

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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20 CENTS

Town taxes may rise by a dime

The Hertford Town Council tentatively adopted a 1981-82 budget Monday night which includes the first property tax increase in some 12 years.

Residents will pay 10 cents more per 100 property valuation if the budget is approved at the public hearing, slated for 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 24.

The 10 cents increase, which boosts the tax rate up to 75 cents, is expected to accrue an additional \$10,500 for the Town of Hertford if the rate of tax collection remains at about 91 percent.

Adoption of the new tax rate followed a heated debate between councilman Jesse Harris, who opposed the tax hike, and council members John Beers, Billy Winslow, and T. Eric Haste, Jr., who were in favor of the increase.

Calling the amount generated a "token sum," Harris said he'd rather see utilities increased than taxes.

Hertford Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox said that "no amount of money is 'token' if you don't have any."

Winslow was in agreement with Cox. "We've got to do more than survive. If we don't start getting \$10,000 here and \$10,000 there, I don't know what we're going to do," said Winslow.

Haste pointed out that the town's past and present cash flow problem may have been avoided if taxes had been increased all along.

Harris also contended that the tax rate would not be necessary if the town withdrew its \$10,000 contribution to the recreation department. "If we delete the contribution to the rec department then we don't have to raise taxes," said Harris, adding, "I personally don't want to give them (the recreation department) a dime."

Harris said he felt it was "unfair" to tax Hertford residents double for the recreation program, noting that county taxes also helped pay for recreation.

General Fund revenues
The \$451,213 budgeted the General Fund, which foots the bill for most town services, is down \$21,984 from the amount budgeted that fund last fiscal year.

Revenues anticipated for the General Fund include \$85,900 from property taxes, up from last year's \$75,400; and \$159,100 from the Electric Fund, down from the \$170,239 budgeted last year.

Although the town increased utility rates by some 15 percent last year, Hertford Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox said the Electric Fund contribution was down by \$11,000 because of the actual amount of electricity sold this year.

Recommendations from last year's audit report included reducing the amount of the Electric Fund contribution in order to keep the anticipated income "realistic." Last year's audit report indicated that previous expectations from the Electric

Fund had consistently fallen short of the actual amount of electricity sold, a problem which may have helped to create the town's some \$34,000 deficit situation in last year's budget.

General fund expenditures
Although the 1981-82 budget reflects slight increases in town employees' salaries, Cox said that no cost of living increase had been instituted. Increases reflected, rather, "salary adjustments" to equal out those employees whose salaries were lower than other's, according to Cox.

General fund expenditures include \$65,163 for the Administrative Department, up from last year's \$62,663; \$83,800 for the Police Department, up from the \$78,000 budgeted last year; \$16,600 for the Fire Department, up only \$250 from last year's budget; and \$8,450 for the Inspection Department, an expense shared equally by the town and county.

The recreation department was budgeted \$51,000, up from last year's \$48,000. Of that amount, the town is expected to fund \$10,000 of the program's expense, with the county chipping in some \$30,000, and the recreation department itself generating approximately \$11,000 in fees and various other charges.

Other General Fund expenditures include \$88,500 for the Street Department; \$80,900 for the Sanitation Department; \$11,800 for the Cemetery Department; and \$48,000 for non-departmental and contingencies.

Utility fund
The Water and Sewer Fund is expected to accrue and spend \$128,500, down from last year's \$129,427.

This year's Electric Fund, also down, is expected to generate and cost \$977,664, a decrease from last year's budgeted amount of \$1,014,174.

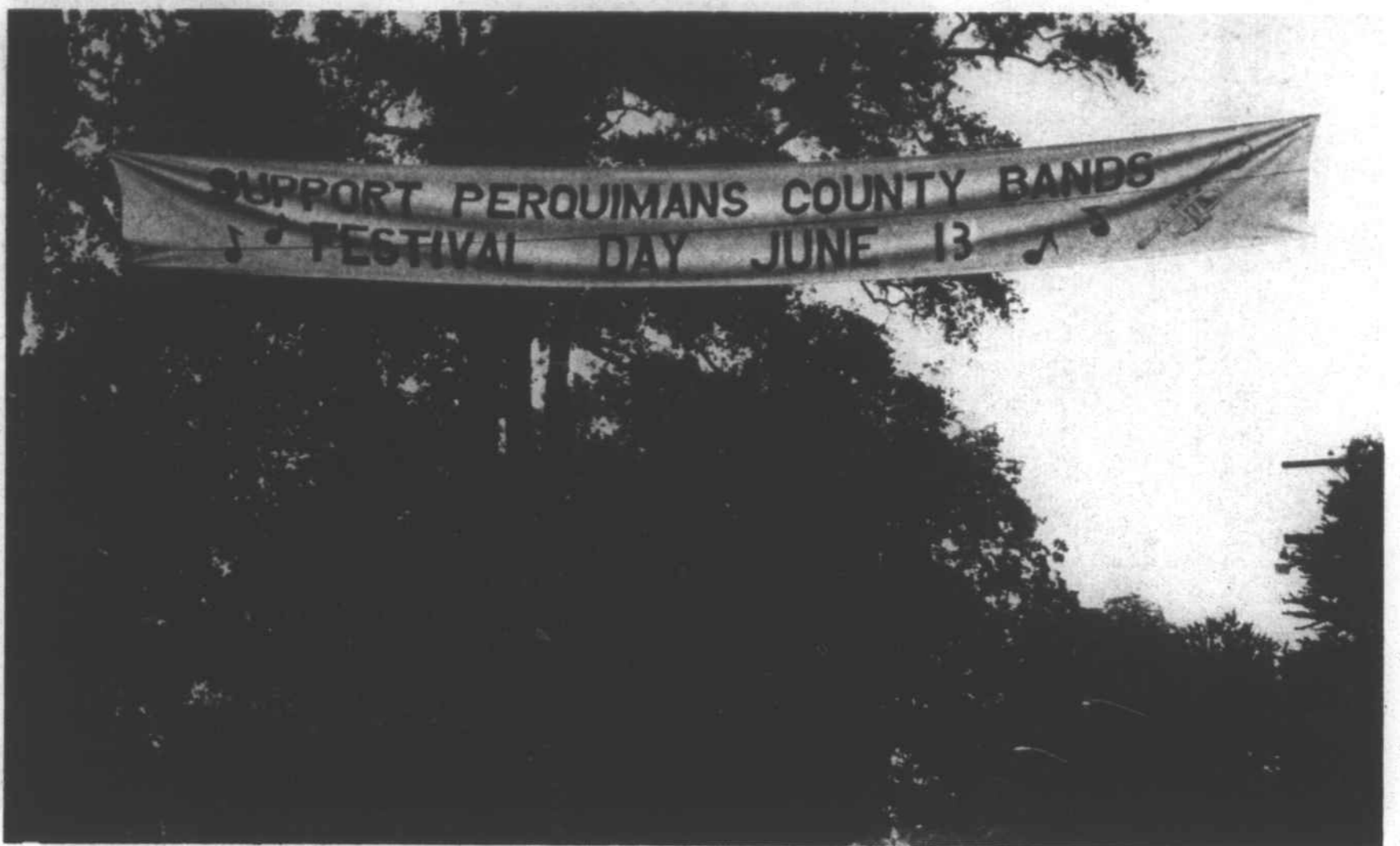
Revenue sharing
The town is expected to receive \$28,000 in revenue sharing monies from the federal government, of which \$10,000 will go to the General Fund for recreation purposes, \$6,655 will go toward property purchased from Hollowell Company, and \$11,345 will go toward construction of the waterfront park on Grubb Street.

"Tight ship"
In an earlier conversation Monday, Cox described the upcoming year's budget as "conservative."

"We have cut every possible item we could in order to run a tight ship next year," said Cox.

He also described the town's cash flow situation as "tight," and conceded that the town was still vulnerable should any unforeseen costs arise.

As to how much he thought the deficit would amount to this year, Cox said he had "no idea," and added, "I certainly hope we don't have any deficit this year."
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Band Day banner

Plans are currently underway for the annual Band "Aid" Festival set for Saturday, June 13, at the Horse and Pony

Club ring on Grubb Street Extended. The day-long event, which will begin at 10 a.m. and last until, will include games,

entertainment, refreshments, and end with a fish fry at 5 p.m. Tickets for the

fish fry can be obtained from any band student or Band Booster member.

County water to cost more

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners adopted on Monday an increase in water rates to partially offset a projected shortfall in revenue.

County finance officer D.F. Reed, Jr. said the shortfall in revenue from the sale of water could be as much as \$40,000 if the rates were not adjusted.

The newly adopted rate schedule, to become effective July 1, will not produce that much more revenue, but the commissioners asserted that they could adjust rates again in the future if necessary.

Commissioner Lester Simpson moved that the minimum charge be upped to \$7.50 from the present \$7 for the first two thousand gallons of water used. The remainder of the rate schedule would be an additional \$1.75 per thousand for two to five thousand gallons of water usage, \$1.25 per thousand for water usage ranging from five to ten thousand gallons and \$1.10 for each thousand gallon increment of water used above 10,000 gallons.

Some 58 percent of the county's water customers pay the minimum monthly bill, and commissioner Charles Ward felt that group should be required to pay a

steeper increase. "I think the minimum ought to be a little more," Ward said.

Ward was concerned that the new rate schedule would not generate enough revenue.

Commissioner Welly White, though, countered that the board should wait and see. "Let's try it at that and move it up if we have too," White said.

Wayne Floyd, a technician for the county's engineering firm, said that Phase II of the county water system would bring an influx of revenue to the system.

"I think you'll be pleasantly surprised with Phase II," Floyd said. "300 people have already signed up in Holiday Island, and that's not going to cost us a dime."

He said the military installation at Harvey's Point will be another \$300 a month water customer.

In another water-related matter, water department head Keith Haskett reported that he received three complaints of red water entering the homes of water customers last Thursday night.

Water department employees had been instructed to operate the plant manually

because of the problem, but Floyd said that had the plant been operating manually the incident would not have occurred.

"This is getting to be a sore subject," said Simpson. "If we can't remedy it one way we'll remedy it another... We'll get some help out there that can."

The water plant has on occasion sent iron-laden water coursing into the homes of customers because of a malfunction in a backwash cycle.

Haskett reported that last week one woman had complained that she had put a brand new white bed spread in her washing machine and it had come out orange.

Rents at the county office building on Church Street extended (ARPC Building) were also a subject of discussion at the meeting.

Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service director Tommy Lynn Riddick and his advisory board told the commissioners that they could not afford to pay the \$4 per square foot they had been assessed for their 800 square feet of office space in the building.

ASCS had previously paid only \$50 per month, but a change in how ARPCD pays

for its space in the building has caused the commissioners to have to make a dramatic hike in the agency's rent.

ASCS representatives said they could pay twice the rent they've been paying and perhaps even three times that figure (\$1,200-\$1,800), but not the \$4 per square foot.

The commissioners also discussed rent for ARPCD. The regional government had budgeted \$6,000, but commissioner Charles Ward had argued that the figure is well below the cost of providing utilities.

ARPCD offered to pay a pro-rated share of utilities, but the county rejected that in lieu of a flat rent fee.

During the fiscal year that is about to come to a close, ARPCD has paid utilities on the building and the county has paid the insurance.

This year, however, ARPCD has reduced its staff and is occupying less space.

The commissioners were divided on whether to seek \$7,500 or \$9,000 in rent from the agency, but agreed to meet again with ARPCD officials on the matter.

School board accepts budget, hearing Monday

The Perquimans County Board of Education approved Monday night a \$1,055,951 local budget, \$10,600 less than the board's initial request to the county.

Approximately \$20,000 of the board's capital outlay request, however, will be

funded through revenue sharing rather than tax dollars.

"It's no change in the money. What they're doing is keeping the tax rate down," said schools superintendent Pat Harrell.

He said board members should be proud of the support the county is showing for education. "I feel very good (about the budget) and I think you have a

right to feel good as a board," he said.

A public hearing on the entire county budget is scheduled Monday night, June 8 at 8 p.m. in the county courthouse.

Following that hearing the county may choose to adopt or further revise the budget.

In another matter, Ken Stalls, Tri-County Career Center director, reported that the search for funds to construct the

facility is underway, and that he remains optimistic about finding brick and mortar money, despite the conservative mood of the nation.

"I still believe it could be a reality," Stalls said, but he said that carefully planned approaches must be made to various potential funding sources and the going is slow.

He said that the nearly \$6 million

dollars needed to construct the facility will have to come from more than one source. "We know it's going to have to be a joint project," Stalls said.

The board also heard from employee Susan Winslow on curriculum development and accreditation activities, and on an ongoing teacher training program.

Mrs. Winslow presented an extensive

report on efforts to get all of the county's schools accredited by the Southern Association.

The schools will be visited by a committee in April, and each will be judged on an individual basis as to whether it meets the standards for accreditation set by the Southern Association.

Teacher training is in its third full year

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Newbold-White House set for dedication July 3

The official opening of the Newbold White House will be July 3, beginning with a dedication ceremony at 11 a.m., according to Albert Eure, president of the Perquimans County Restoration Association.

State officials and dignitaries have been invited, and acceptances have been received from State Senator Melvin Daniels and Mrs. Sara W. Hodgkins, Secretary of Cultural Resources, who

according to Daniels, has supported the restoration project since her appointment in 1977.

"She (Mrs. Hodgkins) always went to bat for us when we needed additional funds," he said.

"And since she became secretary (of Cultural Resources), we have had to go back several times to ask for supplemental grants.

"Mrs. Hodgkins understood the im-

portance of restoring the only extant building where our proprietary government met, and since it is the only 17th century building in North Carolina, restoration was a long, tedious and expensive project," concluded Daniels.

Begun in 1973, restoration of the pre-Georgian structure has often been tangled in government red tape. Further delays have been attributed to the scarcity of some of the materials needed

to refurbish the house, as well as the fact that one man, W.M. Kemp, has done much of the restoration work alone.

The house is expected to be open Tuesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., 12 months out of the year, closing only on Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter.

The tentative admission price has been set at \$1 for adults and 50 cents for

children. The July 3 opening, however, will be free to the public.

The Restoration Society expects to use county residents as volunteer tour guides. Those interested in working as guides should meet at the Newbold White House, located off Harvey Point Road, on Tuesday, June 16, at 3 p.m. For further tour guide information, contact Paige Underwood at 426-7697.

PCHS, Academy graduations are scheduled Friday

Perquimans County High School will graduate some 134 seniors Friday, June 5, at 8 p.m. in the school gymnasium.

This year's graduating class is slightly larger than last year's, which totalled some 112. High school principal William Byrum said he anticipated next year's graduating class to decrease in size.

Commencement speaker will be former Hertford resident Dr. George Reid, Jr., who is chairman of the department of history at North Carolina Central University in Durham.

Valedictorian for the 1981 graduation class is Lynwood Clinton Winslow, III. Class salutatorian is Rene B-w-ser.

Junior marshalls for commencement exercises will be Diane Jordan, chief, Elaine Twine and Ginger Stallings. Tenth grade marshalls will be Paige Hollowell and Sheila Perry. Representing the freshman class will be Theresa Schallock and Ben Durant.

No baccalaureate services will be held.

Graduation ceremonies at Albemarle Academy will also be Friday, June 5, at 8 p.m. at the academy gymnasium.

Speaker will be Donald J. Parrott, former Albemarle Academy headmaster and teacher at Auburn University in Alabama.

Class valedictorian is William D.

Benton. Salutatorian is Alvin L. Smithson, Jr.

Baccalaureate services will be Thursday, June 4, at the First Baptist Church in Elizabeth City, beginning at 8 p.m. Speaking will be Rev. Charles W. Duling.

This week

The county adopts a pay plan to bring its employees in line with the job market - see page 2.

Pokolocki is a first class entertainer with a couple of records to prove it - see page 3.

Market information is as close as your telephone, and free - see page 4.

Weather word

Partly cloudy with scattered showers Thursday, then mostly sunny Friday and Saturday. Highs will average in the mid-90s and lows will be in the mid-60s.

