

Man's death shrouded in mystery From Page A1

from various angles. Womble was acquainted with Jefferson as a substitute teacher at Old Town, and he also sat on the modeling company's board of directors.

"Terry was a magnificent person, a brilliant person," Womble said. "He worked very well with the students and was very high on manners, respect and decorum."

"Whenever we needed a substitute teacher, Terry was the first on our list," said Womble. "It got so that the faculty began to regard him as one of our regular faculty members. And the students loved him."

"If he ever wanted to become an educator, he would have been a master teacher. He would have been an asset to anybody's faculty."

But Jefferson was more interested in owning and operating his own business, said his mother. His activities and interests included karate and singing, and he par-

ticipated in the concert and marching bands in high school.

After graduating from East Forsyth High School in 1976, Jefferson enrolled at Thomas More College in Fort Mitchell, Ky., and graduated in 1980 with a degree in business administration. He received an honorable discharge from the Navy in February 1983.

Jefferson, the second youngest of three boys and three girls, had a close relationship with his parents, said his mother.

"We were close friends," she said. "He was the one (child) who lived with me. He always wanted his mother to be by his side. He always let people know that if it weren't for me, there wouldn't have been no him."

"I just hope God will be able to receive him because he was my love," Mrs. Jefferson said. "I'm sure he died trying to reach his goal."

Bigger school board favored From Page A1

nine members.

"Nine members might prevent the stalemates the board has had in the past," Tatum said. "When people come to a board meeting, they want to have a decision rendered; they don't want to wait."

The third black candidate, Evelyn Terry, who did not attend the meeting, could not be reached for comment.

In addition to the candidates supporting the change, Walter Marshall, acting president of the NAACP and Willie Anderson, president of the Forsyth Association of Classroom Teachers, voiced support for a ninth member.

Said Marshall: "Nine members won't guarantee but will enhance the possibility of us electing someone (black)."

Still, the only way of ensuring minority representation on the board, Marshall said, is to divide the county into districts so that each area will be guaranteed representation.

Anderson said the other school systems that Forsyth is often compared with, such as Mecklenburg, Wake and Gaston counties' schools, have nine members and neighboring Guilford County has three different school systems with a total of 21 representatives.

Now that the board has decided to increase its number of members, the proposal will be given to the Forsyth County state House delegation in the hope that it will introduce the change during the House's short session this spring.

And, before it goes to the delegation, the county commissioners will be asked to endorse the change.

Since the school board would like for the change to take place before the November election, if it is approved, the executive committees of the Democratic and Republican parties would appoint candidates to seek what would be the fifth available board seat.

Minority plan is good step From Page A1

minority and women businesses," says Burke. "If our city takes a giant step -- not just by law -- we must go a step further and let them (the public) know what we're doing to help businesses."

Burke suggests that the city's new economic development office, which will facilitate new business interests, become a resource for minority and woman-operated firms. She is also concerned by the fact that the Chamber of Commerce hasn't appointed a staff member to deal directly with the interests of minority and female businesses.

"The chamber must be willing to bring on a staff person to deal with minority concerns," she says. "That person could open the doors for those businesses."

She's not alone in that opinion.

"That much is the key," adds C.G. Washington, a local concrete contractor and head of the Voice of Minority Contractors, a local group of black contractors and suppliers. "The city needs a coordinator (for small business interests)."

That person should also be a minority, says Washington. "You know what you're working against, so it (the coordinating effort) has got to be a black thing," he says. "It's an automatic thing."

Most of the board's discussion has centered on major contractors using minority and women subcontractors. The city, at the request of the board, compiled a list of such subcontractors for major firms to consider when subcontracting work.

But Washington believes the city's and board's goals would be better achieved by allowing businesses such as his to deal directly with the city.

"We could get the work as subcontractors," says Washington, "but the GC (general contractor) doesn't want to use you. They already have their staffs together. Racism is a part, but it's not all racism."

Washington says it's more costly for a general contractor to subcontract business because his com-

pany has to monitor the smaller companies. He says a "set-aside system," whereby the city could reserve a certain number of relatively small jobs for minorities and women would be better. Such a set-up, though, is prohibited by law, says Washington.

Another path the city could follow, says Washington, would be to allow minority and female companies to bid directly for certain portions of a major project. This avenue is already open and being used, according to Don Farmer, city-county purchasing agent.

Put simply, certain projects, such as installing sidewalks around a public building, can be separated from the total project and bid on separately by specialty companies. The cost of such jobs must be kept under \$30,000 because most small companies, says municipal engineer Roy Williams, aren't licensed by the state to handle major projects.

Therefore, says Williams, the city is making an effort to pull out lesser portions of major projects in order to allow minority, female and

small companies in general to bid on them separately.

"We're trying to step it up (the pull-out system)," says Williams. "If we can break it (major project) up under \$30,000, then we can make an effort to let minorities and women get general contracting work."

This system, which has become city policy, allows small businesses the leeway to become general contractors or work under the license and bond of a major contractor, says Williams. As of now, he says, most city contracts under \$30,000 involve streets, sidewalks and building projects.

Before a major city contract is awarded, the city now requires the major contractor to participate in pre-bid conferences in order to see which minority and women businesses are available for subcontracting.

"Our major effort is looking out for small projects and keeping large projects broken down so non-bonded companies can bid on them," says Williams.

However, such an effort on behalf of small companies won't prevent larger ones from bidding for small

jobs, says Williams, and the city is required by law to do business with the lowest qualified bidder. On the other hand, he says, the new policy will increase competition because more companies will be able to bid on projects.

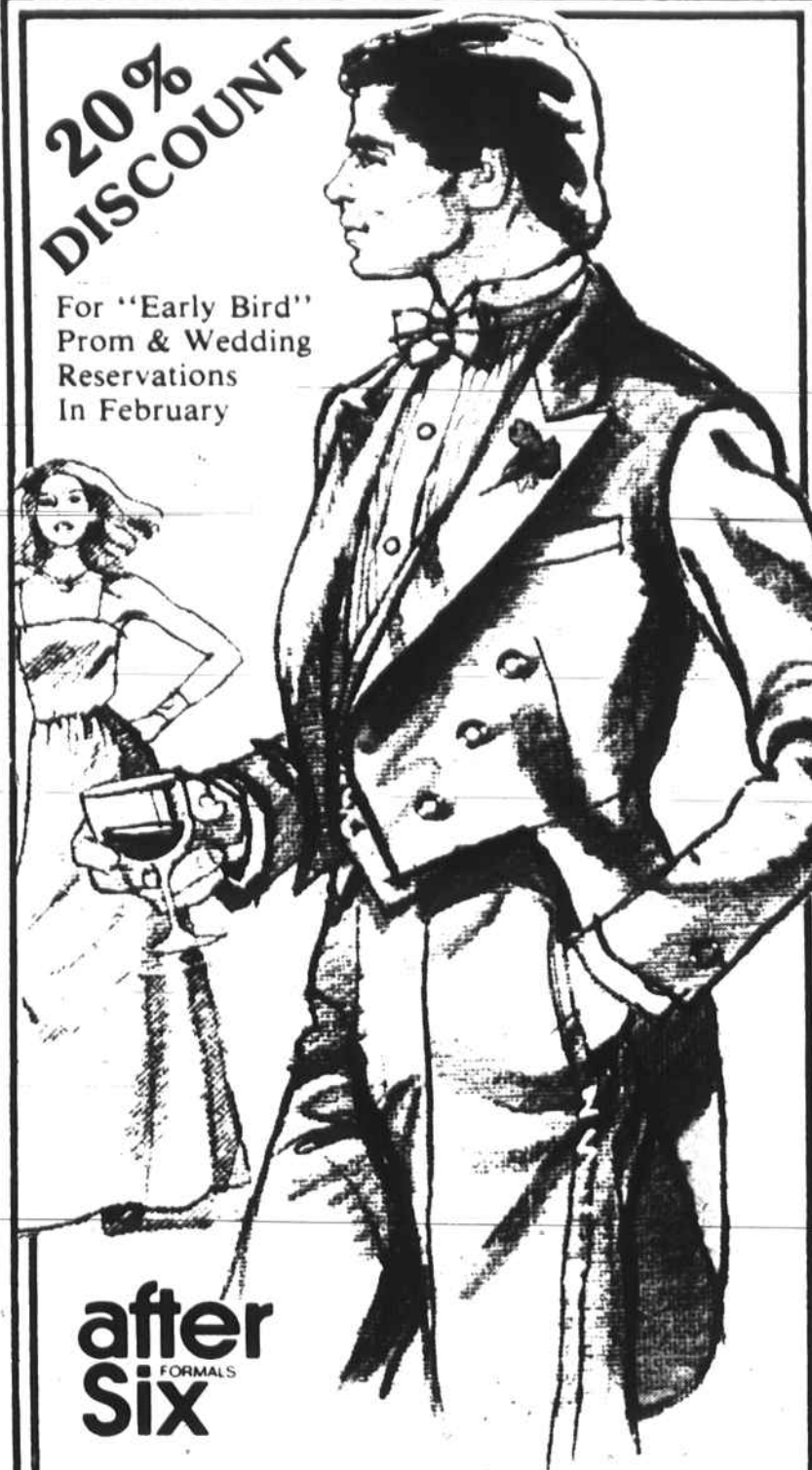
In the first half of last year, Farmer estimates, the city awarded approximately 15 or 16 contracts to minority and female businesses, and the city is doing more all the time, he says. "No policies have changed," he says.

Michael Spainhour, vice president of the Spainhour Brothers highway and public utility contractors, applauds the board's efforts to get more minorities and women involved in city business. Though he says his company doesn't rely heavily on subcontractors, he says his experience in subcontracting work has been satisfactory.

"When I employ a subcontractor, I employ one who is as capable of doing the job as if I were doing it," says Spainhour.

He says his company, which has done major work for Winston-Salem, has no

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