

# Reconciling school current expense requests is major block to county budget adoption

Major decisions yet to be made reconciling the current expense budgets of the Orange County and Chapel Hill school units will determine the 1960-61 tax rate, sentiment expressed at the Board of Commissioners' meeting this week seems to indicate.

Thrown into consideration also is a decision on the \$1.5 million school bond issue recommended for next year

by the School Finance Study Commission.

### Revenue picture 'bright'

Based on the new estimated valuation of \$92,000,000, unforeseen success of the delinquent tax collection program and expected revenue of \$100,000 from ABC stores, the revenue picture is described as exceptionally bright for maintaining services at last year's level, granting most of the requested increases in the various departmental budgets other than schools, and even granting some school increases without a tax increase this year.

The crux of the matter, however, is that school requests are up considerably and there is a wide difference in the Orange County and Chapel Hill current expense requests, in which funds must be allocated on a per capita basis under the law.

The Orange County administrative unit has requested its current expense money on the basis of expenditures of \$37.73 per pupil while the Chapel Hill unit would spend for current expenses at the rate of \$46.62 per student. Last year's current expenses money was allocated at the rate of \$29.07 per student.

### Possibly \$1.01 rate

Assuming appropriation of about the same amount as last year for capital improvements, about \$300,

## Boards talk again Friday on site plan

Another discussion round on the proposal to purchase a 100-acre site north of Hillsboro for school purposes is scheduled before the Board of County Commissioners tomorrow night at 8 o'clock.

The Board of Education asked for reconsideration and a re-hearing on the site purchase proposal last Thursday and it was granted Monday.

Meanwhile, members of the board have indicated they will press for approval of the proposition by the commissioners at an early date and point out that the Board of Commissioners have no authority in the matter, spent for the site."

except "as to the amount to be This, it seems, is indicated in General Statutes 115-78 which states "No contract for the purchase of a site shall be executed nor any funds expended therefor without the approval of the Board of Commissioners as to the amount to be spent for the site."

The sum of \$30,000 which the school board proposes to pay S. T. Latta for the property has already been allocated to the county board for school site purchase from the sum received from the sale of the old Carrboro School to the Town of Carrboro.

The commissioners also expect to consult the school board members on its budget request at this meeting.

000 between the two units, the alternate current expense requests would still push the tax rate to \$1.01 if the Chapel Hill request is adopted and 97c if the County's request is adopted. Last year's tax rate was 95c.

If the Chapel Hill request is adopted, the county school unit will get \$39,122.33 more than the \$187,848.31 it has asked for. If the County's request is adopted, Chapel Hill schools will get \$31,170.94 less than the \$163,452.32 they have requested.

Chapel Hill has requested \$1,005,100.00 for capital outlay in this year year's budget, including two new schools. The county asked

for \$179,402.33.

### Urged five-cent hike

The Finance Study Commission recommended an increase of five-cents on the 95c tax rate this year and a bond issue of \$1,500,000 next February.

It is the reconciliation of these matters which must done by the Commissioners before a final budget can be adopted for the County by July 29, the legal deadline.

Right now, the sentiment seems divided as to whether to hold the present tax rate in view of the bond election possibility in February or to raise it five cents, as recommended by the Study Commission, as a cushion for increases which are sure to come in providing the new buildings, either by bond issue or by raising the annual rate.

Said Commissioner Clarence Jones, "If we are going to call a bond election, I think we ought to hold the tax rate to the present level this year."

## Commissioners pare elections board budget

The Board of County Commissioners continued to grumble about the high costs of elections at its meeting Monday night. But in the end it adopted most of the budget submitted by the election body for the new year.

The elections board had requested \$4,775 for next year. After going over the request in detail with Chairman S. T. Latta and Republican Member Frank Klingberg, the commissioners deleted a special item of \$250 for "purging" the books and another \$25 generally and set \$4,500 as the amount to be budgeted.

### Paid too much

Chairman R. J. M. Hobbs expressed the general feeling of the Commissioners, stated by them in various ways, that the Board of Elections is "being paid

too much." Member Clarence D. Jones said: "I think the Elections Board should be answerable to somebody for what they charge for their services."

The discussion brought out that the Elections Board members are paid \$15 per day and they submit a bill for the number of days worked in putting on the elections. What determines a day is left to the discretion of the members themselves.

For the first primary in May, Chairman S. T. Latta received \$431, Secretary Clyde Carter \$242.57, and Member Frank Klingberg \$122.65. For the second primary, Latta's bill totalled \$105, Carter's \$76.88 and Klingberg's \$60.20.



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