

Citizens Defend Agencies, Causes Against Proposed Cuts

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considering an appropriation that is 37 percent less than the RDC requested.

"The fact that the county commissioners are faced with the possible task of raising taxes should be enough proof to convince anyone that this is not the time to cut the recruiting efforts that will attract jobs and increase the tax base for the county," Hughes said.

He suggested said that "negative publicity" surrounding the budget proposal would hurt efforts to recruit new industry to Brunswick County and that several RDC clients "have already expressed this view."

■Gladys Wagenseil of Supply, Teddy Altreuter of Calabash, Ann Brendford of Calabash, John Cooper of Boiling Spring Lakes, Ethel Green of Sunset Beach and Sue McCann of Shallotte all spoke in support of the literacy council's efforts to improve reading skills.

"If this county is going to prosper, we have to upgrade our literacy skills," said Wagenseil. "The schools are doing a fine job, but they are overworked. They can use our volunteers."

■Friends of the Library member John Snyder took exception to a suggestion in Harvey's budget letter that the organization could take over some of the support functions of the Brunswick County Library Board of Trustees after it was eliminated.

"The Friends of the Library is a volunteer organization," Snyder said. "It is not a function of government to tell it what to do."

Snyder also praised Jones "and his marvelous staff" for programs offered by the parks and recreation department. He said such activities provided cultural opportunities "peculiar to this county."



HUGHES

■Fred Dilley of Holden Beach said he had taken part in numerous day trips sponsored by the parks and recreation department. He also defended department staff members who were described in uncomplimentary terms by Harvey during a recent interview.

"I strongly resent what I read in the paper," Dilley said. "The people we have met are ladies of quality who help us senior citizens get around. If you are going to fire people, at least learn their names."

■Alma Tolson of Shallotte Point spoke in support of the county's senior citizen centers, praising "the former board of commissioners for being so nice to us." She said the programs allowed seniors to become more independent.

"I feel you as new commissioners ought to come and visit us and see the joy," she said. "We're not just there to eat lunch."

■Tri-Beach Volunteer Firefighter Danny Liebl came to the microphone in his turnout gear to ask that the board consider increasing the county's annual contribution of \$14,500 for departmental operating expenses.

He said the allocation "barely covers our insurance costs."

Noting that 71 percent of Brunswick residents who voted in a non-binding referendum favored a district fire tax, Liebl said, "Apparently that idea has gone by the wayside."

Liebl also questioned Harvey's decision to demote Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan to the position of county fire marshal.

"Cecil and the departments don't always see eye to eye," Liebl said. "But he's dedicated to this county and he's done an exemplary job."

■Shallotte Alderman Roney

Cheers spoke against the idea of a tax increase. He opposed a budget proposal to impose new fees for services, saying it would make citizens "victims of double taxation."

"Please toss the idea of tipping fees down the drain," Cheers said.

■Sunset Beach Town Councilman Bud Scramtom spoke against

proposed cuts in funding for the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service. He said the agency provides vital advisory services for local farmers and the golf course industry.

■Susan Gible of Holden Beach thanked the board for indicating that it would return funding of the Volunteer Information Center to the budget, noting that the agency had provided assistance to more than 5,000 people last year. Center Director Pete Barnette also spoke on VIC's behalf.

■Miriam Speicher of the Long Bay Artificial Reef Program requested continued support for the group's efforts to create new habitats for fishing, which he said benefit both local residents and the tourist industry.

■Dale McDowell of Sunset Beach also spoke on behalf of the reef program and praised Barefoot for assisting the group with applica-

tions for funding.

"If not for this lady here, we'd never have got it done," McDowell said. "I'm just an old country boy. She helped us with the paperwork. We could never have done it without her."

■Wayne Strickland, chairman of the Southport Maritime Museum's board of directors, thanked the commissioners for indicating their continued funding support and promised that "We'll see you get your money's worth."

■Miss Brunswick County, Lameice McKoy described the benefits of the scholarship pageant and asked the board to continue its appropriation.

■Bob Black of Shell Point asked the board to approve a capital improvement proposal to extend county waterlines to his area.

■Burnest Hewett of Mosquito requested support for commercial fishing and small business.

■Lynn Petch of Thomasboro asked for continued funding of public radio station WHQR on behalf of herself "and the other 4,999 listeners" in Brunswick County.

■Stephanie Hewett said, "I can't imagine what Brunswick County would be like without Hope Harbor Home" and requested support for

the shelter, as did Betty Buck of Holden Beach.

■Carmen Soles and Cindy Townsend, both of Southport, voiced support for local 4-H programs while Eleanor Hoff spoke on behalf of the cooperative extension service.

■Beth Osiek of Yaupon Beach said local school children "desperately need your support" and asked the board to increase funding for education.

■School board member Bill Fairley said the school budget request was not extravagant and "seeks funding simply to avoid a decline in education."

■Tom Simmons, assistant principal at South Brunswick Middle School, pledged to the board that "if you give us what we need, we're going to raise test scores."

■Parent Teacher Association member Glenda Browning of Leland asked that the board "put children first" and support the school budget.

■Beth Zettlemyer of Supply reminded the board that "anyone can be a victim of domestic violence" and asked support for Hope Harbor Home.

■Tom Yeagle of Sunset Harbor advocated further cuts in spending, saying county government was growing too big and needed to be "lean and mean."

■Floyd Klutz of Leland also criticized spending, saying that county

government "has become a hole that you can put as much money as you want into and never fill it up."

■Faye Burkhalter of Leland described to the board how her young son had benefited from parks and recreation programs, saying, "Because of what he learned from B.J., he can go right into school sports."

■Toby Levin of Long Beach also praised the department, which he called "very successful" and remarked, "Please don't eliminate it."

■Norman Horne of Shallotte said the parks department "is recognized as one of the best in the state" and "offers something for almost everyone in Brunswick County." He asked that the department be left "intact and fully funded."

■Parks and recreation advisory board member Maury Watkins of Leland called the department "a necessary and vital part of Brunswick County's future" that should remain in "the very capable and expert hands of its director, B.J. Jones." He asked the commissioners to foster "stability, not turmoil."

■Several of the speakers elicited applause from the audience. The longest and loudest came after a comment from Helen Cashwell of Long Beach.

"When you talked about change, we didn't expect cataclysmic change," she said. "We're between managers now. So why not leave the budget alone and let the new county manager resolve the differences?"



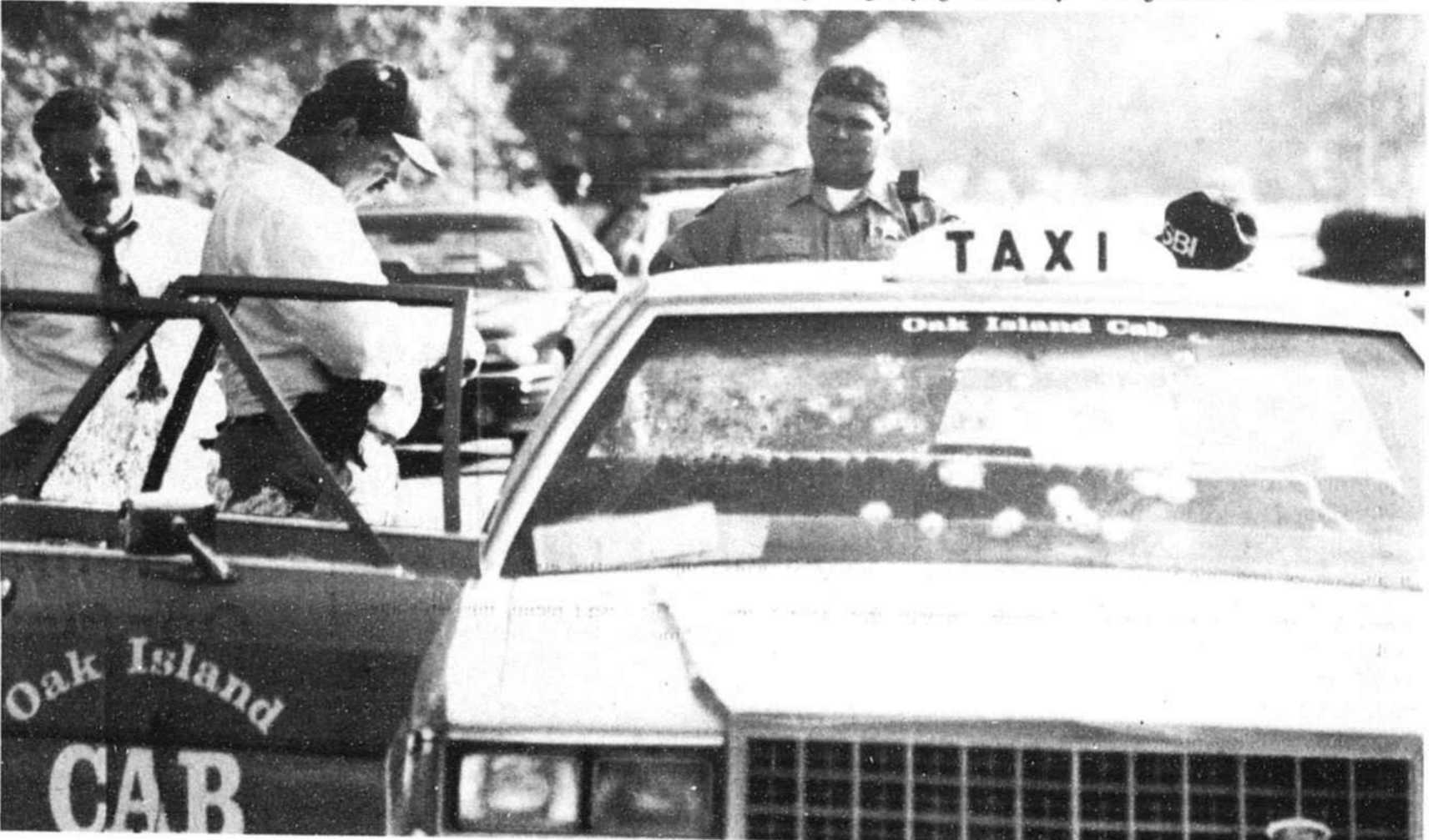
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STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

SBI INVESTIGATORS (from left) Bruce Kennedy and Mike Garrett and Brunswick Sheriff's Deputy Richard Long look over the bullet-riddled taxi in which a young man kidnapped two people and later held off police with gunfire for nearly three hours in Winnabow last week.

Educators Awaiting News On School System Funding

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lated benefits for teachers paid with local funds to match salary increases expected for teachers whose wages are paid by the state; and another \$308,000 to cover a new salary schedule for classified clerical personnel adopted by the school board in May, retroactive to April. Worker's compensation premiums are expected to increase by 50 percent and liability insurance premiums will also increase.

The school system's one-half cent share of state sales tax revenue will provide \$1.3 million for capital outlay expenses, covering most items except the proposed construction projects, which were the top priority items of a 10-year program.

"Construction is where we are really hurting," said Rudena (Rudi) Fallon, school system finance director.

However, Fallon won't begin reworking the schools' budget until she gets the final word. "We're going to wait to hear what the commissioners plan to do, then we'll make whatever adjustments we need," she said.

At Thursday's budget hearing, a board member, an assistant principal and three parents asked commissioners to consider fully funding the schools' budget request.

Tom Simmons, assistant principal at South Brunswick Middle School, reminded the three new county commissioners of the "commitment to education" made during their election campaign last fall.

He also said the schools could guarantee increased test scores if the budget were funded as requested.

School board member Bill Fairley of Southport told commissioners the budget is needed simply to prevent a decline in education, to keep county students from falling farther behind their peers. He stressed the need for

the new computer technology and for school construction to relieve overcrowded classroom conditions.

"The children of Brunswick County desperately need your support and the support of all the people of Brunswick County," Southport Elementary School PTA President Beth Osiek told commissioners. "Our schools are overcrowded and our children are not getting some of the skills they need to go out and lead successful and productive lives."

That message was reiterated by Glenda Browning, president of the county's nine-school PTA Council, whose request was simple: "I ask that you put our children first in Brunswick County," she said, taking away lack of county financial support as an "excuse" for low performance.

"If they were put first, for say the next three years, and we build all the buildings, we would improve the report card. More specifically, we would improve the academic performance of our children," she predicted, with a boost in the county's economy as a result.

If a bond referendum is sought for school construction, Browning urged commissioners to include all items on the county's long-range construction plan, including a new central office.

Letha Thomas of Leland, a Lincoln Primary School parent, reminded commissioners that the proposed new elementary school at Leland is intended to relieve serious overcrowding at Lincoln, where 750 to 800 students are served in space designed for 500. While 80 preschoolers qualified for a special pre-kindergarten program this year, only 10 could be served due to lack of space.

Warm Days, Rain Forecast

Both normal rainfall and temperatures are in the forecast for the coming week.

Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady said he expects temperatures to average from the mid-60s at night into the mid-80s during the daytime, with about a half-inch of rainfall.

For the period May 25 through 31, he recorded no rainfall. Monday night rains will be included in the next reporting period.

A high temperature of 86 degrees was recorded May 31 and the week's low temperature of 53 degrees the night of May 28.

A daily average high of 84 degrees combined with an average nightly low of 63 degrees for a daily average temperature of 73 degrees, which Canady said is "about normal" for this time of year.

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agreed to let the woman out of the taxi. Farther up the road, the driver suggested that Willoughby take the car and drive to Vermont himself. He agreed and let the driver out.

By then the woman passenger had called 911 and reported the kidnapping. Sheriff's deputies sealed off the north end of U.S. 17, but were unable to find the taxi on the highway between Bolivia and Wilmington.

Shortly before 2 p.m., police reports say Margie Wolfe had just returned to her home in Winnabow and was carrying groceries into the house. Her husband Delbert was leveling his driveway with a tractor when he noticed a light blue taxi broken down in the middle of Cherry Tree Lane. He walked over to offer assistance.

As he got to within 10 feet of the car, the driver pointed a gun at Delbert and told him to stay away. Moving quickly back to the house, Delbert told his wife to call 911 and went inside to get his pistol.

A few minutes later the man in the taxi came through the back door, pointed his gun at Delbert and demanded the keys to another car, the report said. Delbert fired his pistol at the man but missed, hitting the door-jamb. But it was enough to send the intruder running back to the cab.

According to a second incident report, another Winnabow couple was driving up Cherry Tree Lane when they stopped next to a stalled taxi that "appeared to be running hot." When they pulled up alongside the car, "a young white male got out, pointed a gun and fired." They quickly drove off unharmed.

Deputy Sgt. Joseph Scoggins and Deputy Richard Duvall were the first law enforcement officers to confront Willoughby that day. As he responded to a call of shots being fired from the taxi, Scoggins said he told the driver to "throw out all your weapons and exit with your hands

up."

Scoggins reported that Willoughby cursed at the officers as he got out of the car with a revolver in his hand. He cursed again and pointed the gun at the deputies. Then he "put the barrel in his mouth and leaned against the vehicle," the report said.

As more officers began to arrive, Willoughby got back into the vehicle and the three-hour standoff began.

Brunswick Detective Tom Hunter, a former Maine State Police officer, established something of a rapport with Willoughby, who had recently moved here from the neighboring state of Vermont. Hunter talked with him over the taxi radio and even patched a telephone call from Willoughby to his father.

Eventually, the taxi radio failed and Hunter said he kept the conversation going with Willoughby over a loudspeaker. An expert hostage negotiator arrived from the Wilmington Police Department. But instead of taking over, he asked Hunter to continue working with the suspect, since he already had Willoughby talking to him.

Meanwhile, about 50 officers, including a Wilmington SWAT team surrounded the stalled taxi and set up snipers at several locations. Throughout the encounter, Willoughby continued to fire two .22-caliber pistols through the roof, out the side windows and through the windshield toward police.

"He tried to break out the windshield with the gun," said Detective Captain Phil Perry. "If he had succeeded, I believe he might have done some damage to somebody."

Distorted by their passage through the glass, the bullets whizzed over police officers' heads in unpredictable trajectories.

"I could see him through my scope aiming right at me," said Lt. Carl Pearson, who kept a rifle trained on Willoughby throughout

the standoff.

At about 4:30, police brought in the young man's mother to try and talk him out of the car. They outfitted her with a bulletproof vest and let her speak to Willoughby through a loudspeaker.

"That turned out to be a big mistake," said Hunter. "He popped up and started shooting at her."

Finally, the SWAT team was given the go-ahead to fire three tear-gas canisters into the car window. Police had hesitated using the weapons sooner because the projectiles can be lethal if they strike someone in a vital area, Perry said.

Within seconds after the tear gas filled the car, Willoughby emerged with his hands in the air. He was taken to The Brunswick Hospital for treatment of a minor cut on this shoulder believed to have been caused by one of his own bullets ricocheting through the car.

Crime scene investigators from

the State Bureau of Investigation reported finding two revolvers and 81 spent shell casings in the taxi along with numerous bottles of wine.

Willoughby has been charged with one count of armed robbery, one count of attempted armed robbery, two counts of second degree kidnapping, five counts of assault with a deadly weapon on a government official, four counts of assault with a deadly weapon, four counts of assault by pointing a gun and one count each of discharging a firearm into an occupied dwelling, felonious breaking and entering and injury to personal property.

He is currently being held in lieu of \$155,000 bail under the protective custody of the N.C. Department of Corrections. At a first court appearance Friday, attorney Sheila McLamb was appointed to represent Willoughby at a June 9 probable cause hearing.

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