

COUNTY BUDGET ADOPTED

# School Board Expected To Ask Commissioners For More Money

BY RAHN ADAMS

Not long after they formally adopted the county's 1989-90 budget ordinance Monday, Brunswick County Commissioners were warned that their action probably won't sit well with the local school board.

Near the close of Monday night's 45-minute commission meeting in Bolivia, Brunswick County Board of Education Chairman Doug Baxley informed the five commissioners that the school board is expected to hold an emergency meeting either today (Thursday) or Friday, to consider requesting a joint session with commissioners concerning the school system's budget.

Under state law, the school board has seven days from the date the county budget is adopted to ask for changes in school funding, if the board feels it cannot operate within that allocation, Baxley said.

Anticipating the request, Commission Chairman Frankie Rabon tentatively set the joint meeting for Monday, July 10, at 6:30 p.m., in the commissioners' chambers.

Rabon also scheduled two sessions to begin at 5 p.m. on July 11 and 12,

for the county board to interview 12 architectural firms interested in designing a new Social Services building and jail addition.

**Need Is Expressed**

As part of the county's \$31.1 million budget, the schools were allocated \$6.17 million for current expenses—some \$561,369 more than commissioners budgeted in that category last year.

However, the schools expect an operating shortfall of \$746,984, Baxley said after Monday's meeting. The school board requested a \$6.78 million current expense allotment from the county, with much of the increase due to anticipated cuts in certain areas funded by the state.

Overall, the schools estimate that state funds will total \$22.6 million, compared to \$21.3 million in 1988-89. But due to a drop in enrollment last year, school officials say the state might not fund 19 positions, including 10 teachers, six teacher assistants, two assistant principals and one support position this year.

New enrollment figures and the state funding level will be determined after the first 10 days of school this

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—Doug Baxley  
School Board Chairman

fall.

"It puts us in a position where we either find some money somewhere else, which is very difficult in this budget, or release some people," Baxley told reporters.

Baxley said county and school officials met informally last Thursday in Bolivia to discuss the school system's budget. Both board chairmen, Commissioner Grace Beasley and School Board member Robert Slockett were present, as were staff members from both groups, Baxley said.

**Budgets Adopted**

In addition to adopting the county's 1989-90 budget ordinance, commissioners approved the coming year's

\$3.88 million water system fund, which reflects no increase in water rates.

The \$31.1 million county budget is \$3.8 million more than last year's budget. The 1989-90 property tax rate is 59½ cents per \$100 of valuation—a five-cent increase from last year. Commissioners had set the new tax rate and tentatively approved the budget on June 20.

Property taxes are expected to raise \$22.96 million this fiscal year, with an additional \$675,000 anticipated to come from delinquent taxes, penalties and interest.

Departmental funding in the new budget is as follows:

- Governing Body, \$103,856.
- Public Inspections, \$241,258.

- County Administration, \$194,358.
- Board of Elections, \$160,378.
- Planning, \$163,980.
- Utility Operations Board, \$58,590.
- Finance, \$218,650.
- Purchasing, \$30,580.
- Computer Services, \$83,340.
- Tax Supervisor, \$466,430.
- Tax Collector, \$193,592.
- County Attorney, \$142,690.
- Register of Deeds, \$468,001.
- Housekeeping, \$256,838.
- Buildings and Grounds, \$682,465.
- Maintenance Garage, \$847,640.
- Sheriff, \$1,514,930.
- Jail, \$407,838.
- Veterans Services, \$51,423.
- Emergency Management, \$82,208.
- Transportation Steering Committee, \$7,790.
- Soil and Water Conservation, \$41,699.
- Parks and Recreation, \$562,506.
- Agricultural Extension, \$169,526.
- IPMA, \$2,500.
- Operation Services, \$425,841.
- Corps of Engineers, \$35,500.
- Sanitary Landfill, \$759,108.
- Clean County, \$36,082.
- Coroner, \$21,000.
- Courts, \$21,901.

- Non-departmental, \$4,054,900.
- Contribution to Agencies, \$1,795,516.
- Debt Service Contribution, \$6,004,110.
- Public Health Contribution, \$999,939.
- Revaluation, \$56,250.
- Social Services Contribution, \$1,410,981.
- Schools Current Expense, \$6,175,054.
- Schools Capital Outlay, \$579,905.
- Schools Capital Reserve, \$1,360,000.
- Aging Contribution, \$202,311.
- Engineering, \$80,008.

**Other Funds Approved**  
Commissioners Monday also adopted various other funds, most of which include substantial state and/or federal monies. They were as follows:

- Public Housing Fund, \$1,060,504.
- Public Health Fund, \$1,678,430.
- Social Services Fund, \$3,801,431 (including \$366,592 for Aging).
- Cafeteria Fund, \$350,281.
- Schools Capital Reserve Fund, \$1,360,000.
- Revaluation Fund, \$56,250.

## Brunswick's Debt Good 'Chunk'

(Continued From Page 1-A)

higher populations provide." High noted, adding that per capita fiscal rates are consistently high in the state's coastal and mountain resort counties.

With several proposed capital improvement projects looming in the near future, county officials continue to explore possible financing options including bond sales and lease-purchase arrangements, which have become more popular lately with local governments, according to the Institute of Government in Chapel Hill.

The proposed projects mainly include a new elementary school, a 911 communications facility, a new Social Services building, a jail addition and water system improvements. Initial estimates were that the projects would total at least \$18 million.

Commissioners, however, are looking at ways to reduce estimated capital improvement costs, whether by undertaking smaller projects or by using existing buildings outside the county complex. They also have indicated that revenue from four cents of this year's five-cent tax rate hike might be used to begin the projects.

As far as additional bond sales are concerned, Brunswick County conceivably could borrow an additional \$312 million, since the legal debt limit is eight percent of a county's assessed value. According to Ms. Hahn, Brunswick's anticipated property valuation this year is \$4.06 billion.

General obligation bonds would require the formal

*"The population is not so high, but (Brunswick County is) providing services that areas with higher populations provide."*

—Robert High  
State Finance Official

approval of voters, with the county's promise to repay the debt guaranteed on the strength of its ability to tax property owners. "The reason we could get (additional bond funds) is because of our ability to raise money," Smith explained.

But it is "a whole 'nother story," High pointed out, as to how much additional debt the state would allow Brunswick County to incur. The Local Government Commission would review the county's total debt structure before approving bond financing.

High said one factor would be how much the tax rate would increase as a result of the added debt, "although that's a decision the county officials have to make—how much burden the citizens want to bear."

## State Street Funds May Have To Be Repaid

(Continued From Page 1-A)

town may have been collecting state monies not due it and that the matter has been discussed privately in recent months.

He said the town attorney had advised that the town contact the DOT to work things out, but that most of the board members wanted to see if the matter could be resolved more discreetly.

"It was nothing intentional to try to deceive anybody," said Jones. "We wanted to try to get this thing ironed out, and it would have been brought out if we had trouble."

However, Mayor Pro Tem Paul Wayne Reeves said the board has done very little or nothing to correct the situation since he became aware of the discrepancy last fall.

"My concern was why we continued to report it when we knew those streets had never been formally dedicated to the town," he said. "I was of the opinion, and still am, that that was not proper."

Although he cited other reasons at the time, Reeves said this week that a recent vote against the paving of two town streets reflected his feelings that the town should not use money it may not deserve.

Beamon Hewett, who was mayor when the roads were added to Shallotte's Powell Bill maps in 1984

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—Jerry Jones  
Mayor of Shallotte

and 1985, said the streets were added to the maps because the town board had every intention of accepting the streets shortly after the subdivision was annexed, and the roads were improved.

"The developer wasn't supposed to keep them up forever. And the city never intended for him to keep them up forever," said Hewett. "I think there's been a misunderstanding."

Jones, who took the mayor's post in December 1985, said the roads were left on the Powell Bill maps each year because he assumed when the maps were completed each July that the streets would be taken over by the town during that fiscal year.

Ms. Chappell noted that state transportation officials will have to determine if the money was received under false pretenses before asking the town to pay it back.

"We have to make an in-depth study of the situation. It's a lot of legal work," she said. "We don't slap anybody's hands before we're sure they've done something wrong."

The highway analyst said refunds to the state could be deducted from future Powell Bill checks, or the town could agree to pay back the money over a number of years.

"We try to work with the towns and not against them," she said. "It's their program and we're not working to catch them. We're trying to make sure the towns are using the monies right."

Ms. Chappell said the situation could be an honest mistake, but she pointed out that the mayor is ultimately responsible for any state funds the town receives.

She said state transportation officials would probably contact the town and research the matter after reading this newspaper article.

Because of the situation in Shallotte and similar circumstances in other towns, the state DOT is requiring each municipality this year to complete a street inventory and submit a list of the names and mileage for all roads maintained by the town.



*'I'm Warning You!'*

Renee Fulk of Carthage, left, appears to be warning her inflatable raft to stay put before joining playmate Emily Smith of Albemarle for a quick dip in the ocean Saturday at Holden Beach. The two girls were among thousands of children taking advantage of the balmy weather and mild water temperature during the area's busiest holiday weekend of the year.

## Fair Weather Is Forecast

Seasonable weather conditions are expected in the Shallotte area over the next several days, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady.

Temperatures through the weekend should range from around 70 degrees at night to the upper 80s during the day. Rainfall is expected to measure about three-quarters of an inch.

During the period of June 27 through July 3, the daily average temperature in the Shallotte area

was 76 degrees, which Canady said was two degrees below normal.

The daily average high temperature was 86 degrees, and the daily average low temperature was 67 degrees.

The maximum high temperature during the period was 90 degrees, occurring on June 28. The minimum low temperature was 59 degrees, occurring on July 1.

Canady measured .11 of an inch of rain during the seven-day period.

## CP&L Sets 'Growl' Test

During the period of July 11-13, Carolina Power & Light Co. will conduct a low volume "growl" test of the sirens in the 10-mile area around its Brunswick Nuclear Plant at Southport.

The sirens will be sounded individually in order to make sure each siren works, a check made every three months by the utility.

The rotating sirens are mounted on 50-foot poles at 33 locations in Brunswick and New Hanover counties within a 10-mile radius of the

## Filing Period Opens Friday

(Continued From Page 1-A)

seats than usual this fall.

Seats now held by Ed Oliver, William Thorsen and James Brown will be up for election in November, with successful candidates earning four-year terms.

Also to be filled, for two-year terms, are the seats presently occupied by Walter Aldridge and Mary Childs. They were appointed to fill the unexpired terms of Linda Phillips, who resigned to accept a job in Raleigh, and the late Judy White.

Candidates for aldermen in Southport run from one of two wards, but are elected at large. Seats occupied by Oliver, Brown and Childs are from Ward I, and the others are from Ward II.

The mayor's post, now held by Norman Holden, is filled every two years. The mayor may run from either ward.

**Navassa**

Mayor Bobby Brown's seat and two slots on the Navassa Town Council will be up for election this year. The council seats are now occupied by Thurman Mosley and Edward Williams. Council members serve for four years, and the mayor is elected every two years.

**Belville**

The mayor's post and two seats on the town board of commissioners will be up for election this fall in Belville. Holding those slots now are Mayor Ken Messer and Commissioners Thomas Butler and Roger Reagle. The mayor is elected every two years, and commissioners serve for four years.

**Dosher Hospital**

Three seats will be filled this year on the Doshier Hospital Board of Trustees.

Seats up for election are presently held by Doug Ledgett, Ben Blake and Dorothy Gilbert, who was appointed to fill an unexpired term. Winners of the seats now held by Ledgett and Blake will be elected for six years, while the seat occupied by Ms. Gilbert is for four years.

Only Smithville Township residents are eligible to vote for members of the hospital's governing board. Township residents pay a special tax to support the hospital's operation.

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