

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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Hertford, Perquimans County, N.C. Thursday, June 22, 1989

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Local Briefs

Hertford BPW members go to convention

The Hertford Business and Professional Women's Local Organization was represented by Dr. M. B. Taylor, Janice McKenzie Cole and Fannie S. Leigh at the 70th Annual State Convention of the North Carolina Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. held June 15 through 18 at the Hyatt in Winston-Salem. More than 500 women from local organizations across the state were present.

Dr. Taylor, serving another term as president of the Hertford organization, was among the 80 local organization presidents presented Friday evening at the Federation banquet. The banquet also celebrated the upcoming 70th Anniversary of both the state and national organizations.

The Hertford organization placed second for the Marlene Plyler Award for the club that increased its membership by the largest percentage. Hertford also received awards for equalizing its membership and for its contributions to the North Carolina Business and Professional Women's Foundation.

Hertford Police make arrests

The following arrests were made in the town of Hertford on June 16, 1989 through June 19, 1989:

Fonzy Miller, 25, 329 Market Street, Hertford was arrested on June 16, 1989 for assault by pointing a gun, possession of cocaine, marijuana and drug paraphernalia.

Reginald Combs, 22, Rt. 4, Box 1000, Hertford was charged with assault on a female June 16, 1989.

Johnny Flyth, 28, 416 Dobbs St., Hertford was arrested on June 18, 1989 for first degree trespass.

Trudy Charlene Overton, 26, Rt. 2, Box 31T, Meads Trailer Ct., Hertford was charged with shoplifting on June 19, 1989.

Dismal Swamp Visitor Center to open today

Raleigh—Federal and state officials will be attending the dedication ceremony for the Dismal Swamp Visitor Center scheduled for today at 1 p.m. The visitor center, located on Highway 17, 3 miles south of the North Carolina-Virginia state line, is the only visitor center in the state that serves both motorists traveling along the highway and boaters traveling along the Dismal Swamp Canal.

Local officials from Currituck, Camden, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Chowan, Washington, Tyrrell, Dare, Gates and Hyde counties will also be participating.

Activities for the center's official opening day include the dedication ceremony and the placing of the Dismal Swamp Canal on the National Historic Register. The dedication ceremony also is being held in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

In April 1988, the N. C. Board of Transportation awarded a \$1.1 million contract to Outer Banks Contractors to build the visitor information center and rest area.

The contract called for the construction of a 1,560 square foot building and vehicle parking area. In addition, a 150-foot dock would also be constructed to provide a rest area for tourists traveling along the Dismal Swamp Canal. The dock would be constructed by DOT personnel at a cost of \$108,000. Construction began in May of 1988 when Gov. Jim Martin broke ground for the visitor center.

Arts and crafts will be on display during the ceremony and luncheon plates will be sold for \$3.50. The luncheon is sponsored by the Albemarle Commission. The public is invited.

Correction

Last week's front page headline concerning the high school graduation incorrectly identified the university of which Dr. Jimmy Jenkins is chancellor. The headline read "ECU Chancellor Jenkins speaks to PCHS graduates." Dr. Jenkins is chancellor at Elizabeth City State University (ECSU). The paper regrets the typographical error.

Blacks, school board clash over school renaming

By JOE SOUTHERN

Staff Writer

HERTFORD — Approximately 60 members of the black community met with the Perquimans Board of Education Monday night to urge the board to consider changing the name of Perquimans Middle School to King A. Williams Middle School in honor of a black man who made many personal sacrifices for the school. The all white board unanimously rejected the request.

The board went into a long and heated discussion with the group, hearing several people voice reasons why they wanted the change and why it was so important to them. The board stuck to a 10-year-old, unwritten policy of not naming a school in the county after an individual. The decision visibly upset

the group which vowed they would return in larger numbers to again make their request.

In a move clearly intended to send a message to blacks, the board unanimously voted on a motion by Clifford Towe to not change the name of the school. Instead, the board offered a tentative compromise to name a new vocational wing of the high school after Williams. The compromise did not set well with those in attendance, as they said they were looking to change the name to honor Williams and his many accomplishments.

One person spoke out and said that Williams dedication went beyond being a vocational instructor and principal. She said it was his dedication and hard work which helped to purchase land for the school. Williams, who was then one

of the few black homeowners in the county, mortgaged his home to help buy the land for the school. He often provided the use of his car to transport children when the bus broke down.

Shirley Yates acted as a spokesperson for the group which was a committee of Perquimans Middle School alumni. She said that the group had been considering proposing a name change for about a year. Earlier this year Yates went to the board as a spokesperson for the group. She said that she was first told that there would be no name change in honor of an individual. After some persuasion the board tabled the request for further consideration.

However, when the board held firm on its stand to not name a school after an individual both

Yates and Rev. John London protested saying it was a waste of their time to be invited back to argue their case when the board already made up its mind not to make the change.

Rev. Willie B. Moore addressed the board saying that it was past time the blacks in the community received some recognition for their dedication and contributions to the county.

"I thought that through the years the board would see fit to offer something like that...without us having to ask for it," Moore said. He went on to speak on how people should receive what they have earned. He said that Williams, and the blacks of the community, had earned some recognition. All they wanted was to receive it.

"I'm sure that it is racially motivated," Yates said after the meeting. The board tried to argue that the policy is not racial. Chairman Clifford Winslow said that the policy of not naming a school after an individual was set during a similar case 10 years ago. He said that race did not matter when it came to naming the school. Board member Ben Hobbs said that he was in favor of the logical, geographic naming of the schools rather than honoring any specific individuals.

Rev. London, along with several other people, asked if it is possible to change policy, and if so, what steps are necessary to do so. Following the meeting Yates said the group does not want to let the issue die, and that they will be back with another request.



These children enjoy a nutritious lunch free of charge at Missing Mill Park. The meals are available to children 18 years and younger through the Perquimans County Schools. Meals are available through July 28, except July 4 at several locations throughout the county.

County tax rate to rise

Passed by the county commissioners Monday night was the 1989-90 fiscal budget which raised the ad valorem tax rate from 68 cents per \$100 valuation to 73 cents per \$100.

The tax increase was necessary to balance the \$3,990,205 budget, according to the budget message prepared by County Manager Paul Gregory. Commissioners last year voted to hold the tax rate at 68 cents, the same as the 1987-88 fiscal year. Due to increased needs, the commissioners were unable to hold down the tax rate for a second year.

Renovations to the Blanchard building next year are expected to exceed \$134,000. The total renovation of the 9400 square foot facility will cost between \$350,000 to \$400,000.

The structure will provide much-needed office space for the Dispatch Department, Sheriff's Department and Building Inspection Department, as well as providing a new courtroom. The county expects to complete the renovations in fiscal 1990-91.

Revenues for the project will come from ad valorem taxes, court facility fees and state grants.

School needs are also high on the county's priorities list. The commissioners appropriated the budget as requested by the board of education. In addition to the monies for bond retirement, the schools received \$904,300 for current expense and \$185,500 for capital outlay.

The board of education will draw heavily on their reserves for urgent facilities needs in fiscal 1989-90 to meet their budget needs of \$356,500 in capital outlay and \$1,502,300 in current expense.

Commissioners increased permanent county employee salaries by 7.5 percent in an effort to be competitive with the surrounding counties. It was also hoped that the increase would help to compensate for the lack of salary increase two years ago.

The Recreation Department received \$38,675 to construct two new county athletic fields. This figure represents 50 percent of the total cost. The other half of the project cost will come from a federal grant. It is felt that the complex will be a great asset to the county. Presently, the county owns no athletic fields, and must play all sports on school property.

Also included in the budget is anticipated Emergency Medical Services expenditures of \$81,064. Next year will be the first full year the department is operational.

Fiscal 1989-90 will be the last year of the jail expansion line item, which totals \$104,762, plus a projected carry-over of \$61,400. Perquimans County's 22 percent share of the project is expected to be \$292,762.

The budget is based on a tax collection rate of 95 percent with a tax base of \$269,780,489. This would provide revenues of \$1,870,927.

County ups permit fees

The county commissioners Monday night approved new fees from the building inspector's office to take effect August 1.

The higher fees were proposed by building inspector Aubrey Onley, Jr. after he surveyed the fees of surrounding counties. The purpose of the increase is to attempt to make the office self-supporting. The department also needs additional personnel, which should be hired next fiscal year.

By law, Perquimans County must have a building inspector. If the department is not self-supporting, commissioners said, then the funds to operate the department must come from ad valorem taxes. Commissioner Durwood Reed said that everyone should not be required to subsidize those who wish to build structures.

When the new fees take effect August 1, inspection and permit fees will increase by 98 percent on a 2,000 square foot house, jumping from the present \$123 to \$244. Fees on a 1,200 square foot home would jump 87 percent, from \$107 to \$200.

The schedule also sets minimum fees, in addition to per square foot fees, for construction.

The commissioners will advertise the new fee schedule next month.

Holiday Island water problems
County Manager Paul Gregory shared with commissioners a letter from the Holiday Island Property Owners Association complaining about low water pressure over Memorial Day weekend.

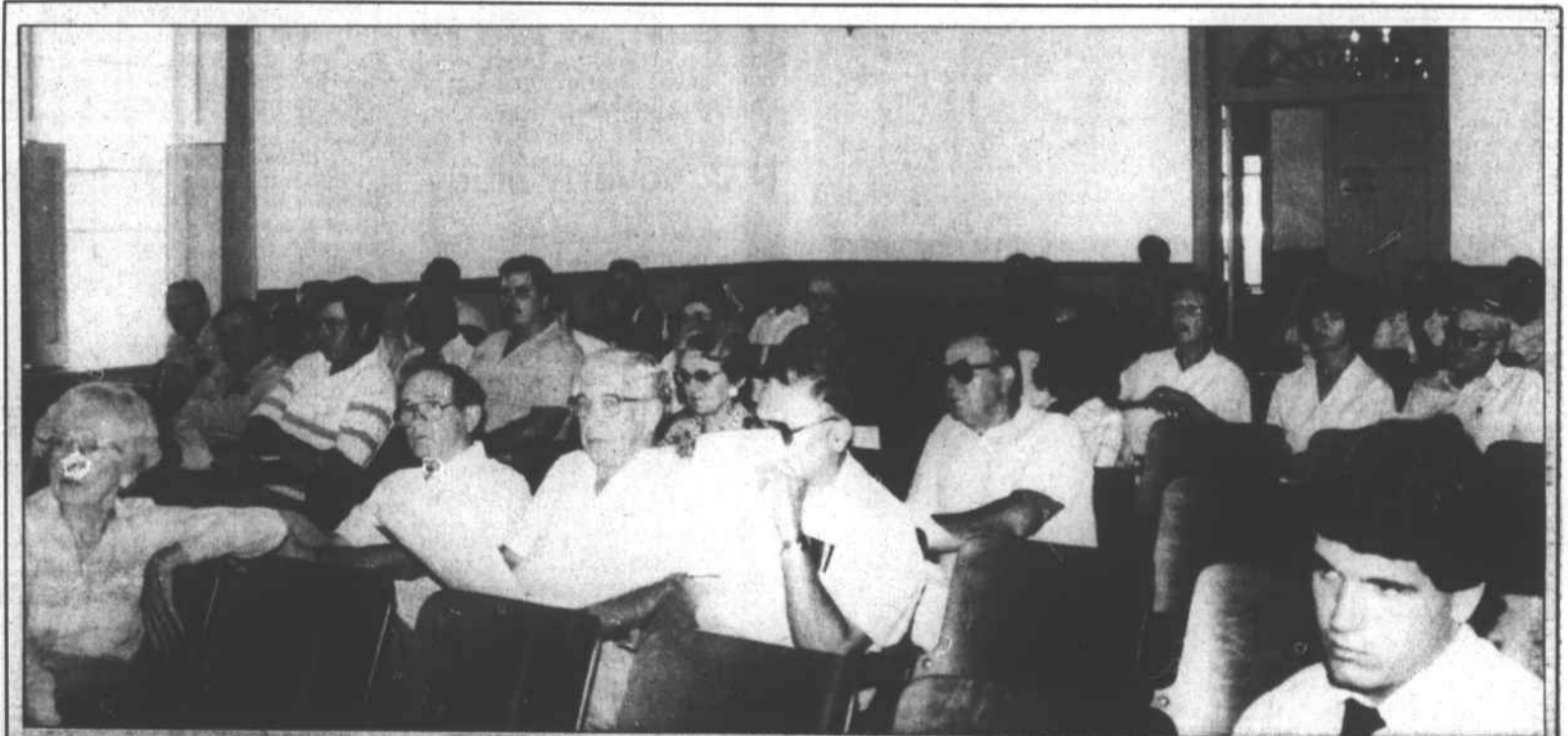
Gregory read his response to the commissioners who authorized its mailing. He told the property owners that a lever broke in the Winfall plant prior to the time employees got to work on May 27, which diminished the water supply in the tank.

With the influx of people to the subdivision over the holiday weekend, the pressure was reduced.

Holiday Island is a bulk rate customer. They own the lines inside their subdivision.

Gregory said that with the recent opening of the Belvidere pumping station, the water pressure problems should improve.

See Commissioners, page 2



A crowd gathered at the courthouse Monday to hear the N.C. Highway Commission's report and ask for work on their roads. The commissioners unveiled a \$906,710 plan for unpaved rural and unpaved rural subdivision roads in Perquimans County. Although

several projects will be undertaken if funding is available in fiscal 1989-90, there are still some who will have to live on an unpaved road for some time to come.

N.C. Highway commissioners visit Perquimans

Members of the North Carolina Highway Commission came to Hertford Monday afternoon to unveil the state's 1989-90 plan for upgrading unpaved rural roads in Perquimans County. A large delegation of county residents eager to see their roads paved filled the courthouse.

The commission anticipates a total of \$906,710 in secondary road funds to be available if the revenue bill is ratified by the General Assembly.

Almost 12 miles of unpaved roads are scheduled for paving next fiscal year at a cost of \$876,500. Administrative costs will account for the other \$30,000.

Monies collected from gasoline taxes are appropriated proportionally with the miles of unpaved roads per county. Anticipated from this source is \$332,929. Added with the \$1,215 carry-over, the total available funds will be \$334,144.

Those funds will grade, drain, base and pave Carolina Shores Road (\$188,000), widen Beech Springs Road from 16 to 20 feet (\$115,000) and spot stabilize N. Bear Swamp Road (\$1,500).

If the revenue bill is ratified, several streets in the Snug Harbor subdivision will be paved, along with other short stretches in the county. The roads to be improved with revenue monies must be used by 50 cars per day.

Streets and roads to be improved would be SR 1411, an unnamed street; Hemlock Street, Laurel Street, Sycamore Street; Russell Drive, Webb Street, Jordan Lane, Maple Avenue, White Oak Avenue, Navaho Trail, Yeoplin Trail, Evergreen Drive, Charlie Griffin Road and Boy Scout Road.

Unless some contingency funds become available or a higher priority project cannot be done, Boy Scout Road will be graded, drained and

stabilized, but not paved during fiscal 1989-90. Paving that road is highest on the contingency agenda.

Other roads that should be paved as soon as funds become available are Sueola Beach Road, Lee Drive, George Lane Road and Hog Neck Road. These projects total \$465,000.

Highway commissioners told the interested persons attending the meeting that the state uses a priority system to determine what roads get paved. Points are assigned to each road based on the number of homes, businesses, school buses, recreational facilities and traffic on the road. Those roads with the most points are top priorities.

This year, said highway commissioners, the roads were broken into two categories: rural roads and rural subdivision roads. The top 10 priorities under each category are "locked in," to their top 10 slot.

For example, assume that road A is the number 3 priority in 1989-90, but cannot be paved due to a lack of funding. When the roads are reevaluated, road A would fall to number 12 due to lesser traffic count in later years. But under the new system, road A must still be in the top 10 priorities because it was there and was left unpaved.

Another feature of the system is that the short subdivision roads usually have the rights of way in order and can be paved as soon as monies are appropriated. Work can begin on those areas while rights of way and other matters are handled on other unpaved roads.

The objective of the N.C. Department of Transportation is to pave every road in North Carolina used by over 50 cars per day.

Several citizens spoke at the meeting regarding the state taking over roads, paving roads or re-prioritizing, but no changes were made to the plan.