

The News-Journal

RAEFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

Covering Hoke County Like A Roof Since 1905

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Volume LXXVIII Number 38

Thursday, January 8, 1987

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New DSS worker to be employed

By Sally Jamir
News-Journal Staff Writer

Workload stress at the Department of Social Services (DSS) will soon be alleviated due to recent action taken by members of the Hoke County Board of Commissioners.

Members of the board on Monday granted a request made by DSS to hire a new eligibility specialist.

The position, approved by DSS board members on December 29, will be established in February and will cost the county \$6,795 annually. The new position will work in intake and application processing where there has been an influx of applicants due to an increase in DSS programs.

A shortage of staff to handle the influx of applicants from additional Federal programs have led to delays in processing information. The delays caused DSS staff to miss important deadlines and be responsible for financial penalties, according to DSS Director Ken Witherspoon.

Witherspoon said DSS must be able to meet these deadlines as well as see applicants in a timely fashion in order to comply with federal regulations.

"It's got to make a major impact upon it," Witherspoon said of the current situation.

Penalties totaling \$2,600 have been paid by the DSS since July 1, 1986. However, Witherspoon said that the comments of the state DSS director in a recent evaluation report expressed surprise in finding that the Hoke County DSS "had not deviated from policy" with the number of applications they were responsible for.

Before commissioners voted on the request for the position, Commissioner Neill McPhatter spoke in support of approving the request by saying that the condition of inadequate staff was not one that came about "overnight" but one that occurred gradually over a number of years.

McPhatter said the situation is "not going to get better. It's going to get worse."

"It's frustrating for staff to have more pressure and still not accomplish goals."

In other business, commissioners granted a request from the Economic Development Commission (EDC) for \$5,000 for filing an

application for a Development Planning Grant with the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

The decision followed a second public hearing held in order to receive comments for or against the grant. A brief presentation about the grant was given by Economic Developer John Howard.

Also, commissioners passed the proposed revisions to the Alternative Learning Center at J.W. Turlington School. The changes in the program provide for an after-school detention program with school bus transportation provided afterwards.

In further business, commissioners moved to have county attorney Duncan McFayden draft an ordinance which would regulate the operation of masseurs, massage parlors, health salons and clubs in Hoke County.

The request for an ordinance was presented by the Raeford Ministerial Association.

Commissioners expressed the opinion that clubs of this nature could become a problem if they are not checked by regulations and the intention of the ordinance would be to keep them from coming into the county.

In other business, commissioners moved to designate the "Commissioners Room" as a District Court for the duration of the Superior Court case trying Edward Lee Cummings for first degree murder.

Judge Sol Cherry spoke on behalf of the court system saying that facilities available for District Court, criminal cases, as well as child support cases, would be backlogged.

Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell said that the arraignment and filing of pleas, is scheduled for Hoke County Superior Court on January 21.

Commissioners also granted a request for \$11,000 in funds for renovations and improvements to Armory Park.

American Legion Commander Freddie Williams presented the request for funds which he said would improve lighting at the park and enable the park to "become self-supporting" through the offering of the facilities to people wishing to hold games there.

(See NEW, page 3A)



Sunrise

Light pours over an open field at dawn on a winter morning. Although cold weather has drawn many around the hearth, snow has yet to blanket the tree-lined pastures.

photo by Sally Jamir

One of the county's oldest

Hoke Drug goes out of business

Hoke Drug Company on Main Street, one of the oldest businesses in the county, closed on the last day of 1986.

The store dates back to 1911 when the McPherson Brothers Drug Company opened in the C.J. Benner building. In 1912, S.P. McPherson and Frank S. Blue renamed it the Hoke Drug Company.

In 1914, Blue bought the McPherson interest and then sold the business to J.S. and Edgar Townsend in 1915.

The business again changed hands in 1924 when it was purchased by Walter P. Baker. In 1961 Walter N. Coley, who had been working at the store since 1956, bought half interest in the business.

Baker died in 1966 and, in 1967 Mike Wood joined the staff, buying into the business two years later.

Hoke Drug Company's prescription file and inventory were purchased by Tom Howell, owner of the drug store across the street,

Howell Drug Company, Inc. Howell Drug has been in business on Main Street since 1947.

"Mike Wood was concerned about his long-time customers," Howell said. "We promised Mike we would provide his customers with the same service. Hopefully their service won't be interrupted at all."

Howell, a county commissioner and chairman of the Raeford-Hoke Economic Development Commission, said it bothers him that another Main Street store has

gone out of business.

"I hate to see anybody close on Main Street," he said.

Howell said he plans to hold a clearance sale in the Hoke Drug Company store, but "eventually all the merchandise will be moved across the street."

The building in which Hoke Drug Company is located is owned by William Moses and Walter Coley.

"After the end of this month, the building will be available," Howell said.

County briefs

Wanted man arrested

A Fayetteville man wanted for parole violations in connection with a voluntary manslaughter conviction was arrested by a Highway Patrol officer, according to Sheriff's Department records.

Tommy McEachern, 34, 5200 Hodge Street, convicted of voluntary manslaughter in 1982, was arrested close to midnight, December 31 by Trooper Brent White on 401 South just south of Bowmore.

McEachern was clocked at over 100 miles per hour, driving a white Chevrolet Camaro Z-28.

Records say that McEachern had in his possession packages of a white substance, which were later found to be cocaine. At a later time marijuana was found in the car.

McEachern was also armed, records say.

Detective C.E. Herzig reported that a check with the Department of Criminal Information revealed that McEachern was wanted for parole violations in connection with the manslaughter conviction in 1982 for which he received a six-year prison sentence.

Records say, McEachern was arrested for driving while impaired, speeding, carrying a concealed weapon, possession of a firearm by a felon, possession of cocaine with intent to sell and possession of marijuana with intent to sell or deliver.

All controlled substances were confiscated by the Sheriff's department as well as the weapon, the car and over \$940 in cash. Records say McEachern's bond is set at \$55,830 secured.

Raeford woman killed

A Raeford woman was killed in an accident on NC 211 on the evening of January 4.

Ila Belle Ivey, 78, Route 3, Raeford, was hit by a vehicle driven by Clyde Chambers, Route 3, Raeford, when she walked into the west-bound lane of NC 211 three and a half miles west of Raeford. Ivey was pronounced dead at the scene of the accident.

Records say, no charges were filed.

Evington begins pastorate at First Baptist

When the Rev. J. Max Evington preached his first sermon as the new pastor of Raeford's First Baptist Church on Sunday, he brought a special message to the congregation.

His sermon was entitled "The Pastor And The People," and in it, Evington discussed what the relationship between a pastor and his congregation "ought to be and should be."

"I shared with them my vision of the church under my pastoral leadership as being a fellowship of joy, trust and gratitude," Evington said.

The Rev. Evington first preached to the Raeford congregation on November 30 at the request of the church's pastor selection committee. The committee was searching for a pastor to replace The Rev. Billy Beaver, who resigned in December.

That first sermon in Raeford, which is known in the Baptist Church as a "trial sermon," made the right impression because the congregation voted to "extend the call" to Evington that afternoon.

During Evington's November visit to Raeford, he found the people to be "very warm, caring and loving."

"The church has that reputation," he said. "I feel very fortunate to be here."

A native of Spartanburg County, South Carolina, The Rev. Evington graduated from Gaffney High School where he was an honor student, president of the student body, a four-year letter-



Rev. J. Max Evington

man in baseball and a two-year letterman in football.

Evington served in the United States Navy from 1952 to 1956. He was graduated from Gardner Webb College, Boiling Springs in 1958, Wofford College, Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1960 and earned a bachelor of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1963.

He has served as pastor of Midway Baptist Church in Gaffney; Cypress Chapel Baptist Church in Spring Hope; Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Seaford; Jackson Baptist Church in Jackson and Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, Shelby. For the last 12 years he was

pastor of Mills Home Baptist Church in Thomasville.

Active in civic and community activities, Evington has served on the Thomasville Board of Education and the Thomasville Recreation Commission. He has served as President of the Thomasville Lions Club.

Rev. Evington is married to the former Orilee Alsbrooks. They have three sons, Max Jr. and Gregory Alan, both married, and Brian Scott, a college student.

"Raeford is a beautiful little town with a lot of good people," Evington said. "I'm looking forward to spending a lot of good years here. It looks like it's going to be a great place to live."

Around Town

By Sam Morris

New Year's Day was a wet one in Raeford. If the old saying about what happens the first day of the year will follow for the remainder of the year, then it should be a wet year.

The temperatures have been in the 40s and 50s for most of the time, but the wind Monday made it feel colder. We had a big frost over the weekend and in the early morning it looked like snow.

The forecast is for the weather to warm up for the remainder of the week and it could reach 60° during the day. This will be good for golf.

The committee for the Jimmy James Appreciation Day met last Friday and began putting plans together for the banquet to be held on Saturday, January 24 at the MacDonald Gym. The banquet will begin at 6:30 p.m. The price of the banquet tickets will be \$7.50 and can be purchased only at the Raeford-Hoke Chamber of Commerce office in the Old Depot building on Main Street. The deadline for buying tickets will be Monday, January 19.

A program will be presented at the banquet and Marv McNeill is in charge. More details about the program when it is finalized.

Contributions for a gift for Jimmy James will be accepted through the end of the month. (See AROUND, page 3A)