



The Public Parade

Taxes, High And Low

Protests over pending tax increases in Chowan County are typical of what is going on in counties, cities and towns all across North Carolina.

In Iredell County, for example, Statesville residents are facing a 12.5 per cent increase, not only in their ad valorem taxes, but in their utility rates as well. Rural residents face a 10 per cent increase in their property taxes and, if the legislature approves it, a 100 per cent boost in their local sales tax, which, of course, will apply in towns as well.

And all this on top of a property revaluation which, just one year ago, almost tripled the tax value of their property.

There may be a few fortunate areas in the state where special circumstances will make it unnecessary to boost local taxes, but they are not typical. They are the exceptions. And the reason for this widespread upward movement of local taxes is, almost without exception, the loss of federal revenue sharing funds.

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Water Emergency Declared In County

Chowan County officials declared a water emergency Tuesday and are asking water customers to implement a voluntary water conservation program. Persons on the county system are being asked not to water lawns and gardens, wash vehicles, or to refrain from any other non-essential use, such as filling swimming pools.

Graham Farless, head of the County Water Department, said that a million gallons a day had been pumped on Monday and Tuesday of this week. He said, "That's 60,000 gallons more than we've ever pumped during a 24 hour period."

The county is currently buying 140,000 gallons daily from Edenton, Perquimans and Gates Counties under an emergency buy-sell agreement. Farless said that the county lines are tied in with those systems and all that is required is opening the appropriate valves.

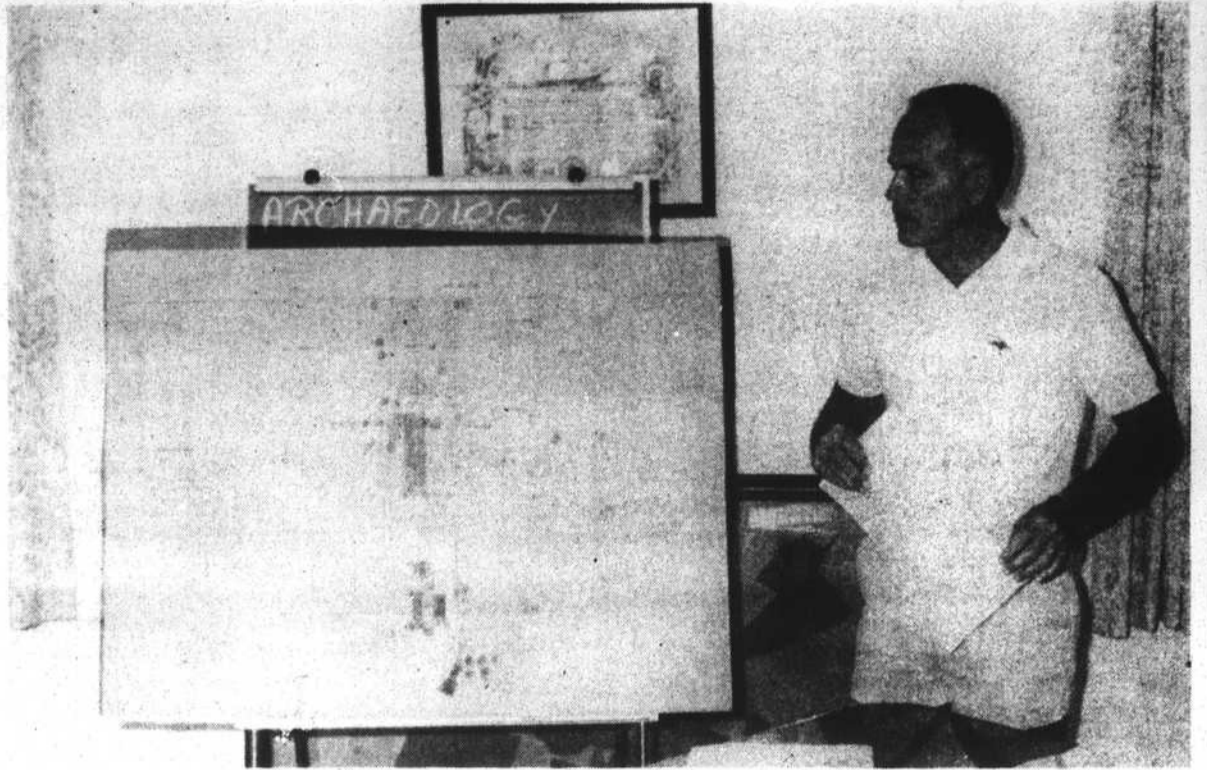
The water department official said that two of the county's six water pumps broke down Monday night, adding to the system's woes. "When it rains, it pours," Farless said.

County Manager Cliff Copeland said that the county's population growth has outstripped the size of the current system. A new water treatment plant is under construction at the site of the present plant in Valhalla. The new plant will have a capacity of pumping 800 gallons per minute, compared with the present system's 200 gallons per minute.

Copeland said that the new plant, a \$1 million project, will be tested next week and should be in operation by the first of September or possibly sooner. The much larger plant will replace rather than supplement the present one, he said.

The county manager said of the present water emergency, "In the past, the county's calls for voluntary conservation have been very effective." He said that while he expects that the public will heed this call as well, mandatory restriction on water use would be implemented if necessary.

Farless said that "a 25 per cent reduction in water usage is needed immediately if an adequate water supply is to continue to be provided."



PRESENTS PLAN FOR WATERFRONT—Gil Burroughs showed the Edenton Town Council last Tuesday night a schematic of a proposal to construct a recreational park on the waterfront site previously proposed to be used as the location of a commercial waterfront inn. The park plan, presented by Burroughs and Ross Inglis would be implemented by area civic groups and cost some \$40,000.

Inn Proposal Put On Hold

Council Hears Alternate Plan

By JACK GROVE

An alternative plan was put before Edenton's Town Council Tuesday night for the use of town-owned property on the waterfront. The plan would recruit civic groups to adopt various projects on the site in the construction of recreational facilities for a park.

Gil Burroughs, a teacher at Holmes High School, presented a drawing of the park proposal and discussed the suggested amenities. They would include croquet, badminton, horse shoe, shuffle board, hand ball and beach volleyball courts, a boat house and floating ramp in the existing inlet and picnic shelters.

The site has been the center of controversy for months due to a proposal by a developer to buy the property from the town and build a waterfront inn. The location includes the building currently housing the Edenton Police Department. The developer's plan would necessitate relocation of the police department. The park plan would not.

In his opening remarks Burroughs said, "We're victims of the Lazarus syndrome — we'd like one more chance." He said that the park could be developed in stages by various groups and that the property could be made "more than serviceable."

Burroughs threw in an added inducement for the town to consider. "I am offering you tonight four 16-foot day sailers. We'll teach sailing free." He said that this offer was made by the Edenton boating club.

Ross Inglis provided cost estimates and a projected phasing plan for the proposal. Phase I would include stabilization (not bulkheading) of the shoreline, and badminton and volleyball courts

at a cost of \$7,000 to \$10,000.

Phase II would include shuffle board and hand ball courts, picnic shelters, a stage, the inlet building and a floating ramp at a cost of \$9,000. Phase III would see the construction of a boat house and other amenities for a cost of some \$20,000.

Inglis summarized, "So perhaps with \$36,000 to \$40,000, in the long run it could be accomplished. We've got the will and the skill if the council will see fit to consider it again."

After the park presentation, the council took up and quickly rejected an offer by the developer, Anderson-Benton Corp., to purchase the property. The written offer was rejected due to a sentence that provided that the town must successfully apply for a federal grant. This money would then be made available to the developer in the form of a low-cost loan.

Mayor John Dowd appointed a study committee to meet with Burroughs and Inglis to assess the feasibility of the park plan. Town council will be represented by Mayor Dowd, Town Administrator Sam Noble and council members Marina Crummev and Willis Privott.

Council conducted a hearing on a special use permit requested by Claude Small to operate a coin laundry and a car wash on his property on Badham Road.

Residents of the neighborhood nearby presented a petition against the request signed by 76 persons. During the hearing, they voiced concerns about traffic congestion and late hours of such establishments. They were also concerned about possible sewer and storm drain stoppages from water used at the site.

Saying that he needed to utilize his property for business purposes and on which he was paying town taxes, Small said, "I feel like a car wash is needed. There's nothing wrong with having clean clothes and a clean car." He said that the businesses would be supervised

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Beaman Presides Over Docket

Chowan District Court was in session July 1, the Honorable Grafton G. Beaman presiding over the criminal calendar.

Paul H. Jackson pleaded guilty to DWI. He was sentenced to six months, suspended for three years, with the provision that he serve a 14 day active sentence. He was also ordered to pay a \$500 fine and cost of court; to attend ADET School and pay the school fee; and to surrender his operator's license. An appeal was noted.

Richard Eugene Martin pleaded guilty to DWI. He was sentenced to six months, suspended for three years and placed on supervised probation for three years. He was ordered to pay a \$500 fine and cost of court; to reimburse counsel in the amount of \$150; and to surrender his operator's license.

Allyson K. Allen pleaded guilty to a worthless check charge. The defendant was sentenced to 30 days, suspended for two years upon payment of cost of court and restitution to Debbie Norwood.

Finley Donell Norfleet pleaded guilty to disobeying a stop sign and was assessed cost of court. An

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SET ROAD IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES—DOT officials met with Chowan County Commissioners Monday morning to set priorities for \$102,779 in county road improvements. Arrowhead Beach got the largest slice of the funding pie this year, receiving \$50,000. Shown left to right are District Highway Engineer Earl Moore, DOT Board Member Kenneth Roberson, Commissioner C.A. Phillips and Commissioner Clara Boswell.

Secondary Road Improvements Discussed

Kenneth Roberson, state Department of Transportation board member for this district, met with Chowan County Commissioners Monday morning to discuss secondary road improvement priorities. The DOT's budget for the county program contains \$102,779.

The Arrowhead Beach subdivision will come in for \$50,000 of the total, with \$42,000 going toward completing the base and paving Pocahontas Trail. Another \$8,000 was set aside as the state's matching funds for improvements to Shawnee Trail and Huron Trail. Property owners on Shawnee Trail will be assessed \$9,600 and those on Huron Trail, \$9,424 as a result of their petitions to the county for road improvements.

Arrowhead resident Al Howard told the commissioners and DOT representatives, "We appreciate this...to finally reach the top (in road priorities) is great."

Roberson and the board of commissioners agreed to make up for the \$8,000 allocated to Shawnee and Huron Trails by deleting a planned spot stabilization to Meadow Road worth \$7,000 and taking \$1,000 from a reserve of \$8,779.

The only other road receiving improvement funding is S.R. 1222 from N.C. 32 to S.R. 1217. It will receive strengthening for resurfacing on 3.7 miles at a cost of \$45,000.

Commissioners took advantage of the presence of Roberson and

district engineers to comment on other issues and to ask questions. Commission Chairman Alton Elmore asked if something could be done about N.C. 32 south from the town limits to the Base Road. He said, "That's as bad a section of major road as we've got." Division engineer F. W. Adkins said that it would be looked at for possible resurfacing in the fall.

Commissioner Joe Hollowell asked for an "overview" of efforts to get area major highways four-laned. Roberson said, "That's what I'm trying to make happen." Of the four-laning of U.S. 64 from Tarboro to Rocky Mount he said,

"The state hasn't seen fit to match federal funds." He said that he was currently trying to get funding for engineering studies for the highway from Tarboro to Williamston.

Concerning four-laning of U.S. 17, he said that he was working on getting a "leg" widened from Hertford to the bypass at Edenton. A section from the current four-lane south of Elizabeth City to Winfall has already been approved for widening.

Elmore asked if a portion, perhaps one-half mile on each

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Legislature Approves Tax Bills

Two new taxes that will greatly improve the county's financial position in the future were enacted by the General Assembly last week. Both bills were introduced by Rep. Vernon James and endorsed by Rep. Charles Evans and Senator Marc Basnight.

Special legislation introduced for Chowan County provides a land transfer tax of one per cent on the sale of real estate. County Commissioners made it official Monday morning by passing a local resolution putting the act into effect as of September 1, 1986.

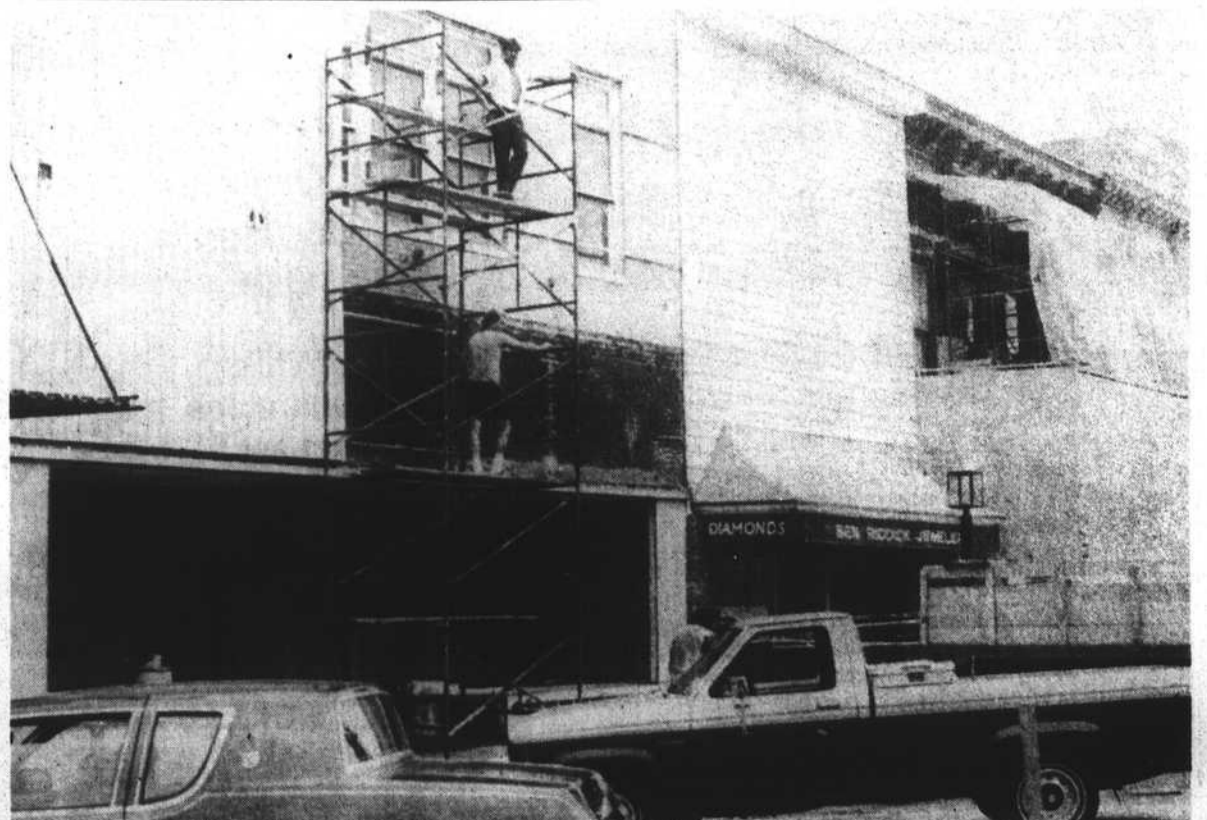
The land transfer tax proceeds can only be used for capital outlays, according to County Manager Cliff Copeland. He estimated the yield from the tax

at from \$180,000 to \$200,000 annually.

The other bill passed by the legislature provides for an additional one-half cent sales tax that may be levied by counties across the state. Counties already have the authority to levy a half cent sales tax and 99 of the counties have opted for it Copeland said. That tax currently yields \$270,000 but Copeland said the latest half cent was expected to bring in about \$100,000 during the first year. The tax is distributed by population rather than on the basis of which county collects it.

The county manager said that all of the new revenue would go

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RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL—The Elliott Co. facade comes down from the building that is now owned by Al Cox of Chapel Hill. Three businesses are currently occupying the building: Applied Business Systems, Sandy Silks and Express Printing. Two doors down is the former Pate's Florist being renovated as the new location for Colonial Real Estate. Russell Bootwright said Tuesday that both buildings are being restored to their original condition. Bootwright is the owner of Colonial Real Estate and the brother-in-law of Cox.