

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## County employees confront commissioners regarding pay raise

By SUSAN HARRIS and JANE B. WILLIAMS  
Perquimans County Commissioners were confronted Monday night by a delegation of county employees who were under the impression during the county's Fiscal Year 1985-'86 budget talks that they would be awarded a five-percent pay increase.

During the final budget meeting held on Tuesday, June 25, commissioners discussed possible ways to cut the proposed county tax rate, but came to no viable solution, leaving the meeting with the proposed bud-

get intact with plans to adopt said budget at their July 1 meeting, the same day that the new budget was to be effective.

In the June 25 meeting Commissioner Wayne Winslow stated that although he would like to see the tax rate cut by two and one-half cents he could see no way to do it. Winslow briefly discussed at that meeting four cuts, ie. employee salary increases, library and recreation department increases and Board of Education funds, but did not substantiate his ideas with a motion, stating, "We've got to be fair to every-

body."

However, on July 1, after the county entered FY 85-86 without a budget, Winslow presented a motion to the board with those exact cuts. The motion was adopted.

In an interview following that meeting Winslow stated that he did not feel he had any support for the budget cuts at the earlier meeting so he did not offer a motion at that time. Winslow further stated that he was later contacted by Commissioner Thomas Nixon, with whom he met on Sunday, June 30, to re-evaluate the proposed budget.

The action taken by the board

caused numerous county employees to request an audience at the next commissioners meeting, which was held on Monday night.

A group of 36 county employees representing seven county departments presented a resolution to the board requesting no less than a five-percent increase. The resolution pointed out that the employees estimated their worth to the county as greater than a two and one-half percent increase, adding that such an increase in effect was not an increase considering costs of Social Security, retirement, taxes and insurance rates on the new salary scale.

After assuring the assemblage that the board was proud of the county's employees and their performance Chairman W.W. White, Jr. stated, "We will reconsider (salary increases) if there are monies available. We will look at it again. There's no guarantee, but we will look at it."

Social Services Director Paul Gregory addressed the board stating that he had met with County Finance Officer Durwood Reed, and together they had found the funds for the employee raises, working within the county's ad valorem tax rate.

"I just can't believe that you gentlemen are going to sit out there and keep the county employees at a two and one-half percent pay raise," Gregory said.

At that point Reed and Gregory joined the commissioners at their table to show the board how the full raise could be granted without escalating the tax rate of 66-cents per \$100 valuation.

After studying that information Commissioner Lester Simpson said that he felt that if you treated the employees fairly they would work to save the county money. Then Simpson made the motion to give all county employees a five-percent salary increase. Simpson voted against the adoption of the county's FY 85-86 budget that contained the cuts.

After three requests by the chairman for a second to the motion gained no response, the motion died.

Commenting on the lack of action by the board, Gregory said, "It was clearly shown that money wasn't the problem." His statement elicited a round of applause from the assembled employees.

The additional increase in salary would cost approximately \$8,500 during the next year, however a portion of those monies would not be paid by the county but would come from state and federal matching funds.

It was pointed out at the meeting that the county brought forward \$140,698 from the general revenue fund balance into FY 85-86.

County employees, led by Sheriff Julian Broughton, just prior to their departure from the meeting, showed their appreciation for support offered by

Commissioner Simpson verbally and with the evenings second round of applause.

When asked about the groups next course of action, Debbie Reed, a spokesperson for the group and an employee with Social Services said, "We'll have to get together and see."

As the board neared adjournment Simpson said, "I still don't think the employees were treated right," adding that he felt they were led to believe that they would receive a five-percent increase.

Commissioner Winslow asked Simpson who had given the employees that impression, to which Simpson replied, "You did."

After all business had been discussed Chairman White requested a motion for adjournment. No motion was made. Upon the recommendation of County Attorney John Matthews, White himself adjourned the meeting.

## RMS opens first satellite clinic

WINFALL—Quality health care moved to a medically underserved area on Sunday when an affiliate of Albemarle Hospital officially opened it's first satellite medical facility here.

The facility, The RMS Perquimans Medical Center, plans to serve all of Perquimans County. With a population of just under 10,000 the county was considered medically underserved with only one doctor practicing here.

"The Americal Medical Association recommends that there be one family physician or internist for every two or three thousand residents," said Jack Morris, chairman of Regional Medical Services' (RMS) building and development commit-

tee. It's easy to see why RMS decided to place a medical center here," he added.

One of the primary goals of RMS is to bring health care closer to home for those in outlying areas. The hospital affiliate was incorporated last summer. The Perquimans facility is the first new building to be unveiled by the organization.

He thanked local community leaders, including Mayors Lloyd Morgan and Bill Cox, who were present.

He also thanked local agribusinessman, Willis Jessup, for making the site on Highway 37 available, and for other valuable support and assistance.

"Perhaps the most important

decision we made was finding the right physician to meet the needs of the community," Morris said. "We interviewed approximately 15 doctors before selecting Dr. Neil DeNunzio. We were looking for youth, enthusiasm, ability, and a commitment to serve. We found all of those characteristics in Dr. DeNunzio."

Speaking to the group, DeNunzio said that he was pleased to be opening his internal medicine practice in Winfall. He briefly described the range of an internal medicine practice - covering treatment of blood pressure disorders, diabetes, heart disease, preventive medicine and routine checkups among other things.

DeNunzio credited Albemarle's administrators, and RMS managers, Bob Jeffries, Glen Washington and Charles Stewart with helping to bring him to the area.

"I am looking forward to offering medical care to you and your families and your neighbors. I am looking forward to being your doctor," DeNunzio said.

After speaking, DeNunzio and his wife, Laura, severed the ribbon across the front door, allowing the entry of approximately 150 who visited the center on Sunday.



Dr. Neil DeNunzio and his wife, Laura, officially opened the new RMS Perquimans Medical Center in Winfall on Sunday afternoon. (Photo by Jane Williams.)

## Commissioners change road improvement plan

By JANE B. WILLIAMS  
Perquimans County Commissioners elected to deviate somewhat from a proposed plan for secondary road improvements in Perquimans County after a substantial number of Snug Harbor property owners voiced their dismay at being rated too low for action on the upcoming year's priority list at a public hearing on Monday.

The hearing which is held annually by the North Carolina Department of Transportation Division of Highways - Planning and Research Branch is set to advise local residents of plans made by that department for secondary road improvements in each county, and to gain the residents input. Monday's hearing brought repeated requests from Snug Harbor residents for

the state to re-evaluate their plans for road improvements, moving that neighborhood higher up on the priority list.

No road improvements were scheduled in the original plans for FY85-86 by the state for that community.

After a lengthy discussion, Perquimans County Commissioners voted to alter the original plan presented by the DOT for the use of the \$256,445 available to Perquimans County, by adding Hemlock Street in Snug Harbor to the list for stabilization, along with State Road 1216, 1359 and 1360. The commissioners also approved the widening of Balahack Road in its entirety at a cost of approximately \$83,500. Originally only a portion of that road was set to be widened.

## Two injured in weekend collision

By JANE B. WILLIAMS

Two women were injured on Saturday morning at the intersection of U.S. 17 Business and U.S. 17 By-Pass approximately one-half mile south of Hertford when a vehicle operated by an Edenton woman failed to yield right of way and struck another vehicle head-on at the busy interchange.

According to North Carolina Highway Patrolman Y.Z. Newberry, Dorothy Mosher France of Edenton, who was operating a 1976 Plymouth, was heading north on U.S. 17 when she initiated a left turn onto U.S. 17 Business, placing her vehicle directly in the path of a 1980 Oldsmobile operated by Mrs. Liza Murdock Lang of Kinston, creating a head-on collision.

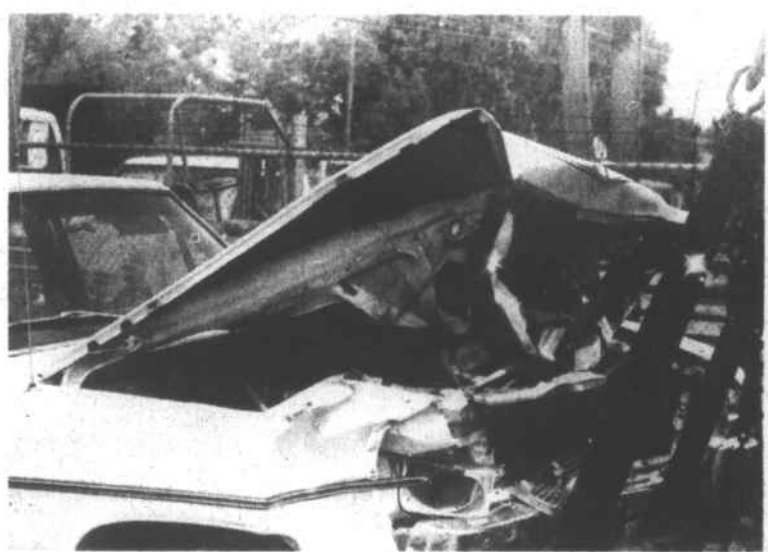
Pictured is a 1980 Oldsmobile that was totaled during a head-on collision Saturday at the intersection of U.S. 17 Business and By-Pass just south of Hertford. The vehicle was operated by Mrs. Liza Murdock Lang of Kinston who was transported to Albemarle Hospital for overnight observation. (Photo by Jane Williams.)

Dr. Robert Earl Lane, a local physician, was enroute to Edenton when he came upon the scene and stopped to administer first aid. Both drivers were transported to Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City by the Perquimans County Rescue Squad.

Mrs. France was listed in serious condition at the hospital, and Mrs. Lang was held overnight for observation.

According to Newberry both vehicles were totaled.

Mrs. France was charged with failure to yield right of way.



This 1976 Plymouth was totaled in a Saturday collision near Hertford. The driver of the vehicle, Dorothy Mosher France, was charged with failure

to yield right of way. Mrs. France was admitted to Albemarle Hospital and listed in serious condition. (Photo by Jane Williams.)

