

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

Graham "Baldy" Clark stated at the City Council meeting Monday night that a heavy frost would look good. The council was meeting and with the thermostat having been set on 78 degrees the room had not cooled off. Then when some bodies (warm) got in the room this caused the room to heat up more. There was not any heated debate so it was not so bad after a little while.

The long range forecast is for hot weather and little chance of rain. So maybe a heavy frost would look good.

The hot weather makes everyone think of vacation time, but if you will think for a minute it is only three weeks until school starts. The teachers will probably go back before then. So we all say "where did the vacation time go?"

Last Saturday morning, for the folks who sleep until eight o'clock, the water pressure in the city was low. It was almost impossible to get enough to shave, wash your face or brush your teeth. Now most folks say they must have a cup of coffee to wake up but last week it was the need for some water on your face.

I hadn't got out of my car at a local service station before the wrath of a couple of citizens came down on this councilman. So water on the face is about like the cup of coffee.

The 16 - inch pipe from the well to the tank had broken and most of the water had drained from the tank. The bell sounded, but by that time the pressure was low. Maybe a warning bell could be installed when the tank is about half out rather than low enough to lower the pressure. (Just a suggestion)

Of course the low pressure coming on top of the increased water rates didn't help me cool off the irate citizens.

Howard Wood of Lutz, Fla. and a former schoolmate of mine of Raeford High School in the early thirties, called me from Florida last Tuesday and commented on the picture of Jay Lunsford Howard, having been born and raised in the Rockfish community, stated that it was good to see and read about someone that he knew so well.

We talked for a few minutes and he asked about many of the people that we were in school with. He was especially interested in Hudson and Jinx Graham. He did not know that 'Hut' was deceased, of course after fifty years many things have changed in Hoke County and Raeford.

He did ask about James Wood and wanted to know if he was a millionaire. I made a comment but won't repeat it in this column.

It was good to talk with you Howard, and I will take you up on the beef meal the next time I am in Florida.

One never knows what will be the outcome of an item in this column. Last week the item about Ben Niblock's visit to Raeford seemed to bring forth a soft whisper from a few of his friends that were mentioned. From all reports the group wanted to know what they have in common. Now I can't repeat what some people had to say, so you can come to your own conclusion.

Good News! Political season is coming soon. How can I tell? The meeting at the city hall last week brought forth from the Department of Transportation that four - laning of US 401 from Seventy - First school to Raeford was on the drawing boards. They must have found it from four years ago as it comes up every four years.

Of course, we still have faith!

Wouldn't you like to be out with the Hoke High Bucks practicing football in this weather? They are getting ready for a tough season and need your help too. You can help by joining the Booster Club. Join today!

Study To Determine Feasibility

Turkey Plant Considering Moving

The recent increases in water and sewage rates and taxes in Raeford and Hoke County have prompted the House of Raeford Farms, Inc., to begin having a feasibility study done for the location of a new turkey processing plant east and northeast between Hoke and Duplin counties, Marvin Johnson, president of the company, said in a statement issued Tuesday.

"After the feasibility study has been completed," the statement continues, "it will take approximately two years to construct the processing plant and move the equipment from Raeford."

"About 50 per cent of the turkeys processed at the House of Raeford Farms are owned by

Nash, Johnson & Sons Farm in Rose Hill, N.C."

The House of Raeford employs 850 people and has been operating in Raeford since the late 1950s.

The statement was issued in response to an inquiry made by *The News-Journal* to obtain confirmation of a report which quoted Johnson as saying "we are thinking" of leaving Raeford.

Asked for comment on Johnson's statement, City Manager Ron Matthews told *The News-Journal* that despite the increase in the tax rate set by the City Council for the 1979 calendar year, the House of Raeford paid \$18,758.93 in city taxes in 1978 and will be paying

\$14,081.40 in 1979. He attributed the decrease to a drop of \$1 million in the company's personal - property evaluation.

The City Council raised the city tax rate three cents to 60 cents per \$100 property evaluation for the 1979-80 fiscal year. The county tax rate was advanced to \$1.01 per \$100 property evaluation, an increase of 9 cents per \$100 from last year's.

Matthews reported the House of Raeford paid \$130,655.44 in water and sewer charges in the fiscal year July 1, 1978 to June 30, 1979. If the company uses the same number of gallons of water in the fiscal year 1979-80 that it did the past fiscal year, it will pay \$146,119.43.

The city water rates were raised 12 1/2 cents to \$1.12 1/2 per 1,000 gallons of water for the current fiscal year. Matthews said the rate declines as the amount used increases.

He said House of Raeford pays the same water rates that every residential and industrial customer pays.

The House of Raeford contribution to the city sewage has been a subject of periodic discussions between the town and the company for the past 10 years. Matthews and Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., indicated Tuesday.

Monday night, the mayor and council asked Matthews to arrange a meeting with Johnson for a discussion of the com-

pany's total operation as it relates to the city.

Matthews said he was unable to reach Johnson Tuesday.

He said a State engineer has advised the city administrator that the turkey plant's discharge into the city system is a problem but that if the plant would treat its sewage at its site it would go a long way to solving the problem.

Matthews said that, specifically "a tremendous amount" of grease and turkey pin feathers are dumped from the plant into the city system.

This matter, he said, the city has to skim off, then bury at the city - county landfill.

Yet if the House of Raeford (See TURKEY PLANT page 12)

At Commissioners' Meeting

Board Tables Road Plan; New Armory Construction Delayed

The Board of Hoke County Commissioners Monday adopted the federal Housing Opportunity Plan, voted to table the proposed County Thoroughfare Plan, and learned construction of the planned new National Guard Armory will be delayed by President Carter's directive to stop or curtail all armory construction nationally for a two - year period.

The actions were taken and the information received during the commissioners' regular first - Monday meeting for August.

The Housing Opportunity Plan represents an effort to coordinate the distribution of federally assisted

housing resources within Hoke and the three other counties of Region N, Lumber River Council of Governments area, the commissioners were told by Charles Niedringhaus of the Lumber River COG. Niedringhaus explained the proposal.

The motion adopted by the commissioners also accepts the allocation of housing units to the county.

The summary of the HOP explained by Niedringhaus says the plan details each jurisdiction's housing needs and integrates the relative needs of the communities with regional distribution goals.

The summary also says each jurisdiction retains its right to decide whether to seek federally assisted housing funds.

"Even a community choosing not to seek federal assistance," it says, "may benefit from the increased availability of housing funds for neighboring towns and counties in meeting the regional needs for low - income housing."

"HOP is designed to satisfy ... federal guidelines (concerning dispersion of housing opportunities for lower - income households) by providing a broader choice of lower income housing locations throughout the region without any undue

concentration of assisted housing in any jurisdiction."

Under the plan smaller towns and the rural areas in the four counties will receive greater percentages of federal housing assistance funds for the region than in the past. HOP works in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which must approve the plan after it is adopted locally.

In order for the plan to be adopted regionally, at least 50 per cent of all jurisdictions, representing 75 per cent of the total regional population, must approve the HOP.

"If the HOP is accepted prior to the next round of federal Community Development grant pre-applications this fall, prompt consideration by each jurisdiction is necessary," the summary says.

The other counties in the region are Robeson, Scotland and Bladen. Niedringhaus said the HOP should make getting federal funds for housing easier for the local government units who want it.

He said an objective is to disperse housing; reduce the concentration of new housing in urban areas.

A region retains all housing units allocated to it, he explained. If a local area within the region turns down an allocation, the allocation will go to another area within the region or within the rejecting area's county itself.

Niedringhaus was accompanied to the commissioners' meeting by Vic Josephs and John Highfill, also of the Lumber River COG staff.

THOROUGHFARE PLAN

The commissioners need to talk further about the proposed County Thoroughfare Plan with the State Department of Transportation. John Balfour, chairman of the board of county commissioners, said before the motion to table was made.

Commissioner Danny DeVane said the plan would be detrimental to downtown Raeford business, though good for beach traffic from Southern Pines, since the plan would provide a route that would bypass most of Raeford from N.C. 211 west of town to N.C. 211 east at the southern end. The route would run near the east and south borders of Raeford.

Commissioner Mabel Riley said parts of the route would "take up a lot of good farm land."

DeVane said the proposed route wouldn't eliminate downtown truck traffic using N.C. 20.

ARMORY CONSTRUCTION

The commissioners were informed the new armory is still scheduled for construction not later than 1981 and that a recommendation to reschedule construction a year earlier was to be submitted to the U.S. Department of the Army.

The information regarding the construction was transmitted in a letter written August 2 by CW 3 Jesse Jones, assistant adjutant of Headquarters, Second Battalion, 252nd Armor, Army National Guard, at the Raeford armory.

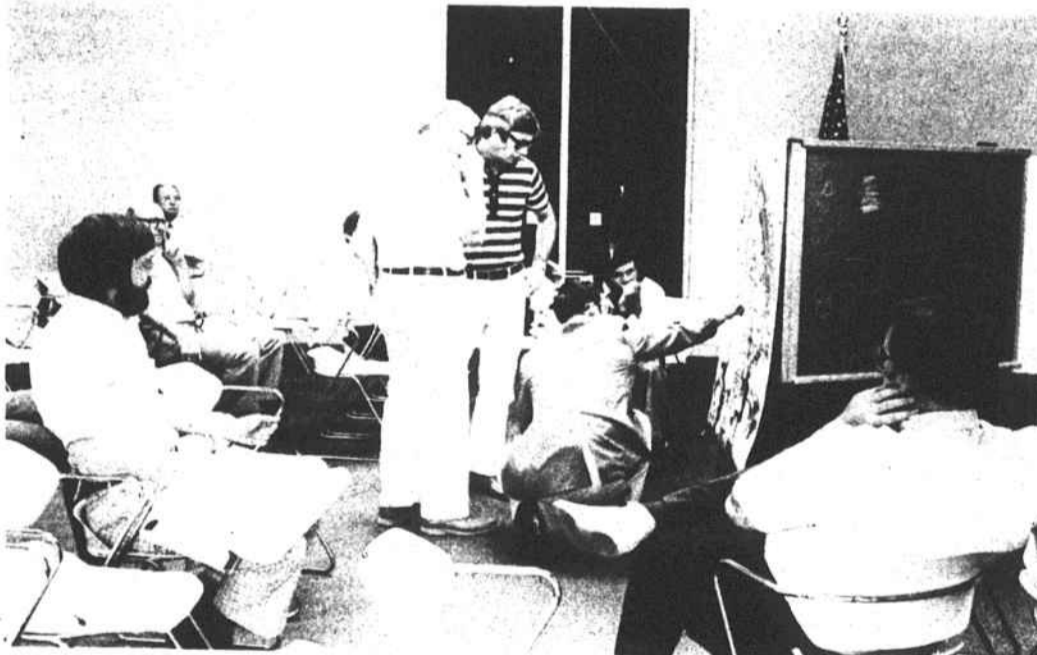
Balfour gave the information to the commissioners.

Jones said in his letter a representative of the General Accounting Office inspected the facilities a few days before August 2 and said the earlier construction date would be recommended.

Jones said if the recommendation isn't acted on, construction still would begin not later than 1981, taking about 16 months to com-

(See 4-LANING, page 12)

(See BOARD, page 12)



CITY-COUNTY ROAD MEETING - Map of proposed Raeford Thoroughfare Plan is discussed at Thursday's meeting of Hoke County and Raeford officials on the proposed Raeford and Hoke County plans. At the map are, standing, L-R, Robert Gatlin and John Balfour, chairman of the Board of Hoke County Commissioners; and, pointing to a detail on the map is City Councilman Vardell Hedgpeth. At left, seated, L-R, are County Commissioner Danny DeVane, Assistant County Manager Lester Simpson, and W.C. Sellars, Raeford city public works superintendent. Seated at right is Andy Andrews, a State Department of Transportation project engineer. In right foreground is Raeford City Manager Ron Matthews.

U.S. 401 North

4-Laning Starts In '84

Hoke County and Raeford city officials were told Thursday four-laning of U.S. 401 north 10 miles from Raeford to 71st High School in Cumberland County was scheduled to start in the fiscal year of 1984 and work to acquire rights of way on the construction route would start in fiscal 1982.

Bob Booker, project engineer with the Thoroughfare Planning Unit of the State Department of Transportation, said this during a Raeford town hall meeting for discussion of the city's and county's proposed thoroughfare plans.

The city and county plans took into account the anticipated de-

velopment in traffic volume to the year 2000. For example, replying to a question, Booker showed traffic counts predicting traffic volume would be 9,000 vehicles daily on N.C. 211 northwest by 2000, where the 1978 count shows 4,600; and 8,000 on U.S. 401 southwest by 2000, compared with 5,000 in 1978.

No official actions were taken by the City Council or the Board of County Commissioners following the discussions during which changes were proposed.

A feasibility study will be made by the Division Eight DOT staff in Aberdeen regarding a truck route to avoid the Raeford central busi-

ness district.

City and county officials proposed a sign be posted on N.C. 211 at the western edge of Raeford at Palmer Street advising truckers they can use the present route south along a connector linking 211 and the U.S. 401 bypass to go around the business section.

The county's Thoroughfare Plan as well as the city's will go to the Raeford Planning Board for recommendation to the City Council because the county's proposed routes would lie in the city's one-mile-wide zoning belt adjoin-

New Students To Register

All principals will be on duty the week of August 13-17 to register new students in Hoke County or anyone who failed to register last spring.

All parents are urged to visit the school during that week to register their child.

High School students should report directly to the Guidance Center for registration.