

Ledford Doubts Henderson Will Leave Regional Council

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

James Ledford, chairman of the Madison County Board of Commissioners, has some doubt that Henderson County will actually pull out from the Land of Sky Regional Council, as the Henderson County Board of Commissioners voted to do at their March meeting.

"I don't think they fully realize the amount of money they are getting in nutrition programs, child development and other things," Ledford said in an interview Friday night.

"I don't feel like they will go through with it," he said.

The Henderson board voted 3-2 earlier this month to withdraw from the Region B council that also includes Madison, Buncombe and Transylvania counties.

The surprise move by the Henderson board came on a motion by Commissioner William Drake after county Administrator Joel Mashburn requested an increase in Henderson's allocation to the regional organization, according to an Asheville newspaper.

Henderson County's pro-rated share of the cost of the Region B council is \$30,688, based on the county's population, but Henderson had been contributing only about \$20,000, according to Mashburn. The council had begun billing the county for a balance of \$10,000.

One of the commissioners voting for withdrawal argued that the council has become a "self-sustaining, self-perpetuating bureaucracy," and Drake, himself, proposed that the county reconsider its vote if the council would revert to its original function as an advisory body rather than perform as a service agency.

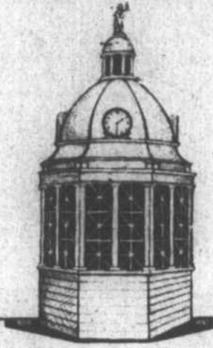
Ledford said the council will be meeting this week to discuss Henderson's action, and repeated his doubt that the county would give the state-required two-year notice and pull out at that time.

Madison County's share of the council's budget is \$10,757 for this fiscal year. If Henderson does pull out of the council, Madison's share would probably not be changed drastically, according to Ledford.

"There are two ways of looking at it," he said. "Region B would probably be cut down in the operation. I'd be in favor of cutting back in the expense of the council," he said.

Ledford said he didn't think Madison County would be adversely affected should Henderson finally pull out.

"I think it would be hurting the people of Henderson County, I'd hate to see them pull out, personally," he said.



THE NEWS RECORD

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF MADISON COUNTY

Madison County Library 9/81
Marshall, NC 28753

81st Year No. 10

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE COUNTY SEAT AT MARSHALL, N.C.

WEDNESDAY, March 10, 1982

15c Per Copy

Spring Creek Petitions For Tax Referendum

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

When residents of Spring Creek joined forces last year to establish a volunteer fire department, they did so with gusto and in a matter of weeks the West Madison Volunteer Fire Department became a reality. Friday night, many of them joined forces again to ensure the continuation and well being of the department.

The residents presented the Madison County Board of Commissioners with a petition calling on the commissioners to hold a referendum on establishing the Spring Creek township as the West Madison fire district and on levying a fire district tax to provide fire protection in the community.

The commissioners approved a motion to submit the petition, containing nine pages of signatures, to the county attorney so that he can "take whatever legal actions needed so he can present

this to the board of elections."

If a referendum is held, voters in the Spring Creek township would vote on a fire district tax "not to exceed 15 cents on \$100 valuation," the petition stated.

In other action, the commissioners:

- Approved a request to apply for a \$10,759 Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention grant to be used for an in-school suspension program at Madison High School. The request was made by Ed Morton and Joe Martin of the county schools' Team Project who explained that JJDP money could no longer be used to help finance the Team Project. The county must be the local government agent signing for the grant application.

- Approved a request to apply for a \$12,697 Community Based Alternatives grant to continue the Team Project in the school system. Ed Morton, director of the county health department told the commissioners that money would be used to pay a public health nurse and

a nurse social worker. A 10 percent local match is needed for the grant, Morton said.

- Accepted the resignation of Jerry Plemmons, director of the Marshall Senior Citizen Center. The commissioners said Plemmons had accepted employment with the French Broad Electric Membership Corp.

- Approved the hiring of Edwin Glen Phillips Jr. as director of the Marshall Senior Citizen Center.

- Approved a recommendation from Maria Cox to hire Frances Revis as a cook in the Nutrition Site meal program.

- Approved a request to send Mrs. Vonciel Penland as a representative of the Madison County Emergency Medical Service to a policymakers workshop in Raleigh on March 10-11. The workshop, sponsored by the state Office of Emergency Medical Services, is designed to offer administrative direction to state EMS policymakers.

Board Tentatively Approves Dental Screening Request

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

County school students may be getting free dental screening by area dentists next month, if the Madison County Board of Education determines there are no objections to the free checkups from the State Department of Public Instruction or local principals.

Myra Zeller, a health educator with the Hot Springs Health Program, requested permission from the board last Wednesday to allow two HSHP dentists to conduct the screenings in the Hot Springs and Spring Creek elementary schools. In addition, a dentist in private practice has agreed to conduct the screenings at Walnut and Marshall elementary schools, Mrs. Zeller said.

The board unanimously approved a motion to permit the screenings, subject to the approval of Dr. Bruce Hawkins, dental health supervisor, Western Region and local principals. School Superintendent Robert L. Edwards told the board that he would be checking with Dr. Hawkins soon to get his opinion of the idea.

Screenings would be with parents' permission and that the children would have to volunteer for the service.

Mrs. Zeller said the intent of the service was to offer free dental screening to students who volunteered for the service, and she assured the board that no pitch or enticement for dental work would be made by the participating dentists.

"It's merely an effort to promote bet-

ter dental hygiene in the county," Mrs. Zeller said.

The two-minute examinations would be done with a light and a mirror only and the dentists would send a note home to the parents stating what dental problems, if any, they found with the student, she said.

In other business, the board:

- Approved the hiring of Mary Holt as a substitute teacher at Hot Springs Elementary School.

- Heard a report on the county School Food Service program. The report was the result of an audit conducted Feb. 1-4 by Ann G. Smith, director of the Division of Child Nutrition, SDPI, of Raleigh and Elizabeth Norris, coordinator of child nutrition at the

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VICA DISTRICT OFFICERS — Newly elected officers of the Eighth District of the Vocational Industrial Clubs of America are (l-r) Teresa Norris, president, Madison High; Debbie Macie, vice president, Erwin High; Nancy Holcombe, secretary, Madison

High; Daphney Kerley, treasurer, McDowell High; Cathy Johnson, editor, Tuscola High; and Tina Rice, parliamentarian, Madison High. The officers were elected at the annual VICA conference at Western Carolina University last week.

Madison High Wins Big At VICA

Madison High School's Vocational Industrial Club of America (VICA) produced three district officers and won four first place awards at the annual District VIII VICA conference held at Western Carolina University last week.

More than 500 student delegates from 16 western North Carolina counties attended the conference and competed in 17 events.

In club competition, McDowell High placed first and Madison High was second in the club scrapbook category.

Elected as officers were Teresa Norris of Madison High, president; Debbie Macie

of Erwin High, vice president; Nancy Holcombe of Madison High, secretary; Daphney Kerley of McDowell High, treasurer; Cathy Johnson of Tuscola High, editor; and Tina Rice of Madison High, parliamentarian.

In the display category, Madison finished first and McDowell second. In club business procedure, Madison was first, Brevard second and Erwin third. Tuscola and McDowell finished first and second, respectively, in the safety category.

Seven Madison students were winners in individual competition. They will advance, along with other district conference winners, to state competition at Charlotte in April.

Madison winners in the leadership contests were Stuart Jolley, first, extemporaneous speaking; Teresa Norris, fourth, prepared speech; Jennifer Nix, first, Miss VICA; and Robert Murray, fourth, job interview.

In the skill contests, Danny Wallin placed fifth in bricklaying, Mark Cutshaw, third, cabinetmaking; and Kent Hurst, fourth, auto mechanics.

Erwin and North Buncombe High Schools won six and four

individual competitions, respectively, and Erwin placed third in the club business procedure category.

Individual Erwin High winners were Teresa Parham, third, and Jeffrey Beaty, fourth, extemporaneous speaking; Kim Fosterer, first, prepared speech; Kimberly Shirlin, first, job interview; and Hilda Anderson, third graphics.

North Buncombe individual winners were John Rickman, fifth, architectural drafting; Tim Bailey, fourth, cabinetmaking; Jack Metcalf, sixth, cabinetmaking; and Roger Baldwin, third, welding.

In-school Suspension Program Proposed At Madison High

By NICHOLAS HANCOCK
Editor

Barring any hitches in the grant application process, Madison High School will institute an in-school suspension program when school begins in the fall of 1982.

The Madison County Board of Education approved the program proposal submitted by Dr. Bobby Jean Rice, schools supervisor, at the board's Wednesday meeting.

Under the in-school suspension program, students breaking school rules or becoming discipline problems, and consequently receiving a suspension, would be placed in a special classroom for the duration of the suspension period. In the past, being suspended meant being sent home and not allowed to attend school for the suspension

period.

THE NEW PROGRAM will allow students to remain at the school where they can continue their studies under close supervision and also receive guidance and help in improving any unacceptable behavior, Dr. Rice said.

Under the present system, suspended students often miss schoolwork while out of school, and little is done to prevent future anti-social behavior. Disciplinary action used in the past—a combination of suspensions, corporal punishment and/or assignment of menial chores on school grounds after school hours—was "not always successful," as determined by the frequency of repeat offenders, according to the proposal statement given to the board.

Thus far, during the 1981-82 school year, about 90 students have been

"threats to the total school environment," according to Dr. Rice. "Approximately one-half (or 25) would have had trouble with the law, had all violations been reported," the proposal stated.

Dr. Rice and Madison High officials say the objectives of the in-school suspension program are to change these students' "inappropriate behavior" and prevent them from "exhibiting behavior that would lead them to involvement in the juvenile justice system."

THE POSITIVE Educational Alternative Room, as the special classroom will be known, will provide individual academic and tutorial services as well as individual and group counseling for students placed in the program.

School officials predict the rate of

suspensions will be reduced by the end of the 1982-83 school year under the new program, and that half of the students in the program will be able to function "within the parameters of the school environment," meaning attending school without exhibiting anti-social behavior.

They also predict a 25 percent reduction in the cases of students who are behaving unacceptably and a 15 percent increase in the academic performance of these students.

Students will be placed in the program by the principal and assistant principal and will remain in the program for the length of time he is under suspension.

STUDENTS MAY be suspended and placed in the alternative classroom for

disruptive physical or verbal behavior; the use or possession of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, chemicals, firearms, knives, or fire-crackers in the school or on school grounds; or for fighting, theft, harassment or vandalism.

Dr. Rice said that students in the program would not be allowed to have breaks or lunch periods with the rest of the student body.

School officials are applying for a Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention grant of "between \$10,000 and \$12,000 to operate the program, Dr. Rice said. The board of education will select a "para-professional" to work with students in the alternative classroom.

Dr. Rice said there is "not enough money now for hiring a professional" and stressed to the board that whoever is selected for the position would have to be "a special person" that could work with these students.

MADISON HIGH'S proposed program is based on a similar in-school suspension program at Mt. Heritage High in Yancey County. Dr. Rice, Mrs. David Wyatt, high school guidance counselor, and Norris Gentry, also a counselor, visited the Yancey school as part of the research for developing the local program.

In-school suspension programs have caught on and spread in junior and senior high schools throughout the state in the past few years.