

# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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## Area schools denied critical needs funding

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Portions of this article are reprinted from an article which appeared in The Daily Advance on Sunday, May 15th. The article originally was received by The Daily Advance from AP and staff reports.)

RALEIGH: Area school systems apparently will have to look to other sources for money to rebuild their deteriorating classrooms and buildings. A state commission on Friday refused to allocate any critical construction funding to local counties including Perquimans County.

The Commission on School Facility Needs voted to divide \$119 million for school construction among 29 other North Carolina counties despite charges that some of the state's most needy school systems were overlooked.

"You do have counties that have special situations that were left out and are not going to get any money," said W. C. "Bill" Owens, who is the chairman of the Pasquotank County Commissioners.

Currituck County, for example, got no construction money through 43 percent of its students are in buildings classified by the state as substandard. These buildings are old, often in violation of fire codes and should be abandoned, said Darrell Spencer, director of the Department of Public Instruction's school planning division.

The commission, however, gave \$2 million to Caswell County, which has all of its students in classrooms classified as adequate or better.

"I have a problem with that," said Owens, who voted against the commission's spending plan.

Commission co-chairman Margaret Tennille of Winston Salem said the commission tried to work out distribution of the money as fairly as it could. "Of course, in a case like this, somebody is going to be unhappy," she said.

Perquimans County had identified over \$12 million in school facilities needs in their long range plan earlier this year, but received no money from the commission.

"We are going to have to look for other sources of money to fund projects included in the plan," said Pat Harrell, Perquimans County School Superintendent, in an interview on Monday.

Perquimans County had ranked 37th out of North Carolina counties in terms of need, and Harrell stated his disappointment at the commission's decision.

Robeson, Columbus, and Harnett counties were the top money winners, each getting \$10 million - the most allowed under the formula used by the commission for awarding funds.

The 10-member commission was appointed by the North Carolina General Assembly to decide where to spend money allocated for school systems with critical building needs. The legislature set aside \$96 million for the 1987-88 fiscal year and another \$10 million for each of the next nine years. The money is part of a \$3.2 billion, 10 year school construction plan approved by the legislature last summer.

All of the spending formulas considered by the commission, including the one it settled on, ranked counties on the basis of wealth as determined by per capita income and the amount of property, sales and intangible taxes available per student.

Owens questioned the validity of the statistics. The formula, for example, placed Tyrell County as the third richest of the 60 counties applying for the money. "Anyone who has been in Tyrell County knows better," he said.

James Ellerby, superintendent of the Johnston County Schools, told the commission he is busing 450 elementary students to buildings across the county, because their school burned down on Christmas. Last week, he closed a school in Clayton to replace ceiling tiles containing dangerous asbestos. The school's 775 students will be divided between a church and a school that had been closed for six years, he said.

But the commission gave no money to Johnston County, which also has nine substandard buildings. It did, however, give \$450,000 to Rocky Mount Schools, which reported replacing roofs on two schools as its two major needs.

Owens asked the commission to spread at least \$3 million among the 10 counties in the northeast corner of the state, but Owens' request was denied.

"I'm disappointed, but I fought as hard as I could," Owens said. "I don't think they addressed critical needs across the state."



## Spring flowers are popping up everywhere!

Ernest Hardy has been working all over town recently at his spring gardening. Recently we caught him working in a bed of Poppies in front of the Hertford Municipal Building.

## Commodities distribution scheduled Wednesday

May 25, 1988  
8:30 - 12:00  
RAIN DATE: 5-26-88

Perquimans County will receive cheese, butter, corn meal, instant milk, flour and rice for distribution to the needy of Perquimans County in May. We hope to have good weather for the day of distribution; however, we have made a rain date of May 26, 1988 if needed.

The Hertford Lion's Club will begin the distribution at 8:30 a.m. It will be conducted at the Ice Plant, Grubb Street in Hertford and will be available to all income eligible households in Perquimans County. Households having four or more members should bring a helper with them to assist in carrying the food to the car.

All households who will not be able

to pick up their commodities may use a representative for this purpose. The commodities card or application must be signed in the correct places for this to be acceptable. No household will be allowed to pick up food for more than themselves and one other household as representative.

There will be two lines at the distribution site. The second line will be for the handicapped and/or disabled; WHO ARE PRESENT AT THE DISTRIBUTION to pick up their food. A Doctor's note, stating the disability, must be provided.

Cars may not be driven into the distribution area. Please remember to park in only authorized parking areas as the Hertford Police Department will be patrolling the area.

Applications may be obtained from

the following agencies beginning May 16, 1988: Department of Social Services, Health Department, Economic Improvement Council, Catholic Social Services, Senior Citizen Center and the Open Door Ministries at the Ice Plant.

The Commodities Distribution Program is available to all eligible persons without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, handicap, or political beliefs. Information about regulations against discrimination and how to file a complaint may be secured from the N. C. Division of Social Services, 325 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, N. C., or from your county Department of Social Services.

The income criterion are listed below:

Household Size	Household Gross Income Must Be Below Level of Appropriate Size Household		
	Per Year	Per Month	Per Week
1	\$ 7,150	\$ 596	\$ 138
2	9,620	802	185
3	12,090	1,008	233
4	14,560	1,214	280
5	17,030	1,420	328
6	19,500	1,625	375
7	21,970	1,831	423
8	24,440	2,037	470
Add for each additional household member:	\$ 2,470	\$ 206	\$ 48

## Library receives construction grant

Gov. Jim Martin and Cultural Resources Secretary Patric Dorsey announced that public libraries in fourteen North Carolina counties including Perquimans County will receive state construction grants totaling \$1,187,500. Twenty-four public libraries applied for a total of \$2,788,016.

A joint committee of the State Library Commission and the N.C. LSCA Advisory Council met with Secretary Dorsey and State Library staff on May 10. The committee recommended the following counties receive construction grants for the second year of the 1987-1989 biennium, which is this coming fiscal year.

Following are the amounts awarded to the counties: Caldwell,

\$62,500; Craven, \$97,500; Cumberland, \$100,000; Dare, \$125,000; Davidson, \$125,000; Duplin, \$75,000; Forsyth, \$62,500; Johnston, \$62,500; Lenoir, \$80,000; Martin, \$75,000; Mecklenburg, \$62,500; Perquimans, \$75,000; Pitt, \$65,000; and Sampson, \$120,000.

Appropriated by the General Assembly, this funding must be matched dollar-for-dollar locally. In addition, a maximum of one construction grant per library system per year is permitted. Individual awards may not exceed \$125,000 nor may they cover more than 10 percent of the total annual library construction appropriation.

All library construction grant applications were evaluated utilizing

the following criteria: (1) North Carolina library services areas with either no library or an inadequate facility receive the highest priority; (2) the individual needs of the proposed project's service area were carefully considered and evaluated; and (3) the planning already completed, the availability of local matching funds and the projected construction schedule were also important considerations.

This funding is to be applied toward construction of new library buildings; acquisition, expansion and remodeling of new and existing facilities; and the purchase of necessary library equipment and furnishings.

## Board of Transportation lets contracts

Beaufort—The State Transportation Board has awarded construction contracts to four lane almost 15 miles of a strategic highway corridor that connects central and northeastern North Carolina.

The corridor is comprised of US 64 from Raleigh to Plymouth and US 17 from Williamston to the Virginia line. It is one of 20 identified by the board last November as important to the state's economic growth and to the reduction of traffic congestion in urban areas.

The contracts, which totaled \$17.2 million, account for more than half of the \$33 million in construction improvements approved by the board at its meeting May 13 in Beaufort. Contracts were for \$7.5 million to pave a 13.8 mile section of US-64 being built from Rocky Mount to Tarboro in Edgecombe County and for \$9.7 million to build dual bridges over the

Roanoke River on US 13-17 at Williamston. The new bridges will connect Bertie and Martin counties.

Governor Jim Martin said the board's action is another step in his administration's effort to assist economic development efforts in northeastern North Carolina.

"The four laning of this corridor is crucial to the future of this region. As we move into the 21st century, this corridor will be a life line to the communities along its path," Governor Martin said.

Other contracts awarded by the board were for \$6.3 million to build the next phase of Fayetteville's Central Business District (CBD) Loop; for \$2.2 million to widen to five lanes 1.3 miles of Walnut Street in Cary in Wake County; and for \$367,595 to complete a connector from Oxford's Outer Loop to Watkins-Wilkinson Road.

Contracts to replace bridges in Durham, Lee, Caldwell, Lincoln and Henderson counties also were awarded.

In all, the board awarded contracts for work in Bertie, Martin, Edgecombe, Durham, Wake, Cumberland, Granville, Lee, Caldwell, Lincoln, Henderson, Union, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Duplin, Sampson, Onslow, Pender, Franklin, Vance, Warren, Person, Alamance, Watauga and Alexander counties.

In other action, the board adopted a \$100 million capital improvements program for replacing physical facilities of the Division of Highways during the next 10 years. The program, an update of last year's program, includes numerous projects within the department's 14 highway divisions and the ferry division.

## Perquimans County to refinance county bonds \$2.6 million savings expected

Perquimans County Commissioners expect to save Perquimans County taxpayers over \$2.6 million by refinancing two water and one school bond through an offer made possible by the Farmers Home Administration recently.

Following several meetings the week of May 2nd, the commissioners voted to tentatively accept a proposal offered by Wachovia Bank and Trust Company to refinance the bonds.

According to County Manager Paul Gregory, the county is currently paying 5 percent interest on the bonds, but the new proposal presented by Wachovia Bank will reduce the payments, and the Farmers Home Administration will pay part of the principal owed by the county as an incentive for them to refinance the bonds.

Under the new proposal, the county will have a 20 year payment schedule at a fixed interest rate of 10.75 percent for the first 15 years, and the remaining five years of payments would carry an interest rate of the prime interest rate plus .25 percent. Gregory estimates that the annual payments made by the county under the new proposal will total \$294,990.00, compared to payments now being made by the county, which total \$282,000.00 on the three bonds.

The first water bond was issued by the county in 1977, and totaled \$1.6 million. The second water bond was issued by the county in 1982, and has a balance currently of \$463,000. The third bond is the school construction bond, which was issued in June of

last year. It has a principal balance remaining of \$2 million, and the county has not made any payments on this school construction bond.

By refinancing the Farmers Home Administration will reduce the principal balances owed by the county on the three bonds as follows: the first water bond, \$656,500, the second water bond, \$204,700, and the school construction bond's principal will be reduced by \$882,680, thus reflecting a \$2.6 million dollar savings to the county.

The board of commissioners also turned down a request by the North Carolina Department of Transportation for right-of-ways along U. S. Highway 17 needed for four laning the road from the weigh station to the intersection of U.S. 17 Business in Hertford.

The commissioners tentatively denied the request, because they stated they wanted to wait and see if the North Carolina General Assembly would provide funds to help the county move approximately four miles of water lines, which must be moved for the project's completion. The cost to move the lines is estimated at \$150,000.00.

By tentatively denying the request, the board will not delay the project as it will be several years before the NCDOT reaches the intersection where the right-of-ways were requested; however, the board does hope that this will cause the general assembly to help out with the project.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

## Local school board makes request for budget hike

Perquimans County Commissioners listened intently last week as Perquimans County Board of Education members requested an 8 percent increase in funds from the county for the upcoming 1988-89 school year.

The school board's \$1.8 million budget request for next year is approximately \$141,400,000 more than the board received from the county for the present school year, but members of the board of education stated on Wednesday that they felt the budget request was realistic, and a conservative budget proposal.

According to Superintendent Pat Harrell, the actual increase in the budget over last year will be \$103,000 considering interest income, money carried over from this year, and fines and forfeitures.

Four items accounted for the majority of the increase requested by the board. The four included: a five percent increase in employee salaries, \$25,000 to comply with new regulations concerning asbestos in the schools, \$30,000 for increased electricity costs in the schools, and \$20,000 for additional custodial services at county schools.

Members of the board of education did not ask for any additional money under capital outlay requests. This total will remain the same as last year, \$351,000. That figure includes \$88,000 that board of education members are requesting the county transfer from items funded in the current expense budget last year.

The schools are also going to be benefiting from the Basic Education Plan, adopted by the North Carolina Legislature last summer. State money will be used next year for additional secretaries, support positions, vocational education positions

and programs and more.

Clifford Winslow, chairman of the board of education, and Pat Harrell said they realize in coming years Perquimans Schools will be in need of many things, which will require large capital outlay expenditures. At the present time, Winslow said elementary schools in the county are crowded, and in the future some of the county's facilities may have to be replaced.

"As time goes on, Perquimans County schools will need sizeable amounts of capital outlay funds. Our elementary grades are crowded, and we are faced with decisions of continuing to repair or replace them," said Winslow.

Board of Education members stated state officials are predicting a 31 percent student increase in the county by 1997, and the county must be prepared.

The 1988-89 current expense budget request presented totals close to \$1.47 million, which is increased by \$141,000 over 1987-88. Funds are earmarked to expand the guidance counseling department in the county's elementary schools, and will use funds to begin planning to offer foreign language classes in the elementary grades as soon as 1990.

The only capital outlay project outlined for next year is construction of a \$75,000 warehouse.

\$25,000 has been allocated for inspections of local schools for asbestos as required under newly mandated federal laws, and development of a plan for removal.

The county will consider the school board's request as well as other departmental budgets in June. After a public hearing on the proposed budget, the county's final budget will be adopted in July.

## FHA changes income limits

Recent changes in the Farmers Home Administration housing loan program mean more families may be able to qualify for loans to either build new or repair old homes.

The program was recently changed to enable more families to construct, purchase or repair modest homes.

Money is available to purchase lots, landscape and provide waste and sewage systems when construction is involved. The size of the home to be financed is also tied to the number of people in the family.

Present interest rate on a rural housing loan is nine percent with repayments up to 38 years under certain conditions.

"Payments are based on the gross family income at an interest rate within the family's ability to repay a

loan," said Melvin E. Howell, FmHA's county supervisor for Perquimans and Chowan.

New income limits are based on Federal Housing and Urban Development limits for adjusted income, which is the gross family income minus \$480 per child under 18 years old.

Qualifications in Chowan & Perquimans are one family member of adjusted income at \$13,600, two at \$15,500, three at \$17,500, four at \$19,450 and five at \$20,650.

Families must have good credit history and steady employment to secure these loans.

Applications for Chowan and Perquimans counties may be made at the FmHA office in the county office building on Church Street Extended in Hertford.