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School Board Seeks Legal Study On Budget Cuts

Faced with a \$500,000 cut in its 1980-81 budget request, the Board of Education decided last week to ask its attorney "to study legal ramifications" of the county commissioners' actions and report to the Board at 8 p.m. this week.

The commissioners reduced the school's proposed current expense

budget from \$2,024,232 to \$1,555,000. The county appropriation for the next fiscal year will be \$46,000 more than it was this year.

Board Member Jimmy Strickland made the motion to restudy the budget in view of the cut and to ask for a legal study.

"It seems the two boards are at an impasse on the

budget," said E.L. Boyette, chairman. "There are processes to be taken if the question is not settled by the two boards. The staff should go over the budget to cut all but the most worthwhile items, and if the two boards still can't agree, the budget should be examined by an impartial official."

Boyette then asked Strick-

land to make the motion.

Strickland said he believed the two boards should meet again on the budget. "It may be a year that we need to take a beating (on the budget)," he added.

Assistant Superintendent L.S. Guy asked the board to set priorities for the staff to follow in meeting the commissioners' cuts.

Duplin Rescue Squad Cuts Pender Service

Rescue squad services provided to residents of northern Pender County by Wallace Rescue Squad have been cut off until the Pender County Commissioners arrange a contract with Duplin County, according to Hiram Brinson, Duplin's director of Emergency Services.

Pender citizens in Willard, Watha and other nearby communities have been served by the Wallace Rescue Squad from across the Duplin-Pender County lines. The Wallace squad is closer to those communities than the Pender County Rescue Squad in Burgaw.

Duplin County was advised by the N.C. Attorney General's office several months ago that Duplin rescue squads cannot legally serve Pender without a contract between the two counties. The Wallace Rescue Squad continued to serve Pender residents in spite of the ruling until about three weeks ago when its ambulance failed to pass a state inspection.

"We could slip down there because we had an ambulance of our own," J.C. Bryant, captain of the squad said Friday. "There are no boundary restrictions when a squad owns its own vehicle. But our vehicle was not recertified. The ambulances we're using now are county-controlled, so it's illegal to go down there."

"We don't want it to be this way," Bryant said. "These people are not outsiders. They're home folks. They do business in Wallace."

Bryant said an accident occurred at a ballpark near Wallace, but within the Pender County boundary on Thursday night.

"A guy's arm was broken in several places," he said. "We could have been there in two minutes, and it took 25 minutes for the Pender squad to get there from

Burgaw. Don't get me wrong, I'm not criticizing them, but it puts us in a bad position. People look down at us for not responding, but it is illegal for us to do business in another governing body's territory without getting the consent of that body."

A meeting has been scheduled for June 30 at the Upper Union Community Building to discuss the problem with residents of the area, Bryant said.

According to Brinson, Duplin officials asked the Pender County Commissioners about a year ago for a financial contribution for rescue squad services. They were told the Pender squad could take care of Pender citizens, he said.

Bryant said the Pender Commissioners were later contacted and asked for permission for the Wallace Rescue Squad to come into Pender without a charge, but the commissioners never responded to the request.

S. Franklin Williams, chairman of the Duplin Commissioners, said Friday he sent a letter to Pender Board Chairman John W. James, Jr. this past week with a copy of the attorney general's ruling to clarify the problem.

"One of the Pender commissioners was quoted in a

local paper this week as saying he didn't really know what the problem is," Williams said. "I want to be sure that they do understand the problem. It's not that they don't have a good rescue squad, but the distances are an issue sometimes. They may have to go 15 miles to respond to a call that would only be a couple of miles for the Wallace squad. Someone's life could be at stake."

Duplin has an emergency services contract with Sampson, Lenoir and Wayne counties.

"We have the same situation up in Mount Olive as the Pender County and Wallace situation," Brinson said. "People in the northern end of our county are nearer to Mount Olive, which is in Wayne County, than to Wallace, and they are on the Mount Olive telephone exchange. We pay the Mount Olive Rescue Squad \$175 a month. It's much cheaper for us to help them out than to have to organize another rescue squad in that area."

Pender County Clerk Howard Holly said Friday the question of a contract with Duplin County had been scheduled for discussion at the Pender board's July 7 meeting.

Faison Budget Includes Recreation Funds

Faison town commissioners adopted a \$317,828 balanced budget including a \$16,500 recreation fund, at the special meeting June 16.

During a budget session held June 4, the Board had voted in a three to two decision to trim the recreation budget. Commissioners Helen Britt, Rachel Clifton and Fred Wheless had

moved to reduce the recreation budget from \$21,500 to \$10,000. Commissioners William Igoe and Billie Hollingsworth opposed the cut.

Funds taken from the recreation budget were allocated for sidewalks, \$2,000; rescue department, \$3,000; and capital reserve for a trash truck, \$6,500. The \$5,000 allocated for side-

walks and the rescue department was revenue sharing funds, while the \$6,500 had come from the general fund.

A public hearing on the town budget was held June 12th. The only topic discussed during the hearing was the cut of recreation funds. Approximately 111 town citizens appeared to oppose the \$10,500 cut in the

Miss Duplin County Competes In State Pageant

Contestant 13, Shari Arelley Jones Miss Duplin County 1980 is participating in the Miss North Carolina pageant in Raleigh this week.

Out of the 45 Miss North Carolina contestants from across the state, Miss Duplin, a native of Warsaw, will be contestant number 13. The state pageant began Monday and final competition will be Saturday night.

"Thirteen is a lucky number in my family," Shari said. "I would really rather have that number than any other number."

The Miss Duplin County pageant is sponsored by the Warsaw and Calypso Jaycees, and Shari says she is glad to have the opportunity to promote Duplin through the aid of the Jaycees. Being Miss Duplin County involves miles of travel all over the state to make appearances. Shari added that meeting the different queens in her travel has been a rewarding experience.

"But, what I like to do most, as Miss Duplin County, is to appear at events in Duplin. And, it really means a lot to me to know the people at home appreciate me. After all the people at home are what really matter."

"There were two reasons I

wanted to be Miss Duplin County. It was something I have always wanted to do since I was a little girl, and being Miss Duplin County gives me the opportunity to brag about my county and maybe help get it on the map. Another reason is the money. Scholarship pageants are good ways to help girls further their education."

Shari is presently working with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as a secretary in the office of Public Health Administration Services. While working, Shari also attends the University part-time and plans to major in radio, television and motion picture production. She is a 1976 graduate of James Kenan High School and a 1978 graduate of Mount Olive College.

As Miss Duplin County, Shari says she represents more than just a county, but the Jaycees and the next queen. Whatever a queen does during her reign, she must always remember the people she represents, and especially the girls who will follow, because there will always be someone to follow you, Shari said.

"I have already been thinking about the next Miss Duplin County pageant, trying to get ideas to make next year's pageant better. Regardless of what happens



MISS DUPLIN COUNTY

at the state pageant, I can come home and know the people still love me, and will always remember me as Miss Duplin County."

To promote Duplin during the state pageant, Shari said, Cates Pickles and Liberty Cart Brochures will be distributed to as many of the Miss North Carolina contestants as possible. With each contestant receiving Duplin County favors, a little bit of Duplin will be spread out

across the entire state, Shari said.

Shari is the second Miss Duplin County in the Jones family, but she said the entire family treats the second time as a new experience. And, she added, her sister, Miss Duplin County 1974, is her biggest supporter. Shari is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Jones of Warsaw.

By Emily Killelte

Man Dies In Motorcycle Crash

Fitchure Chestnut, 42, of Route 1, Magnolia, was killed last Thursday night in a motorcycle accident on McCrae Street in Magnolia.

According to Magnolia Police Chief Sherwood Ezzell, Chestnut and his half-brother, Robert Raines, were riding their motorcycles about 7:15 p.m. Ezzell said Raines told him he was riding some distance ahead of Chestnut when he realized he could not see Chestnut in his rearview mirror. Raines said he looked around and saw Chestnut lying in the middle of the street.

Chestnut was taken by the Magnolia Rescue Squad to Duplin General Hospital, where he died from head injuries.

The accident occurred on a straight stretch of road, according to Ezzell. The investigation is continuing, he said.

moved to reduce the recreation budget from \$21,500 to \$10,000. Commissioners William Igoe and Billie Hollingsworth opposed the cut. Funds taken from the recreation budget were allocated for sidewalks, \$2,000; rescue department, \$3,000; and capital reserve for a trash truck, \$6,500. The \$5,000 allocated for side-

walks and the rescue department was revenue sharing funds, while the \$6,500 had come from the general fund.

A public hearing on the town budget was held June 12th. The only topic discussed during the hearing was the cut of recreation funds. Approximately 111 town citizens appeared to oppose the \$10,500 cut in the

recreation budget, and a petition with 330 signatures supporting a full-time recreation department was presented to the Board. Two Faison citizens appeared to oppose the use of tax money to support a full-time recreation program.

Leading the discussion at the June 16th meeting of the Faison Board, Commissioner William Igoe said, "Overwhelming support for the recreation program was displayed at the public hearing. There was a good representation of the town's organizations, largest business, and each age group."

Igoe made a motion that the \$6,500 (general funds) be taken from capital reserve and placed back into the recreation budget. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hollingsworth.

"It looks as if I'm going to be the green dragon, but it seems as if the parents could pay part of it (recreation expenses) for their children," Commissioner Clifton said. "If there are 2,000 people participating a month and they each pay a dollar,

Kenansville Tax Rate Reduced To 65 Cents

The Kenansville Board of Commissioners met June 16 and 17 and reduced water and sewer rates, cut the tax rate to 65 cents, and approved a \$331,756 budget for

1980-81. During the June 16th meeting, the town administrator, Woody Brinson, informed the commissioners \$13,113 of additional re-

quests had been added to the proposed budget which was distributed to the board June 2. The budget proposed at the June 2nd meeting of the board totaled \$357,075; with the addition, the budget would total \$370,188. The addition would result in an 11-cent tax increase over the 25-cent increase needed to balance the proposed budget. Brinson said. The 1979 tax rate was 44 cents.

Commissioner Jimmy Johnson told the Board a water rate increase of more than one dollar would destroy the credibility of the commissioners. Johnson stated an increase of one

dollar per customer had been the projected rate when the citizens passed the water system improvement bond. He suggested the rates be changed to allow a dollar increase over the old rates, and the sewer charges be half of the water bill. The board moved to reduce water and sewer charges from the proposed rates, leaving a \$18,800 loss in 1980-81 water and sewer revenues. With the loss of water and sewer revenues, a tax rate of 93 cents would be needed to balance the 1980-81 budget, Brinson said.

The commissioners agreed to reduce the town employees by three people. Two workers, a clerical position and a public works employee, both CETA positions, will not be funded in the coming budget. The board also reduced the police department by one employee. And, the commissioners completely cut their salaries along with the salary of the mayor. A total of \$19,130 was cut in salaries, an additional \$6,740 was cut when local government employees retirement was trimmed from the budget. Capital outlay funds of \$7,500 for a new police car were cut and the \$500 for the firemen's annual dinner. An additional \$4,562 was trimmed from other budget items, leaving a total budget of \$331,756 and a tax rate of 65 cents.

A motion to set the 1980 tax rate at 65 cents was made by Commissioner William Fennell and seconded by Commissioner Earl Hatcher. The 65-cent tax rate was unanimously approved by the board.

The proposed 1980-81 budget includes \$189,011 in the general fund, \$71,440 for water and sewer, and \$30,130 for debt service. The recreation budget is \$41,175, none of which comes from town funds; all revenue comes from profits made by the recreational activities at the park, and grants.

Miss Liberty Contestants

Nine contestants will be vying for the title of Miss Liberty 1980, June 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Pink Hill School auditorium.

The contestants are being sponsored by Pink Hill businesses, who will also provide gifts for the contestants and Miss Liberty 1980. Yvonne Deatherage, pageant chairman, said the theme for this year's program will be "Yankee Doodle," which all the girls will feature in the opening number. Directing the opening performance will be Miss Liberty 1979, Sherri Mincey, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Durwood Mincey of Pink Hill.

Contestants participating in the Miss Liberty pageant include: Kerry Joe Bell, Kelly Cauley, Wendy Stallings, Celia Turner, June Sandlin, Merry Freeman, Flora Howard, Sharon Hill and Brenda Holt. Advanced tickets for the pageant are on sale at Brewer Drug, R.L. Hood Pharmacy and the office of Har-Scott Co. Advanced tickets are 50 cents for ages 6-15, and \$1.25 for 16 and older. Tickets at the door will be 75 cents and \$1.50.

Bridge Support To Be Replaced

The division of Highways of the North Carolina Department of Transportation has closed a Duplin County bridge over Gum Swamp for approximately four weeks, according to Division Engineer Ted

Funderburk. Located near Beulaville on Road 1735, the bridge was closed to allow crews to replace bridge supports. It is scheduled to reopen in July. Traffic will be detoured over local roads.



Rich Boyd, First Rehearsal Of Liberty Cart. Drama will open July 18th