

Bids On N.C. 39 - U.S. 401 Project To Be Let

Only a hand-full of local citizens attended a public hearing here Tuesday on the N. C. 39-U. S. 401 project. Fifth Division Highway Commissioner J. B. Brame of Durham addressed the group and gave an explanation of the proposed project. Brame pointed out that improvement to the highway is part of the Fifth's allocation of state bond funds and that the improvement would not reach to the Vance County line as he had earlier hoped.

The hearing was called by the Highway Commission to give the public an opportunity to express opinions and to ask questions about the route of the highway and other aspects of the project. Obtaining rights-of-way has been underway for some time along the stretch.

Brame said that \$750,000 had been allotted to Franklin for this project and \$600,000 had been allotted Vance for

work on N. C. 39 leading to the Franklin line. However, Division Engineer Merie T. Adkins explained that approximately two miles on the Vance side of the line is not included in the project there and approximately three miles in Franklin County will not be improved in this letting. The exact mileage left unimproved will depend on the amount of the bids received, he explained.

Bill Garrett of the State Design staff explained in detail the straightening and grading as well as the widening of certain portions of the road which is to start north of State Rural Road 1249 and connect with the Louisburg town limits on Bickett Blvd and on North Main Street.

Garrett said the "right-of-way acquisition is progressing real well", and he added that the project is expected to let for bids on "the last Tuesday in

November, whatever date that is."

State Senator-elect E. F. Griffin asked if the project had been requested by the County Commissioners. Brame answered that his memory was not the best on the matters but that he believed that the Commissioners and a "group of leaders" in the county had voiced approval of the project. Later newsmen A. F. Johnson and Clint Fuller verified Brame's statement that both were present when the Board of Commissioners approved the project.

Johnson asked when the project would be started. This drew Garrett's

statement and Fuller asked, "What, if anything, is planned for that portion of N. C. 39 in Franklin County not scheduled for improvement in this project?"

Garrett said he did not know and Brame stated that he "considers this gap important." "Whether we can do anything about it, other than a recommendation to the next administration, I do not know," Brame added.

Brame told the group that N. C. 56, a project long-scheduled and which has been a point of controversy over the years, is "still set up as a federal aid

project."

The project consists of massive improvements over a 6.5 mile route and two-tenths of a mile of the Henderson Road to the Town limits which is to be widened and receive curb and gutter. Estimated construction cost of the overall project was given by Adkins as \$633,000. This does not include some \$67,000 engineering costs or the cost of acquiring rights-of-way.

The strip of N. C. 39-U. S. 401 that passes the cemetery, will receive curb and gutter on the east side, according to Garrett and the highway will get some

relocation at the junction of State Rural Road 1474.

Accompanying Commissioners Brame to the hearing were: M. T. Adkins, F. W. Atkins, District Engineer, two right-of-way division people identified only as Mr. Phillips and Mr. Chappell, James Alford, Franklin County engineer, and Garrett.

Following the hearing, Brame met briefly with Industrial Development Director Kenneth Schubart to discuss a proposed interstate connector link with Raleigh, which would run through Franklin County.

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Two County Women Injured

Two Franklin County women employees of IIT Telecommunications Transmission Company plant in Raleigh were injured in an unexplained explosion at the plant early Wednesday morning. The women were identified as Voncilla B. Strickland, 36, of Youngsville and Nancy B. Alford, 29, of Louisburg. The first woman suffered a broken arm according to reports and the latter suffered a back injury.

A machine, which issued in the manufacture of printed electronic circuits, blew apart, the report said, after it popped a few times, and sent out clouds of yellow smoke. The machine normally operates with an inside temperature of 450 degrees. Four other employees were also injured.

Two partition walls were blown loose where the walls joined the ceiling, doors were blown off and windows were smashed and all of the ceiling was blown out of the machine room where the explosion occurred and a large area of the cafeteria ceiling was torn down by the blast, Keeter said.

The blast knocked off ceiling boards some 250 feet from the exploded machine, the fire chief said.

T. W. Williams, comptroller for the firm, said the blast forced the firm to close down a portion of the plant. However, he said he expected the plant to be back in full operation this morning.

Williams said the machine that exploded was a solder leveling machine containing hot salts used to remove excess solder from printed electronic circuits.

FBI Back In Franklin County Investigating School Operation

Reliable reports have disclosed that at least five agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation are in Franklin County investigating complaints of segregation on school buses and in the classrooms. According to the reports, teachers of both races as well as student bus drivers are being questioned at their homes, bus drivers.

On September 19, 1968, J. LeVonne Chambers of Charlotte, attorney for the NAACP, a plaintiff in the Franklin County school suit, wrote Board of Education attorneys E. F. Yarborough and Charles Davis requesting that "immediate steps be taken to desegregate the classes within the various schools and to eliminate the racially discriminatory practices in the transportation of students to the various schools". A copy of the letter was sent to District Court Judge Algernon Butler, who had ordered the schools totally desegregated last August 5.

School officials have contended that there is no segregation on buses or in classrooms except where parents have chosen to transport their children privately instead of placing them on school buses and in classrooms, only where ability or chosen subjects place a child in a particular class.

It was not learned what prompted the FBI to again enter Franklin County on a school matter, however, an unconfirmed report indicates that the Civil Rights Division of the U. S. Department of Justice ordered the agents here.

School Board attorney E. F. Yarborough told the Board in a special meeting here Wednesday night that the plaintiffs in the case could have taken advantage of procedures open to them under the courts by filing interrogatories seeking information on the two complaints. This, said Yarborough, has been done several times before in the case.

On September 11, 1968, U. S. Senator Sam Ervin filed a protest with Attorney General Ramsey Clark over the fact that fifteen FBI agents and two Justice Department attorneys were in the county on the opening day of school to "observe". Sen. Ervin wrote, "I would expect such conduct in a police state but not in a society

which is supposed to be free".

"For all practical purposes, the use of such a large number of men amounts to the deployment of a national police force on your part...." Ervin's letter to Clark continued.

He also said he felt the FBI could

be better used elsewhere in the county "fighting organized crime".

The most intensive investigation this week has taken place in the Epsom and Gold Sand School areas, according to reports.

Place On Stand Third Day In Murray Trial

The trial of former Franklin Accountant E. Lee Murray is continuing today with Raleigh CPA William Place on the stand for the third straight day. Murray is charged with embezzling funds amounting to \$6,360.48 during the period September 30, 1962 to September 30, 1966. The Wake County Treasurer, now on leave, has refunded the loss to the county maintaining his innocence but saying that he felt he was responsible for the office during that period.

Place, a witness for the State, has been quizzed by Solicitor W. G. Ransdell since taking the stand shortly after 3 p.m. Tuesday. Monday and most of Tuesday were taken in the selection of 12 jurors and two alternates, all from a venire from Granville County.

The larger portion of Place's testimony deals with introduction of evidence by way of forms, checks and vouchers. The process is slow as defense attorneys find much of these objectionable. A number of sessions between attorneys and Superior Court Judge Leo Carr have been held in the Judge's chambers.

A main point of contention in Tuesday's questioning bordered on the use by Place and Ransdell of the word "shortage". It began when Ransdell asked Place, "Did you determine whether or not there was a shortage?" Place answered "yes" and attorney Hill Yarborough offered the first objection, contending that this was a point the state was required to prove.

Following a closed door session in

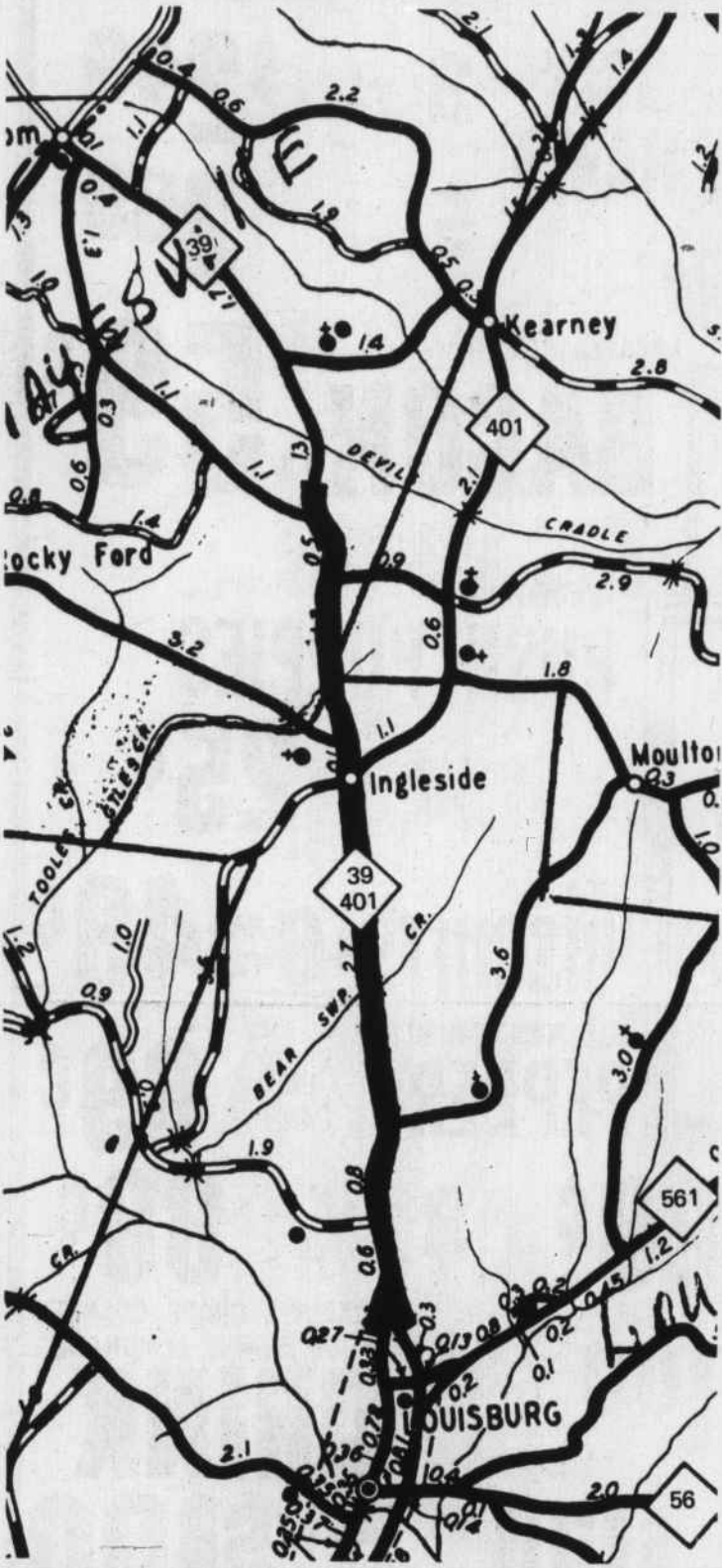
the Judge's chambers, the questioning was continued. Ransdell asked Place what he meant by the term "unexplained disbursements" and Place replied, "From my point of view, there was not sufficient competent supporting matter". Then Ransdell asked, "In your opinion, what does this represent?" Place replied, "I think it's a shortage". Place also told of reporting the "unexplained disbursements" to the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners and the entire Board. He testified that he was employed to "extend the audit back two years" from the 1966-67 fiscal year.

At one point in his testimony, Place said, "I did not perform an entire audit of the books as such. We examined transactions such as these". This was in reference to earlier testimony of his audit of Social Security contributions.

On Wednesday, the State began introducing various documents which were passed around to the jurors. These were identified by Place Quarterly Social Security forms. The introduction of these and other forms continued throughout the day Wednesday and were still going on this morning.

The trial is expected to last well into next week and is being conducted in the Louisburg Armory due to the renovations going on in the county courthouse.

Granville County residents selected See TRIAL Page 4



Board Acts On Bus Controversy

The Franklin County Board of Education, meeting in special session here Wednesday night, approved a plumbing bid for the Methods and Material Center clearing the way for the start of the federally financed education facility and, after a lengthy discussion, acted on a controversial question pertaining to activity buses.

The bus matter has been debated to some degree in several of the recent Board meetings. The question arose when the District Court order necessitated the elimination of the former Perry's Riverside and Gethsemane Schools. The buildings at these schools are now used for primary grades under the total integration order.

As equipment from the former high schools was being moved to accommodate the increase in students at the former white schools, the Board ordered the three activity buses formerly used by the Negro high schools moved to the new consolidated schools.

The action brought a protest from the Perry school community. A delegation, several weeks ago, appeared before the Board asking that the bus be returned to the community. Similar requests have been made by former patrons of Riverside and Gethsemane schools, although these have not been formal.

The three buses were purchased by the various P.T.A.'s over the years and titled in the name of the Board of Education.

Wednesday night, after listening to a plea from Gold Sand Elementary School Principal J. E. Wilson that the bus be returned to the community, the Board, after obtaining a legal ruling from its attorney, voted on a split count to retain the buses for school

activities.

E. F. Yarborough, Board attorney said in his opinion, the Board could not give the bus back; that it was county property and if the Board decided to dispose of the one or all buses, it would have to be done at public auction.

Board member Clint Fuller moved to retain all three buses for use of students at the three district schools involved and that each be repainted. Jones Winston seconded the motion. On the vote, Fuller and Winston voted for the motion, Lloyd West voted against it and William Boone abstained. On a subsequent motion to letter each bus, "School Activity Bus, Franklin County, N. C." the vote was unanimous.

In other action the Board set the school calendar with Christmas holidays beginning December 23 and going through December 27. New Year's Day will be a school holiday and April 2 through 7 is set for Easter holidays. The last day of school is set for Tuesday, June 3, 1969.

Receives Merit Award

Miss Anne Parrish, daughter of Mrs. Annie F. Parrish and the late J. F. Parrish of Route 3, Louisburg, was presented the "Citation of Merit Award of the North Carolina Public Health Association" Thursday night in Charlotte, N. C.

The citation reads: Miss Anne Parrish, a dedicated, professional health worker, See AWARD Page 4

Gardner Speaks At Opening

Congressman Jim Gardner, GOP candidate for Governor, spoke briefly here Wednesday at ribbon-cutting ceremonies marking the official opening of his campaign trailer on Bickett Blvd.

Gardner told the crowd of approximately 100 persons attending the noon affair that "Dan Moore has shown us we can do without a Governor for four years" as he hit the "Democratic political machine in Raleigh". Saying he has "nothing against Bob Scott personally", he added the difference between him and his Democratic opponent is their "political philosophy".

"I didn't vote for Hubert Humphrey in 1964 and he did", Gardner said. "There's not a dime's worth of difference between Hubert Humphrey and Bob Scott," he added.

"If I can sell hamburgers for 15 cents - now 19 cents", Gardner said, "I can certainly solve the farmer's problems". He said farmers are not getting their share in the market place. "We're going to win by a landslide", the Congressman said, "We'll win by over 100,000 votes. You just ought to see the hundreds of people in Charlotte and Greensboro standing in line to register. They are tired and want a change and they're lining up to register."

Jesse Austin, former Democratic State Senator, spoke following Gardner and urged everyone present to register. "We may never get another chance to honor our responsibility", Austin said.

Prior to the address, Gardner joined Archie Bunn, Franklin campaign manager, in cutting the ribbon. Following the speech, Gardner was presented a check for \$1200 by Bunn and Crowell Strickland, county finance chairman for Gardner.



COUNTY MANAGER ARCHIE BUNN AND CANDIDATE JIM GARDNER