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County commission passes up senior citizen funds

By Ed Miller

Members of the Hoke County Commission voted Monday morning to pass up \$56,000 in state funds to build a center for senior citizens.

The action was taken because of unanswered questions and because the application had to be made before commissioners could be sure of the county's obligations under the grant.

During the last county commission meeting, Hoke County Social Services (DSS) Director Ken Witherspoon was asked to make the application soon after he found out the funds were available.

The application was presented to commissioners on Monday.

"There is concern for the need of additional planning," said Witherspoon.

"Time just doesn't permit the

development of additional details," the DSS director said.

The grant was supposed to have been applied for by September 30, but additional time had been secured for commissioners to review the application, Witherspoon said.

"I like to see grant money come into the county usually, but there are more strings attached to it," Commissioner Wyatt Upchurch said.

Upchurch and Witherspoon both agreed during the meeting that the grant application in this case is a "rush job."

Upchurch also expressed concern over what state regulations may require of the commission.

"That's what tore us up with the ambulance service. The state required us to hire a certain number of people," said Upchurch.

"I have sort of a negative view on this because of the community buildings in the county now that are not being used," Upchurch said.

"I cannot see us building another building for the county to maintain," he said.

According to Witherspoon, a new building has not been proposed for the center. Renovations of old buildings had been recommended, he said.

The commissioners expressed concern that operating expenses for the building would have to be paid by the county.

"I just can't see us putting up another building without the money to operate it," said Josephine Hall, who was attending the meeting.

"I'm just trying to be practical. Unless I'm assured that we are go-

ing to have some money to operate this thing, I'm skeptical," she said.

Witherspoon estimated between \$14,000 and \$20,000 per year in operating expenses.

"First of all, I think it's a dead issue if we expect you to pay all the operating expenses," Witherspoon told commissioners.

In his concept of the building, Witherspoon said the center would try to minimize county expenses, but would not be self sufficient.

"Are we willing to increase the taxes of Hoke County one penny to support this thing?" Commission Chairman John Balfour asked.

"I'd like to see us do something for senior citizens, but I'd hate to hurt them in the long run," said Commissioner Cleo Bratcher.

"The time frame of the whole thing has upset me a lot. It was just

handed to us too fast," former County Commissioner Mable Riley said in the meeting.

Riley was among the Hoke County residents present at a recent Lumber River Council of Government meeting when the grant was offered.

"Even if we had the money in the county to operate this thing, will the people use it?" asked Riley.

"You have to look at things in black and white before you really see them. Some things that are good are not always good," she said.

"I'm in favor of helping senior citizens, but I've got a problem with the state putting guidelines on us," Commissioner James Albert Hunt said.

Currently, there are 92 centers operating in 63 counties in the

state, said Witherspoon.

Just after passing the motion not to apply for the grant, commissioners, on a motion from Upchurch, moved to form a council on aging for Hoke County.

According to the motion, there should be representatives on the council from each township in the county.

By the next meeting, a procedure for selecting those representatives will be presented to commissioners, Chairman Balfour said.

New health personnel

In other action passed by the commission, a new position at the Hoke County Health Department was approved after a request from Health Director Bobby Rogers to add the position to his clerical staff.

(See HEALTH, page 3A)

Recommendations OK'd for schools

By Ed Miller

Members of the Hoke County Board of Education adopted four facility recommendations Tuesday night that will, if implemented, lead to better schools for students.

Hoke County Superintendent Dr. Robert Nelson made the recommendations.

"These recommendations will lead us to our eventual goal of developing some solution for our facilities problems," said Nelson.

Of the four suggestions, the first is all important because without it, the other three are void.

A meeting with the Hoke County Commission is called for in that recommendation.

Financing for school construction will be a major topic in this meeting.

Board of Education members want to know if there are any other major projects on county back burners that will be competing against the schools for funding.

Another concern of board members is the status of Revenue Sharing.

According to Nelson, the commissioners can provide him with more timely information about the program's situation and possible elimination.

Commissioners will also be asked their views on committing funds as proposed in a Long Range Facilities Planning Committee's report of a year ago.

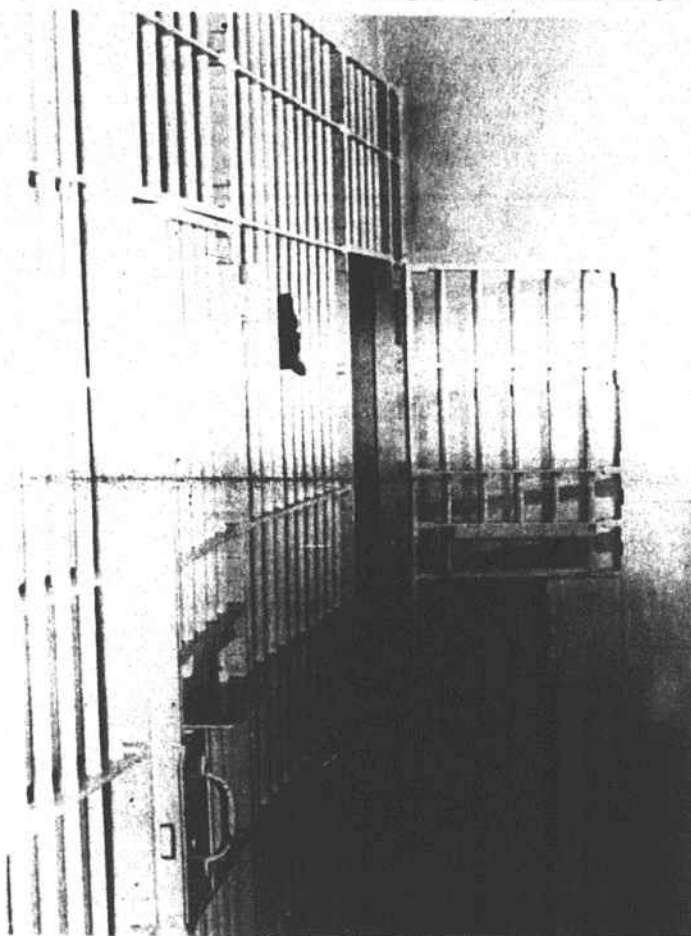
Perhaps the most crucial topic to be discussed in the meeting will be how the commissioners feel about floating a bond issue for facility funding and what the commissioners' position on that bond issue would be.

"If we don't have the commissioners' support, we are going to have a tremendous uphill battle to get a bond issue for facilities," said Nelson.

In the second recommendation, Nelson said the school board needs to commit to a detailed study of construction at elementary schools in the county.

The possible product of this study will be expansion of those schools to include the fifth grade, said Nelson.

This move will be made as educators in Hoke County slide toward a "middle school" system of teaching.



County jail

Cells in the Hoke County Jail near the area where a Raeford man was found hanging from the bars on Saturday.

Raeford man found dead hanging in county jail

By Ed Miller

A man was found dead by sheriff's deputies after he apparently hanged himself in the Hoke County Jail's detoxification cell last Saturday evening.

Robert Lee Chappelle, of 702 Forest Street, Raeford, was found by Hoke County Deputy Ralph Tindall at 5:40 p.m. Saturday, said Hoke County Sheriff Dave Barrington.

The 28-year-old Chappelle used his own socks to apparently hang himself, said Barrington.

Chappelle, who had been arrested by Raeford Police officials and charged with being drunk and disruptive, was not a first timer in the Hoke County Jail, records show.

The Raeford man had been arrested on the same charge on December 12, 1984 and sentenced to 20 days in jail on December 18, records from the Hoke County Clerk of Superior Court's office show.

Chappelle was arrested at 4:40 p.m. at the Raeford Cleaners by Raeford Policemen Steve Coughlin and George Brown, Barrington said.

He was charged, and Hoke County Magistrate E.G. Inman placed a \$50 bond on him.

Officer Coughlin made some phone calls for the man, but no one answered at any of the

numbers, said the sheriff.

"For his own protection, Chappelle was placed into isolation cell number three in the jail, said Barrington.

The sheriff said that all intoxicated or impaired people are placed in isolation cells until they sober up to protect them against injury.

In the regular cells of the jail, doors are controlled electronically and slide from open to closed.

"To keep a drunk from sticking his arm in the door, we put them in isolation cells," said Barrington.

"The arrest was made without incident," said Barrington.

A witness to the arrest confirmed that police officers even tried to send the man home with his sister before he was arrested.

"There were no problems other than him (Chappelle) being a little boisterous as all drunks are," said Barrington.

Here are the events as they apparently occurred prior to the discovery of Chappelle's body:

• Chappelle was placed in the cell at 4:50 p.m., he said.

• At 5:05 p.m., Deputy Tindall prepared to serve food to Chappelle and the other 16 prisoners in the jail, said Barrington.

"While he was preparing the food, he (Tindall) took two or three calls," Barrington said.

(See RAEFORD, page 2A)

Reluctant council endorses phone EAS

By Ed Miller

After an hour of squabbling, members of the Raeford City Council passed a resolution endorsing the installation of extended area telephone service (EAS) between Raeford and Fayetteville.

By taking the action, the city joins the Hoke County Commission, the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Board, whose members approved similar resolutions.

With only three councilmen present to vote on the issue, it took about a half-an-hour to get a motion on the floor and another half-hour to get a second.

Councilman Vardell Hedgpeth, who is also a member of the Raeford-Hoke Economic Development Commission and a member of the EAS committee, was absent from the monthly session, and councilman Bob Gentry had to leave the meeting early.

Councilman Joe Upchurch was most vocal in his disapproval of the EAS.

"I believe there are more people against it (EAS) than there are for it. That's what I've heard from the people who talk to me," said Upchurch.

"It will hurt as many people as it helps," said Upchurch.

Economic Development Commission Director John Howard was also present at the meeting to answer questions.

Howard told councilmen that the service could bring new businesses and residences into

Hoke County and Raeford as well as cutting the costs of present residents' long distance service.

"I feel like it will pay for itself if it gets put in," said John Furmage, present as a spectator at the meeting.

"I've seen it happen. It will increase your tax base," said Furmage.

"Once you get it in, the people who don't use it now will use it," he said.

"There are a lot of 50, 60, 70 and \$100,000 houses in Parkton that were not there before (EAS)," Furmage said.

"I've never seen them," Upchurch said.

According to Raeford City Manager Tom Phillips, people in the military are discouraged from moving into Hoke County because of all the special arrangements that have to be made for Ft. Bragg to call them.

"Post officials frown on personnel living out of the area," he said.

"On the other hand, some businessmen may lose business because it will be just as easy to call a person in the same business in Fayetteville as it will be to call the one in town," Phillips said.

"Ft. Bragg will add a good bit to this community if we can tap that source," Howard said.

"I agree with Joe (Upchurch) that there are a lot of people against this," Councilman Benny McLeod said.

"But, I really believe that the

(See DOWNTOWN, page 2A)

Four charged following bite, high-speed chase

Four persons have been arrested following an incident last Thursday that started after a deputy sheriff tried to break up a fight and was bitten and ended with a high speed chase involving county, city and state law enforcement officers.

Willie Howard Graham, of Rt. 3, Box 75 has been charged with carrying a concealed weapon, assaulting an officer, failing to stop for a blue light and siren, driving while impaired (DWI), hit and run property damage and driving without a license, say records from the Hoke County Court-house.

Sharon Graham, of 1914 Autry Street, Raeford has been charged with assaulting an officer.

John Howard Graham, of 3318, White Oak Drive, Raeford, has been charged with hit and run property damage, driving without a license, having no insurance, failure to stop for a blue light and siren, having no registration, DWI, careless and reckless driving and attempting to elude arrest, records say.

John Graham and Willie Graham were still in jail Monday under \$1,000 bond, records show.

Sharon Graham was out of jail on \$750 bond.

Incidents leading to the arrests were started when Hoke County Deputy Clarence Patterson was called to Harmony Heights Trailer Park to stop a fight.

Upon his arrival, Patterson found several people standing around arguing, he said in a report.

Patterson asked the people to leave and all but one woman did.

She approached another woman and Deputy Patterson stepped between the two women, he said in the report.

Patterson took the woman by the arm and she bit him on the shoulder.

As Patterson tried to arrest Sharon Graham, John Graham also assaulted him, reports say.

As they struggled, a crowd approached and demanded that the deputy let the Grahams alone.

Patterson was forced to draw his gun, he said.

As he did so, the people left running for their cars.

Patterson then called for assistance.

(See AREA, page 2A)



Winning show

State Rep. Danny DeVane, D-Hoke, congratulates one of the winners in Saturday's Hoke Band Festival. Arts writer Sonya Falls and photographer Terry Houston take a look at the festival in review on page one of section B in today's News-Journal.

Around Town

By Sam Morris

Monday morning it felt like frost would be on the ground. The temperature was in the low 40s Sunday night and it took a while for the sun to warm things up. As this column is being written Monday afternoon about four o'clock my thermometer was on 68 degrees in the shade.

We did get some much needed rain last Thursday night and Friday morning. I haven't heard how much, but water was standing in my driveway.

The forecast is for cool nights and sunny days and for the temperature to reach 80° by the weekend.

It has been several years since I had anything to do with a United Fund Drive. The \$28,853 budget for the drive this year should be reached if everyone will give their fair share to the charity organizations that are listed. These organizations help many people in the county and state that you would never imagine.

The reason I make this statement is because for 17 years I was treasurer of the Hoke County

(See AROUND, page 3A)