

# The News - Journal

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THURSDAY, APRIL 26, 1979

## Commissioners To Meet Thursday

# Action On Ambulance Service Scheduled

## Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The Board of Hoke County Commissioners Monday night set a special meeting for 9 a.m. Thursday to choose an ambulance service.

The vote on the motion, made by Commissioner Danny DeVane, was 3-1. Commissioner Mabel Riley voted against the motion. Earlier she had made a motion to table action on the proposals and to have Spring Lake Ambulance Service's books audited. Spring Lake has had the ambulance service contract the past two years. Mrs. Riley's motion died of lack of a second.

After DeVane's motion was adopted, she made a motion again that Spring Lake's books be audited, and it also died of lack of a second.

None of the other commissioners gave a reason for not seconding her motions.

The board's ambulance committee recommended a five-year contract be given to the new service which will be operated by Jim and Linda Henley managers till April 20 of the Spring Lake Ambulance Service, which has had the county contract the past two years.

## BOE Meets

## Sawyer Tenured

In a special session Monday night, the Hoke County Board of Education voted to tenure Peter Sawyer, a carpentry teacher at Hoke High School, after Earl Oxendine, Hoke High Principal, recommended that Sawyer's contract not be renewed.

The decision was delayed from last week because Oxendine could not be reached to comment on his evaluation of Sawyer.

The motion, made by Mina Townsend, stated that there was "not enough concrete evidence to warrant not putting Mr. Sawyer on tenure."

Raz Autry, superintendent of schools, said Tuesday that the board is not obligated to follow the principal's or the superintendent's recommendations on hiring school personnel, that they simply add input to help the board in reaching a decision.

"The Board of Education is fully supportive of Mr. Oxendine, principal of Hoke High School, and they feel that he was conscientious in making his recommendation on Peter Sawyer to the board."

"However, since there is some doubt in the minds of the board of education that there is really enough concrete evidence to warrant not putting Mr. Sawyer on tenure, the board is hereby placing Mr. Sawyer on tenure," the motion read.

The original motion included statements that Sawyer was to improve by next spring, or action would be taken by the board's attorney to remove him from his post. Townsend told the board she thought the motion was too harsh, and Board Attorney Bill Moses agreed.

"You can either grant him tenure or not grant him tenure," Moses said.

Autry countered Moses's statement by saying that Sawyer needed "to be reprimanded in some way."

Autry said Tuesday morning that he did not want to comment on Oxendine's reasons for recommending that Sawyer not be tenured. Oxendine was in a meeting and

## Jury Chosen

A jury was seated by mid-day Tuesday to hear evidence in the first-degree murder trial of Gwendolyn Nettles, a local woman charged in the April 1978 shooting death of Levene Campbell.

Campbell was killed by a gunshot wound at Ms. Nettles' home on St. Pauls Road last year. Ms. Nettles pleaded not guilty to the charge in the April session of Hoke County Criminal Superior Court.

Along with numerous drunk-driving, breaking and entering, and larceny and traffic violations up for trial this week are three second-degree rape cases.

Charged with second-degree rape

The Henleys have offered to provide the service for \$50,000 in the county subsidy for the first year (fiscal 1978-80) and increases in the four ensuing years of the contract be tied to the national Consumer Price Index. The increases would compensate for the effects of inflation on operating expenses.

The Henleys' proposal is the lowest in money of three, the board's committee reported. DeVane, who heads the three-member committee, told the board the other proposals were \$70,000 by the Spring Lake firm for the first of three years, and a 5 per cent increase each for the second and third year; and Gerald Williams of Fayetteville, \$55,248 for three years.

The Spring Lake firm has been providing the service during the current fiscal year, which will end June 30, for a \$45,000 subsidy, but informed the commissioners at the end of March that it would have to have \$75,000 for the first three years of a new contract, and a 5 per cent increase annually after that to meet increases in expenses caused by inflation.

Commissioner Mabel Riley said, "I do not go along with any of these proposals." She said this after observing, "We never audited ambulances."

DeVane replied that the Henleys have the figures, that he saw them Monday afternoon.

Mrs. Riley said, "I want to see the margin of profit and loss," that she hadn't seen expenses of services.

"The fire department books are audited each year," she said.

By auditing, Mrs. Riley said, "we know whether they (an ambulance service) are making or losing money."

The county subsidy is intended to make up the difference between an ambulance service's income and expenses.

Mrs. Riley said during the discussion she couldn't understand why the Spring Lake firm could operate in Cumberland County without a Cumberland County subsidy but needed one to operate in Hoke County.

She was informed the reasons are that the service area in Cumberland has a population at least equal to

all of Hoke's and that the rate of collections of ambulance service charges is high, because military people constitute the bulk of the patrons and collection from them is certain.

She also was told an agreement with the Veterans Administration Hospital provides an income of \$70,000 a year to the service.

The Henleys' figures for Hoke, read by County Manager James Martin, say 46.8 per cent of the ambulance charges were not collected during one period.

Mrs. Riley said the whole problem seems to be charges can't be collected from some users of the service. There should be some way of forcing people to pay, she added.

Later the commissioners were informed that a state general statute says a county may put a lien on personal property to collect such bills.

If the county collected payment an ambulance service didn't collect, the county would keep at least part of the payment.

Board chairman John Balfour asked Henley about this, and Henley replied he would not want

the county to collect for Henley service, unless all the service's resources to collect were exhausted. He added the charge of another agency collecting was 15 per cent of the collection.

During the discussion also, DeVane read a letter written by Dr. Robert Townsend Jr., of Raeford saying, he'd hate to see the county lose them (the ambulance service). He described the staff as conscientious.

A letter written by Dr. R.M. Jordan of Raeford, which DeVane also read, recommends the Henleys and says he'd like to see unnecessary use of the ambulance service eliminated.

During the discussion, commissioners said some people use the ambulance service as a "taxi service."

Balfour asked Henley whether the Henleys would refuse service people who didn't have emergencies.

Henley replied, None of us are doctors. We can't tell what's an emergency. Consequently, "we take them all."

Mr. and Mrs. Henley gave the Spring Lake firm a two-week notice that they were leaving their jobs. Henley told a reporter when resignations were announced that he and his wife weren't leaving just the Hoke ambulance service but the mother company.

He added, that he and his wife have decided to make their home permanently in Hoke County.

In other business during the meeting, the commissioners were given a report by architect Sam Snowden on his firm's architectural study of the county's present government staffs and the office space they have available, and the departments' and federal and state agencies' needs five and 10 years from now.

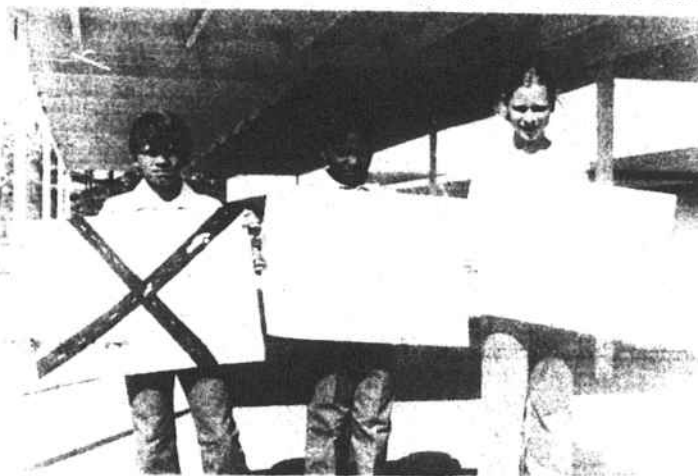
Over-all, Snowden said in summary, the county is in pretty good shape, except for the Social Services Department, which needs help now. His figures show this department's current staff of 30 will have to be increased in five years to 38, and in 10 years to 44. The department now has 5,770 square feet of working space.

The County Health Department staff will expand to 25 in five years and 30 in 10 years from its present 17 people the study shows, but Snowden said the space the department now has is "adequate for the next 10 years."

The Sheriff's department and county jail staff of 18 fulltime and one parttime member (a cook) will have to be increased to 31 in five years and to 51 in 10.

Snowden is with Jordan, Snowden & McVicker.

Before going into their special meeting, the commissioners met at the County Board of Equalization and Review.



TOP THREE -- These Scurlock Elementary School students won the top three places in the Hoke County poster contest held by the County Health Department in connection with the Health Fair April 27. Teresa Ramsey (right) won. Felicia Cagle placed second, and Ricky Hamilton, third. They are holding their posters. The prizes were donated by Theresa's Dress Shop, B.C. Moore & Sons Department Store, and Mack's Variety & Fashions. The owner of Theresa's is not related to Teresa Ramsey. The three students are in the fourth grade. The fair will be held at the National Guard Armory in Raeford from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

## Health Fair Planned

Over 25 exhibits will be on display at the Second annual Hoke County Health Fair Friday from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. at the National Guard Armory.

The Health Fair will provide an opportunity for local citizens to learn what many agencies and private organizations do and what services are available through them.

Participating agencies include the Health Center, Employment Security Commission, Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Rescue Squad, Home Visitor Nurse, and the Hoke County Youth Task force, just to name a few.

Burlington Industries and Faberge will provide samples of

their products, Doris Brunson of the Health Fair publicity committee said. The Coca-Cola Company and Pig'n'Chicken will donate refreshments for those participating in the presentation of exhibits.

Some area school children will attend the fair throughout the day, and the entire affair will be free to the public.

A poster contest has been held in the schools and posters promoting the Health Fair and displayed throughout town were drawn by Venise Riley a student at Westover High School in Fayetteville.

The public is urged to attend the annual event to keep abreast of happenings in local public service agencies.

## To Students Who Failed In November

## Competency Test To Be Given Next Week

The North Carolina Competency Test will be given on Tuesday and Wednesday, to those students who failed the initial test in November.

The makeup test will be the same one administered to over 81 thousand 11th-grade students during the first test.

Ninety percent of the students who took the reading portion of the test in November passed it, which means over 8 thousand did not. Over 11 thousand students failed the math portion of the test.

Since November, those students have been involved in remedial programs in their schools. The efforts are designed to aid the students having problems in some of the areas covered by the test. According to many teachers and administrators, the tests have already helped many students identify trouble areas, subjects in

which they need special help.

Every public school in the state had students who failed one or more of the tests. Dare County had the fewest number, only 2 of 139 who took the test.

The Competency Testing program was legislated by the 1977 General Assembly. The tests are basic skills tests of reading and mathematics designed to measure minimum competency, not ideal achievement. The law provides that passing the tests is a requirement for receiving a high school diploma.

Students who are unable to take the makeup test during the first two days of May will be allowed to take it May 7-9.

Local school officials are required to provide help to students who fail beyond their junior year in high school if that becomes

necessary.

Every attempt is being made to assure the student ample oppor-

tunities to obtain what he or she has worked for during 12 years of schooling: a high school diploma.

## Night Club Slaying Results In Arrest

A local man was arrested and charged with first-degree murder following the shooting death of James Harris Cross, 31, of Rt. 4 Box 37, Raeford early last Wednesday morning, according to a report on file at the Hoke County Sheriff's Department.

Johnny Earl Bease, Jr., 35, of Rt. 1 Box 264, Raeford, was placed under a \$15,000 bond after being arrested on the charge.

Cross apparently died of a small-calibre gunshot wound in the head following an alleged argument at a local club.

Deputies found Cross sprawled on the floor of the Adult Club on Saunders Street Extension at about 2 a.m. April 18. He was pronounced dead at the scene and transported to Buie Funeral Home, the report said.

Last weekend while coming back from the golf course the subject of cars was brought up. If you get out on an interstate, you wouldn't ever think of a gas shortage.

While talking about how people had to ride everywhere they went this day and time, a comment was made by my good friend, Neill McFadyen. He said that everyone had a car or two, but that the gas supply was being used up and then we would have no use for the cars.

I hadn't thought about that but it seems that everytime the people of the world become so high and

(See AROUND TOWN, page 15)