

County resists increase

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners is steeling itself to resist increased local spending for social services in the coming year.

County social services director Paul Gregory offered a budget projection at a Monday meeting of the board that would up local contributions by about 9.4 per cent, or \$20,781.

But the commissioners instructed Gregory to find some more cuts, and some members endorsed taking the increase out of Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

Commissioner Lester Simpson lamented that AFDC had made pregnancy profitable. "If the state and federal government are cutting, we should be cutting too," Simpson said.

Gregory, however, argued that the county is mandated to participate in AFDC at a certain level, and that the state would require payment when local funds ran out, whether budgeted or not.

The state offered an estimate of \$55,315 in local requirements for AFDC, but Gregory had projected expenditures of \$59,365.

He said the state estimate would not even cover cost of the program in the present year, and that it has been increasing in cost at a rate of about 5 per cent per year for the last three years.

Commissioner Welly White, however, advocated going with the state estimate, and that idea seemed to find general agreement among board members.

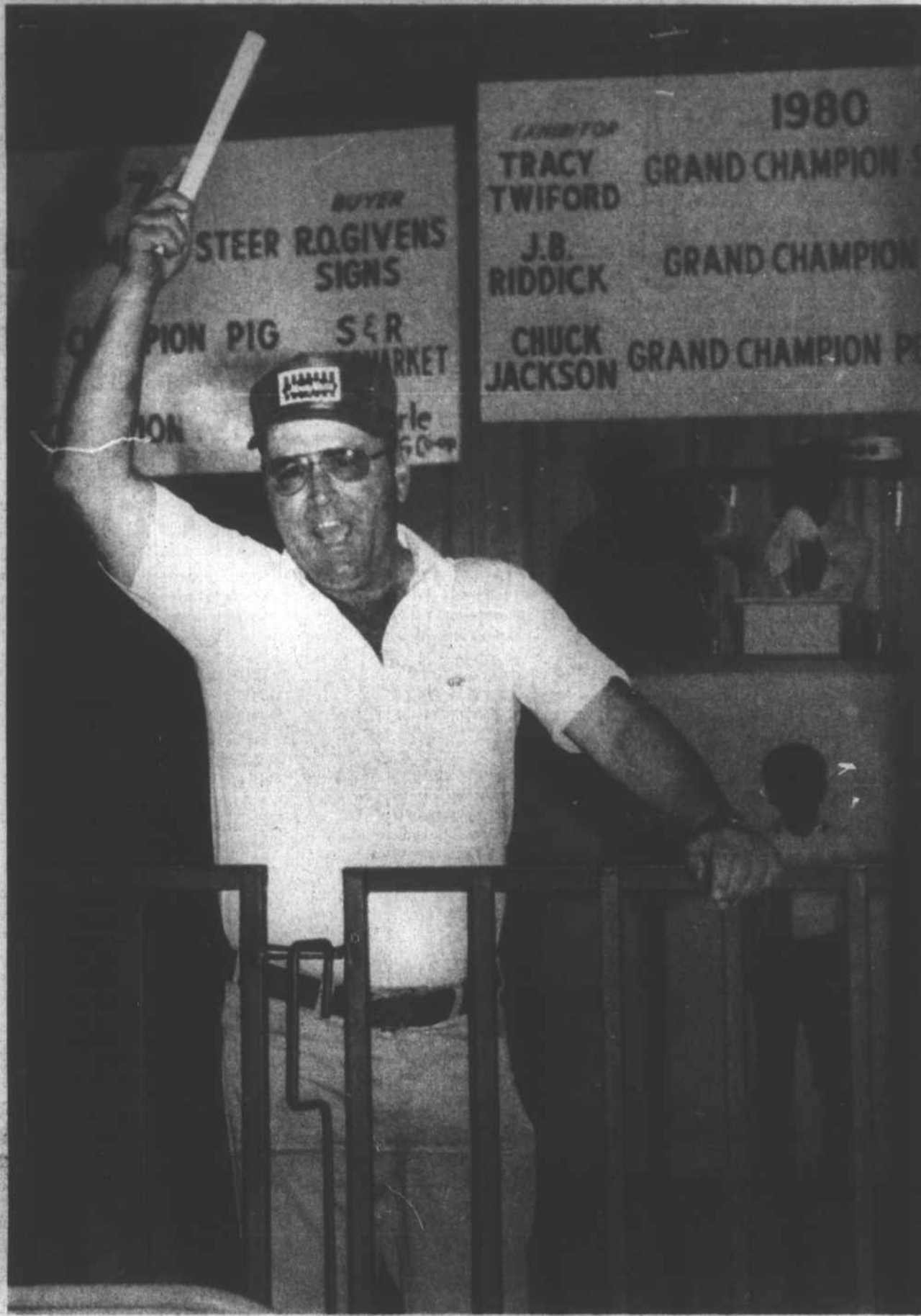
Increases were also projected in Medicaid, special assistance (county contribution towards rest home expenses), and administrative costs.

Gregory was instructed to get his budget proposal approved by the county social services board, which had rejected it because of the increases, then come back to the commissioners for approval.

In another development, Wayne Floyd, of Rivers and Associates, the firm that engineered the county's water system, told the board that he would be able to locate three new wells and an additional water treatment plant on three one-acre tracts of land located off U.S. 17 near Winfall.

Ron Sessoms, another Rivers and Associates representative, told the board

(Continued on page 2)



A spotter indicates that a buyer has indeed upped the price a few more cents in auctioning at the Albemarle 4-H

The bid mounts

LiveStock Show and Sale conducted last Tuesday and Wednesday in Elizabeth

City. For more on the show and sale, see page 9.

13 percent sought

Schools ready budget for joint meeting

The Perquimans County Board of Education will present a budget that includes an increase of some 13 per cent in local spending when it meets with the county commissioners in a special session on May 11.

The budget calls for \$886,151 in spending for current expense, an increase of some 12.75 per cent, and \$180,400 for capital outlay, up 17 per cent.

A total of \$551,200 would be generated through local tax dollars and the remainder would come from other sources.

If approved, the budget would represent a 52 cents share of the county's tax rate, up 3 cents over the present year.

The current expense side of the budget was described as "hold the line" by schools superintendent Pat Harrell, and board members toiled over paring down the capital outlay side of the budget in a lengthy session Monday night.

The bulk of projected capital outlay is in renovations and repairs, and the major new item included is \$22,000 for a new bus needed to transport the county's high school band.

Board member Clifford Towe said that he might be able to locate a quality used bus at significant savings to the schools.

While the percentage of increase in capital outlay may seem large, board members have argued that maintenance needs are critical in some of the school buildings.

"If they (the county commissioners) can't provide the money for keeping the buildings up our hands are tied in maintaining the buildings like they should be," said board chairman Clifford Winslow.

Board member Lloyd "Flutch" Dail proposed taking the commissioners around and showing them the needs if they balked at providing maintenance and repair money.

The King Street Building at Perquimans County High School is targeted for extensive repairs, and the replacement of rotting windows at Perquimans Union School and PCHS is

projected to cost more than \$30,000 in the coming year (\$10,000 in additional window replacements at PUS would be carried over to the next year's budget).

The Monday night meeting will begin with a 7:30 p.m. public hearing on county use of revenue sharing funds, to be followed by the joint session with the board of education.

In other facility-related matters, the board decided to improve existing restrooms in the athletic complex, rather than build new ones, and decided that work should begin on building a turf for the coming football season.

Hybrid bermuda sprigs will be rolled into the existing grass, beginning with the area between the two 35 yard lines, and progressing as funds permit.

The largest expense will be an irrigation system, Harrell said.

The board also elected to get an architect's drawing for a proposed weight room to be attached to the high school gym, and to proceed with that project.

Board members had discussed the construction of a new restroom facility at a recent meeting, but decided against it Monday night, because an expenditure of such magnitude would tend to tie the football field to its present site.

Long range plans call for a new athletic complex to be constructed across the street from the existing facility.

In other matters, the board learned: •that advanced typing students from PCHS had finished first in a regional typing contest at East Carolina University;

•that Brock Winslow, Tammie Lane, Bonnie Harris, and Elmer Boyce, all seventh graders at PUS, had been singled out for honors by Duke University because of their scores on the Standard Achievement Test (SAT); and;

•that the public auction of a storage building built by the PCHS carpentry class would be on May 15 at 12 noon at the King Street building; with bids starting at \$1,650, the cost of construction.

Winfall officials seek Hertford power-line sell-out

Representatives from the Town of Winfall appeared before the Hertford Town Council Monday night asking that Hertford begin negotiating the sale of Hertford electric facilities in Winfall to Albemarle Electric Membership Cooperative.

Winfall town attorney Walter Edwards, Jr. read a resolution, passed by the Winfall council in April, asking that Hertford sell out to AEMC because of a four-month petition drive by Winfall residents unhappy with electric services

provided by the Town of Hertford.

Some 90 Winfall residents signed the petition requesting the switch because of alleged poor service, because Hertford pays neither property taxes nor gross receipt taxes to the Town of Winfall, (while AEMC does), and because the cooperative, located in Winfall, might provide more timely service.

While Edwards told Hertford councilmen that they did not expect immediate action, he requested the board to make a decision as "soon as possible."

Hertford Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox requested a copy of the petition and signatures, "so that we, too, can see who signed."

Winfall Mayor Lloyd Ray Morgan, who was also in attendance, assured Cox that a copy of the petition and signatures would be forwarded to him immediately, and added that he hoped Hertford councilmen would not take the matter "personally."

"Winfall citizens formed their own committee and collected signatures —

we had no alternative except to go with it," said Morgan.

Hertford councilmen told the Winfall contingent that they "would study the matter."

In other business, the Hertford Town Council moved to tentatively close the ice plant. Councilman T. Erie Haste, Jr., recommended "we proceed into the season with the ice plant closed, and keep it closed on a month to month basis until we can determine the community's needs."

Cox said later it was not "financially feasible" for the town to re-open the plant, closed since the first of the year because of a breakdown in the compressor. Repairs at the plant have been estimated at \$8,000.

The council also:

•Moved to hold a public hearing at the Municipal Building at 7 p.m., May 26, to amend a zoning ordinance requiring accessory buildings to be erected 10 to 20 feet from real lines, depending on the area. The amendment is sought to

uniformly require that such buildings may be built within 5 feet of real lines, no matter what zone;

•Learned that Cox had begun working on redesignation as a Community of Excellence;

•Heard from Hertford Police Chief Marshall Merritt that the department had raised all the funds needed to send Corporal Robert Morris to the drug enforcement academy in Washington, D.C., and that Morris had begun classes Monday morning.

Newbold-White House may open this summer

If all goes as hoped, doors will open sometime this summer to the Newbold-White House, considered by some to be the oldest extant building in the state.

While W.M. Kemp, the contractor who has been working on restoration of the

pre-Georgian structure since 1977, said he couldn't put a date on the opening, members of the Perquimans County Restoration Society are more optimistic.

Some have even looked forward to a mid-June opening of the historic house-

museum, but former society president William Nixon said he thinks it could be complete by July 1, making July 4, "a good opening date to shoot for."

Nixon, who said he expected the house to be completed two years ago, added that he felt "it would be a boost and an encouragement if restoration is complete by July 4, 1981."

Final stages

Al Honeycutt, supervisor of Restoration and Preservation Services, a branch of the Division of Archives and History, of Raleigh, visited the house last Wednesday and described restoration efforts as in "the final stages."

According to Honeycutt, among tasks yet to be finished are installation of the sheathing on the second floor and sheathing around windows, placement of a lock on middle partition doors, some baseboard work, refinishing paneling, and plastering.

Hand-planed sheathing materials, which Honeycutt said resembled the character of the original sheathing found in the north and south rooms of the house, were found in a Bertie County structure, circa 1850.

Paneling on the lower level is being finished to blend with the original ceiling,

which shows an accumulation of smoke and grease build-up — the result of many years of cooking, according to Honeycutt.

Exhibits of the original wall plaster, which are preserved in framed glass displays on the stairs and lower level, indicate that the plaster went down to the floor with no baseboard, a practice Honeycutt said would be copied, though baseboards will be used on the wooden partition walls. The plaster display on the stairs shows the original tread of the stairway, now wider for safety's sake, according to Honeycutt. The stair is a copy of the one in the 17th century Lynnhaven House, in Virginia Beach, Va.

All interior brick will be covered with plaster, which Honeycutt said would mimic the brushed-coat effect of the pre-Georgian plaster technique. "At that time, they brushed on several thin coats of plaster," said Honeycutt, who added, "It (plastering) had to be done often because it flaked off so easily."

Mixture of old and new

A blending of both old and new materials has gone into renovation of the house, according to Honeycutt, who said the exterior doors and part of the flooring

were of new wood, while much of the interior paneling was made from old church pews.

But even new materials for the house were not easy to come by. Finding the heart pine needed to replace the flooring turned into a year's search, and was finally located in Gates County. Finding a mill willing to cut the pine into the 18-foot long planks presented still another dilemma. A Windsor mill finally agreed to do the work.

The pine flooring was sealed with a dry base, which will allow it to age with time, and blend in with the original floor boards.

Even the handblown glass for the leaded casement windows had to be ordered from a firm in West Germany. Glass fragments found during an early archeological dig provided clues to the proper hue and texture. Kemp, along with Herbert Nixon and James Godwin, recreated the leaded windows that flank the doors in both the front and back.

Exact date unknown

Although Honeycutt said that neither historical nor archeological research had yielded any information which could pinpoint an exact year in which the structure was built, he said that several

of the house's features were indicative of medieval building practices.

Ghost marks found on the center

(Continued on page 2)

This week

•A crew of 57 men are attempting to take the clikety-clack out of the railroad track through Perquimans County — see page 2.

•Aunt Etta, post-mistress in New Hope, keeps those cards and letters coming, but her retirement is pending, and the future of the contract station is uncertain — see page 3.

•County youths were superb in showing their animals at the Albemarle 4-H Livestock Show and Sale last week — see page 9.

Weather word

Chance of showers Thursday, then partly cloudy Friday and Saturday. Highs in the 70s, lows in the 50s.



Al Honeycutt, supervisor of the restoration of the Newbold-White House, points out a sample of the structure's

original plastering, preserved in glass on the stair. The plaster indicates where the original stair treads were placed.