggest problem I see is when board members do not call in and say, 'I'm not going to be here,'" Carter said. "If they notify us by 12 o'clock that they're not going to be here, then we can notify everyone else that we're not going to have a quorum."

Each member was asked last Wednesday to choose two committees that they wish to serve on for the fiscal year, including building and grounds, legislative and financial committees. Chairman W.A. Stanley will make appointments at the Sept. 18 meeting.

Other Business

In other business last week, the board:

- Hired three instructors—Barney Bush, a visiting artist whose concentration is in writing and poetry; Patricia Arnold, compensatory education for the interagency handicapped program; and Richard Erhardt, real estate instructor.

- Heard a report from Carter that predicts 575 students for the fall semester, an increase of 75 students over last year. During the summer extension program, the school registered 1,000 students, he said.

- Agreed to schedule a photo session for the board members for the individual portraits that will hang in the board conference room, at \$16 each.

- Accepted the establishment of the Ester Swain Fraizer Memorial Nursing Award, a \$500 scholarship that will be awarded to an outstanding student in nursing. The award will be presented by Margaret Hood and Marie S. Harris each year.

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