

Commissioners may restore some funding for public schools, PCC, fire departments

By TIM CHANDLER
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Commissioners Monday night. Commissioners met for their first budget work session Monday and had very few items to discuss concerning Manager Heidi York's recommended budget for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins July 31.

The topic that drew the most discussion was the restoration of the funds for PCS, PCC and the volunteer fire de-

partments, which would total \$257,851. York proposed a 2.5-percent reduction in funding from last year for each of the three organizations. Commissioner Sam Kennington proposed restoring \$221,539 to PCS, along with \$24,792 to PCC and \$11,520 to the volunteer fire departments for a total of \$257,851.

In his motion for the restoration of

those funds, Kennington proposed eliminating a proposal by York to implement a new merit pay program for county employees in the coming year, which was budgeted at a cost of \$260,390. Kennington's motion also included a provision that PCS, PCC and the volunteer fire departments provide an outline to York by Tuesday, May 31, of how the additional funding would be spent.

Kennington's motion, which was seconded by Vice Chairman Kyle Puryear, passed by a 4-1 vote, with Chairman Jimmy Clayton casting the lone dissenting vote. Commissioner Ray Jeffers noted on the record that he was not voting for any funding increase to "the schools..." See COMMISSIONERS back page

Budget cuts lead to BOE's approval of reductions in force

By GREY PENTECOST
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The Person County Board of Education approved reductions in force in several areas of employment within Person County Schools (PCS) Monday due to budgetary constraints.

Schools Supt. Dr. Larry W. Cartner pointed out that the school system was facing a reduction in budgets for both certified and non-certified personnel. He said the school board's preparation in previous years for budget cuts prepared the school system for everything except the "massive cuts in non-certified allotments." Cartner added that while he was not devaluing any group of employees, he believed that "as a learning organization" the school system could not place priority on non-certified positions over certified positions.

Cartner presented the board with four options concerning teacher assistant positions, noting that no local funding was allocated to teacher assistant positions. PCS staff held a voluntary meeting with teacher assistants on Friday, during which the options being discussed were explained to them. During Monday's board meeting, Cartner denoted option A as the PCS staff recommendation. This option outlined a movement to an hourly wage for a standard work week of 37.5 hours, and a reduction of the term of employment to 180 student days and 18 paid benefit days, representing a 17 percent salary reduction for teacher assistants. The option would allow the schools to fund 36 teacher assistants, which would require the elimination of one position, since the district currently employs 37 teacher assistants.

Option B amounted to a 10 percent salary reduction and funding for 33 teacher

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Phyllis Boatwright / C-T



MEMORIAL SALUTE IN TIMBERLAKE

The annual Timberlake Memorial Day Parade was held in the heart of Downtown Timberlake Saturday morning. The annual event has appeared to grow in participants and spectators in each of the years it has been held. In the photo above, the Rougemont Ruritan Club entered a patriotic float in the parade. In the photo at left, members of the Person High School JROTC proudly march in uniform with flags displayed. For more information and photos on the Timberlake Memorial Day Parade, turn to page B1 of today's edition.

Sewer hike eliminated, water increase reduced in city's budget

COLA approved for employees

By PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT
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City of Roxboro employees will likely get a two percent raise next year, and residents won't face a 14 percent hike in water rates, if the latest version of the city's fiscal year 2011-12 budget is adopted June 14.

On Monday, Roxboro City Council met in a second budget workshop, after directing Interim City Manager Tommy Warren to revise his budget proposal to reflect the cost of living adjustment (COLA) for employees and a lower water rate increase. He was also directed to remove a proposed sewer rate increase of two percent from the budget.

Warren presented his initial budget proposal at the regular May meeting two weeks ago, but council members asked for minor revisions before they would give final consideration to Warren's suggestions.

In his initial budget, Warren did not propose any COLA for city employees, but council member Ralph Clark said he would like to see a two percent raise included in the budget.

Clark also opposed Warren's suggestion to raise water rates by 14 percent and sewer rates by two percent, which was lower than the 16 percent water increase suggested by a study the city had done several years ago.

Clark asked that Warren look at not raising the water and sewer rates.

Mayor Samuel Spencer was not initially in favor of giving city employees a COLA, citing the tight economy.

Mayor Pro-tem Marilyn Newell suggested finding "a happy medium" on Clark's suggestion to not increase water and sewer rates.

Regarding the COLA, Newell said she would like for the city to find the funds to give employees a modest raise, but did not want the effort to cause budget problems in the future.

The latest budget proposal submitted by Warren totals \$14,672,589. His initial proposal was for \$14,723,761, a 0.64 percent decrease over last year's figure of \$14,818,899.

The budget now under consideration is balanced and uses capital reserve

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'I'm pedaling pretty fast'

Davis serving as interim principal at North Elementary

By GREY PENTECOST
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North Elementary School will welcome a new principal - Annitra Leigh - for the upcoming school year, but for the few remaining weeks of this school year, former Person County Schools Assistant Superintendent Sandy Davis is filling the position as an interim.

Davis' services were requested after former North principal Aisha Howard took a job at a school in Durham. Her last day was Friday, and Davis shadowed Howard during her last three days in order to learn the ins and outs of North. Davis, who retired from her position in

central office in September of 2009, assumed the responsibilities of principal on Monday.

"I have certainly enjoyed every minute of it," said Davis of her interim work thus far. "I have found that the teachers and the staff here are just wonderful in terms of being supportive of me and helping me."

Prior to becoming interim principal at North, Davis had been working part-time since August of last year as a mentor for beginning teachers at Northern and Southern middle schools and Person High School.

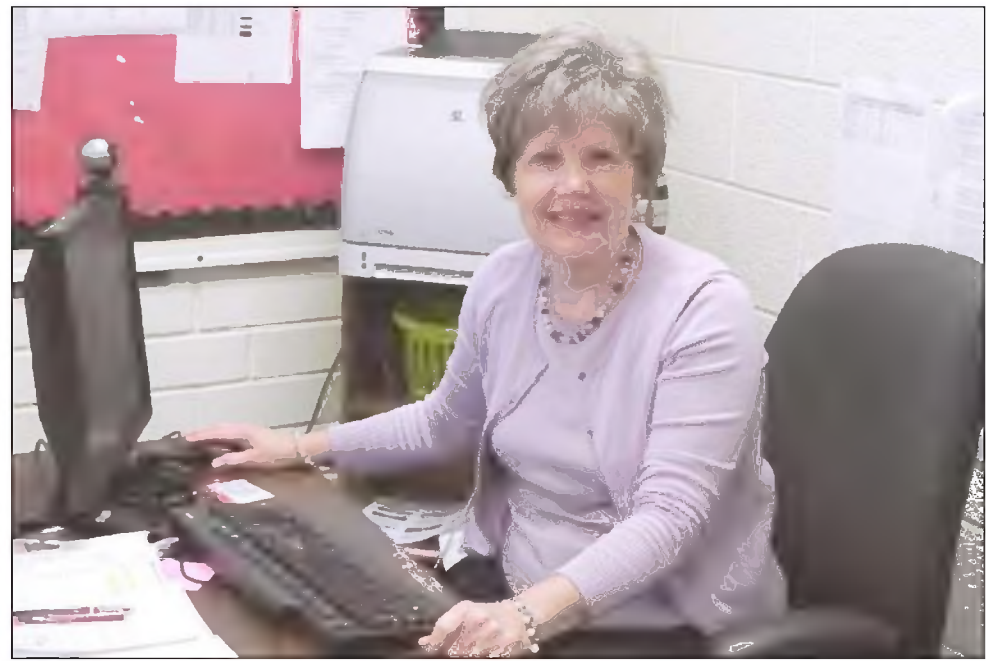
She recently completed those duties and said the experience was "very rewarding," and that it helped her to "recall

and reminisce" about her own first years of teaching. She said she was reminded of how challenging it is to be a teacher, with all the skills and knowledge the position entails.

Davis served her last year as a principal in 1990. She allowed that there were still many things about how to "do school" that remain the same as when she was principal, including the importance of having caring and dedicated teachers and staff, which she said she sees continued at North Elementary.

However, Davis has noticed some differences. For instance, she hasn't quite gotten used to taking a walkie-talkie with

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Grey Pentecost / C-T

Sandy Davis is serving as interim principal at North Elementary School.