

# Warrant

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# Chocowinity Principal Of Misuse Of Property

After having cancelled its January meeting, the Beaufort County Board of Education changed its mind and decided to meet Tuesday, January 8, in light of a warrant which was served Wednesday, January 2, on Chocowinity High School principal James Henderson.

The warrant, signed by new school board member Calvin Pittman, accuses Henderson of the misdemeanor offense of use of state-owned property, specifically the school van, for personal reasons. Pittman said, in a

telephone interview, that although he signed the warrant as a member of the board of education, he did so independently of the other board members. He commented that he didn't carry the matter to the full board "because the same thing would happen to this as has happened to other (problems) in the past."

He added, "I've got no problem with what I've done...none at all."

The warrant alleges that Henderson used the school van to send a student, Tiffany Jones, home to get a tape recording of a

conversation between her parents, Carolyn and Vernon Carawan, and Ottis Cox, a former Chocowinity math teacher now assigned to Aurora High School. Cox was transferred to Aurora at the beginning of the 1984-85 school year and has since filed suit against Henderson and the board of education claiming that he was transferred because he spoke out publicly against Henderson's administration of Chocowinity High. In December, Henderson filed a counter-suit alleging that he had been slandered and libeled by

Cox.

The tape was a recording made about two years ago, said Vernon Carawan. He commented that it was actually immaterial as to what was taken and that he was, at this point, primarily concerned about the alleged misuse of school property, which, he said, was a violation of state law. The incident occurred on December 10.

Carawan said that Henderson had previously been refused access to the tape but that Tiffany was not aware of this and only did what Henderson instructed her to

do; she was driven home, according to Carawan in the van by another student. "She (Tiffany) was taught to respect people in responsible positions. We don't fault her," he commented. He said he learned later that night that Henderson had the tape.

He said that Tiffany was sent home while both he and his wife were at work and without their permission. Several months earlier, he commented, when Tiffany became ill while at school, her mother had to leave work, go to the school and sign a release

form so that the girl could go home with a relative.

Carawan said he and his wife discussed the matter unofficially with other school board members, as well as with Pittman, and after getting no response from them, made an official complaint to Pittman as Chocowinity's representative at the end of the December.

When contacted, Henderson said he had no comments to make until after the trial as he did not want to try the case in the media.

The trial is scheduled for January 14 in Washington.

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## Home Health, Nursing Home On Wednesday Night Agenda

In addition to the discussion on the nursing home that is scheduled for Wednesday night, January 9, another issue, one which could also ultimately impact upon Pamlico County and Richland Township, will be also be on the agenda.

The issue is home health care. Currently in Pamlico and Craven Counties and Richland Township in Beaufort County, home health care is provided by the Craven County Health Department and the Aurora Home Health Agency. But Craven County Hospital would also like to establish a home health care agency to serve primarily, said Linda Stauch, hospital spokesperson, Craven County. At the meeting Wednesday night, Stauch said the hospital would be presenting its case.

Although it's "no reflection" on the existing agencies, Stauch explained that the hospital officials "feel like there is a larger home health market...than is currently being met." A home health agency, she added, would also allow the hospital to cut its losses in the DRG (Diagnostic Related Group)

program, under which only a certain amount can be charged to each Medicaid patient, depending on his illness.

Stauch commented that, with the DRG program implemented and, therefore, earlier discharges, there would be a greater need for services and that the hospital could provide a greater "intensity" of services—longer visits in the home by personnel, including nurses, more frequent visits, and longer monitoring periods.

Craven County Hospital's program, if approved, would be concerned mainly with the Craven County area, she said, but it would be willing and able to expand if the services demanded it. Stauch said that it is not the intent of the hospital to compete with the existing agencies for the home health dollars "but I can't say it wouldn't happen."

Aurora Home Health Agency, which operates under the auspices of Tri County Health Services, has been serving Pamlico County and Richland Township for a number of years. Tri County Health Services director Emily Keel informed the Pamlico County board of

commissioners at a recent meeting. She told them that the agency was growing, adding new services, and that, as far as she knew, had not had complaints about the quality of services from the physicians who order them for the patients. She commented that the agency had also, to date, been able to provide any service ordered by a patient's doctor, using either the agency's permanent staff or contracted services.

The Pamlico County commissioners passed a resolution stating that the services provided by Aurora Home Health were adequate and that they saw no need for an additional agency operating in the county.

Aurora Home Health serves mainly Pamlico County from Highway 306 east while Craven County Health Department, in a cooperative effort with the Aurora group, provides services for the patients living west of Highway 306.

Also on Wednesday night, the four nursing/rest homes seeking certificates of need that will enable them to construct their facilities will be heard by the

Eastern Carolina Health Systems Agency (ECHSA) and citizens will have a chance to comment upon the proposals.

Of the four, two are interested in building a facility in Pamlico County, one in Craven County and one in Jones County. In all probability, only one will receive a certificate of need; it is unlikely

that the 66 nursing care beds available will be divided since that would make construction economically unfeasible as there would not be enough revenue generated by the other beds to support the home.

For Pamlico County, the commissioners have endorsed Pamlico Health Care Center over

Bayboro Health Care Center, citing lower administrative costs, higher nursing staff-patient ratio and a larger dietary and recreation room, as well as a lower initial capital investment.

The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 9, 7 pm, Craven County Courthouse, New Bern.



Aerial photo of courthouse in Bayboro.

## Meetings On Septic Tank Regulations Set

On Tuesday, January 8, the Pamlico County Board of Commissioners and the Pamlico County Board of Health were scheduled to meet with an official of the state Division of Environmental Management in a continuing effort to find solutions for the septic tank problems plaguing property owners in the county. In addition, another meeting is planned in February, at which time the county plans to discuss the need for certain changes in the sewage regulations to allow the placement of septic tanks in the areas where they are not now allowed.

On Tuesday, county officials were to meet with Jim Mulligan, regional supervisor with the N. C. Division of Environmental Management. The division issues sewage permits for systems that discharge waste to the water or land, for example, lagoons, spray irrigation, or package plants. Mulligan was to explain how the agency permits systems, which types are allowed under current regulations and which types might be feasible for residential use.

The Pamlico County Health Department is seeking changes in state sewage rules which strictly prohibit septic tanks in areas with a high water table. County health director, Jim Baluss, has requested to meet with policy making officials in the N. C. State Division of Health Services and in February Baluss will meet with Dr. Ronald H. Levine, M.D., M.P.A. and James Stamey of the Environmental Health Branch.

"We will be presenting our case to these state officials that on

some sites—specifically large lots with ample room for setbacks to safeguard water supplies and adjacent lands—public health is not jeopardized by installing septic tanks," Baluss said. "We will call this concept 'low density relief.'" A similar concept is allowed in Virginia, he said. The main argument for granting relief from prohibiting septic tanks in areas with high water tables is that sewage can receive adequate treatment in these areas if it's kept underground and if there is enough land area set aside for subsurface treatment. "We will cite documented studies showing movement can be rendered harmless if the distance is great enough. Sewage treatment then becomes a function of the amount of area available for treatment of the effluent," Baluss stressed that the department would not seek any rule changes which would, in their opinion, result in untreated sewage being discharged, allowed to surface, or create an odor, or

threaten any water supplies on adjacent property.

"We sincerely believe that with proper distances and setbacks any localized contamination of the shallow water table in the area of the drainfield can be made harmless if proper controls are maintained," Baluss added that the relief sought will only be for areas with a high water table—not areas currently denied due to poor soil texture or permeability (clay), or areas subject to frequent flooding. Any such "low density relief" would also require persons to have larger lot sizes—perhaps an acre or more—and would prohibit subsequent additions to the system or subdivision of the property which would increase density or sewage load into high water tables.

"We keep trying to come up with safe solutions," Baluss said. "We will seek at this meeting to convince the state that the current rules are more restrictive than is necessary to protect public health."

## Finance Officer Resigns

Pamlico County will soon be starting a search for a new finance officer as the current one tendered her resignation on Monday, January 7.

Dot Avent has served in the position of finance officer since January 1980. Prior to that she had been employed with the county as CETA supervisor and accounting technician since 1978.

Avent's resignation, according to the letter she submitted, is ef-

fective February 15; because of accrued annual leave, however, her last working day will be January 15. As for her reasons for leaving, Avent's letter cited "many things including my health and the present work environment."

She will be joining the Public Service Employees Benefit Program as a director for eastern North Carolina.

## Asbestos In The Schools

### School Facilities Discussed At Pamlico School Board

School facilities, existing and needed, were topics of discussion at the meeting of the Pamlico County Board of Education Monday night, January 7.

Superintendent George Brinson told the board that the Division of School Planning and the School Board Association had both recommended that any school with asbestos in its facilities join a class action suit filed against Manville Corporation, a manufacturer of asbestos products. Brinson said that almost every school constructed prior to 1978 would contain some asbestos. He recommended that Pamlico County join; there will be no cost to the county.

Brinson said that in mid-December, he had a firm come in to do an asbestos survey of the schools. "Anderson (and Arapahoe) are just about free" of it, he said.

Asbestos is classified into two types, he explained, friable and non-friable. The first will crumble and release flakes; the second is encapsulated or combined with a bonding agent.

On the underside of the balcony in the auditorium of the high school, a "suspicious material" was found, he said. The tests showed that there is asbestos in the compound. Steam lines in the two-story section of Pamlico Junior High School are also "lagged down" with a material containing asbestos, he said, but are located between ceiling and floor.

Brinson said that the asbestos

found posed little danger to those in the schools. "I think everything we've got is encapsulated (surrounded by other materials) to some extent."

Removal of the asbestos materials would be very expensive, he said, and could be even more hazardous. Taking out the auditorium ceiling and disposing

(See PAMLICO, Page 12)

## Commissioners' Depositions To Be Taken This Week

The Pamlico County commissioners have a busy week ahead of them.

Besides a meeting Tuesday with environmental health officials and a public hearing for the developers seeking certificates of need for nursing homes Wednesday, the commissioners will be meeting with their attorney Wednesday and Friday to discuss the suit filed by former tax office

employee Dora Brady alleging sex discrimination.

Brady filed the suit against county manager Bill Rice and the commissioners after being passed over for the position of tax supervisor/collector following the resignation of Grady Simpson in the spring of 1983.

Rice will be meeting with the attorneys Thursday, also.