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Around Town

By SAM C. MORRIS

Mrs. A. A. McInnis, Rockfish correspondent, called last week in answer to the comments of Herman Koonce. She stated that the quote of "I like it like it" did not mean that she was against progress for Rockfish. Mrs. McInnis said she wished they had a school, nice stores and more churches. We believe that Mrs. McInnis would like Rockfish any way that development would make it.

Anyway, we don't want to get in a fuss with our friends in Rockfish.

We have a letter that H.R. McLean brought in to us written by Rufus Dickson of High Point. It is about the post office at Vollers. Now Vollers is located or was located where H.L. Gatlin, Jr. now lives. The post office was on one side of his house and the school house was on the other side. The home was originally owned by the late Dr. A.P. Dickson. We think that the letter will be of interest to many of our readers, so it follows:

Dear Raymond:
I was pleased to receive your letter a few days ago. The item about the double wedding reception for your parents and Will McLean's parents was most interesting. It's the kind of story the State magazine would welcome for its See AROUND TOWN, Page 9

County Taxes Will Probably Be Increased

"It looks like the tax rate will be going up," county manager T.B. Lester predicted gloomily.

He based this on the indications that the state legislature will not include the entire Medicaid costs in the state budget, leaving the counties to finance its share. Earlier this spring, it was believed that the state would pick up the entire Medicaid tab.

But now the county is waiting, with the fiscal year ending and tax receipts a month behind, for the state to act in order for the county to know how to set its tax rate.

"We usually get tax receipts in the mail by the last of this month," Lester said. "We'll try to get them out by mid-July if we can marshal enough forces."

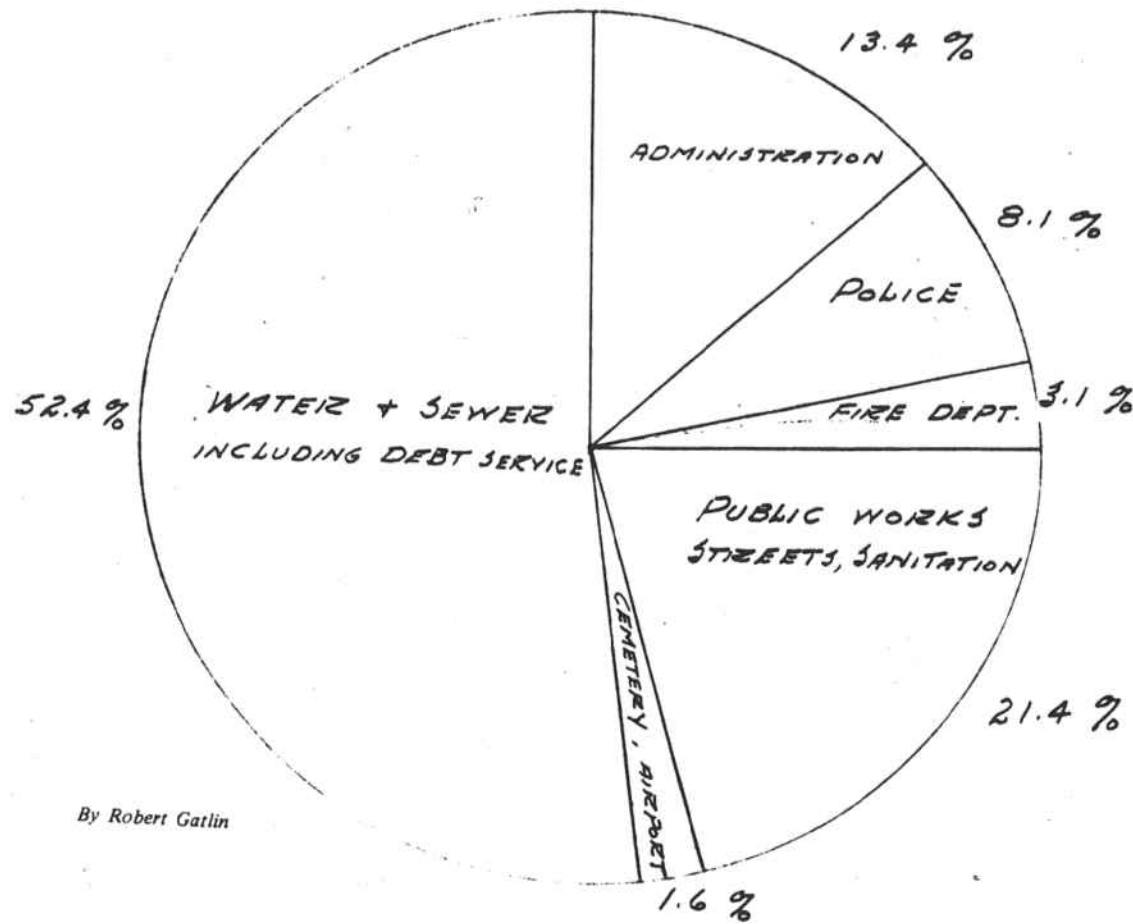
County tax workers have been making out some receipts already, using the tax rate from last year and are about halfway through the list. These will have to be corrected if the rate is increased, which Lester says he expects.

According to Rep. Neill McFadyen, the legislature may act on the budget Thursday, Lester said.

The tentative budget that was set by the county in April still stands, he said, and no budget meetings have been held. See COUNTY, Page 9

It Costs More Now To Run A City; Council Plans 10¢ Tax Increase

CITY OF RAEFORD BUDGET 1971-72



By Robert Gatlin

Rate Hiked To \$1.45

If the city council adopts the proposed budget, the city tax rate will go up a dime.

The proposed tax rate is \$1.45 on each hundred dollars valuation of taxable property, compared with \$1.35 tax rate for 1970-71.

The cost of running a city has increased during the past year, city manager John Gaddy said, making the increased rate a necessity.

Expenditures in the general fund this year are estimated at \$260,980 compared with \$229,633.39 last year.

The debt service has increased \$10,000 from \$109,613 last year to \$119,150 for '71-72. The bond issue passed to expand the water and sewer lines account for the rise there.

Expenditures in the water and sewer fund are estimated at \$287,056.61.

With the increased costs, increased revenue is expected, Gaddy said.

Local taxes, including property and poll tax, privilege taxes, penalties, interest and previous years taxes, are expected to amount to \$184,111.24. State revenue, Powell Bill street funds, and miscellaneous revenues will add \$76,869.44 to the city treasury. Last year local taxes amounted to \$164,445.56 and others \$65,000.

Water and sewer revenue will increase from last year also, Gaddy estimated, to total \$287,056.61. Last years water and sewer charges amounted to \$219,000. However, sewer charges will increase, effective with the August billing, from 20% to 50% of the water bill.

Gaddy said that everything connected with operating a city has gone up. The general administration, which includes city hall operations, have increased about \$7,000 this year, he said. This reflects increased utility costs for street lights, phone cost hikes, increased Social Security and insurance payments. Salaries will be increased on an average of five per cent.

"In the past, the general administration fund has had some sort of surplus," he said. "Now, we can't keep up."

The city debt increased \$10,000, and the entire debt service payment of \$119,150 will be taken from the water and sewer revenues of \$287,056.61. Costs in providing water and sewer have increased also, Gaddy said. Here, also, utility rate increases are felt. Electricity costs for operating the water pumps have increased \$3,000 this year, from \$12,000 to \$15,000. Electricity at the sewer treatment plant cost \$6,800 more than was anticipated this year, Gaddy said, rising from a planned expenditure of \$16,000 to about \$22,000 by the end of June.

While the bond issue passed by city voters last October paid the major portion of the water and sewer expansion, it didn't pay the entire costs, Gaddy said. For example, the two new wells developed and placed in service recently were not included in the bond financing. Voters approved \$60,000 in water bonds and \$80,000 in sewer bonds.

Another factor in the tax rise is the need to maintain old city equipment and to make new purchases.

"We have old, dilapidated equipment and it costs quite a bit just to maintain it," Gaddy said. "In addition, we need to buy some other things, like a new garbage truck and a new truck for the sewer treatment plant, and grass-cutting equipment."

See TAX INCREASE, Page 9

Rising Cost Of Everything Includes Sewer Charge Hike

City sewer charges will go up by 30 per cent next month, reflecting the rising cost of "everything," according to city manager, John Gaddy.

Effective with the August billing on uses for July the sewer charge will rise from the present 20 per cent of the water bill to 50 per cent.

The charge for water will not change. Gaddy cited rising costs to the city in all areas, which make the rate increase necessary.

"Everything has gone up," he said. "Utilities are a big increase."

The utility bill to operate the sewer treatment plant has increased \$6,800 this year, he said. Another cost that figures into the water and sewer fund is that of the bond issue passed last year to finance the expansion of city services. The debt payment, which comes from water and sewer revenue, is an additional \$10,000 over last year, Gaddy said.

Raeford, with less than 4,000 residents, has a sewer treatment capacity equal to a town of 45,000, Gaddy said.

The treatment plant, one of two of its kind in the state and the first one constructed, will treat three million gallons a day, although an additional, and

costly, factor, the biochemical oxygen demand, must also be considered in the plant's capacity.

The plant is presently treating about 1.7 million gallons a day and is well within the allowable BOD level, Chester Beasley, chief operator, said.

Raeford's sewer treatment plant has doubled since it was built and the expansion has now been in operation about a year, Gaddy said.

The facility is located on a nine-acre site by Rockfish Creek, outside the city limits, although the plant is entirely owned and financed by the city.

At the first point in the treatment process a grit collector separates sand and grit from the liquid and then the sewage is piped through a chopping blade, where solids are pulverized. Four pumps that can handle 600 gallons a minute, although usually only two are used at one time, pump the liquid to the other side of the site to two large floatator tanks.

There are untreated materials such as grease and feathers from the turkey plant are skimmed off and are carted away to the land fill each day.

From that point, the sewage is split into four stabilizing tanks where all the sludge and a large portion of the bacteria settle out, according to Beasley. The final step before the liquid is released to Rockfish Creek is the addition of chlorine to make it "relatively safe," Beasley said. He conducts tests at frequent intervals and must keep records of the results. The plant is checked regularly by the state.

"We get above 90 per cent reduction on waste from the plant," he said, "and with the addition of chlorine, the water is relatively safe when it goes to the creek. The chlorine kills most of the pathogens."

The state requires the chlorine addition because Rockfish is used for swimming, he said.

There is a well-equipped laboratory at the plant in which samples are tested.

The semi-solid waste remaining - the sludge - is held in a vat until a large quantity is collected and then is pumped to beds to dry. The dried sludge is used for fertilizer at the plant.

Dried sludge that has been heated can be used for fertilizer on crops, Beasley said, but the state does not recommend that unheated sludge be used on edible crops. Dried sludge can also be pressed into building blocks, he said. The Raeford plant does not process the sludge beyond drying.

Throughout the process, large amounts of air are pumped through the tanks by blowers that produce 12 million cubic feet of air a day. The treatment plant is called an activated sludge process.

Two other employees besides Beasley

See RISING COST, Page 9

Deputies Stop Theft Attempt

Deputy sheriffs broke up an attempted theft at Dundarrach Trading Company last Wednesday night but the three men spotted there escaped after a 25-mile-long chase along rain-slick roads.

Deputies Harvey Young and Robert Graham became suspicious of activity around the trading company, Young said, and parked on one side of the barn there. Before long, he said, three men in a pickup truck backed up to the barn and began to load soybeans into the truck.

The deputies drove toward them and the men fled, Young said. The two Hoke County deputies gave chase and pursued the truck about twenty miles into Robeson County before the men escaped. An attempt to contact Robeson County deputies for aid failed and the wet roads, from a rain storm that night, contributed to the hazards.

\$1 Million Needed For Water, Sewer

An estimated one million dollars is needed for water and sewerage expansion in Hoke County in the next five years, a survey compiled by the State Board of Health and the Department of Water and Air Resources estimates.

Using the needs in Raeford alone, the survey estimates that another \$225,000 is needed for the water supply and \$200,000 for sewerage collection.

An additional \$575,000 for sewerage treatment will be needed for adequate expansion.

Throughout the state, almost \$700 million dollars will be required during the next five years to meet North Carolina's water and sewerage needs, the survey estimated.

Copies of the county-by-county survey, compiled by the State Board of Health and the Department of Water and Air Resources, are being circulated among Tar Heel legislators by Cumberland Senator Hector McGeachy to strengthen the case for a \$150 million clean water bond issue. McGeachy introduced legislation calling for the bond referendum in early June.

The survey shows that \$336,769,296

will be needed for water supply systems by 1976, while \$361,992,500 will be required during the same period for pollution control facilities, including sewage collection systems and wastewater treatment works.

McGeachy said he expects both houses of the General Assembly to give endorsement to the bond issue later this month. His optimism is grounded in the fact that more than 40 members of the upper chamber were listed as sponsors when the measure was introduced in the Senate.

Expecting speedy approval of his bill, McGeachy has already begun putting together a blue-ribbon committee to generate support for the bond referendum, and he has unveiled plans to name county chairmen to campaign for passage of the bond election.

McGeachy began promoting the idea of a state-wide bond issue early this year as a means of attracting a larger share of federal funds to meet the state's water and sewerage needs. He said that North Carolina faces a health crisis if steps are not taken to secure additional funds for water and sewerage projects.

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THIS OFFER EXPIRES FRIDAY, JULY 30

Blood Drive Gains Support

Support for the make-up Bloodmobile visit June 30 is growing in the community, blood drive chairman Clyde Upchurch, Jr. reports.

A soft-ball game was played for blood June 23, with the loser to supply an additional ten pints of blood. Carter's Tire met the House of Raeford for the unusual stakes.

Knit-Away has joined other industries in supporting the drive, Upchurch said. The textile plant will allow employees time off to contribute blood on a volunteer basis, but will not solicit volunteers directly, he said. Bloodmobile posters have been placed in the plant.

Harold Gillis and Bobby Carter are soliciting blood donors from the city in an effort to increase non-industry-connected participation.

Upchurch said he was working on a time schedule for the various industry employees so that a minimum amount of time would be lost from the job.

The county, which failed to collect even a fourth of its quota on the last Bloodmobile visit June 7, is being given a make-up visit in order to remain in the Red Cross program. Only 23 pints were

See BLOOD, Page 9