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Presented Lifetime Membership

Senator Harold Hardison and Representative Wendell Murphy were presented lifetime memberships in the Duplin Agribusiness Council and plaques of appreciation during a brunch meeting July 1 at the Country Squire. The action was prompted by members of the Duplin Agribusiness Council for Hardison's and Murphy's support of the Duplin Agribusiness Fair. Through budget legislation, the two Duplin representatives were able to allocate \$50,000 to the Duplin Agribusiness Council for use in acquiring a permanent location for the county fair. Plans were presented at the brunch for use of part of the funding to construct a multi-purpose livestock arena. Through the cooperation

of the Duplin County Board of Commissioners, the Duplin County Board of Education and the town of Kenansville, the multi-purpose arena is planned for construction on the site which has hosted the county fair the past two years. With the construction of the arena, the site surrounding Kenan Auditorium will become the permanent location of the Duplin Agribusiness Fair. Pictured above, Duplin Agribusiness Council member Melvin Cording presents Senator Harold Hardison of Deep Run with a plaque of appreciation, and Duplin Agribusiness Council President Ruth Wells presents a plaque of appreciation to Representative Wendell Murphy from Rose Hill.

Duplin County Schools Keep Programs Alive

Coming to terms with a \$500,000 slash in the Duplin County school system's budget request left the Board of Education divided when they met last week.

By a 3-2 vote, the board appropriated an additional \$26,500 the County Commissioners had approved late Monday and \$22,014 from school carry-over funds to finance some programs that otherwise would have been eliminated.

Included in the programs was the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps at East Duplin High School in Beulaville. The county's share of that program's cost is \$31,000.

Also endangered by the commissioners' original slash were the in-school suspension and arts programs.

Board members William Richards of Wallace and Amos "Doc" Brinson of Kenansville voted against the fund transfer. Supporting it were Joe Swinson of northern Duplin, James F. Strickland of Warsaw and Chairman Carl Pate of Beulaville.

The board eliminated one county-paid teaching position that would have had a salary of \$20,585 a year. County school Superintendent L.S.

Guy told the board the new state teacher allocation formula may provide another teaching position.

Richards, who has opposed the JROTC program in the past, said he still believes \$31,000 is too much to put into it in one school. He believes the money could be used better throughout the county.

Pate countered, "Principals and guidance counselors tell me the ROTC is one of the best programs we have."

Referring to a joint meeting of the board of education and commissioners at the Country Squire Restaurant Monday night, Brinson said: "we came dangerously close to letting the County Commissioners tell us how to spend current expense money. They think they can do better education work than those elected to do it. We came close to setting a very dangerous precedent."

During the discussion of Commissioner Dovie Penney's motion Monday night to restore \$26,500 of the fund cut, Commissioner Allen Nethercutt sought assurance from the school board that if the motion were approved the JROTC program would be retained at East Duplin High School.

After receiving the unofficial assurance, Nethercutt seconded Mrs. Penney's motion, which was approved 3-2 with Mrs. Penney, Nethercutt and W.J. Costin voting for it and Commissioners Calvin Turner and D.J. Fussell opposing.

During the commissioners' earlier session Monday, Mrs. Penney had moved to restore the \$26,500, but the motion had died for lack of a second. The commissioners also rejected the school board's plea for restoration of \$75,734 of the \$600,000 the board had cut from the school budget request.

The joint session was a continuation of the commissioners' regular meeting, on the first Monday of each month. It was held to review a \$15 million to \$17 million long-range school facilities plan for Duplin County. The plan could be swamped by the lack of taxable resources in one of the state's most rural counties.

Turner emphasized the county's limitations with statistics from the 1980 census. He said the average 1980 income per person was \$5,730 and 53 percent of the population was in poverty.

He said 32 percent of the residents lived in substandard housing and 12.7 percent were illiterate. Nearly one-fourth of the dwellings lacked complete plumbing. "And now you are asking us to put these people in debt."

After long discussion in which Turner and Fussell said they flatly opposed the plan, the County Commissioners agreed to have an official of the state Association of County Commissioners, Ed Reagan, present several alternative financing possibilities to the boards later.

Turner and Fussell said they opposed any bond issue. Nethercutt disliked the idea of the county's going into debt. Mrs. Penney and Costin said they would not oppose the county having a referendum on the matter.

Turner said, "The people I talked to in District 2 don't like your facility plan. I was voted in by the people to express their views." Turner represents District 2, which covers much of northeastern and eastern Duplin County, all of it essentially rural.

Among the plan's features are building a junior high school near the East Duplin High School and eliminating the junior high grades from the B.F. Grady school in eastern Duplin County.

Kenansville Tax Rate To Remain At 69 Cents

The Kenansville property tax rate will remain at 69 cents per \$100 assessed valuation for another year.

The town board last week approved a budget of \$381,045, including \$217,687 in the general fund and \$108,718 in the water and sewer fund, both showing minor increases over the 1984-85 figures.

The budget includes a 10 percent pay increase for most town employees and a 12 percent increase for the clerk. Town board members will

receive \$50 per month, an increase of \$25 per month. The mayor will receive \$60 per month, a \$10 increase.

The debt-service fund of \$35,980 will be virtually the same as the 1984-85 figure. The revenue sharing fund estimate of \$18,660, including \$13,160 in the federal grant and \$5,500 carried over from last year, is down \$27,120 from the combined 1984-85 revenue sharing receipts and carryover.

The town is using revenue sharing money to pay for its new town hall. The budget includes \$24,000 for the payment.

Large general fund expenditures include \$69,925 for administration, \$46,432 for police, \$12,700 for the fire department, \$57,375 for streets and \$33,400 for sanitation.

Water and sewer expenditures include \$35,980 for debt service, \$20,100 for utilities, \$13,324 for salaries, \$9,018 for repairs and \$9,365 for supplies.

Water and sewer department revenue includes \$100,768 from service fees and \$6,600 from 40 percent of the local option half-cent sales tax. Town Clerk Mary Anne Jenkins believes the water and sewer revenue will be greater than the estimate because of the state Department of Correction connection to the sewer system. The facility is on U.S. 117 south of Kenansville. The line was built with state funds.

Property taxes are expected to bring in \$87,172 plus \$2,900 from back taxes, penalties and interest.

Franchise taxes are expected to bring in \$31,400, sanitation collection fees, \$21,636, the local sales tax \$29,160, Powell Bill grant \$18,000, interest on investments \$11,000, beer and wine tax \$3,700, ABC store

profits \$4,000 and intangibles tax \$3,350.

Mrs. Jenkins expects Sanitation Department receipts to exceed the estimate because of new construction in the town. She noted that the town's first Hardee's restaurant will open this month. She said at least two houses have been completed in the last year.

Duplin Board To Review High School Proposals

The Duplin County Board of Education will review architects' fee schedules and possible plans for improvements at James Kenan High School in a special meeting at 8 p.m. July 16.

Board member Amos "Doc" Brinson asked that plans be drafted to accommodate the school remaining a high school permanently but also for its later conversion to a junior high school. The school needs additional classroom and library space.

In other business, school officials reported that a house built by

Wallace-Rose Hill High School trades classes will be sold at auction at 10 a.m. July 13 on the school campus at Teachey.

The board re-appointed Rodney Kornegay to the James Sprunt Technical College Board for a four year term starting this month.

It changed companies for student insurance, signing a contract with Standard Insurance Co. of Rock Hill, S.C., for the coverage at a fee of \$9.50 per school year per student. The former carrier, Youthguard Inc., charged \$10.

Duplin May Not Be Able To Fund Construction

A \$15 million to \$17 million long-range school facilities plan for Duplin County could be swamped by the lack of taxable resources in one of the state's most rural counties.

The County Commissioners and the Board of Education met last week at the Country Squire Restaurant between Kenansville and Warsaw to review the school plans.

After long discussion in which two commissioners said they flatly oppose the plan, the Board of Commissioners agreed to have an official of the state Association of County Commissioners, Ed Reagan, present

several alternative financing possibilities to the boards at a later meeting.

The commissioners had continued their earlier meeting in the courthouse to the night meeting. During the day meeting, the commissioners rejected the school board's plea for restoration of \$75,734 of the \$600,000 the board had cut from the school budget request. At that meeting Commissioner Dovie Penney's motion to restore \$23,000 of the cut died for lack of a second.

Mrs. Penney said she was dissatisfied with present conditions.

Beulaville Board Hires New Auditor

Beulaville Commissioners opened bids for the 1985-86 town auditor contract during the July 1 meeting of the board and awarded Donald Pickett, certified public accountant, the job.

Pickett turned in the low bid at \$1,800 to audit the town's finances during the 1985-86 fiscal year. For services required by the town outside the bid specification, Pickett will receive a fee of \$25 an hour. The contract was unanimously awarded to Pickett on a motion made by Commissioner Rabon Maready and seconded by Commissioner Elvis Sumner.

Other bids were submitted by certified public accountants Doug Clark, Randy Albertson and the firm of Thompson, Brown and Co. Pickett will replace Doug Clark who had served as Beulaville's auditor for the past several years.

Following an executive session of the Beulaville Board, Commissioner Maready moved to reinstate Morris

Strickland as town public works director on a 30-day trial basis. Maready's motion died after no second. Strickland had resigned during June. The board approved the appointment of Beulaville police officer I.J. Hines as acting town public works supervisor. An additional fee of \$7 per day was granted by the Beulaville Commissioner to Stanley Miller to maintain the town's water system until a new public works supervisor is appointed. Miller currently holds a contract with the town of Beulaville to test and maintain required standards at the waste water treatment plant.

In other business the board approved the payment of \$358.64 to repair damages to Eugene Kenan's automobile. The vehicle was damaged when it struck an unmarked man-hole protruding above ground level at the intersection of Evans and Parker streets. The town was grading the streets during the time the accident occurred.

Police Chief Aubrey Murphy was

authorized by the Beulaville Commissioners to receive bids and negotiate a contract for 2,000 gallons of gas. The gas is to be used in the operation of town public works and police automobiles.

Commissioner S.A. Blizzard reported to the board that surveying had begun of the property proposed for purchase as a park in south Beulaville. Blizzard recommended the board purchase a small strip of adjoining land to extend the property line to the natural boundary. The recommendation was approved if Blizzard could negotiate the purchase within \$1,000.

Following a public hearing, prior to the regular meeting of the Beulaville Board last week, town commissioners moved to spend \$20,000 of Wickline loan repayment funds on street repairs and surfacing. And, the board moved to establish a revolving loan fund for new and existing businesses. The fund will begin with \$42,946 from Wickline repayment monies.



Certificate Of Appreciation

S.L. Norris of Scotts Store is presented a certificate of appreciation for his help in the witchweed eradication program in Duplin County. Norris is a cucumber

grading station operator. Presenting the certificate is Charlie Albertson, USDA plant protection and quarantine officer stationed in Kenansville.