

Schools Seek Funds For Basics, Extras Such As Matching Cash

BY SUSAN USHER

A school food service subsidy, funds to match athletic boosters' contributions and employee supplements will boost the Brunswick County's Board of Education's total request for local funds to more than \$6.4 million next year.

The funds account for a small portion of the \$31.5 million budget package adopted by the Brunswick County Board of Education Monday night. It included five separate budgets for state, local, capital outlay and federal.

The budget provides funds for additional bus mechanics and 7 percent cost-of-living raises.

In addition to \$5.7 million toward operations, the school board will ask for another \$111,500 in additional personnel supplements and \$139,000 to put its ailing \$1.9 million school food service division back into the black without raising the price of meals.

Capital Outlay

As part of its \$2.5 million capital outlay budget, the board is requesting \$527,184 in local dollars for long-range planning and an additional \$150,000 for "special projects," or cash on hand to match contributions of up to \$50,000 each from high school booster clubs for athletic facilities.

In other capital revenues, the schools anticipate \$1.365 million in local sales tax and a match of up to \$492,662 in state construction funds for site improvements. Projects include expansion of South Brunswick High School, roof replacement at all high schools, purchase of two activity vans and a yellow school bus, along with support vehicles.

Another \$10,500 would provide 50 percent of the cost of band uniforms for North Brunswick High, with the idea of helping others buy theirs in turn.

The school board will seek the \$111,500 in additional supplements as a separate line item above and beyond its funding needs for the coming year. The figure reflects \$67,000 and \$15,000 to increase supplements for teachers and teacher assistants respectively, according to a staggered scale proposed by the Brunswick Chapter of the North Carolina Association of Educators.

Teachers would receive supplements of \$406 to \$892 a year depending on credentials and experience, while teacher assistants would receive 1 percent of pay. Another \$25,000 would supplement salaries of other non-certified employees, while \$4,500 would provide part-time bus drivers \$50 each.

School board member Marvin McKeithan pushed for inclusion of funds to match those raised by high school athletic booster clubs for athletic facilities. He first proposed \$300,000 be set aside, or up to \$100,000 that could be

matched for each of the three high schools next year, but compromised on \$50,000 each. "What we do for one we're going to do for all," he insisted.

Impetus for the project came a month ago when members of South Brunswick's Athletic Booster Club challenged the school board to match their \$50,000 gift 2-to-1 to add several thousand bleachers to the school.

McKeithan said he'd been advised by several county commissioners that the item was likely to be approved if the school board presented it. He also said that what is available to one high school should be to another.

But not everyone agreed with the idea. "This whole system is high school oriented," member James Clemmons told McKeithan. "People wonder what happened to our high school kids. It's because we're neglecting them in the earlier grades."

Others questioned limiting the matching funds to only athletics and only the high schools and Chairman James Forstner wanted the item isolated in some way so that there was no chance of the school having to fund the matches while more basic items get cut.

In other budget-related matters, the board decided it had no problem with last year's arrangement in which \$75,000 was set aside in the Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department for use at the schools. The money was spent on improvements such as tennis courts for two high schools and a track for a third. Next year, said Clemmons, he wants some of the money spent on the elementary and middle schools.

Seeking \$139,956 local dollars to subsidize food service appears to be "the lesser of four evils" to school board members, given the large number of employees with longevity, rising food costs, declining student participation and the higher costs of meals compared to other counties in District II.

Locally students pay 60 cents for breakfast, and either \$1 or \$1.10 for lunch, while adults pay \$1.75, roughly 5 cents to 25 cents higher per plate. Raising prices a nickel each would have netted only about \$30,000. The last increase was in 1986-87.

Assistant Superintendent P.R. Hankins said no more than 45 percent of cafeteria sales proceeds should be used for personnel costs. However, in Brunswick County, he added, for schools to stay in the black with current participation would require reducing that percentage.

The budgets adopted provide for a \$50,000 reserve, addition of five schools to the county water system, local funding of several professional people as well as custodial supplies and service.

Policies Debated

A student attendance policy won the board's

unanimous approval Monday, while a proposal to provide preschool care on campus was tabled when members could not reach consensus.

The attendance policy adopted by the board limits to 20 the number of times a student can miss an individual class or days of school without being held back a grade or receiving no class credit.

Only the eight situations covered by the state's compulsory attendance law would qualify as excused absences: illness or injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, medical or dental appointment, educational opportunity, court proceeding or immediate demands of the farm or home. Missing the bus, vacation and oversleeping don't count. Students in "unusual circumstances" have the right to appeal, proving appropriate documentation.

Board members reached no agreement on a proposal to pay or give compensatory time off to staff, such as teacher assistants, to take care of a "babysitting problem"—supervising children left on campus in the early morning by working parents and now the responsibility of the school.

"Once they hit the school grounds, they're your baby," noted retired Lincoln Primary School principal.

Having parents pay a fee for the service was not discussed.

During a lengthy meeting that ended shortly before 12:30 a.m. Monday, school board members met twice behind closed doors—first for approximately 40 minutes with their attorney and architect to discuss property acquisition and a contractor problem, then later for 50 minutes to discuss personnel.

After the first session, attorney Glen Peterson would only say, "The board gave lots of instructions."

The school system and its consulting architects, Boney & Associates of Wilmington, have encountered difficulties in getting work completed on jobs at Union and Lincoln Primary schools and are to bring to the next meeting a break-down of expenditures to subcontractors. The general contractor was to have attended Monday's meeting, but did not show.

Other Business

In other business, the school board:

- Reviewed with Boney & Associates sketches of the proposed expansion of South Brunswick High School and asked the architect to examine the possibility of including new JROTC facilities in the same project, rather than coming as a separate item in the local capital outlay budget. The firm will take the plans to Raleigh today (Thursday) for review by the Division of School Planning. The renovated school would serve an estimated 1,000 students maximum.

•Authorized to negotiate with North Brunswick High School English teacher Charleen Letsen on a 1988-89 contract that continues her employment without costing the schools money while she serves a National Council of Teachers of English fellowship in China, Sept. 1-Dec. 22. Rather than take professional leave and lose benefits, Letsen offered to pay for her own substitute while away. She is one of eight teachers who will participate in the program next year.

•Received a written proposal from South Brunswick Middle School bus drivers, represented by Pam Aslin, seeking better pay and benefits for all 131 county drivers, to include 15 days annual and sick leave and health benefits. "If we have benefits and more pay," said Aslin, "We don't think we would have the problem keeping drivers or getting substitutes when we need them like we now have."

•One year late, presented a plaque to 1987-88 Brunswick County Teacher of the Year Meg Poe of South Brunswick High School.

•Heard a report from North Brunswick High School Principal James McAdams on the Student Information Management System in place at North three years and since expanded into other senior and junior highs. Among other bookkeeping and tracking duties, it can be programmed to call students' homes (up to seven tries each) to remind parents of student absences or even to congratulate them on their child's school performance, and can print out transcripts and grade sheets. The system is being installed statewide.

•Audits of five county schools show good compliance with school finance procedures, which are now being standardized, according to Finance Officer Elaine Shappell, and in-school audits at remaining campuses are scheduled before the end of school. A recent visit to monitor the school's Job Training Partnership Act program brought only praise from the Region O reviewer, said Shappell, which Superintendent Kaufhold said was good news since the program was not in good shape this year when turned over to Bill Furlless to manage.

•Adopted a 1988-89 calendar that calls for school to start for students on Aug. 23 and to end June 2, with 12 days off for Christmas and five for Easter.

•Amended the current school calendar to show school ending Friday, June 10, not Monday, June 13.

•Approved applications for federal funds of \$754,270 for Chapter 1 for 47 teachers to work with an estimated 915 students in grades 2-5 in seven schools, and \$15,525 to hire an itinerant paraprofessional to recruit and tutor about 50 of the county's roughly 71 qualified migrant children.

State Unfolds Erosion Rates

BY SUSAN USHER

Updated annual erosion rates, dock and pier shading of coastal wetland vegetation and compliance with enforcement of regulations will be addressed during a May 19 public hearing scheduled in Southport by the Coastal Resources Commission.

The hearing begins at 7 p.m. in the Southport City Hall Aldermen's Chambers and is part of series being conducted in seven coastal counties.

The erosion rates have been calculated from 1986 aerial maps and are the first updates provided in five years, according to Melissa McCullough of the Division of Coastal Management staff.

Hearings are needed because changes in the long-term erosion rates for local beaches also change the areas covered by ocean hazard AECs or areas of environmental concern.

An ocean hazard areas is defined as a distance landward from the first line of stable natural vegetation to the recession line that would be established if the long-term annual erosion rate were multiplied by 60—. However, if there has been no long-term erosion or the rate is less than two feet per year, the distance is to be 120 feet landward from the first line of stable natural vegetation.

During its May 25-25 weekend, the CRC anticipates adopting new erosion rates and a related rule wording change at its May meeting at its May 25-26 meeting at the Duke University Marine Laboratory in Beaufort, S.C.

Those who want to speak on the

issue are asked to call David W. Owens, director of the N.C. Division of Coastal Management, no later than May 18, at (919)733-2293, or to write him at P.O. Box 27687, Raleigh, NC 27611.

Holden Beach Building Inspector Dwight Carroll had not seen the proposed erosion rate maps as of last week.

However, at a Monday meeting of the Ocean Isle Beach Commissioners, island developer and town water commissioner Odell Williamson estimated the proposed rates would change oceanfront lot setback requirement opposite the canals at Ocean Isle Beach from 60 to 90 feet.

Maps available from the N.C. Division of Coastal Management show both the current average long-term rates of erosion and the updated rates.

Further, he noted that with 150-foot deep lots and a front setback of 25 feet from the street, only 35 feet would be available for building.

The public will get to the opportuni-

ty to comment on a proposed change or in the standards for construction of decks over wetlands and waters.

The public will also get to see a proposed change in the standards for construction of decks over wetlands and water. The existing rule would be clarified to ensure that platforms could only built on the waterward and refrained. Total footal, an area of approximately 500 square feet.

Decks could be no more than six feet wideover wetlands in order to protect the valuable habitats from shading the long-term erosion rate maps and the proposed clarifications are available from the N.C. Department of Natural Resources in Raleigh.

Average long-term erosion rates are unchanged in some instances, with the greatest variations nearest inlets, where rates ranged from a low of three feet up to 6 1/2 feet, with the beachfront in some cases accreting, as along most of Sunset Beach, and in others eroding, as at much of Bald Head Island.



Driver Unhurt In Crash

STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

Brunswick County Sheriff's Deputy Jerry Gurganus talks with bystanders as 33-year-old Peggy A. Gore of Route 1, Shallotte, (left) waits for the N.C. Highway Patrol to arrive at the scene of her wreck on Old Shallotte Road. According to Highway Patrol Sgt. J.B. Axson, the accident happened last Wednesday at 12:40

p.m., 3.5 miles south of Shallotte. The 1980 Chevrolet ran off the road and overturned when Ms. Gore attempted to retrieve a bottle from the floorboard of the car. Axson said Ms. Gore was charged with a safe movement violation by Trooper B.L. Wilkes.

District Attorney Will Not Seek Charges In Marlowe Case

BY RAHN ADAMS

Although the victim's attorney says the case isn't closed, District Attorney Michael Easley announced Monday that no charges will be sought in connection with an incident last October in which a Brunswick County man was injured.

In a prepared statement issued Monday afternoon, Easley said an SBI investigation into the alleged racial beating of 38-year-old Kenneth Marlowe determined that the black man's injuries apparently were suffered in a traffic accident and not an assault.

Marlowe, who according to his Raleigh attorney still maintains he was beaten by a gang of white men, suffered a broken jaw and cut lip, and lost all but four of his teeth in the Oct. 31, 1987, incident. After receiving initial care at The Brunswick Hospital in Supply, he was treated at New Hanover Memorial Hospital in Wilmington until Nov. 5, 1987.

"There is no evidence to indicate that Mr. Marlowe was beaten by anyone or any teeth (were) pulled other than by those medical personnel who removed the 15 teeth at the hospital," Easley said. "It is therefore the opinion of this office

that no assault warrants should issue and the investigation should be concluded."

According to the district attorney, the SBI report stated that seven other teeth were found inside the pickup truck, whose dashboard contained "tooth enamel, human skin and hair consistent with that of a black man." "This indicates that Mr. Marlowe's head hit the dash, and his injuries are consistent with that type trauma," Easley said.

The district attorney also stated that Marlowe voluntarily submitted to an SBI polygraph test. "The results of which showed deception on his part."

Marlowe's attorney, Amos Link of Raleigh, said Tuesday that his investigation of the alleged beating would become "more vigorous," since the district attorney does not plan to seek charges. Link said he and Marlowe would "make some determination of what manner to proceed" with the matter after they receive the SBI report.

The incident was first reported to the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department Nov. 1 by Marlowe's mother, Dessie Marlowe of Ash. She told officers that her son had been

beaten the night before in Crusoe Island, but that he had also been involved in a pickup truck wreck off N.C. 130 just inside Brunswick County.

The case was turned over to the Columbus County Sheriff's Department after Marlowe confirmed that he had been beaten and that the alleged assault occurred in Columbus County. The Columbus County Sheriff's Department completed its preliminary investigation of the case last November and concluded that Marlowe was injured in the wreck. However, the sheriff's department requested the SBI probe last December because of the Marlowe family's claim that lawmen intimidated Marlowe into signing a statement that he had not been beaten. The SBI investigation was completed in February.

On Tuesday, Link maintained that some of Marlowe's statements were made "under duress and coercion."

Marlowe could not be reached for comment Tuesday. His brother, Lavern Marlowe, said the family had no comment on the district attorney's decision and referred questions to Link.

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