

After much debate, tax issue still in limbo

Board discusses need for public input

BY NATALIE BLACKBURN
STAFF WRITER

Tensions were high, comments were bold and common ground appeared unreachable.

The Orange County Board of Education met Monday to discuss the recent referendum concerning a special district tax for Orange County schools — one that failed on the Nov. 8 ballot.

After much debate, school board members left the issue unresolved.

The special district tax for county schools was seen as a proposal

that would help equal the amount of funding between county schools and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, which already has a special tax that generates about \$13 million.

The Orange County Board of Commissioners saw the referendum as a way to see whether or not the county would support such a tax — it was rejected by roughly 78 percent of voters.

Graig Meyer, a parent of an Orange County student and chairman of the school governance committee at A.L. Stanback Middle

School, spoke briefly at the meeting and said he was not surprised by the outcome of the vote.

"I was not surprised that the referendum failed," he said in a phone interview Monday. "I was a little surprised at how overwhelmingly it failed."

Meyer was one of the most vocal members of the community in support of the referendum before Election Day, and now he is working to convince the school board to adopt other possible monetary plans for Orange County schools.

The school board, however, is having trouble agreeing on a solution or the level of need. With such disagreement within the group, some mem-

bers thought hearing public opinion would be more beneficial.

"It would be helpful to turn to our public and ask for some feedback," board member Libbie Hough said.

School board members disagreed on how much the public already had participated and the ability of the board to make discussion easily accessible to the public.

"We haven't embraced the community to come to our schools, to sit down, to ask questions," school board member Delores Simpson said.

But school board member Elizabeth Brown said she believed the school board has been doing enough to reach the public.

Hough voiced her opinions on the

need for equity between the city and county schools. "I think we do have a system that is unfair and unjust," said Hough. "It's time to fix that."

Board chairman Randy Copeland, however, disagreed with the need for equity. "I don't think equity is something we need to put our sights on," said Copeland, who also stated that he was against the failed district tax and against a raise in taxes in the county at all.

Copeland said the county schools do not need more tax money but rather need to look at redistributing funds throughout the system.

Meyer, who could not stay for the discussion, had predicted disagreements would occur during the meet-

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GRAIG MEYER, PARENT

ing and made a request of the school board in an interview beforehand.

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YMCA BASKETBALL NEEDS volunteer coaches and staff officials for the Winter 2006 season (01-07-2005 thru 03-11-2006, grades K-8th). Contact Mike Meyen (mmeyen@chcymca.org, 942-5156) with your interest.

BARTENDERS NEEDED!!!

EARN \$20-35/hour. Job placement assistance is top priority. **RALEIGH'S BARTENDING SCHOOL**. Have fun! Make money! Meet people! Call now about our fall tuition special. 919-676-0774. www.cocktailmixer.com.

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GARDEN CENTER opening downtown Carrboro seeks individuals to assist customers, maintain plants. Knowledge of orchids, hydroponics, and organic gardening preferred. \$8-\$9/hour. 544-4300.

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WEEKEND/HOLIDAY VETERINARY ASSISTANT needed for busy, small animal hospital 2-3 weekends/month plus holidays. Live local to Chapel Hill and Durham only. Call 403-5591 or fax resume to Kym 408-0485.

HEALTHY MALES 18-34 years of age. UNC Andrology lab is currently recruiting sperm donors. Compensation provided. Please call 962-6596 for more information.

VETERINARY RECEPTIONIST, experience necessary. 40 hrs/week including Saturdays. Apply in person or fax resume Attn: Kym at 408-0485 or call 403-5591.

CFO NEEDED: Are you interested in earning some holiday spending money and extending into the summer? We are in need of a certified pool operator to work a few hours a week in the off-season on residential and commercial pools in the area. Competitive pay. Please call 545-9138 if interested.

WHAT'S IN YOUR WALLET? Make \$10/hr and fill your wallet fast! Paid trainings. No experience necessary. Are you enthusiastic, hardworking, reliable and caring? Work with individuals with developmental disabilities. Visit www.rsi-nc.org or call 919-942-7391 x121 for more information and to apply!

ARTISTIC? Need someone to letter our Sandhitch Board twice/month using liquid chalk. Good pay for minimal work. Experience preferred, but not necessary. Also, need experienced MURAL PAINTER. 967-2506 or email larsedance@gmail.com.

Child Care

PART-TIME MORNING NANNY needed by 01-01-06. Tuesday through Thursday 7:30am-3pm for 8-week-old girl and 1-year-old girl. Please email foreswick@nc.rr.com.

RESPONSIBLE BABYSITTER needed, 1 weekend evening/month. Child will mostly be asleep. Will pay \$10/hour for you to study. Email katiegmill@yaho.com.

OCCASIONAL BABYSITTER needed to play with easy-going and energetic 4-year-old in our Southern Village condo on some Wednesday and/or Friday afternoons. Willing to pay \$8-10/hour depending on play experience. Send email with introduction and description of experience with three references to rsbhaper@cs.com.

BABYSITTER needed, 2-3 weekday mornings/week for 1 small child. Days are flexible. Transportation required. Negotiable pay. 919-623-3604 or 919-602-0117.

AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE for two children, 12 and 8, in Durham starting January, W-Th. Must be non-smoker, with reliable car, clean driving record, and references. Contact Sally Hicks at sallyhicks@duke.edu or 681-8055.

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