

School Bus Rules Made Stronger

Housing For Couples Wanted

Suggestions Made

At Public Hearing

Completion of improvements at Davidson Park and more housing for young married couples were two suggestions made by citizens attending Tuesday night's second and final hearing on how the city will spend \$388,000, fifth year entitlement in Community Block Grant Funds, for 1979.

Kathleen (Mrs. Luico) Wilson told the small gathering in Council Chambers that "I am worried and feel sure that most folk in the Black community are worried about the lack of housing for our young married couples who are moving out-of-town."

She had posed the question to Mayor John H. Moss, "how are we to get housing in Kings Mountain that young married couples can afford and are the programs we're talking about tonight funded only for low-income and elderly?"

Mayor Moss explained that the HUD program, as designed at the national level during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, were primarily to assist low and moderate income people and give them opportunity to move into the middle income area.

"Change is basically the name of the game in federal funding each year, said the Mayor, citing new guidelines from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. There is a continuing emphasis on new priorities, said the Mayor, but Kings Mountain is fortunate in being one of only 10 cities in the state designated a "hold harmless" community, elaborating on the program accomplished and continuing by Community Block grant funding.

Replying to questions by Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Sarah Manning and Rev. M. L. Campbell about progress of improvement to Davidson Park, the mayor said that additional property acquired from KM School System will help develop the area into "one of the prettiest parks in the area" and that dugouts and seating will be ready for the first ballgame in the spring, along with installation of lighting and completion of road work.

The Mayor, in elaborating on the need for more housing, said there are approximately 107 unused lots in the city with immediate utility service available but applauded Mrs. Wilson's suggestion that private developers be encouraged to construct housing for young couples in the city.

"But how can youth afford it?" asked Rev. Mr. Campbell, to which Mr. Moss replied, "Someone has to start the ball rolling and this is one area we can work on." The Mayor said that prior to the downturn of the economy in 1976, a housing boom was underway in the area and that "a real beginning" was the construction of 280 units of housing in 14 months.

David Long, city planner with the Department of Natural Resources, reiterated eligible activities under the Community Block Grant program and noted that the city is filing on Jan. 22 a pre-application for a Small Cities grant. Additional public hearings will be necessary on the final application. He said that in the new year the city has the opportunity to obtain \$388,000 in the Community Block Grant program, which is "phasing out" this year, and up to \$8 million over a three year period in the Small Cities category for which the city will be competing with other cities for the funds. — Elizabeth Stewart



Photo By Tom McIntyre

MINISTERIAL LEADERS — Taking office this month as the leadership of the Kings Mountain Ministerial Association for 1979 are (left to right) — Rev. J. C. Goare, president; Rev. Gary Bryant, vice president; and Rev. Clyde Bearden, secretary-treasurer. Outgoing president is Rev. Dwight Edwards and outgoing secretary-treasurer is Rev. Bob Boggan. The association meets monthly at Central United Methodist Church.

Parents Suggest To Board

School Should Open Later

Parents prefer next school term begin after Labor Day with fewer holidays and less workdays for teachers.

Teachers object. Over protests of teachers attending Monday night's board of education meeting on setting the school calendar, Mrs. Philip Witherspoon, a former teacher aid, complained that "all teachers are not in their rooms doing work on workdays." She said she thinks one workday after each nine weeks sufficient.

"The day of schools beginning after Labor Day and ending in May are over," said Dean Westmoreland a teacher and past president of the

N. C. Association of Educators, and George Lubianeski, president of the Association of Classroom Teachers.

Explaining what he called the "direct effect the school calendar has on the school program," Westmoreland said the extended 10 month term helps teachers do the job "we are hired to do" coupled with the demands which are so much greater today than 20 years ago. "Teachers, he said, must have time after each quarter to grade papers and if the work isn't done during the work days assigned, this means the work must be done during the school day, robbing the students of classtime which would not be giving students the best quality for the

taxpayer's dollar."

Mr. Westmoreland declared that "students need the time off between quarters. They'll tell you," adding that the Kings Mountain school calendar is the envy of teachers in other systems because "this calendar is tilted toward instruction."

Cary and Donna Osborn, among parents present, said that school children accomplish nothing by attending school in hot weather and John and Jewel Warlick suggested the term of school begin in late August or Sept. 1 with fewer holidays in a calendar similar to that followed by the Charlotte City School

(Please Turn To Page 2A)

On Water, Sewer Pipe

Contracts To 4 Bidders

Four separate bids have been received on water and sewer pipe for city construction, but the board voted Monday night to award contracts to all firms based on unit pricing.

Alvin B. Moretz, city engineer, and Walt Ollis, public works supt., recommended the board consider doing business with all four firms rather than a single one.

"I think if you will examine those bids you will find that one company offers the same materials for less than the other," Moretz said.

Commissioner James Childers wondered "if the four firms bidding will go along with that?"

"They were told this would probably happen when the specifications were sent out," Ollis replied. "It has been done before and the firms are happy to do business that way."

The materials are to be used for the expansion and upgrading of water and sewer lines.

The bidders were Davis Meter and Supply Co. of Columbia, S. C. — \$8,796.92; Municipal and Utility Supply Co. of Asheville — \$9,690.85; ITT-Grinnell Corp. of Charlotte — \$9,192.04; and Pico Supply Co. of Charlotte — \$9,684.89.

The above figures represent total bid price on all materials. The city proposes to purchase various items based on unit pricing.

In other action Monday night, the board approved a petition from Parkdale and Mauney Mills to make Oak St. a straight line between Railroad Ave. to Candler St., and to include curb and gutter on the north side of Oak from the north end of Suber-Mauney to Candler, and to close the portion of Oak now used as a parking lot.

(Please Turn To Page 3A)

By ELIZABETH STEWART
Staff Writer

Stronger enforcement of regulations for passengers on the Kings Mountain District School's 36 buses is now in effect, according to Larry Allen.

Allen, who recently moved from Central School, where he served as principal, to the administrative offices as new director of federal programs and support services, told the board of education Monday night that the stronger measures are needed.

"Some particular measures have been taken to control vandalism, student behavior and ensure safety while the school buses are going to and from school," he said.

Allen continued, indicating that the plan of supervision and inspection of buses by drivers and school-based coordinators include assigning students certain sections of each bus. Within these sections seats are assigned to individual students.

Daily inspection of each bus by the drivers with daily reports on known vandalism are to be submitted to bus coordinators at the schools. Allen said at least bi-weekly inspections of buses by coordinators or assigned staff members is also expected.

"Students will be given periodic reminders relative to bus conduct, care and safety," Allen said. "A traffic safety study will be conducted at some of the schools to determine the need for mechanical flashing controls and or police to be assigned traffic control."

These measures are all part of the plan to deal with student welfare and any disciplinary problems that occur. Allen told the board the majority of these "problems" occur on the "high school fleet of buses among students in grades six through 12." This includes seven

buses out of the 36 assigned to the KM district.

Allen told the board a new school bus driver workshop is scheduled for January and that presently the system has a full staff of drivers.

Responding to a question from Kyle Smith, board member, Allen said vandalism to buses alone has been responsible for the school's spending about \$1,852.12 for repairs.

Cary Osborn, a parent attending the meeting, wanted to know if there is a possibility the system could employ "only adult drivers," and Mrs. (Donna) Osborn suggested that parents could ride buses as volunteer disciplinarians.

Supt. William Davis replied that he feels bus driver salaries would have to be raised significantly to attract adults only to the job and agreed with Mrs. Osborn that a volunteer program would be "a real plus for the system."

Pursuing his question, Osborn said he felt that 16 and 17-year old student drivers are intimidated by rowdy bullies and could be afraid to turn them in for misconduct on the bus, but that this wouldn't happen if the drivers were adults.

Davis, commenting on driver salaries, said he anticipates a pay raise from the state by July 1, 1979, but that he didn't know that for sure. Currently drivers are paid \$2.62 per hour.

Allen noted that, recently, "a series of unfortunate events relating to the effective and efficient operation of some of the system's buses has escalated the school system to center stage publicly, resulting in a stepped up policy of discipline for both drivers and passengers."

"An average of 50 percent of our student body ride the buses daily," Allen said. "Busing has become a big business and a big operation."

Two-Day Workshop For Bus Drivers Set

A two-day workshop for adults and students interested in driving school buses is scheduled Jan. 23 and 25.

The sessions will be held in Barnes Auditorium from 8:30 a. m.-2:30 p. m. and enrollees must attend both sessions to be considered.

Drivers are currently paid \$2.62 per hour and work about 14-15 hours

Bryant "Not Proud" Of Testing Results

Reporting on test scores of Kings Mountain 11th graders on the state competency test, Director of Instruction Howard Bryant told the board of education Monday night, "I'm not proud to make this report but I'm glad it's as good as it is. We had some anxious moments."

A total of 820 students were tested at KMSHS and 290 students passed reading and 287 students passed math tests, said Bryant. Thirty students failed the reading test and 88 students failed the math test. Twenty-five KMSHS students failed both parts of the test.

Director Bryant told the board that five students achieved a perfect score of 120 in reading.

"Some of the students showed marked improvements over tests administered in the spring," said Bryant.

Students who failed can take the test again May 1 or 2 and will also have two more opportunities during

the following school years to make passing scores.

Remedial classes at KMSHS begin during second semester. Twenty-five students who failed both tests may have to sacrifice their time and give up jobs to obtain a high school diploma, said Bryant, since passage of both tests is requirement for graduation.

Eighty percent of the students already enrolled in a remedial class at KMSHS passed the second test. "I'm afraid that some of our students won't be able to raise their scores by more than 10 points on the next go-round," said Bryant.

Booster Club Meet

Kings Mountain Boosters Club will meet Monday night at 7:30 p.m. at B. N. Barnes Auditorium for regular meeting.

All members are encouraged to attend.