

SCHOOL BOARD HEARS SUPPORT FOR CENTER

Electrical Contractor For Elementary School In Default

BY SUSAN USHER

One of the contractors involved in construction of the new Supply Elementary School is in default, with a replacement to be hired this week.

Bill Turner, assistant superintendent for auxiliary services, told Brunswick County Board of Education members that Reagan Electrical Contractors of Wilmington was found in default on its May 13 contract when a crew failed to appear for work.

The firm had lost several other jobs in neighboring counties, but was in hopes of keeping the Brunswick County contract, said Turner. "But the first day they didn't show, we took action."

Acting on behalf of American Casualty, the company that holds the performance bond for Reagan Electrical Contractors, project architects Boney & Associates were to open bids for a replacement contractor Tuesday.

Electrical work on the school is three to four weeks behind schedule, according to Turner, and the new contractor will have to make up the work even if it means working seven days a week.

The bonding company will pick up any difference in construction cost between the original contract and the new one.

Watson Electric had been hired on a temporary basis following Rea-

gan's dismissal, and is one of the companies to bid on the new contract.

After meeting in executive session Monday night, the board directed Turner and the architects to notify American Casualty of its liability and to request remedy for damages incurred as a result of the default.

'Just Say Yes'

The new elementary school wasn't the only facility on the minds of school board members and staff Monday.

After a visit by school system personnel last month to the Ruth Patrick Science Education Center in Aiken, S.C., Assistant Superintendent Mose Lewis had simple advice Monday for school board members regarding pursuit of a similar center for Brunswick County.

"Just say yes," he said. "They have their center. I think we can have one. The concept is very much within our reach without it taking any time or energy of the Brunswick County Schools."

Carol Midgett, a first grade teacher at Southport Elementary who took part in the tour, described the facilities and the programs provided under the direction of Jeff Priest. Priest spoke about the center earlier this year at a meeting in Southport.

Lewis said Brunswick Community College and business and industry are eager to become partners

with the school system in such a venture. The key, he said, "is finding the right person who would be willing to go in within low pay and give their time to organize it."

In executive session, board member Robert Slockett said afterward, the board authorized attorney Glen Peterson to draft a proposal on how the board should proceed from here with the project for discussion at its January meeting.

Facility Plan Adopted

School board members adopted a five-year capital improvement plan, as discussed at an earlier workshop meeting.

The plan gives with top priority to renovation of the Southport Elementary Cafeteria into classroom space and construction of a new cafeteria, followed by construction of a new central office at the Brunswick County Government Center.

Assistant Superintendent Bill Turner said the school system should have sufficient funds to build and equip these two facilities, and to purchase land for two new elementary schools, and hire design work on a future 24,206-square-foot addition to West Brunswick High School. The schools expect to receive \$1.69 million in half-cent sales tax revenues and more than a half million dollars in capital fund tax revenues next year. Most of the money needed for the Southport

Primary project has already been set aside.

Passing The News

Slockett said Monday night he wanted the public to know the school board was aware of the results of a Nov. 5 county exit poll which indicated that those responding favored non-partisan school board elections by almost a 3 to 1 margin. The final tally was 4,328 for and 1,136 against.

"I simply wanted us to let the public know that we are interested in the results of the poll," he said, "and that we expect Mr. (State Rep. David) Redwine to pass this information along to the legislature."

Other Business

In other business, the board:

■ Heard from Turner that recent break-ins at several schools have involved areas without alarm systems, such as mobile units, resulting in theft of athletic equipment, computers and other items. Schools will be asked to try to move equipment to more secure locations over the Christmas holidays.

■ Heard from Turner that next year's budget "will have to have a lot of ring-a-dings," since all but one of 11 schools have some alarms, clocks and bells that do not work.

■ Heard that students are paying 5 cents less for a half-pint of milk. Food Service Director Rebecca

Brandon said the milk/dairy product service was let for bid, with low bidder Pine State Dairy awarded a \$137,710 contract.

■ Amended the budget to transfer \$4,800 from a school's current expense fund to capital outlay, subject to county commissioners' approval. The money will be used to pay off a lease-purchase agreement on a copier that was entered into several years ago against school system policy.

■ Adopted the consent agenda, including a trip by West Brunswick High School's basketball team to Gainesville, Fla., to compete in a tournament and for team members to each "shadow" a college player for a day.

■ Heard from Cliff Jones and Phillip Tate about a conference on human

relations and violence in schools attended by 10 representatives of the Brunswick County Schools. They came back with specific ideas for prevention as well as intervention of violent incidents.

■ Reviewed proposed procedures and instruments for evaluating classroom teachers and principals, as presented by Assistant Superintendent Mose Lewis.

■ Heard from Lewis that staff members are working on a five-year plan that sets goals for the system and milestone year markers, which schools in turn will use to develop their own five-year plans.

■ Reappointed members of the South Brunswick Middle School Advisory Committee, including one new member, Sally Lineberger.

Head Start Secures Lease For Proposed Leland Site

All Four County Community Services of Laurinburg needs now to open a Head Start Center this fall adjacent to Lincoln Primary School in Leland is a federal grant.

Monday night the Brunswick County Board of Education unanimously approved a 10-year lease of property adjoining the primary school.

Four County is applying for a federal grant to open a 2,800 square foot modular facility near the

school, with plans to serve 40 students five days a week.

According to Faye Gore, assistant Head Start director and education coordinator, those figures would be an increase in service to the county.

It would also make service more convenient for some Leland area parents.

Recently Four County announced it is closing the Head Start center at Northwest, but that students served by that site can attend the center it is

opening in Ransom, in Columbus County, in a better facility that can accommodate more students.

Once the center at Leland opens, students could enroll at whichever center is closer to where they live, she said.

Four County can terminate its lease with the school board on 30 days' notice should funds not be

available, while the school board can terminate the lease with 90 days' notice should it need the site for other purposes.

The lease includes enough land on which to place the modular structure and a small playground. The center will tap into the school's water and sewer services, but will pay its own electric and telephone bills, said board attorney Glen Peterson.

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