

INSTRUCTORS WOULDN'T QUALIFY

BCC Trustees Eye Benefits Plan For Part-Time Support Personnel

BY SUSAN USHER

Before approving a proposal to offer a benefits package to part-time support personnel, Brunswick Community College trustees want to know what it could cost.

The package proposed by BCC President W. Michael Reaves would provide some benefits to support personnel who work 20 hours a week or more, have been employed for at least a year without a break, and are in positions that have been filled and budgeted for at least two years.

"We feel like this is a start," Reaves told trustees as he introduced the package last week. "I'm not saying it's where we want to be, but it's something I think we can afford."

Reaves and his staff developed the proposal after looking both at what other community colleges across the state are doing and what other Brunswick County employees are doing in terms of benefits for part-time employees.

"They range the gamut from nothing to partial benefits," said Reaves. "We haven't found any college yet that provides benefits for part-time instructors because they are hired by the quarter and paid hourly wages."

BCC's 200-plus part-time curriculum and continuing education faculty members are exempted, as are work-study, Brunswick Intergency Program or other student workers.

Fewer than 20 employees would be eligible for the four hours per month of leave to be used as either sick leave or annual leave and to be used within the fiscal year. The leave could not be carried over to another year or converted to cash if

an employee left the position without using all the hours.

Eligible workers would also be allowed to participate in one of the health/hospitalization plans offered by BCC, paying the full price of the premium chosen; and would be eligible to join the N.C. State Employees Credit Union and to arrange for direct deposit of payroll checks.

As part of the package, those part-time support positions would become salaried positions with annual contracts.

Trustees expressed concern that so few part-time workers would qualify. They had asked staff to look into the possibility of providing benefits to part-time workers, who constitute the bulk of BCC's workforce, hoping to improve employee morale and make jobs more competitive.

"I think benefits are needed to get good people to work for you," said Trustee Dean Walters.

Board members asked for a break-out of possible costs while they mull over the proposal.

"We need to weigh the concerns we have and to know what we're spending," advised Chairman Dave Kelly.

Budget Request Up 38%

BCC's 1994-95 county budget request of \$1.04 million is \$289,246 more than this year's allocation, an increase of 38.38 percent, trustees learned.

Most of the increases relate to full-time operation of the Odell Williamson Auditorium and the development of a distance learning classroom at BCC.

Personnel-related needs include a distance learning site manager at

\$30,000, a part-time electrician and a part-time sound technician for the auditorium; a maintenance worker for the auditorium; an auditorium secretary (just hired); two security officers and a new item, \$100 supplements proposed for all faculty and staff who have been employed by BCC at least one year.

Included are capital items totaling \$102,000 include a rigging lineset, a theatrical fixture and a wireless microphone system for the auditorium, a mini-van; maintenance equipment; a telephone voice mail system; distance learning equipment for BCC's link to the N.C. Information Highway.

Other Business

In other business, with trustees Eugene Hewett, Jamie Milliken and Charles Lanier absent, the board:

■ granted educational leave for Linda Eicken-Mudaro, lead instructor of developmental reading and writing, to attend a month-long Kellogg Institute at Appalachian State University, in an exception to a policy that provides for leave with pay only after an instructor has taught 11 consecutive quarters.

■ heard that a new focus group chaired by P.R. Hankins, retired county schools superintendent, met May 16 to begin developing strategies for recruiting more minorities, particularly black males.

■ hired Walter R. Floreani of New Braunfels, Texas, as Health Information Technology Director for a three-campus program. He is an associate professor at Southwest Texas State University and doctoral student at Texas A & M University. BCC will paid one-third of his

salary and Floreani will be based at the local campus. His first major assignment will be to prepare the BCC, Cape Fear Community College and James Sprunt Community College programs for an accreditation team visit

■ subject to the review of the board's attorney for possible conflict of interest, approved a landscaping proposal for the Odell Williamson Auditorium site developed by recreational grounds management students, at a cost not to exceed \$40,000. The class proposes to oversee the project, with installation by a business owned by a program instructor.

■ heard from Building and Grounds Committee member Dean Walters that Graka Builders Inc. has a few "punch list" items still to complete, and that plans for a new water line to the building are under review by state agencies. He said a grand opening for the auditorium could be scheduled anytime after the July 4 holiday.

■ hired Paula Almond, currently secretary to the faculty, as the new secretary of the Brunswick Community College Foundation. The job had been offered to another BCC employee, Portia Starks, who resigned to accept a job outside the county.

■ learned that Rep. E. David Redwine was to introduce a bill seeking a \$1 million special appropriation toward the cost of a new recreational grounds management/aquaculture building. BCC is seeking funds for the project from multiple sources that also include remaining state community college bond issue revenues and a federal grant.

Shallotte Aldermen Favor \$1.1 Million Sewer System Expansion Project

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte Aldermen have tentatively agreed to a \$1.1-million sewer system expansion project that engineers say would provide enough treatment capacity to last the next 10 years.

The proposed project would expand the existing 206,000 gallon daily treatment capacity by 200,000 gallons and include a storage lagoon large enough to meet projected needs through the year 2015.

Aldermen voted unanimously in favor of the expansion scenario during a meeting Tuesday with Street Lee, project manager with McKim & Creed Engineers of Wilmington.

The scenario, which was slightly modified by town officials, is one of five that was included in the firm's preliminary draft 201 facilities plan that must be submitted to the state by June 1.

The plan includes information on existing facilities, the potential of expanding the service area, growth projections and alternatives for sewer system expansion.

Under the approved scenario, town officials hope the state will issue about \$1 million in sewer bonds and allow the town to repay the low-interest loan over a 20-year period.

To pay back the state bonds, Lee estimates the additional cost to the 600 sewer system users would be \$7.25 per month.

However, Alderman Carson Durham said the additional cost to users, who now pay a minimum monthly fee of \$9, may go down shortly after expansion as the town collects development fees and brings more

sewer users on line.

"As time goes on that rate will reduce," Durham said. "It's very likely in three or four years that rate could be cut in half of what it is initially."

As the first phase of a 20-year, 550,000-gallon per day expansion, Lee has recommended the town expand its treatment system and spray irrigation fields to accommodate an additional 200,000 gallons per day.

Instead of building a 12-acre storage lagoon to handle the extra 200,000 gallons, town officials agreed Tuesday to build a 24-acre lagoon that could serve 550,000 gpd, which Lee projects will be needed within the next 20 years.

Aldermen also said Tuesday they hope to lower overall construction costs by using town employees for some of the work.

Public Works Director Albert Hughes said town forces can install spray irrigation piping and erect fence around the land application site.

A public hearing on the facilities plan is scheduled Tuesday, July 5, at 7 p.m. in town hall. The \$1.1 million cost estimate does not include land costs.

Lee told town board members at their meeting last Tuesday that he has opened negotiations with two paper companies for the lease or acquisition of land for additional spray irrigation fields.

Engineers have studied soils on an 1100-acre tract owned by International Paper Co. and a 210-acre tract owned by Federal Paper Board. Combined, Lee said the areas

could handle about 525,000 gallons of wastewater per day.

Town officials are interested in working out long-term leases with the paper companies that would allow the town to use the land and irrigate the timber with treated wastewater. The paper companies would harvest the trees.

Lee said last week he has discussed the idea with local International Paper Co. officials.

"The reaction's been good so far. There seems to be a willingness to discuss it," he said. "I think they see it as something that would help them and obviously help the town."

DOT Dragging Its Feet?

Town officials said last week they are upset with the N.C. Department of Transportation because of delays in constructing the overpass where the U.S. 17 Bypass intersects N.C. 130 West.

Aldermen were told last summer construction would begin in October 1994, but now it has been pushed back until July 1995.

Durham said NCDOT delays have forced landowners to postpone development, which is costing the town added tax base. He said the town needs development to help pay for sewer system expansion.

"DOT is going to shut the town down as far as sewer is concerned," Durham told NCDOT Division Construction Engineer Joe Blair at last Tuesday's meeting.

Durham said two fast-food restaurants that were planning to build near the bypass have been held up by the department of transportation.

"It's already hurt Shallotte and this area very badly because we need those businesses out there," he said. "I just don't think DOT's been up front with the town and those property owners out there."

Mayor Sarah Tripp said some landowners have been unable to get driveway permits from the state.

Blair said he didn't know why the owners were having trouble getting permits. He noted that the transportation department is currently acquiring right of way for the overpass.

Gallery Mounts New Exhibits

Several new exhibits will be mounted at Frank's Square Gallery in Southport beginning May 31 and continuing through June 28.

Members' works will be featured in the show "Old Familiar Places" and in an exhibit of three-dimensional sculptures. Entries are to be delivered to the gallery May 27 and 28 ready for display, said spokesperson Marilyn Harness.

Entries in a recent photography contest conducted by the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department will also be on view.

Home of the Associated Artists of Southport, a non-profit organization, the gallery is located at the rear of Franklin Square Park, at Howe and West Street, in downtown Southport. Admission is free. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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