

TOWN BOARD SAYS TO COUNTY BOARD

'Give Us Help; We'll Ask Bonds'

BY JIM TAYLOR

Raeferd Town Board indicated here Monday night it will call for a \$900,000 bond issue for water and sewer improvements if the county will participate in the program to the extent of some \$20,000 a year.

County commissioners, invited to the special meeting at town hall, gave little encouragement to the proposal at the time. However, they were asked to vote on the request at their next meeting, so the town board will know how to proceed from there.

The point-blank proposition came at the very end of the meeting in which Richard Moore, consulting engineer, and members of the town board had gone to great lengths to explain the town's predicament in water and sewer problems.

In a nutshell, they told county commissioners the town and county either has to provide some \$1.3 million in water and sewer improvements, or cease to grow.

Worse than that, they said, the town and county will be retarded, because present facilities will not long serve existing needs.

The town's new sewage disposal plant, completed two years ago, is badly overtaxed, largely because of increased water use by Burlington Industries and Raeferd Turkey Farms.

Water use creates waste, of course, and it is the sewage disposal plant's inability to handle more waste that has put the town in a bind.

Burlington Industries, for example, uses about 1 million gallons of water a day and discharges about that amount of waste into the sewage system.

Raeferd Turkey Farms uses a similar amount of water and creates a corresponding amount of waste, Moore said. Without the needed improvements, it is likely that state authorities will give the town permission to add any new customers to the overtaxed system.

That would eliminate adding the county's new elementary school, now under construction off Bethel Road.

It would prohibit the annexation of any new areas, and, in fact, areas newly annexed would have to be de-annexed because they could not be supplied water and sewer facilities.

No new industry could be added (and a new industry is considering building a factory here), nor could existing industry expand.

Raeferd Turkey Farms is contemplating an expansion program for this year which would cost some \$250,000. It would add tremendously to the water and sewage load, however, board members told county commissioners.

"Why not run one line to take care of the new school?" asked County Commissioner Ralph Barnhart.

The line would cost \$120,000, he was told, and would be useless, because the treatment plant wouldn't be able to process the additional sewage.

A new south outfall is planned in the improvement project. It would cost some \$260,000 and serve the new school and residential areas to the south and west of town.

Another new outfall is projected from Burlington Industries plants north of town to the treatment plant. That, plus the south outfall and improvements to the treatment plant, would cost in the neighborhood of \$1.3 million.

If action is taken immediately to call the bond referendum, the project would make the April 1 deadline for a state priority list used in getting federal participation.

The town would then be eligible for 30 per cent participation by the federal government, or about \$400,000, leaving \$900,000 to be covered by local bonds.

To repay the bonds without county participation would require a 20-cent per \$100 valuation increase in town taxes and an 80 per cent increase in water bills.

Minimum water bill, including a 20 per cent sewage surtax, is \$3.24. The average is about \$6, according to Town Manager Ed Williams.

The proposed increases would raise the minimum to \$4.29 and the average to \$9.80.

Town commissioners contend that the county benefits as much or more than does the town from the industries served by its water and sewer lines.

Burlington Industries pays no town taxes, they said, and the county gets all the ad valorem benefits from the two plants.

Both Burlington Industries and Raeferd Turkey Farms pay 16 cents per 1,000 gallons for water. Like private citizens, they pay 20 per cent of that amount additional for sewer facilities.

Palmer Wilcox, town commissioner, said at Monday night's meeting the town board didn't call for commissioners to meet with them to directly ask for financial assistance.

"We just wanted to acquaint you with the problem, and if you could find a way to help us, we'd appreciate it," he said.

Representing the county board were commissioners Barnhart, John Balfour, Tom McBryde and Webb. Commission chairman T. C. Jones was not present.

At the end of the session, Barnhart called for a direct proposal.

"I want you to give us your proposition," he said. "There is no question but the new school has to have water and sewer, so lay it on the line," he said.

"It's this simple," replied Town Commissioner McNeill. "You promise us a third of the 'non-tax' funds, and we'll call for the bond issue."

Don't Call It ABC Cash

All Town Wants Is Part Of \$8

The town board has been wrestling with the water and sewer problem for more than a year. In fact, one year ago, it tried to get a federal grant for half the cost through the Economic Development Act, but failed to qualify.

In the intervening 12 months, estimated costs have gone up 12 per cent, Moore said.

At its regular meeting February 6, the town board passed a resolution asking Rep. Neill McFadyen to introduce a local bill in the General Assembly to grant the town one-third of the proceeds from the local ABC store.

That resolution got a chilly reception from county commissioners, and from McFadyen, who said he could not in good conscience introduce the legislation unless the county board of commissioners agreed.

"If there is a disagreement as to how the money should be appropriated, it should be settled at the local level, and not in the General Assembly," McFadyen said. "As soon as the two boards have agreed among themselves how they want the profits distributed, I will be glad to introduce any legislation they request jointly."

Privately, many citizens hooted at the town board's request, saying that when the ABC store was approved by voters, it had to be built in the county rather than in town because a town ordinance forbids the sale of liquor inside the town limits.

Town commissioners said, however, that the town board never took action prohibiting the establishment of the store inside the town limits.

"We requested one-third of the ABC profits because we thought that might be one source of funds the county could share with us," Commissioner J.D. McMillian said. "If the county can provide an equal amount of money from another source, we'd be very happy to receive it."

At Monday night's special meeting of the town board, County Commissioner J.A. Webb said it was regrettable that the town specifically requested ABC money.

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Balloon Sale

Rained Out

A balloon sale in connection with the current Heart Fund campaign in Raeferd and Hoke County was rained out last Friday and Saturday and will be held this Friday and Saturday, officials of the drive reported.

Members of Hoke High School's Beta Club will sell the balloons on downtown streets. Other fund-raising activities are reported in another story on Page 3.

Scott Trial

Is Scheduled

The trial of Johnny Scott, 19, of Shannon was expected to be called Wednesday afternoon in District Court here. Judge D.B. Herring was presiding.

Young Scott faces a series of charges in connection with an incident here about January 1 in which State Highway Patrolman J.D. Robinson charged Scott forced him off the street during a wild chase through the south section of Raeferd.

The News-Journal went to press before the case was called, but a complete report will appear in next week's edition.

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EDWARD ROBINSON, LEFT, MODELS NEW UNIFORM FOR DIRECTOR JIMMY JAMES

Band Uniform Fund Passes Halfway Mark

Hoke High School band uniform campaign passed the halfway mark yesterday when contributions reached almost \$4,000.

Goal in the campaign to raise money for 70 band uniforms is \$6,000. Each uniform costs \$87.86.

Mrs. Edmund Murray, Mrs. Ralph Barnhart and Mrs. Carlton Niven are heading the project. Solicitation of business establishments and individuals has provided most of the proceeds.

With a great many canvasses incomplete, the campaign passed the 43-uniform mark. That money already is in the bank. Other pledges indicate the goal may be reached by the end of the month if individual contributions hold up to expectation.

This week, a model of the uniform the band selected arrived and was modeled for band members. It is being put on public display in the show window of Niven's Appliance and Furniture Company.

A signboard showing progress in the drive, as well as a list of contributors to the drive, also is being arranged in the window.

The campaign was launched here earlier this month after a great many interested

citizens decried the situation concerning uniforms for the high school band.

Three years ago, the band consisted of one or two performers who hid themselves in the stands at football games and emitted trumpet renditions of the old cavalry "charge" bugle call.

Then, the high school hired Jimmie James, then band director at St. Pauls High School. In three years, James built the high school band to 70 members and inaugurated a program of elementary school band activities which will assure recruits for the high school band for years to come.

Earlier this year, the band was invited to the University of North Carolina to participate in band day activities there. Lacking formal uniforms, each band member was dressed in white shirt, dark trousers, "Mexican" straw hat, and a saddle blanket piece of goods that passed as a serape.

Rain washed out the scheduled performance of high school bands during halftime of that Saturday's football game. Raeferd band members expressed delight that they didn't have to perform, apparently because

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Town Board Names Six-Man Team To Survey Local Housing Needs

A six-man commission to study housing needs in Raeferd and suburbs has been appointed by the town board.

The appointments were made Thursday night at an adjourned meeting of the board, held primarily to consider the town's pressing water and sewer needs.

Named to the group were Fred Culbreth, chairman, James Wood, Benny McLeod, W. L. Howell Jr., Bill Moses and Jimmy Sinclair.

Alternates are Robert Gatlin, Lonnie Bledsoe and Walter Coley, in that order.

The commission has been instructed to survey the housing situation in Raeferd and contiguous areas and to report its findings, without recommenda-

tions, at a public hearing to be set for a future date.

The move is in response to a petition by 123 interested citizens asking the town board to establish a Raeferd Housing Authority to construct and administer some 100 low-rent dwelling units.

When the petition was presented at the board's February meeting, action was deferred until the special meeting last Thursday night. At that time, Franklin Teal made a motion to establish the study group. Town Commissioner J. D. McMillian nominated four of the five regular members and two of the three alternates.

Under the proposal, the town board would create the housing authority and there its respon-

sibility and authority would end.

The housing authority would be empowered to issue 40-year bonds, which would be guaranteed by the Federal Housing Authority, to construct the dwelling units.

When completed, the housing would be available to low-income families on the basis of need. Rent would be in proportion to the family's income, and in all cases, lower than comparable housing would cost if rented from private owners. A director would be employed to supervise the project and collect rentals. His pay, set by tradition, would be \$4 per month per unit.

In lieu of taxes, the town and county would share on an equitable basis 10 per cent of

the annual rental income.

The town and county would be responsible for none of the bonds, nor would they incur any expenses other than providing normal services, such as water and sewer, police and fire protection, and street lighting.

Cost of any streets in the project presumably would be at the expense of the housing authority.

It would not be necessary to build all 100 units in one development, leaders of the petitioning group explained. They might be built in groups of 10, or even 25 or more.

The housing authority would have complete control over assignment to housing units, they

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Boards Request

John McNair Agrees To Widening NC 211

New Width Will Be 24 Feet

Hoke and Moore county commissioners extracted a promise from the district's state highway commissioner here Tuesday to widen N.C. 211 to 24 feet in width between Raeferd and Aberdeen.

John McNair of Laurinburg, the commissioner, met with members of the two boards at a special gathering in the county courthouse.

A contract already had been awarded to resurface the road from the Hoke-Robeson line to Aberdeen. Following his decision here Tuesday, McNair contacted state highway officials and arranged to have the resurfacing contract withdrawn and bids re-submitted for March letting. That move won the approval of the company which had been awarded the resurfacing contract.

The improvements also will include re-routing the highway at McCain. The new section of the road will run behind the state sanatorium there. A separate contract was awarded for that project some time earlier and work is already under way.

At their February meeting, Hoke County commissioners passed a resolution to ask McNair to recommend the widening project. At that time, they were told by Jim Fout, manager of the local chamber of commerce, that if the resur-

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TO SAVE A LIFE--These women didn't wait until Heart Sunday to make a start on the door-to-door canvass for the 1967 Heart Fund drive. Here, they call for Mrs. Ralph Barnhart's contribution. Making the canvass are Mrs. Harry McLean, Heart Fund chairman, and Mrs. Ed Murray. Little Susan McLean lends a helping hand by carrying the revealing sign. Funds collected will go toward research in an effort to combat diseases of the heart and circulatory system.

County Health Officer Says He Locked Out Of Plant

BY JIM TAYLOR

Hoke County's health officer, Dr. Harry H. McLean, complained after a Monday night meeting of Raeferd Town Board that he was "floored" by the reception he received when he went before the board with suggestions as to how the town might save hundreds of thousands of dollars in dealing with its current sewer and water problems.

"It was the first public meeting I had ever been invited to leave," Dr. McLean said afterward.

He appeared before the board, he said, in a dual capacity.

1. As a taxpayer of the Town of Raeferd who was concerned because his tax rate and water bill are about to be increased, "perhaps unnecessarily."

2. As Hoke County Health Officer, hired presumably because of his special qualifications, whose recommendations have been ignored.

"The latter specification exists to the extent that I had to threaten court action to get into the Raeferd sewage treatment plant after I had been locked out," he said.

"More than the county not being interested in the town's water and sewer problems, I was sent at county expense to Houston, Texas, (last May) to the convention of the Southern Division, American Public Health Association, one day early to study the City of Houston's activated sludge sewage disposal system," Dr. McLean told the board.

When he returned, he said, he gave the county board of health and Raeferd town board a report stating that a possibility existed that certain modifications to the town's sewage treatment plant might vastly increase its capacity and capabilities at a fraction of the cost now anticipated.

Dr. McLean said later that if the Houston procedure could be followed here, the problem might be solved for \$50,000 instead of the some \$800,000 anticipated in present plans.

"I want to stress that I have always said 'might' and that the possibility exists, rather than that will work," he later said.

He said he told the board that to the best of his knowledge, it had never considered his recommendations.



DR. HARRY H. McLEAN

"At that point, Commissioner J. K. McNeill told me they had called in the State Board of Health and they (the state board) told them (the town board) I didn't know what I was talking about."

Dr. McLean produced Wednesday DR. McLEAN, Page 9