

Higher Tax Bill Seen

Town Board Gets Proposed Budget

Warrenton commissioners Monday night gave reluctant approval to a proposed \$435,197 budget for 1977-78 requiring an 18 percent increase from the average taxpayer.

Finance Committee Chairman Bill Leary had hardly finished presentation of the tentative budget before calls for a reduction in the tax rate were sounded.

The proposed tax rate—67 cents on the \$100 valuation—may be lowered before final adoption of the budget prior to July 1. Commissioners representing various departments of the town are expected to meet with Leary's Finance Committee in an effort to reduce anticipated expenditures prior to a public hearing on the budget set for June 27 at 8 p. m. at the Town Hall.

Recent revaluation increased Warrenton's tax base from \$9 million to \$13 million, allowing for a

drop in the tax rate of 75 cents used during the current fiscal year.

"For every penny you cut in the tax rate, you will have to reduce the budget by \$1300," Leary told his fellow commissioners. The proposed tax rate is expected to generate \$87,100 in revenue. Federal revenue sharing funds are expected to add \$39,800 in town revenues, while profits from the Water Department are expected to add \$42,900.

The largest single item in the proposed budget is for operation of the police department, expected to cost \$92,774 next year. The proposed budget reflects a pay raise of about 7½ percent for key town employees, Town Manager Bill Davis said.

Other department budgets included in proposed general fund expenditures include: Street Department, \$31,177; Sanitation Department, \$17,475; Fire Department, \$5,020. Non-departmental expenses are estimated at \$57,841, while administration of the town is expected to cost \$27,950, exclusive of \$4,550 for governing body costs.

Salaries in the Water and Sewer Department are expected to be \$35,044, with department operations costing an additional \$38,935. Debt service for the town is estimated at \$19,181.

In other items of business to come before the board, commissioners authorized Town Manager Davis to proceed with negotiations to have the foundation of an old church on South Main Street beside Warrenton Gulf removed.

Davis said a bulldozer could level the site in return for the use of the lot for at least two years by the town.

The town manager reported that approximately 15 summer workers may help town crews under the

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Indian Funds Are Approved

Indians of Warren and Halifax Counties will receive a total of \$46,420.67 under the Indian Education Act, Title IV, Part A, according to a direct report from Washington, W. R. Richardson, Chief of the Haliwa Tribe, said yesterday.

The money is dispensed through local educational agencies with the Indian children receiving money according to the number of Indian students within the school systems.

Chief Richardson said that the allocation this year exceeds that of last year, and that \$14,534.85 has been awarded to the Warren County School System, and \$31,885.82 has been awarded to the Halifax School System.

Large Reading Budget Wins Federal Approval

James Jordan, Jr., director of Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) programs in the school, told the Warren County Board of Education Monday night that a budget of \$454,000 for continuing a reading program had been approved. He briefly discussed the program with the use of slides.

"We are concentrating in the primary grades, although senior high students are being helped," Jordan said. The program has been in operation for almost 10 years, and will reach as many as 855 youngsters next year.

"Statewide there were 54,000 participants from the primary grades last year," Jordan said. Grades four through six had 47,000 participants, and seventh through twelfth grade included about 15,000.

"We also provide social work through home-school coordinators, and health care," Jordan said.

Projected areas on concentration during the 1977-78 school year will be in reading, among the hearing impaired students, in social work and in staff development.

Four high school classes have been proposed to help students who have difficulty reading, and there are presently 10 students in the county with hearing problems who are being aided

through special tutoring. All the schools in the county are eligible for participation in the program, Jordan said.

Mr. Jordan completed his remarks at 9:50 p. m., and the board turned to its agenda.

—Approved a school calendar for the next school term.

—Awarded a contract to Watts and Scobie for auditing the books of the Board of Education for the sum of \$2700, and discussed the employment of Mr. Scobie to assist the county in setting up the Fiscal Control System for the county.

—Discussed and approved the present system of selecting school personnel.

Elected Mrs. Margaret Phillips, librarian for South Warren and Fonda C. White as special education teacher for South Warren. The Board also elected Mrs. Elizabeth Massey Traylor as kindergarten teacher at South Warren if she is approved by the school principal.

—Accepted the resignation of Mrs. Sharon Watts, third grade teacher at Northside School and the retirement of Mrs. Emily Alston, reading teacher at the Vaughan School.

At 11 o'clock other items on the agenda were continued to a special meeting on Monday, June 20.



Eighteen stalks of marijuana over eight feet, nine inches tall were found in Warren County Tuesday afternoon by Warren County deputies and Vance County ABC officers. The weed was found beside a power pole on a Carolina Power and Light Company right-of-way near Drewry by Warren Deputies Dorsey Capps and Bobby Bolton and Vance ABC Officers H. D. Greenway and M. M. White. The plants were near a creek and had been well fertilized with stable manure. No arrests were made. The haul had a street value of \$2400 officers said. (Staff Photo)

Hampton, Davis Sent To Prison

Barring an adverse ruling by the state's Supreme Court, a Warren County man found guilty of murder during a Superior Court trial held here last week will spend the rest of his life in prison.

Joe Hampton, Jr. was ordered to jail "for the remainder of his natural life" by Judge Harry E. Canaday of Benson after a jury deliberated less than an hour before returning a guilty verdict.

Lawyers for Hampton who had two motions denied by Judge Canaday, gave notice of intent to file an appeal with the state's highest court. No bond was granted for Hampton, charged with first-degree murder in the beating death of Cleveland Wilson, 28, of the Afton community.

The jury began deliberation at 4:25 p. m. on Wednesday of last week but were recalled 35 minutes later and excused for the day. Meeting again at 9:30 a. m. Thursday, the jury took only 20 minutes before returning its verdict.

Later in the day McLean Davis, the state's star witness, was tried on a lesser charge. Davis, who had testified that he saw Hampton beat Wilson to death with an automobile jack on January 21 and that the two had thrown Wilson's body into Lake Gaston, was given a 20-year prison sentence after entering a guilty plea.

Davis, already on probation at the time of the murder trial, had his probation revoked and was ordered to serve time at the expiration of his 20-year sentence. Davis will have to serve one-fourth of his time in prison before being considered for parole. Other charges against Davis including larceny of an automobile, larceny from the person, and larceny were dismissed. Similar charges against Hampton were continued pending the outcome of the Supreme Court appeal.

Among other cases tried were the following: Ernest Davis on probation for larceny after breaking and entering; and John Baker, on probation of two charges of breaking and entering and larceny, the probations were revoked

and the men were ordered to serve the active sentence imposed originally.

Will Edward Neal was granted an extension of six months on his probation for assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury.

Tony Washington, on probation for assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury and assault with deadly weapon was ordered to serve the active sentence after his probation was revoked. He appealed the order.

Other cases in which probations were revoked and defendants were ordered to serve the active sentence were those of Sandy Yancey, charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury, and Clemon Kearney.

Probations were continued for Lawrence Cleo Baskerville, driving under the influence; Michael Aycock, breaking into a vending machine and breaking into a coin operated machine.

Alvin Ray Lynch, charged with assault with deadly weapon inflicting serious injury, plead guilty to assault with a deadly weapon and was ordered to the custody of the Director of Prisons for 12 months, suspended and placed on probation for two years on the condition that he not assault Bob Alston, pay restitution to anyone entitled for damages, pay \$150 fine and costs.

Elijah Hargrove, charged with driving under the influence, called and failed. He was ordered arrested with bond set at \$400.

Sandy Lee Davis, was found guilty of driving under the influence and following too closely and was ordered to jail for six months, suspended and placed on probation for two years on the condition that he not operate a motor vehicle without a valid license during period of suspension, surrender operator's license to the Clerk of Superior Court, pay fine of \$200 and costs.

An order of arrest was issued for Arthur Boone after he was called and failed. He was charged with assault on a female. bond (Continued on page 10)

Educators Offer Reward Money

Assault Of Teacher Is Probed

Miss Rebecca Neece, a member of the English Department High School in Warrenton, was brutally attacked at her home in Littleton Saturday night by an unidentified man.

Warren County schools have already raised an \$1120 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of her assailant, and have hopes that the reward will be raised to more than \$1600 before the week is over, according to Mike Williams, principal of the Mariam Boyd School,

who announced late Tuesday afternoon that \$500 had been paid in by NCAE-ACT, and that the staff of seven Warren County schools have turned in \$620. Williams said that the staff of John Graham has said they hoped to be able to raise \$500.

Miss Neece was in her home at Littleton when she heard a noise outside and stepped outside the door to investigate. She was attacked from behind and then struck in the face where her eye was blacked, several teeth knocked out and her nose broken.

Miss Neece's screams attracted the attention of a neighbor who in turn began to scream at the sight of her neighbor being attacked. This frightened the man away and may have saved the teacher's life.

She was taken by neighbors to Memorial Hospital in Roanoke Rapids from which she was discharged Tuesday.

The attack occurred in Littleton which is under the jurisdiction of Halifax County, but because the teacher was employed in Warren

County at the time of the attack, Sheriff Davis sent Chief Deputy Dorsey Capps to investigate with Littleton police and Halifax police officers.

Capps said late Tuesday afternoon that Miss Neece, who made a dental appointment upon her discharge from the hospital, said that following her treatment at the hospital she was a great deal calmer and remembered better. She said she did not believe that her attacker was a student, as was first rumored.

Suit Filed Here Seeking Recovery Of \$2 Million

A suit seek \$2 million in damages has been filed in Warren County Superior Court as the result of an accident on Gaston Lake on April 13, 1975, in which two persons were killed.

The suit was originally filed in Wayne County against VEPCO and John P. Nelson, doing business as American Heritage Camp Ground, by Mrs. Kathleen Metcalfe Bendlin on behalf of her son, Jeffrey A. Metcalfe, seven-year-old son of Capt. Alan Lefon Metcalfe, who was killed in a boating accident. The action was subsequently transferred to Warren County. It is scheduled to be held at the next civil term of Warren County Superior Court which convenes on Oct. 10.

Mrs. Bendlin is asking \$1,500,000 in actual damages and \$500,000 in punitive damages.

Mrs. Bendlin's complaint alleges that Alan Lefon Metcalfe, an Air Force Captain, was sailing in a Hobi-Cat sailboat at or near American Heritage Campgrounds at the time of his death, and that he was accompanied by Lt. Janice H. Ravenhorst. At the time of their deaths they were sailing in a cove near the campground.

It was further alleged that VEPCO had strung its power lines across this cove, that there were no support poles for the series of wires in the middle of the cove and that the wires were carrying 115,000 volts of electricity. It is alleged that, although the lake waters were unusually high at the time, due to a flood, no warning or caution signs were erected either by Nelson or VEPCO, and that Nelson did not warn them of any danger from sailing in the cove.

Mrs. Bendlin alleged that when the steel mast of Capt. Metcalfe's boat struck the wires that Capt. Metcalfe was instantly killed and thrown into the water by the force of the shock, and that Lt. Ravenhorst was knocked to the bottom of the boat, from which she was taken to

a Roanoke Rapids Hospital where she soon died.

In his answer to the complaint, Nelson denied any guilt. He admitted no warning signs were displayed at the cove, but said that Capt. Metcalfe had sailed

under the wires at least once on April 13, 1975; that the day was a bright sunny day with good visibility and that Capt. Metcalfe's faculties were impaired at the time by large consumption of alcoholic drinks. He

asked that the complaint be dismissed.

VEPCO, while stating that it would defend Nelson's suit, indicated it would not file an answer until a motion in court to dismiss the case had been heard.

Summer Athletic Field Use Draws Protests Of Neighbors

After protesting for more than 20 years the noise and dust created by summer ball games on the athletic field where homeplate is "almost in her bedroom," Mrs. A. D. Harris had put a "For Sale" sign in her front yard, and invited a member of the Board of Education to come into her home and listen to the noise created by softball tournaments.

Monday night a delegation of citizens from the area appeared before the Board of Education to protest the use of John Graham athletic facilities during the summer months by adults who have little connection with the school. Mrs. C. E. Rodwell acted as principal spokesman for the group. Others present were Mrs. A. D. Harris, Mr. and Mrs. W. C. Bobbitt and Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Williams.

Mrs. Rodwell said that when she and her husband built their home Wilcox Avenue was a quiet and peaceful neighborhood. The same was true at the time that other homes were built in the neighborhood. At that time, she said, inhabitants of these homes were young and not particularly bothered by noise; now they have grown old, troubled by lack of sleep and infirmities of age, and needing peace and quiet.

On weekends as tournaments are played, the games go on all day Saturday and until after midnight, on one occasion, and on Sunday from 1 p. m. to 10 p. m. Traffic is heavy on the narrow street and cars are parked all around

the neighborhood. Mrs. Harris said that she has never objected to the use of the field by John Graham students or by children, but that she did object to its use by adults, some from out of the county, in summer when she had to raise her windows for ventilation. She said the noise, hour after hour, has made a nervous wreck of her, and that she was at her wits end. When the games end at 10 o'clock and the lights are turned off, she said, spectators do not immediately leave the field, and many go off with other persons and return for their cars in the early hours of morning. She said that in Henderson and Lumberton, which she frequently visits, when school is out, the school gates are locked for the summer. She wanted to know why John Graham School could not do the same?

Mr. and Mrs. Bobbitt and Mr. and Mrs. Williams said they felt that the people in the neighborhood are entitled to some relief. Dr. L. B. Henderson, board member who had visited Mrs. Harris' home

during the playing of a softball game, was most sympathetic. "I am a young man," he said, "and I love sports, but I don't think I could stand what Mrs. Harris has to go through."

The members of the board wanted to know if the softball games were over? John Graham Principal W. E. Terry didn't know as he said that Coach Bill Frazier scheduled all the games played on the field. The board instructed him to find Frazier. A few minutes later Frazier appeared before the board. He said that he had tentatively scheduled other softball tournaments and had planned to use the field all summer, but of course he would do as the board ordered.

Asked if he could not find other fields on which to play, he said he could, but that a summer softball program did much to draw support for the school. "Give me ten acres on the Norlina field and I will solve the problem," Frazier said. He said that Warren County needed a consolidated school. He discounted the opposition of Mrs. Harris.

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Littleton Motorist Not Hurt Seriously

Thomas Ray Lynch, 22, of Littleton, escaped serious injuries on Monday night when he ran into a ditch embankment attempting to avoid an accident.

Trooper Palmer of the highway patrol reported that the accident occurred at approximately 9:10 p. m. at the intersection of the Warren Plains Road and Highway 158. Palmer stated that Lynch stopped for a stop sign, following another vehicle. When he pulled off at the intersection the accelerator pedal on his vehicle hung and he veered to the left and struck the ditch in order to avoid a rear-end collision with the vehicle he was following.

Palmer said that Lynch was transported to Warren General Hospital for treatment of minor injuries. He

estimated the damages to his 1969 Ford station wagon at \$1000. No charges were filed in the accident.

Prince Allen Lynch of Hollister was charged with driving under the influence following a collision with a parked vehicle south of Arcola Friday night about 11:05 p. m.

Palmer listed the owner of the parked vehicle as Dozene A. Sweatt of Roanoke Rapids. Damages resulted to about \$450 total on both vehicles and no injuries were reported.

Queen Ingram Park of Warrenton struck and killed a calf belonging to Melvin Abbott of Route 2, Henderson, near the Cokesbury community on Thursday night. The highway patrol listed damages at \$150 in the unavoidable accident and no injuries were reported.