

Al Beaty's hotseat

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of his peers." The younger Beaty graduated from all-black Atkins High School in 1961. He then enrolled at Winston-Salem State University.

"I didn't receive any scholarships, grants or loans to go to college," Beaty said. "I worked my way through college."

While he was in high school and college, Beaty worked weekends and nights as a bartender at Forsyth Country Club.

"He was a very honest and intelligent," said Thomas L. Davis, the manager of the bar at the club. "He was a very respectable young man. Everybody loved him."

Davis helped Beaty get his first car, a 1954 Ford. "He was very proud of that thing," Davis said.

"I expected him to do great things," Davis said. "Anybody who worked as hard as Beaty did would have good things coming to him."

Beaty went to high school and college during the civil rights movement. He said he participated in several demonstrations and sit-ins in Winston-Salem, but he was never arrested.

"I think race relations have improved in Winston-Salem since the 1960s," Beaty said. "Blacks have gotten into the mainstream of Winston-Salem life."

Blacks have made economic, social and educational gains in Winston-Salem "because of the sacrifices of a lot of people," Beaty said.

In 1965, Beaty graduated from WSSU with a bachelor's degree in history. "My ambition was to be an attorney," he said. "(But) if I would have gone to law school, I probably would have been drafted to go to Vietnam."

Graduate students received only a year's exemption from the draft during the Vietnam War; teachers received an occupational deferment.

So Beaty took a teaching job at Conetoe High School in Edgecombe County. "My goal was to be the best history teacher that ever cracked a book," Beaty said.

He taught history, social studies and economics for five years. Beaty also was a member of the police reserve in Tarboro and a scoutmaster.

He left teaching and Tarboro for greener pastures in 1970. "Teaching was a job that I thoroughly enjoyed," Beaty said. "But it didn't provide me with year-long employment, and the pay was low."

He returned to the Twin City after landing a job as a personnel specialist with the Experiment in Self-Reliance, a city-funded agency.

"He was an excellent worker," said Vera E. Phillips, an administrative assistant at ESR who worked with Beaty 16 years ago. "He had a good relationship with the staff."

Beaty was concerned about the employees in the agency, Ms. Phillips said. "He made sure that their rights were not being violated," she said. "He had an open-door policy with the employees. He was always there for them. The employees understood that, and they respected him for it."

Beaty became the agency's personnel director in 1971. He lists among his proudest accomplishments while at ESR the agency's providing of membership dues for about 20 inner-city black youths to join a local Boy Scout troop.

In 1972, Beaty worked as the director of the city's Manpower/Planning and Development Office. Two years later, he became a personnel supervisor and later the city's personnel director.

Beaty replaced John P. Bond III as an assistant city manager in 1978, becoming the second black to hold that position. Bond also is black.

"This job has a lot of challenges and opportunities," Beaty said. "I deal with a lot of issues that cross my desk every day."

Beaty is responsible for the operation of the police and fire departments, and the city's Purchasing, Personnel, Human Services and Housing Services departments.

Beaty receives myriad phone calls from citizens who are concerned about issues such as crime, the lack of affordable housing and the employment of blacks, whites and women in city government, he said.

"If it is an issue that has been resolved by the Board of Aldermen, I attempt to give the rationale behind that decision," Beaty said. "If it is an issue that has not been resolved, I will take what they have said into consideration."

Despite being in the public eye, Beaty said he doesn't feel any pressure while doing his job. "I do my work in public, but I am not a publicity hound," he said.

City Manager Bryce A. Stuart describes Beaty as a man of action. "When we give him an assignment, he does it very well," Stuart said.

Beaty worked with Stuart for four months preparing a report on the police department's handling of the Deborah B. Sykes murder investigation.

Mrs. Sykes, a copy editor for *The Sentinel*, was raped and stabbed to death on Aug. 10, 1984. Darryl E. Hunt is serving a life sentence after he was convicted of Mrs. Sykes' murder in a widely publicized trial last year.

The report, which was released last Nov. 20, criticized police detectives for allowing District Attorney Donald K. Tisdale to direct their investigation.

The report said that investigators let Tisdale influence them into disregarding established procedure regarding police lineups, the administration of lie-detector tests and the preparation of reports on the case.

Although Stuart released the report to the media, Tisdale criticized Beaty for its conclusions.

"I could care less what he (Al Beaty) thinks about how I run my office," Tisdale told the *Winston-Salem Journal* in November. "He will not dictate to me how I will operate, nor will he interfere with my constitutional and statutory duties."

Beaty said last week that Tisdale never spoke with him privately about the report.

"I did read what he said about me in the newspapers, but that didn't bother me," Beaty said. "I will let the report speak for itself."

While he was working on the report, Beaty interviewed Tisdale about his involvement in

the Sykes investigation, Beaty said.

"It was a business-type interview," Beaty said. "There were no hostile feelings on anyone's part."

Beaty also was one of the authors of the city's controversial merit-pay system. That plan has been criticized for being too subjective and discriminating against black city employees.

But Beaty defends the plan. "All of the employees are treated fairly," he said. "We have maintained competitive pay and benefits with private business."

Even though he is the highest ranking black city employee, Beaty doesn't consider himself a black leader.

"I have never seen a group of people come here and say we want you to be our leader," Beaty said. "I leave those leadership roles to other people. I am just a public servant."

No public official can be a leader, said Walter W. "Doc" Farabee, director of the city's Human Services Department and a colleague and friend of Beaty.

"I admire the man because he can get things done," Farabee said. "I think he is a role model."

Beaty wants to be judged by his talent and performance and not by his race.

"I realize I have a lot of responsibility," he said. "My success or failure should not condemn or highlight the whole race. I would like to be judged on how well I do regardless of my race, marital status or sex."

Southeast Alderman Ward Alderman Larry W. Womble said Beaty has proven to be a capable assistant city manager. "He carries himself in a very professional way," Womble said. "I don't agree with a lot of staff recommendations that

he brings to the board, but I do respect him."

However, some blacks have criticized Beaty for failing to speak out on issues that directly affect black people in his role as an assistant city manager.

"He is reluctant to articulate the concerns of the black community," said a black leader who asked not to be named. "There is a concern that he is not responsible to black people, and that he is afraid to speak out."

Beaty says it is not his duty to be outspoken on every issue. "Everytime an issue comes up in the community, Al Beaty doesn't have to have his mouth in it," he said. "I am sorry. That is not Al Beaty's style."

Thomas J. Elijah Jr., president of the Winston-Salem Urban League, said criticism of Beaty's responsiveness to blacks, or lack thereof, is unfounded.

"It is hard for him to satisfy everybody," Elijah said. "He is under a lot of pressure."

Beaty has been an effective city official, Elijah said. "I think he has done a fine job. He makes some good decisions. He is a very good negotiator."

Beaty belongs to several community organizations. He serves on the board of directors of the Old Hickory Council of the Boy Scouts of America, the Winston-Salem chapter of the American Red Cross and the Nature Science Center.

Beaty also is a member of the Juvenile Justice Council and the Minority Committee of the International City Management Association.

Beaty, who lives on West 25th Street, is single and has never been married. "(Marriage) has just never happened for me," he said.

Remaining single is Beaty's

prerogative, Farabee said.

"That is his way of life," Farabee said. "Maybe he has a better outlook on things."

Despite what seems like one controversy after another, those who know Beaty say he maintains his sense of humor. At one North Carolina Black Repertory Company event, for instance, Beaty livened things by singing along with the performers from his seat in the audience. "In this job, you have to have a sense of humor," he said. "It adds to your personality and helps a person get through the day."

Farabee says it is difficult for public officials such as Beaty to enjoy their social lives because so many people ask them about city business, no matter where they go.

"Al doesn't seem to be bothered by this," Farabee said. "In fact, I think he enjoys it."

Probe: Guard made offer

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versation," Oldham said. "No one took it seriously."

Two female inmates, Wanda K. Newmon and Savannah Dodd of Winston-Salem, told the *Chronicle* in July that the matron had offered them marijuana, cocaine and heroin on June 14.

A letter written by another inmate, Van Ester Hailes, charged that the women were offered drugs in exchange for doing special cleaning in the jail. Ms. Hailes, a native of West Palm Beach, Fla., said the women refused.

When he was told by the *Chronicle* of the allegations, Oldham immediately asked the SBI to investigate.

The investigation's results were turned over to District Attorney Donald K. Tisdale, Oldham said. Oldham said Tisdale has to decide whether there was any criminal intent.

But Tisdale did tell the *Winston-Salem Journal* Tuesday that no further investigation is needed. Tisdale also told the *Journal* that none of the in-

mates took the offer seriously.

However, Ms. Newmon said Wednesday that she did take the offer seriously.

"If I had been hooked on the stuff, I would have taken it and I would have been in on another charge," she said.

Ms. Newmon was in jail when the incident occurred for assaulting, delaying and resisting an officer. The other inmate, Ms. Dodd, could not be reached for comment.

Oldham said he plans to look closely at the SBI findings.

"Apparently a statement, joking or otherwise, was made," he said. "We're going to look at areas like jailer/inmate relations."

Since the district attorney sees no need for further investigation, Oldham said, he plans to talk to the matron.

"I'll discuss with her dealing with inmates in general conversations," he said.

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