

Big Tax Increase Proposed

County Struggles With Budget

Property owners in Chowan County are faced with a possible 30 per cent increase in taxes — from 75 cents per \$100 valuation to 98 cents — and the board of commissioners are calling for a second public hearing on the \$2.8-million budget “to be in complete compliance with the law.”

The question of legality arose

Monday morning during a public hearing on the budget. Mrs. Lueta Sellers alleged that the hearing was illegal because the public notice did not contain a summary of the budget as required by law.

Chairman A. Phillips said in his opinion the board considers it legal “like we’re doing” and that there is “no one not to comply

with the law.” He added: “As far as we know we are following the law to the letter.”

Later it was decided to hold a second public hearing at 10 A.M. on July 1 — the last day the board can lawfully adopt a budget for fiscal 1977-78 — and that the notice would appear in The Daily Advance, published in Elizabeth

City. There is some question as to whether such a notice will satisfy the law since The Chowan Herald is the newspaper of record and of “general circulation” within Chowan County.

The budget, as it was discussed Monday, totals \$2,834,827.24 of which \$237,964 is for the Water Department and no levy is required for this item. It would require a 98-cent rate, based on \$115-million valuation and 95 per cent collection. An additional five cents would be charged in the Fire District.

Mrs. Sellers’ chief complaint, other than the manner in which the hearing was advertised, was that commissioners were not adequately funding the Edenton-Chowan Schools.

Commissioner Alton G. Elmore, who ran for election several years ago on a better schools platform, expressed the opinion that the schools were being adequately funded. During the discussion, he said the commissioners would be accused of having to increase taxes to purchase property for the new courthouse-jail complex. “This is not the case,” he asserted.

“We have under taxed for the past few years,” he alleged. He continued by saying the county has used off what reserves were on hand and must replace them.

Included in the budget is \$200,000 for deficits. It was explained that this was brought about because federal funding for the courthouse-jail project came in the middle of the budget year and the county had not budgeted to purchase the site — a requirement under the federal act.

When Mrs. Sellers requested specifics regarding where the increase in taxes would be spent, she was told it would be spread

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STEPS DOWN—R. L. Spivey of Perquimans County, right, stepped down Friday night as president of the Albemarle Law & Order Association. Pictured here with him at a Nags Head banquet is Mel Bunch of Edenton, ALOA project director.



CRIME FIGHTERS—Dist. Atty. Tom Watts of Elizabeth City, right, is shown with Police Chief W. C. Owens during Friday night's meeting of Albemarle Law & Order Association. Chief Owens was elected president of the group and Watts was keynote speaker.

Owen President Of ALOA

NAGS HEAD — Police Chief W.C. Owens of Elizabeth City was elected president of the 10-county Albemarle Law & Order Association here Friday night and R. L. Spivey of Perquimans County, who has headed the organization since its inception, was recognized for outstanding leadership.

Dist. Atty. Tom Watts of

Elizabeth City delivered the keynote address, calling for a “team effort” on the part of citizens, officers, prosecutors, judges and administrators to curtail crime. The speaker said even with the best efforts of people in this area, crime continues to increase.

He specifically pointed out the contribution ALOA is making through training of law enforcement personnel and progress being made in the judicial system.

Watts cited so-called “victimless crimes” a bunch of “hogwash”, saying: “We know too well we are all victims of crime.”

He said this country must be aware of the “decay from within” and we must not turn our heads on the warning signs.

Chief Owens is the senior member of the Governor's Crime Commission and will direct the area association with the aid of Mayor Charles Evans of Nags Head, first vice president; Sheriff Troy Toppin of Chowan County, second vice president; Sheriff Frank Cahoon of Dare County, secretary; and Cleveland Paylor of Plymouth, treasurer.

W. B. Gardner of Edenton was chairman of the nominating

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Toppin Honored

E. C. Toppin of Edenton has been named Legionnaire of the Year by the N.C. Department of the American Legion as well as elected Division Commander over 61 Legion posts east of Raleigh and north of New Bern.

A member of Edward G. Bond Post 40 since 1971, Toppin has served locally as post commander and adjutant. Toppin is a past District Commander and has held various state posts including vice chairman of the New Post Organization and Development Committee and vice chairman of the Publications Committee.

Toppin is employed by the Carter's Ink Company.



E. C. Toppin

Public Parade

A Troubled County

Problem With Laws

Chowan County commissioners Monday morning held a public hearing on the budget for fiscal 1977-78. It is not a popular budget and certainly not one which will win friends or influence people.

It calls for a hefty increase in property taxes — from 75 cents per \$100 valuation to 98 cents, or some 30 per cent — and except for inflation increases and \$200,000 to fund “lawful deficits” there is little, if anything, new included.

Because of a question of legality raised by a concerned citizen, the board has called a second public hearing for 10 A.M. on July 1, the last day it can legally adopt a budget for a particular fiscal year.

The second hearing, in our opinion, will be just as illegal as the one Monday, but for a different reason. The initial notice did not contain a summary of the budget, a new requirement but one which was called to the attention of certain commissioners. Therefore, to be in their words “in complete compliance with the law”, a second hearing was called.

In order to comply with the 10-day notice requirement, the legal advertisement is to run in The Daily Advance, published in Elizabeth City. The Daily Advance cannot be considered to have a “general circulation” in Chowan County and does not comply with Section 1-597 of the General Statutes of North Carolina because it has not been “regularly and continuously issued in the county in which the publication is authorized or required to be published...”

Time has obviously caught up with the Chowan County Board of Commissioners with regard to the levy for property taxes. In this case it, furthermore, has obviously run out on them with regard to compliance with the General Statutes and the Local Government Commission.

Instead of attempting to explain what they have done and their intent, they should be consulting with their attorney in order to avoid — if at all possible — any embarrassment in the future.

While we are sympathetic with the circumstances which have brought them to this point, their actions are difficult to defend. Compliance with laws and regulations over shadows personal feelings.

...But Not All Lost

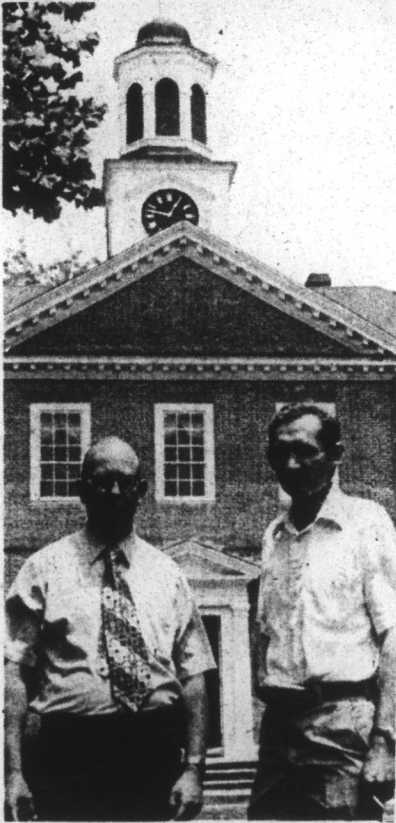
By the time a majority of the citizens along the Public Parade read this one of the last structural obstacles facing Chowan County commissioners in development of a new courthouse-jail project will be removed from South Broad Street and is resting on Water Street, overlooking Edenton Bay.

Also, Edenton-Chowan Board of Education will have fit the pieces together to provide the best education possible with the local dollars being provided. This will be true with other departments within the county as they join hands with the commissioners to make the best of a difficult situation.

The 6½ per cent pay increase will fall short of what many expected. But over the past decade

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Leary Elected Chairman Of Democratic Committee



George Alma Byrum

J. Clarence Leary, Jr.

People Priority

Gov. Jim Hunt is obligated to give this state a “people's government” and his citizens affairs representative said in Gates County last week those on the grassroots level are being heard as never before.

Walter B. Jones, II, speaking at the monthly meeting of Albemarle Area Development Association at Chowan River Inn in Gates County, said he is confident the concerns of the people will get priority.

Jones, son of Rep. Walter B. Jones of the First Congressional District, said Gov. Hunt said during his campaign that his would be a “people's government” and he has taken steps to make this a reality. Traveling 25 counties the representative has found citizens eager to discuss one-to-one, and eyeball-to-eyeball their concerns and suggestions for making the Tar Heel state a better place to live, work and play.

“The entire program,” Jones said, “is designed to make state government more responsive to the grassroots.” The goals include:

Keeping state government in direct contact with the citizens;

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Chowan County Democrats have elected J. Clarence Leary, Jr., chairman of its executive committee, and selected George Alma Byrum, immediate past chairman, as the county's outstanding Democrat.

The action came at noon Saturday at the county convention attended by some 35 people.

Byrum noted that all the precincts except Wardville were organized and represented at the convention.

In brief remarks after his selection, Leary expressed appreciation to Byrum for his leadership over the past three years and urged Democrats to “organize and work to unseat the lone Republican representative” (Sen. Jesse Helms.)

Byrum was chosen to represent Chowan County in competition with others throughout the state for an honor to be announced at a Washington, D. C., function later this year. He was nominated by Dr. Clement Lucas and elected without opposition.

Earlier, Byrum had expressed disappointment with the lack of participation of executive committee meetings in local party affairs. He said he hoped this will improve in the future. Also, he called on party members to become more active in state functions.

Lloyd Griffin, retired executive secretary of the N. C. Citizens Association, was recognized and spoke briefly about getting younger Democrats involved in politics.

James M. Bond reported for the nominating committee and those chosen were elected without opposition. In addition to Leary, party leaders for the county include: Mrs. Edward G. Bond, first

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Divorces Granted

Five uncontested divorces were granted by Judge John T. Chaffin in Chowan County District Court Tuesday morning. They included:

Charles Eugene Spruill from Rebecca Bouson Spruill; Betty Lou Hawkins Pritchett from James Robert Pritchett, Jr.; Margaret Rascoe from Lenhart Rascoe; Sadie Drew Riddick from Cleveland A. Riddick; and Wanda Brooks Jordan from Erie L. Jordan.



THE GOVERNOR'S REPRESENTATIVE — Walter B. Jones, II, of Farmville, left, representative of Gov. Jim Hunt's office in Raleigh, explained the new people-to-people program last Thursday night at a meeting of Albemarle Area Development Association. Pictured with him are R.L. Stevenson of Hertford, AADA president; Eddie McDuffie, Gates County manager; and Zackie Harrell, Gates County extension chairman.



NATIONAL GUARD LEADERS—W. P. (Spec) Jones, right, first commander of the N. C. National Guard in Edenton following reorganization after World War II and present leaders are pictured at last week's reunion here. Left to right are: Adj. Gen. William E. Ingram; 1st Lt. Robert R. Boyce, station commander; and Lt. Col. John E. R. Perry, battalion commander. (Staff Photo by Manning).

Guard Holds 30th Reunion

Adj. Gen. William E. Ingram of the N. C. National Guard was keynote speaker at the 30th reunion of the organization in Edenton held at the armory Saturday night. Six honorary memberships were presented and two veterans recognized for more than two decades of service.

Mrs. Iris Mills received a special service award in memory

of her late husband and William White also received the service award for in excess of 20 years of service.

Honorary memberships went to L. F. Amburn, Jr., Robert W. Moore, W. Earl Smith, Mayor Roy L. Harrell, Dr. Richard Hardin and Mrs. Rachel Phelps. The Chowan Herald and Edenton Chamber of Commerce were cited for meritorious service.

Lt. Robert R. Boyce, station commander, welcomed nearly 230 people to the banquet and W. P. (Spec) Jones, the first commander following reorganization in 1947 responded.

Special guests were introduced by Carroll W. Jones and Gen. Ingram was introduced by Lt. Col. John Perry, battalion commander.

Others appearing on the program were Henry A. Powell and Paulette Lane.

The program carried a brief history of the unit which included the following: “Despite criticism and discouragement, the men responsible for the organization, or more properly reorganization, of this unit in 1947, stood steadfast in their desire and determination

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Police Actions

An \$800 typewriter was stolen from the office at John A. Holmes High School Sunday night after entry to the building was gained through a rear door where a glass was broken.

Police Chief J.D. Parrish said the breaking, entering and larceny is still under investigation.

Also, an unknown quantity of clothing was stolen from Jay's Store on Oakum Street following a break-in Saturday night.

In other police activity, the arrest of Jeffrey Warren Jackson, 16, 1207 North Oakum Street, was noted. Jackson is charged with the possession and manufacture of marijuana.

Chief Parrish said five plants were growing in his backyard.