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# Hunt unveils new N.C. budget

By Jerry McElreath  
Staff Writer

RALEIGH — N.C. Gov. Jim Hunt announced his \$32.55 billion biennial budget stressing the need to create "a new kind of entrepreneurial government" at a press conference Tuesday morning.

During the press conference in the state administrative building, Hunt, state budget officer Richard Futrell and deputy state budget officer Robert Powell discussed the governor's budget recommendations for 1993-1995.

"We're trying to deal with the budget just like a business would," Hunt said.

Hunt said he was sure no division of state government was operating as efficiently as possible and added that he expected each department to cut 1 to 2 percent from its budget.

"These are very reasonable, I would say conservative, budget figures," he said.

Hunt said since the state's economy was expanding he thought the government probably could make budget cuts

of more than 2 percent in each department.

He also said his administration most likely would spend the money saved from budget cuts in each department on programs that would benefit the state's children, encourage economic growth or promote education.

Powell said the money spent on the state's children and educational programs was vital to the state's future. Hunt concurred, saying training children early in their lives would help them become the best workers they could possibly be, thus contributing to the state's economy.

Hunt proposed \$60 million in funding for the N.C. Partnership for Children, a public-private initiative to provide early childhood education, day care, health care and other critical services to



Jim Hunt

every child who needed it.

Hunt said one of his educational goals was to expand the state's vocational programs. His new budget recommends approximately \$60 million for worker-training programs at community colleges.

The improved training programs will mean both high school and community college proficiency tests will be more difficult, Hunt said.

"I'm recommending a tough new exit exam for community college graduates as well so that high school and community college graduates enter the work force equipped with the skills they need to compete," Hunt said.

Hunt also proposed pay hikes for teachers to improve educational standards.

He said he knew the annual 2-percent raise for educators was not substantial and barely would cover cost-of-living increases, adding that teacher salaries would be bolstered as more funds became available.

"I would like to help our state employees more," Hunt said.

# Company faces bid-fixing charges

By Brad Williams  
Staff Writer

The Maola Dairy and Ice Cream Co. was indicted by a federal grand jury in Wilmington last week as a result of charges it participated in a conspiracy to fix bids on a milk contract with the Craven County school system.

In a press release issued by Mildred Jones, Maola's vice president, the New Bern-based company maintains it is innocent of the charges.

"Maola has never believed that the charges were true, and Maola has cooperated fully with the government's investigation," the statement said. "In addition, Maola has had its own lawyers investigate these charges."

Gina Talamona, public affairs specialist with the antitrust division of the U.S. Attorney General's office, said the grand jury had handed down a four-count indictment against Maola and its president, Kenneth Reesman, for conspiracy to commit bid-fixing.

Maola and Reesman also were indicted on three counts of mail fraud.

According to Talamona, the Maola case was not an isolated incident. She

said the antitrust division of the U.S. Attorney General's office had received several case files that listed 83 criminal cases involving 47 corporations and 56 individuals in bid-fixing scandals since 1988. "The practice of bid-fixing is widespread," she said.

Talamona said there had been \$35 million in fines levied against corporations for bid-fixing, but "the cost to the taxpayer has been in the hundreds of millions of dollars."

"Companies want the highest bid prices possible," said Bill Tucker, an investigator with the N.C. Attorney General's office.

Tucker a milk company official, often would call another corporation involved in the bidding to discuss that corporation's bid prices. The two then would contact other companies in an effort to raise the overall bid price.

Contracts to provide milk to public schools are awarded to distributors by each local school district, said Nancy Carroll, assistant superintendent for the Craven County school system.

Carroll said the milk contracts were binding for one school year. The school system mails bid specifications to local

companies, who then send their bids to the school board during the summer. The school board has the right to approve or reject a bid, she said.

Carroll said the companies that usually bid for the Craven County school's milk contracts were established local companies. The school system never has performed background checks during the bidding process, and Carroll said the no-check policy would continue despite the Maola indictment.

"We will not change the (bidding) process until the court has decided Maola is either guilty or innocent," she said. "It is not the American way."

Shirley Wartford, child nutrition director for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro school system, said schools in that district did not have a formal procedure for background checks of milk companies.

She said the school system received information on prospective milk companies from the Department of Public Instruction, along with guidelines for the bidding process.

Wartford said the Maola indictment did not come as a shock to her. "We are disappointed that companies go to that length, but we are not surprised."

# Athletes

to graduate in 1993.

"The high graduation rate is a credit to the athletes and shows the commitment the coaches have in making certain the athletes understand that their first priority at the University is to get an education," Swofford said.

John Blanchard, director of athletic academic affairs and an athletic association academic counselor, said the graduation rate was a credit to the student athletes and the athlete academic counselors on staff.

"The athletes come to the University committed to graduating, and they put forth the energy needed in athletics," Blanchard said.

The University admitted 12 exceptions — students who fail to meet the minimum admission requirements but are accepted based on additional criteria — for football and men's basketball,

while the other 14 UNC-system schools combined admitted 20 exceptions in 1992, the report stated.

"What an exception is at UNC-CH is different from what an exception is at other institutions," Swofford said, adding that the number of overall exceptions has declined in recent years.

Anthony Strickland, assistant director of undergraduate admissions, said the admission of exceptions was a closely supervised process.

"The procedure is set up by a faculty committee to ensure that every facet of a person's makeup is considered," he said.

Strickland said the exception process considered students with disabilities and special talents.

Elizabeth City State University had the lowest graduation rate for athletes recruited in 1987, with 82 percent of the

44 athletes receiving their degrees within five years.

Fayetteville State University had the lowest rate of athletes graduating in five years, with 30 percent of the 43 athletes recruited in 1987 graduating by 1992.

N.C. State University's men's basketball team had the lowest graduation rate for athletes recruited from 1983 to 1987. Of the 21 players recruited during these years, only one player earned his degree within five years.

For the 3,151 students who entered UNC-CH in 1987, 80.9 percent graduated in five years — the highest five-year graduation rate of all the 16 UNC-system institutions.

Fayetteville State University had the lowest percentage of students graduating in five years with 13 percent of the 471 students admitted in 1987 graduating in five years.

# GPSF

dent, passed easily.

"We're very excited about the vice president position," she said. "It's so important to give graduate students a voice, because we make up such a large amount of the University. I guess I'm a believer in democracy."

Bridges said she and Harrell still were working on what the exact role of the vice president would be.

The GPSF will focus on two other major issues in 1993-94, Bridges said. A tuition hike proposed by the N.C.

General Assembly would raise tuition for graduate students by 50 percent.

"The fee increase will hit graduate students harder than undergraduates," she said. "During a time when money and budgets are tight, it's especially important that we be heard."

Bridges said the GPSF was just starting to plan specific strategies to deal with the anticipated tuition increase.

"Another broad goal of the GPSF is increased communication between undergraduates and graduates and also

between the various graduate schools.

"We've worked very hard to improve communication — it's important for graduate students not to be isolated," she said.

Bridges also called for more graduate students to get involved in student government.

"Our personal experience isn't enough," she said. "I personally can't figure out how a mother with five kids is handling graduate school and what her needs are."

# BCC

the coalition for a free-standing BCC, said the Monday meeting had gone as he expected and he still planned to participate in the joint planning process.

"We're just as stuck on the Wilson site as (the working group is) stuck on the Coker site," Smith said. "We're willing to compromise as much as they are."

BCC supporters were making a presentation rather than a protest to the working group Monday, Smith said. Crawford and about 20 BCC supporters left the meeting before making a presentation about the new building's space needs as had been previously planned.

"We weren't protesting," Smith said. "It went from intellectual to emotional because we saw that all along people

were playing games."

Smith said the heated discussion was not unusual for the joint BCC planning meetings.

"There've been debates all along the way," he said. "If we agreed on everything we would have a building now."

Crawford, who said after Monday's meeting that she was withdrawing from the joint planning process, could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

McCormick said he was optimistic that Crawford's comments after the meeting did not necessarily mean she was removing herself from the planning process.

"I took (her comments) to be an expression of her intensity of feeling about the issue and not necessarily that she

would pull out of the joint planning process," he said.

Following the BCC advocates' departure, the working group approved resolutions setting the new center's proposed size at 48,000 square feet contingent on funding, calling for a joint report and eliminating two possible sites from inclusion in the report.

McCormick said he had communicated the resolutions of the working group to BCC Advisory Board Chairman Harry Amana. Amana was unavailable for comment.

The official drafting committee will meet Friday, and McCormick said he hoped to complete the final report soon.

"We're aiming for first draft by the end of this week, and maybe a revised draft sometime next week that would be distributed to everyone," he said.

The final report could still make it to the Board of Trustees by the BOT's March 26 meeting, McCormick said.

McCormick said he could only make a personal guess what the final report would say about a site for the BCC.

"I think the most likely outcome is the report will discuss two sites, and note that the BCC Advisory Board prefers one site," he said.

Robert Eubanks, a former BOT chairman, last week resigned from the working group but then withdrew his resignation. Eubanks refused to comment except to say that he still was a member of the group.

"I think we need to write the report and move on with it," he said.

The working group has no power in deciding the final location of the BCC, Eubanks said.

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