



**EXPLAINING PLAN** -- Florida engineer Royal Jones (center left) and House of Raeford representative Tom Greer (center right) explain proposed sewage pre-treatment plan as members of the Raeford City Council and others listen during Monday's meeting.

## City OK's Treatment Plant

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Grease, feathers and bones would be filtered out before they entered the city system and transported to a rendering facility, Greer said.

"You will catch what we've been catching and burying all these years," Mayor John K. McNeill said.

By using the new process, that material which has been dumped into the city system and wasted will now be rendered and sold, Greer said.

The city has had to bury the material because by the time it reached the sewage treatment plant it had mixed with chemicals from other industries and with domestic waste and was not recyclable.

Although city Manager Ron Matthews said municipal taxpayers have incurred costs for disposing of the plant's waste which are equivalent to the surcharge levied against the firm, Mayor McNeill assured council members that having the House of Raeford's discharge problem corrected would be worth the lost funds.

As long as the provisions of the agreement were carried out and the city was provided with the plans and specifications, the state NRCD would also probably go along and would not levy threatened civil penalties against Raeford, both Matthews and McNeill said.

"The state doesn't want to penalize us anymore than we want to get penalized," Councilman Bob Gentry said.

"The state don't run us. We run the state," Gentry said.

Gentry proposed waiving the fines immediately, but other council members suggested holding the decision to see if the House of Raeford completes work on the pre-treatment facility as promised.

Some evidence that work has already been done on the system is showing up in recent test taken at the Raeford treatment plant, McNeill said, noting that the turkey plant has been getting low BOD readings for the last four days.

"I've been checking it every day," the mayor said.

Municipal regulations require that the House of Raeford bring its

discharge to the level of 400 milligrams BOD per liter, however, until recently the company's effluent has had readings over the 1,000 milligrams BOD, Matthews said.

"Some of us on the council have been working on this for 10 years," Councilman Vardell Hedgpeth Jr. said.

Monday's meeting was one of the first responses the city has had to numerous efforts to get the firm to correct the problem, Hedgpeth added.

The response came less than 30 days after the city levied \$30,000 in fines on the turkey plant.

"We should have charged you that \$30,000 back in July, then we would be through with this thing," Hedgpeth said.

Kitchens noted that the House of Raeford had been aware of the problem and had been working on improving its discharge prior to July.

"We're as tired of it as you are. We're ready to get past it," Kitchens said.

## Battle At Coop Continues

The Lumbee River Electric Membership Corp. Board of Directors' expenditures for 1982 were \$140,294.10, which was 33% higher than the 1981 figure, Carl Branch, spokesman for the LREMC Action Group, reported this week.

The group is seeking the removal of the 12 members of the board for allegedly excessive spending of funds for meetings, travel and other items. The group originally was organized, last December 29, to persuade the directors to explain why they fired Derl Hinson, LREMC general manager.

In his statement referring to the 1981 and 1982 expenditures, Branch said, "High rollers" (for 1982) are J.W. Hunt at \$14,475.01, Davis K. Parker at \$13,651.51, Marcia Lowery at \$12,637.74, and Alton Dudley at \$11,626.63.

"So far, no representative of the LREMC board has contacted our group to explain any benefits to the members for these outrageously extravagant expenditures.

"Of the top '4' Big Spenders, it may be noted that each race, and both sexes are represented -- no discrimination in spending abilities."

Earlier, the directors cut the board's proposed 1983 budget by

\$500,000 and issued an explanation for the firing of Hinson, which was termed "an erosion of confidence" over a period of time between the general manager and the board.

The board also announced it would reduce the members' per diem expenses to \$75 from \$100 and regulate the number of meetings to be attended and the number of directors who would attend.

The board also announced only six of the 12 members would attend this week's national Rural Electrification Administration meeting in Las Vegas, Nev. Branch's statement of January 24 criticized planned attendance at the Las Vegas meeting asking, "How many of you are going to Las Vegas knowing that I shall publicize this action? Can you go party it up, when there are members who can't pay their bills, and a former general manager who has no job, after having given you 8 years of dedicated service?"

Branch also suggested the directors "can save the expense" of the March 3 meeting requested by the Action Group. "Resign, all of you," Branch said. "Don't wait for the March 3 meeting. I will accept ONLY 12 resignations with the ... Action Group naming the

time, date, place and slate of new directors..."

The Board's answer follows: "While the 12 members of the LREMC Board of Directors agree with Branch's assessment that this special meeting of members would be costly; it believes that "a special meeting of members may be called ... upon written request signed by not less than 10 percent of the members and it shall thereupon be the duty of the Secretary to cause notice of such meeting..."

"It is also true the costs of such a meeting would be shared by all members of the rural electric cooperative."

"However, the Board of Directors has proven its desire to trim costs as evidenced by the \$500,000 cut in the 1983 budget last week. It reiterates that the members of the Board studied the budget from November until last week's decision was announced."

"These cuts were achieved by evaluation of the entire operation of the cooperative ... not just some areas. The Board now intends to undertake policy changes which support their budget work."

"The Board would most certainly like to avoid the cost of a special meeting, but if the LREMC membership desires to bring one about, it will be carried out to the letter of the Bylaws."

## County Mulls Ambulance Service

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solution to the Ambulance Service's financial troubles.

In December, Henley reported the service has been unable to collect \$54,000 in unpaid bills from patients it had served. The county budget provides the service with \$64,000 for the service's operations.

At a committee meeting Monday night, the most recent of three, Henley said that he would need \$32,435 more annually to operate and that his company would go bankrupt if the old contract were not renegotiated within 30 days.

Upchurch in his report to the commissioners the next day, quoted Henley as saying the service wouldn't close its doors and will operate as long as it could.

The new amount Henley has asked for would be reduced if the county provided a building and paid the utilities costs.

Mabel Riley, a former county commissioner who is a committee member, suggested at Monday night's meeting that the committee consider a reduced service to save money on equipment and salaries, and the committee did consider it. But Henley objected, saying that if the service were reduced he would leave Hoke County.

County Manager James Martin at Tuesday's meeting said Henley had called that morning asking that the ambulance service's basic fee be increased to \$55 from \$35.

Upchurch said the Rescue Squad also was considered as a replacement for Henley's group but that

the squad wanted \$88,000 per year and nothing to do with equipment. He said the Rescue Squad operates on the basic EMT level, which is a step under the Ambulance Service's Intermediate.

Meanwhile, State Rep. Danny DeVane of Raeford, a former county commissioner, has advised he has included Hoke County in a local bill on the state law requiring payment for ambulance services and penalties for failure to pay.

The other members of the Ambulance Committee besides Mrs. Riley and Upchurch are Eddie McNeill, Anthony Oxendine, and Barbara Buie. Mike Tardiff, manager of the Scotland County Ambulance Service, has been serving as an advisor to the committee and participated in its meetings.

## Youth Saves Family From Fire

Carolyn Kearns and her young sons lost their home and everything but the clothes they were wearing when a fire destroyed their mobile home in Puppy Creek community at 2 a.m. January 13.

And if it hadn't been for Matthew, they might not have had their lives. Mrs. Kearns told *The News-Journal* Friday.

She said Matthew, 7, was awakened by fire at the foot of his bed. He awoke his brother, Lorenzo, 11, and they awoke their mother, so all got out of the burning trailer uninjured.

Matthew is in the Second Grade of Scurlock School.

The Puppy Creek Volunteer Fire Department went to the scene. The

mobile home was in Carolina Country Mobile Home Park.

Mrs. Kearns said she and the boys are staying with her mother, Mrs. Annie B. Ray, until they can find another home.

Anyone interested in helping Mrs. Kearns and the children with donations are advised to telephone 875-8672.

## Charges Dropped In Cases Handled By Ex-SBI Agent

Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell Friday afternoon dropped charges against four drug defendants because a former SBI agent who was a witness is under indictment in Hoke County Superior Court.

She referred to the following defendants and charges:

Regina Bullard McMillan, Rt. 1, Red Springs, possession with intent to sell and deliver a controlled substance, marijuana and felonious manufacturing of marijuana with intent to sell and deliver; Julius Locklear, Rt. 1, Red Springs, possession with intent to sell and deliver marijuana; Clarence Bratcher, 403 Robeson St., Raeford, possession with intent to sell and deliver marijuana; and Elwood McNair, Rt. 1,

Raeford, possession with intent to sell and deliver marijuana.

Each of the statements of dismissal says the reason is "the state cannot call A.A. Dove as a witness because he is under indictment..."

Dove, 25, of Elizabeth City, was arraigned January 20 in Hoke County District Court on charges he altered evidence and obstructed

justice in the drug cases.

The cases of Tony White, Bobby Peterkin, and Ervin Benny Ross in which Dove also was involved with were disposed of previously by pleas, Miss Powell explained Friday.

Dove's Superior Court trial date had not been set before *The News-Journal's* deadline this week.

## Club Owner Charged For House Shooting

Brady Locklear, 39, of N.C. 71, Maxton, was charged Saturday with discharging a firearm (rifle) into an occupied dwelling early Friday morning, according to a warrant filed with the clerk of Hoke County Superior Court.

The Hoke County Sheriff's Department reported Locklear's wife told Deputy Sheriff Lt. J.W. Jones Locklear fired into her home on Rt. 2, Red Springs, and broke in. The report indicated a disagreement over a baby grandson was the cause of the trouble.

Deputy Sheriff Osie Finin quoted Locklear as denying he fired the shots.

Jones reported the investigation found a window shot out, five gunshot holes in a ceiling of the home and three spent .22 caliber shell

casings on the floor under the carport.

He said a door also was found apparently kicked in.

The warrant says the home was occupied by Dennis Locklear, the Locklears' son, and Susan Dickens Horne, besides Brady Locklear's wife, Althea.

Locklear is free under \$2,000 unsecured bond for appearance for trial Thursday in District Court.

Locklear owns Brady's, a club on N.C. 211 east near the Robeson County Line. Another club, Nashville Music, nearby, was destroyed last fall by a fire believed deliberately set. The case is still under investigation by the Hoke County Sheriff's Department assisted by the SBI.

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