

Official proposes changes in budget process

By CARRIE DOVE
Staff Writer

In a move that has made some government officials edgy, state auditor Ed Renfrow has proposed a plan that would revise the development of the state budget by expanding the role of the Advisory Budget Commission.

The auditor's proposal would make the budget process more cumbersome and would blur the line separating powers, said Marvin Dorman, deputy state budget director.

The plan suggests expanding the membership and the role of the budget commission. It also recommends that the N.C. General Assembly enact a law requiring the budget to be passed before June 30, the end of the fiscal year.

Renfrow's proposal would raise the membership of the Advisory Budget Commission from 15 to 28.

The governor, lieutenant governor and the speaker of the N.C. House of Representatives would lose their power to appoint people to the committee if the plan were implemented.

Instead the membership would always include the 10 Council of State officials, the 10 cabinet secretaries, the state controller, the director of the administrative office of the courts, the presidents of the state university and community college systems, two state senators, and two state representatives.

The auditor's plan also calls for the Office of State Budget and Management, the State Controller's Office and the General Assembly's fiscal staff to work together to determine the budget revenue figures. Revenue figures determine the amount of money the state can spend. The state Budget Office and the fiscal staff now calculate the tax estimates and revenue figures.

Billy Watkins, chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and gubernatorial contender, called the plan "useless."

The General Assembly allocates more than \$20 billion in a two-year budget, making for a complicated budget process, Watkins said.

"These outsiders are clamoring for it to be done in a shorter period of time," he said. "You can't go through

deliberations) in a short period of time."

But since state law requires local governments to finish their budgets before the end of the fiscal year, the state government should follow their example, said Gwen Canady, chief deputy state auditor.

"It's a workable plan (designed) to be the most efficient," Canady said.

Renfrow's plan has found little support in the Executive Branch.

Under Republican Gov. Jim Martin, the budget commission has had a limited role. Martin has relied on staff and advisers, leaving the commission to participate only in the final stages of the budget process.

"(The ABC) would be a drastically different beast," said Tim Pittman, Martin's press secretary. "But passage of the proposal is very unlikely."

Pittman said the governor does not support the proposal because it would involve too many people and would be difficult to implement.

Watkins, a member of the ABC, said the commission rarely served an advisory function. Last year it refused to pass a motion recommending Martin's budget plan because the commission had no role in putting the plan together, he said.

Under Renfrow's plan, 12 members of the ABC would be appointed to an executive committee that would write the final budget for the governor's consideration.

The governor does not use the ABC, and it is useless to debate it, said Speaker of the House Liston Ramsey.

"For all practical purposes the ABC is a dead issue," he said.

Jewish holiday starts tonight at sundown

By AMY WINSLOW
Staff Writer

Yom Kippur, which begins tonight at sundown and lasts through Saturday evening, is a sacred Jewish holiday that culminates a 10-day period of repentance.

Hebrew for "day of atonement," Yom Kippur involves a period of fasting and prayer for salvation.

"It is the day that heaven makes a decision about the fate of every individual, whether he will live or die, prosper or not," said Jack Sasson, professor of religious studies at UNC. "It's an extremely important day."

The holiday is a powerful community ritual that, at the same time, forms an international bond among

all Jews, Sasson said.

The celebration begins in the synagogue at sundown on Friday with the "Kol Nidrei," meaning "all vows." This is a prayer to ask God for forgiveness of sins, Sasson said.

The prayer continues into Saturday. Coupled with the lack of food and water, the day of prayer makes people feel as if they are totally in God's hands, Sasson said.

"Psychologically, this is a very powerful and emotional moment," he said.

On Saturday at sundown the fast and prayer ends, and everyone goes home to celebrate and break their fast, Sasson said.

Task force

General College and College of Arts and Sciences.

"The draft isn't flexible," she said. She said the idea of housing outstanding students in the dormitories could be discarded, but encouraging student-faculty interaction could not.

"I'd like us to remember what we are — a university," Cell said. "And a university is about faculty and students."

The committee also discussed whether to dig basements beneath the buildings.

According to the recommendation, Old East would have an interior

elevator to provide access for handicapped students if there is a basement. The basement would house common areas.

If no basement is constructed, the first floor of Old West would be designed to accommodate the handicapped, and would house a kitchen, computer/study room and laundry room.

A basement built beneath Old East would include similar common areas, while the first floor would house a staff apartment and student rooms. A historical commons room restored in a style reflecting the building's history, with a barrel vault ceiling and roof lantern, would be on the third floor.

"It will be a usable room, not a museum," Boulton said.

Without a basement, the first floor of Old East would house a common

Los Angeles area shaken up in earthquake, aftershocks

From Associated Press reports

LOS ANGELES — A severe earthquake and 15 major aftershocks jolted the area Thursday, killing three people, injuring more than 100, cracking buildings and freeways, and setting off dozens of fires.

The U.S. Geological Survey in Golden, Colo., said the quake registered 6.1 on the Richter scale, making it the strongest tremor to hit the Los Angeles area since the 6.4 Sylmar quake of 1971 that killed 64 people.

The quake, recorded at 7:42 a.m. local time, was centered about nine miles south-southwest of Pasadena at the north end of the Whittier-Elsinore Fault. Over the next three hours, at least 15 aftershocks occurred that measured 3.0 or more on the Richter scale.

Damage appeared to be worst in Whittier, the closest suburban area to the epicenter. Marsha Anderson, a spokeswoman for Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital, said 60 people had been treated for earthquake-related injuries.

"Our uptown area has suffered considerable damage," said Whittier police Officer Mike Willis. "It's been closed off."

Nicaraguan newspaper reopens

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — Nicaragua's only opposition newspaper, shut down by the government for 15 months, resumed publication Thursday with a banner headline saying "Truth For The People."

La Prensa, once Nicaragua's

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most popular newspaper, resurfaced after the leftist Sandinista government approved the opening in a Sept. 19 announcement.

Robertson declares candidacy

NEW YORK — Longtime television evangelist Pat Robertson, confronted by chanting protesters, entered the 1988 Republican presidential race on Thursday with a pledge to "campaign for all people" and be "strong for freedom."

Robertson declared his candidacy from a platform in front of the Brooklyn brownstone where he lived briefly in 1959 when he was a young minister. Two days ago, he resigned as a Baptist preacher and also severed his ties to the Christian Broadcasting Network, the religious ministry that made him famous.

Several hundred people, about half of them black, stood in front of the platform, and he often had to struggle to be heard over the chants of "Down with Pat." His supporters countered, "We back Pat."

Iraq bombs shrimp boat

MANAMA, Bahrain — Iraqi warplanes fired a missile Thursday at a shrimp boat in the Persian Gulf and killed its Australian captain after Iranian speedboats attacked at least three tankers in 24 hours, sources said.

The 85-foot trawler Shenton Bluff was damaged but did not sink, said salvage executives who spoke on condition of anonymity.

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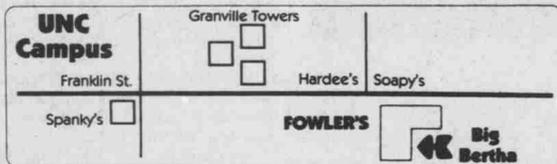


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