



DISCUSS CHARGE SYSTEM — Members of the Kings Mountain Rescue Squad and its board of directors met Monday night for discussions on transport charge system with Larry Revels of the Cleveland County Emergency Services. Left to right are Lawrence Stewart, squad member, and Revels. Dr. Frank Sincox and Otis Falls, squad directors.

Charges Are Discussed

The question of whether patients transported long distances should be charged for a two-way trip was put to Larry Revels of the Cleveland County Emergency Services Monday night.

"We charge for transport — one way," Revels answered.

This question and others were discussed fully when members of the Kings Mountain Rescue Squad and its board of directors met at the local headquarters Monday.

Capt. Raymond Galloway invited Revels and County Manager Joe Hendrick to meet with the squad because of the questions squad members have asked. "I could have gone to meet with Larry and come back with the answers, but I think this is better."

Revels attended the meeting alone.

Pursuing the question of whether to charge one-way or two-way fees for long haul transports, Galloway told Revels that in one incident the squad members "carried family members on the trip. We had to make two stops out of the way to pick up these people before driving to the destination to pick up the patient for transport back to Kings Mountain."

Revels suggested that before such "trips are made that an agreement be reached between the squad and the family members requesting the transport.

"I have even talked to the county commissioners about this," Revels continued, "but the chairman (Jack Palmer) said the charge is to be made one way even if the ambulance has to go to New York to bring someone back."

Galloway said the local squad is bearing the expenses for these trips and that "there is no way we can break even doing it this way. Our first obligation is to our coverage area. We can't jeopardize the people here while we have our people and equipment on a long haul and then not even make expenses for the trip."

Scott Cloninger, a squad director, said Galloway's definition of first obligation is correct and that the squad is not legally obligated to make long distance trips. "However, I would not suggest that you stop that service because there is a moral obligation to consider."

Revels said a transport from Newport News, Va. generated a charge of about \$260 one way. "If we charged both ways it would cost the family about \$500 and no one can afford that. Charges should be sufficient to cover expenses," he said.

Since July 1, 1977 the service by Kings Mountain and Shelby Rescue

units has generated enough charges to leave an uncollected balance on the books of \$20,000. Meanwhile the county continues to pay the salaries of three fulltime EMTs in Kings Mountain, plus a supplement to the squad each month for expenses.

Revels explained, in answer to a question, that in the beginning the county commissioners said that bills would be submitted to the county emergency services, who in turn would serve as a collection agency for the rescue squads. The money would then be sent to the units.

Sincox Suggests Transport Service

Dr. Frank Sincox, a director of the Kings Mountain Rescue Squad, suggested Monday night that a separate organization to handle non-emergency, non-medical transport trips be formed in Kings Mountain.

Dr. Sincox's comments came during a meeting of the board of directors, the rescue squad and County Emergency Services representative Larry Revels at the KM Rescue Squad headquarters.

"I have to say this and I don't know if it will make anyone mad or not," Dr. Sincox said. "but I don't like all of this talk about charges and garnishment. I don't like this attitude. Have we forgotten about the people?"

He said he realized that the rescue squad could not go back to what it was before — a volunteer organization existing from public donations. Donations have fallen off to practically nothing and the government has stepped in and setup certain laws to follow.

"This is not a service anymore," he said. "It is a business. I'm not knocking the EMTs or updated ambulance equipment. I'm sure the state was well-meaning when the laws were past, but their guidelines have created a situation where we can only offer the people one choice of service."

Then Dr. Sincox suggested that some thought should be given to a second organization to provide only transport service. "I'm talking about people who need transportation from here to there to have a cast removed or for a followup visit to a doctor or clinic," he said. "And something like that should not require a \$20,000 fully equipped ambulance and an EMT in attendance. Just a driver and a vehicle suited to accommodate someone who has to lie down if necessary for

"The commissioners also said the county would not press people for the money," Revels said. "That didn't work. The next step was to make our garnishee papers as a sort of scare tactic. That didn't work. Next week we have a man who will knock on doors with garnishee papers in hand to collect the money due."

Revels said he didn't like this, but there is nothing he can do about it. "Nothing any of us can do about it."

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a ride. Under the present setup we cannot offer that choice. There are times when the full treatment is not needed, so why should people have to pay the full price?"

Dr. Sincox said he, as a doctor, did not send every patient to the intensive care unit at the hospital, just the patients who needed it.

He was asked if he didn't send all of his patients a bill for his services and he answered, "Yes, but I don't send the sheriff to their door with garnishee papers in his hand."

Roy Hammett, one of three fulltime employees of the rescue squad, commented that the state law provides for any patient to be transported in a qualified ambulance with EMTs in attendance in the back of that ambulance.

"I know that," Dr. Sincox said, "but that's because you represent yourselves as a qualified rescue unit. If there was an organization that represents itself only as a transport service, then there would be no questions asked."

Squad members expressed doubt that Kings Mountain Rescue could operate both a rescue and transport service because the rescue service, at present, is not paying for itself. Squad Secretary Johnnie Caldwell said, "I can speak for myself on this. After the time I've put in, the study and classes, I wouldn't want to become a glorified taxi driver for such trips."

"I can see your point and I wouldn't suggest that qualified EMTs become glorified taxi drivers," Dr. Sincox said, "but that's exactly what you are when you transport people from here to there who really do not need the full treatment. And I don't think the state had it in mind that these people be placed in the same free category as the real emergency cases."

Groverites Can Look For Higher Water Bill

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Staff Writer

GROVER — April water billing to Grover residents will reflect a slight increase.

The Town Board Monday night unanimously accepted an alternate water rate proposal, upping the rates for inside-city customers to \$4 for the first 3,000 gallons, 80 cents per gallon for the next 3,000 gallons, and 60 cents per for all over 3,000 gallons. For out-side city customers, the rate will be the standard \$5 per for the first 4,000, plus a 30 percent increase.

Airport Meeting Tuesday

A public meeting has been called for Tues., Mar. 14 at 7:30 p. m. at city hall for further discussions on the possibility of an airport for Kings Mountain.

A representative of the FAA will discuss and explore the possibilities with the Kings Mountain Airport Committee and the interested public is urged to attend.

Mayor John Moss said, "The turnout and level of enthusiasm for this project at Tuesday's meeting could have a great bearing on whether or not the city is in line for establishing an airport."

A preliminary plan has already been drawn and a possible site to locate the facility considered and explained in a public meeting several months ago. An airport to serve local industry, business and private citizens, it was explained, would be another drawing card to new business and industry searching for new plant sites.

Members of the airport committee include Dr. Frank Sincox, Tommy Bridges, J. C. Bridges, James Childers, Bill Grissom and Corbet Nicholson.

The board also upped residential ¼ inch tap-on fees from \$100 to \$150, on motion by Tommy Keeter and seconded by Martha Byers, with Harold Herndon abstaining.

Charles DuVal, Treasurer of Minette Mills, and John Harry, President of Grover Industries, expressed opposition to the initial proposal for water increases made by Comm. Tommy Keeter and discussed at last month's meeting. The first proposal was that the new rates be \$1 per 1,000 gallons for first 4,000; 80 cents per 1,000 for next 2,000; and 60 cents for all over that amount.

Current water rates for inside customers are \$1 per 1,000 gallons for first 4,000; 60 cents per 1,000 gallons for next 2,000; 80 cents per for next 2,000; and 40 cents per for all over 10,000 gallons.

Mr. DuVal, who appeared before the board Monday night, protested that the new rate, as circularized, reflected "discrimination" against the three industries who are the town's major water users. They are Grover Industries, Minette Mills and Har-Ray Mills. "These mills will bear the brunt of the proposed rate increase," said DuVal, with no rate increase to those 129 customers paying the minimum." DuVal said industry represented 50 percent of Grover's water customers.

Comm. Keeter said that it was the board's intent to come up with a realistic figure since the water rates had been unchanged since 1963 and the water deficit to the town for Dec. 1977 was \$600 and for January 1978 was \$500, the ultimate aim for the utility fund to become self-sufficient.

Mayor Bill McCarter, who presided, pointed out that the board had surveyed the number of citizens on fixed incomes, such as retired people and widows, in presenting the proposals.

DuVal reiterated that 70 percent of property tax revenue in Grover is paid by Grover's three large industries into the general fund, suggesting an "across the boards" increase.

Mayor McCarter read a letter from John Harry, President of Grover Industries, the town's major water customer, expressing dissatisfaction that "larger water users were bearing the brunt of increased costs" and noting surprise that "no more comment is coming from household users who use more than the minimum."

Comm. Keeter pointed out during the discussion that residents of Spring Acres are "above average" water users in town and that citizens use over one million gallons of water monthly with 135 of the 235 customers billed for the minimum usage of up to 4,000 gallons. Under the new rate, effective in April, the minimum billing will be \$1 per 1,000 for the first 3,000 gallons.

Mayor McCarter said the new rate would mean that a customer billed for 10,000 gallons of water would pay about \$1.80 monthly.

Comm. Keeter explained that the present tap-on fee is \$100 and the last tap-on cost the town about \$200. He suggested a \$50 increase for customers on the same side of the street as the town's water main and recommended that costs be negotiated for larger residential lines. He recommended that deposits remain the same, \$10 for inside-city customers and \$15 for outside-city customers. "We're not trying to make any money on the water system," he pointed out, "the general fund has been called upon so many times lately for money to extend lines and this increase will mean a more equitable way but won't pay for all the costs."

In other actions, the board: Voted to reimburse Grover Fire Department \$229 for a monitor, two inspection stickers, and N. C. Firemen dues, on request of Fire Chief Joe Boheler who reported that "everything is in order for creation of a Grover fire tax district" with preliminary drawings to be brought before the county commission in the near future. To a question, Boheler said creation of the Grover district would not infringe on neighborhood fire departments. No. 3 Fire Department has such a district but Bethlehem VFD does not, said Boheler.

Heard reports from Recreation Director Philip Harry about plans for summer program of baseball, including Little League, Babe Ruth and Dixie Youth participation. The board tabled requests by Harry to lease for \$1 a field, owned by Minette Mills, for a playing field until determination could be made about insurance of players and spectators. The board would also be responsible for lighting the field for night games, said Harry.

Mr. Harry told the board that a concessions stand to be operated at homegames would help finance the summer program. He also asked the board to investigate the possibility of obtaining land for development of a park and swimming pool area for Grover. The board referred his proposals to a land acquisition committee, including Bob Ham-bright, Tyree Keeter and Karen Moss, all Grover citizens appointed by the mayor.

Meet Saturday

Members of a new board of directors will be elected by the Cleveland County Voter Registration Association Saturday at a 6:30 meeting at the Community Center.

All interested persons and members are encouraged to attend, said a spokesman for the Association.

Brown Appointed

Hazel J. Brown, Project Manager of the Casler Street Urban Renewal Project Area of the Kings Mountain Redevelopment Commission, has been appointed by Governor Jim Hunt to the Advisory Council to the Cleveland County Unit of the N. C. Department of Corrections.

His term will expire Dec. 31, 1979. Governor Hunt said one of the goals of this administration is to improve the correction system in North Carolina and in order to accomplish this goal he is establishing an advisory council to each of the prison units in the state to serve as a link between the facility and community.

"With the commitment of community leaders such as Hazel Brown I know we can reach our goal," said the Governor.

Brown's commission of appointment was signed by the Governor with the state seal affixed this week.

A native of Kings Mountain, Brown is the son of Hazel Ingram Brown and Mrs. Ina Virginia Causer. He is married to the former Margaret Virginia Perkinson and they are parents of a 10-year-old daughter, Tanya Marie, and live in Galilee Community. He is active in the Galilee United Methodist



HAZEL J. BROWN