

County Water Rate Examined At Town Council Meeting

By Maru Amburn

Edenton Mayor Roy Harrell addressed the issue of the town's water rate increase for Chowan County at the regular Town Council meeting Tuesday night.

"People...seemed concerned that we had increased the water price to the county," the mayor said. "We sell two thousand gallons to the county for \$2.50 and the fact that the county resells it for \$8.00 has

nothing to do with us trying to help our fellow citizens."

The rate increase, which went into effect as scheduled on May 1, was approved by the Council on March 20. Monthly water bills for the Edenton residential customer using 5,000 gallons of water per month will increase from \$5.35 to \$7.55.

Edenton also increased its rate for the county's emergency water

use from \$.85 per thousand gallons to \$1.25 per thousand gallons.

In 1983, the Chowan County Water Department purchased almost 8 million gallons of water from the Town of Edenton at rates of \$.60 and \$.85 per thousand gallons. Most of this emergency water was purchased during the months of June, July, August and September.

Under the new rate schedule, the

town will charge the county \$6.25 for 5,000 gallons of water county and the county will in turn charge its customer \$12.05, according to calculations by Town Manager Sam Noble. The previous rate charge for 5,000 gallons was \$4.25.

The adjusted town rate structure is intended to provide for total system cost recovery for fiscal years 1984-1987.

The Raleigh engineering firm,

L.E. Wooten and Co. advised the town in a September 1983 water rate study that a publicly owned utility need not be a profit making entity, but that the rate should be designed to provide for the operation, maintenance and administration of the utility.

Noble pointed out that town water revenues were no longer adequate to meet the water-related portion of the town's public works budget.

"We made the change so that we wouldn't have to transfer money from electric to water," Noble said after the council meeting. "The reason we charge the county more is that the town customer is paying for the water system and the county is not."

"We are keeping the rate as low as possible for the average Edenton residential customer," Noble added.

In his remarks before the council, the mayor said, "The town has been very generous with the county. The town stands ready to help the county in any way."

In a telephone interview Wednesday, County Manager Cliff Copeland expressed his appreciation that the town is willing to work with the county on the emergency water issue.

Copeland emphasized that the county is not making a profit on its water system and that the County water system requires a higher rate schedule than the town system.

"The county system is newer and

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Tough Questions

Virginia Electric & Power Company's retail customers along the Public Parade are not being treated fairly by a rate structure which results in cheaper electricity in Virginia. The circumstances in North Carolina do not justify a 22 percent spread.

Stan Hege, a Veeco customer and stockholder out at Arrowhead, needs no introduction to the utility issue. He is more than a lay expert; therefore, he phrases tough questions and expects competent answers.

Mr. Hege demonstrated leadership in Operation Overcharge. That consumer effort resulted in a rollback of electric rates by Veeco and a general focus on management of utility companies.

In a recent letter to Veeco, Mr. Hege challenges the "controlled monopoly" for advocating financial assistance to Three-Mile Island. Also, questions are raised about a rate structure that causes North Carolina customers to subsidize the Virginia customers, and which violates a company pledge for rate increases not to exceed the cost of living.

When the Virginia Corporation Commission approves reducing residential rates for 1,000 KWH by \$2.38, there will be a \$12.61 leap to the comparable rate in Tar Heelia.

J.S. Lewis, a skilled corporate word merchant from Veeco's headquarters in Richmond, fails to answer the hard question of "why the firm cannot get costs in line with other companies."

One doesn't have to be a "consumer" nut to press for fair treatment.



SILHOUETTE—A tree overlooking Edenton Bay is silhouetted by a Spring twilight sky. Weather conditions on the bay this week

have been excellent for boating activities. From Yacht Club sailboat racing to sport fishing, Edenton Bay is an ideal location.

Prices and Costs

Food takes a big hunk out of everyone's budget. At a time when farmers struggle, it is increasingly difficult to relate prices to cost.

John Sledge, president of the N.C. Farm Bureau Federation, does a good job of putting the situation into proper perspective. Here it is:

Unfortunately, some urban consumers, separated from the farm by generations, have come to think of the supermarket as the origin of their food. At the same time, many lawmakers with little or no knowledge of agriculture have the responsibility of making decisions which directly affect the lives of farmers.

The independent, self-sufficient farmer, realizing the need for understanding and support of those not involved in his industry, has worked hard to build his public image and relate the "farm story" to consumers.

He has made great strides in building bridges of understanding between farm and city in personal contacts at mall promotions, fairs and farm tours, through speakers' bureau appearances before urban groups and in the schools. He has taken the time to get acquainted with members of his local news media and convince them that what was happening on the farm was NEWS—not just to farmers, but to everyone.

But one area has the farmer stumped. When farm prices go up, there always seems to be an excuse for retail food prices to rise—and this makes the headlines. Yet when farm prices decline, nobody cares or even knows—except the farmer.

Whether farms prices are rising or falling doesn't really have that much effect on retail prices because only 27 cents of the food dollar is put on at the farm level. The other 73 cents is added after the products leave the farm gate.

The farmer, with his ever-rising production costs, understands that the middlemen's costs are rising too. But, what disturbs him is that it's the farm price that's always used as the reason for retail price increases. He thinks somebody else along the food production line ought to take a turn being the "heavy."

Surplus Agricultural Commodity Distribution Planned

The Chowan County Department of Social Services will be distributing cheese, butter, flour, cornmeal, dried milk and honey to the residents of Chowan County at two locations on Tuesday May 22nd and Wednesday May 23rd, County

Social Services Director Hazel Elliott recently announced.

Applications will be processed and commodities distributed at the Center Hill Cross Roads Fire Department Building on Tuesday May 22nd during the hours of 9:00

A.M. to 1:00 P.M. and at the School Maintenance Building on Dicks Street in Edenton on Wednesday May 23rd during the hours from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

"The commodities will be available as long as the supply holds out to all households receiving food stamps in Chowan County and other households meeting certain income levels," according to the Social Services Director. The food stamp households will be notified previous to these days to bring in needed information to receive the commodities and other households will be allowed to sign the applications at the distribution sites.

Gross monthly income levels to be eligible should not exceed \$527 for one person, \$709 for two persons, \$891 for three persons, \$1,619 for four persons, \$1,255 for five persons, and households of over eight persons should add \$182 to \$1,801 for each additional person. The application will contain a self-declaration income statement to be signed by the applicant. There will be no requirement for a household to provide any verification of income other than the signed application.

"One person from each household should come and sign the application and receive the commodities," Mrs. Elliott said. "The Department encourages all households that feel they are eligible to come to the sites and sign the applications to receive commodities."

District Court

Chowan County District Court was in session May 15, the honorable John T. Chafin presiding over the criminal calendar.

William Franklin Smith was called but failed to show on charges of communicating threats and allowing dogs to run at large.

Alfred M. Sanderlin was found not guilty of making harassing telephone calls.

Titus Hosea Wynn was called but failed to show on charges of shoplifting.

Dennis Leon Hassell was found guilty of driving with no operator license. He was sentenced to 30 days suspended for 1 year on the condition that he pay a fine of \$50 and cost of court. He is not to operate a motor vehicle until duly licensed.

Calvin Lee Leary was found guilty of intoxicated and disruptive behavior and resisting arrest. He was sentenced to 90 days suspended for 2 years on the condition that he pay a fine of \$125 and cost of court; he is not to associate with Henry C. Brooks for a period of 2 years.

Henry Clayton Brooks was found guilty of intoxicated and disruptive behavior; he was committed for 30 days.

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HOME—Martha Rascoe is shown standing in front of the house on W. Gale St. that she and her husband, William, moved into in March as part of the Oakum Street Community Development Project.

Oakum St. Community Development Project Relocation Phase Continues

By Ron Anderson

In March of this year William and Martha Rascoe moved from the six room house they were renting on E. Albemarle St. to another six room house on W. Gale St. Their move was part of the Oakum St. Community Development Project.

Relocation is one part of the three phases of the project to revitalize the Oakum St. neighborhood. The project was begun in January, 1983 when a \$627,000 grant from the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Development was received by the town.

The house on Albemarle St. that the Rascoes were renting was

classified as a substandard dwelling and was purchased by the town. Although the building is still standing, it is scheduled to be demolished.

When the town purchased the structure, the Rascoes, who are both retired, needed a place to live.

The house on W. Gale St. was thought to be an excellent place for the Rascoes to relocate because of the similarities between it and their old house on E. Albemarle St. Arrangements were made for the Rascoes to rent the house.

Lorenzo Carmon, Community Development Director, and

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Academic Letters To Be Awarded

Students who have qualified to receive the newly initiated "Academic Letter" at Holmes High School will be honored at a banquet next Monday.

"Our goal is to recognize students who have excelled in academics, similar to the way we recognize ex-

cellence in athletics and other extracurricular activities," Holmes principal Rob Boyce said.

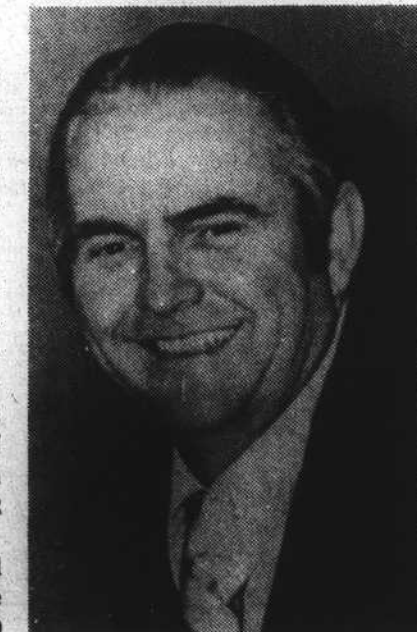
Dr. Craig Phillips, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, will be featured speaker at the May 21 event.

Also attending the "higher standards" activity will be Charles Fayton. The Holmes graduate was a Morehead Scholar and Basketball player at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Fayton is now a medical doctor in Norfolk Virginia.

"We are excited about the addition of this banquet to our awards program at Holmes," Boyce added. "We are hopeful the community will become involved and support this activity with their presence."

In the past two years the local high school has initiated programs to promote academic excellence under the higher standards banner theme.

Tickets for the awards banquet which will begin at 7 P.M., may be purchased for \$5.00 from Peggy A. Vaughan, Ruby Jernigan, Barbara White or from the JAHHS office.



Craig Phillips