

BUDGET

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rate. Kings Mountain Council took steps recently to change its insurance carriers to reduce the total cost of health insurance to a 15.3 percent increase, or an 8.7 percent savings.

The major changes in medical insurance coverage under the plan are as follows:

- The deductible rises from \$300 to \$500, but a \$1,000 aggregate family deductible.

- The plan allows a parent/children coverage option as opposed to the previous parent/child option.

- There is a \$200 hospital admission fee but there is no PPO Network, so any hospital may be used.

- The previous \$5 drug card deductible changes to \$5.00 for generics, \$10 for name brand drugs, unless required by the physician.

- Eighty percent/20 percent coverage until \$2,500 out of pocket expenses, then the major medical becomes 100 percent coverage. The previous cap was \$2,300.

- The city will continue to pay 100 percent cost of medical insurance for each full time employee. However, the share the city will pay for dependents' coverage will drop from 65 to 55 percent.

- The city also changed the life insurance coverage from one times salary up to \$50,000, to \$10,000 for Department heads and assistant department heads and \$5,000 for

all other full time employees. Employees can pay for supplemental life insurance.

The city will pay \$516,088.36 for medical and life insurance coverage this year and employees are estimated to pay \$107,544.20, a total of \$623,632.56 to cover 172 employees, some of their dependents and 16 retirees.

■ The budget contains \$13,000 for a pay plan review, first time since it was implemented in September 1988.

Wood said that the city has held the line on both gas and electric rates over the last five years but small increases are necessary this year to offset inflation. Council has already approved 2 percent increase effective on July consumption and bills.

Wood said the same inflationary costs have impacted the electric fund. Since 1988, only one rate increase of 3.4 percent was implemented and that was to cover the cost of wholesale power increase which the North Carolina Utilities Commission granted Duke Power Company, the city's supplier, in 1992. The two percent increase in retail electric rates, except for SSI customers on fixed income, is effective on July 1993 consumption and bills.

The 2.7 percent increase in industrial water and sewer is also effective with July billings. There is no increase to residential water and sewer customers.

Wood said the landfill tipping fees for sanitation service is well below the rates charged by nearby cities and private contractors. The residential rate will rise from \$1.40 to \$2.40 per month with June billings and the commercial rate will rise from \$2.56 to \$3.56 per cubic yard collected weekly.

Wood said the new budget will reflect only \$384,667.00 for lease/purchase agreements and fewer are projected for the future. "This means these agreements are being paid off and fewer new ones are being used. He said the city will have more flexibility in ensuing years determining how to spend the money available for capital projects and equipment.

Utilities will account for \$516,161,321 of revenues to offset the \$19,060,686 total expenditures budgeted. These utilities provide 84.7 percent of the total revenues to meet the budget. Wood said the revenue projects assume a year identical to the current fiscal year in terms of the local economy's performance, especially industrial usage of the water, sewer, gas and electric utilities, and the summer cooling and winter heating seasons. The budget also assumes that both Dye Tech and Bridgestone-Firestone plants (phase one only) will be fully in operation by July 1.

All the Council's priorities from the April 2-3 planning retreat are funded except the lease/purchase of a garbage truck which the board planned to purchase in the winter and make one quarterly payment in the spring out of the new budget. Wood will recommend at the budget hearing that the purchase be de-

layed 90 days, putting it into the following fiscal year budget. Also, the capital outlay for the gas fund was cut \$4,500 for extensions and customer rebates.

The \$788,250 capital outlay priorities in next year's budget:

General Fund - EDC Sign project, \$2,000; City Hall sign change, \$1800; Fulton Drive traffic change, minor supplies; increase in Cleveland County Arts Council grant, \$1,000; pay plan review, \$13,000; increase for employee assistance program, \$500; Community Center reroofing, \$82,000; three police patrol cars, \$39,000; library bar code scanner, \$2500; library work station, \$550; codes division computer and software for inspections, \$4,000; finish land use plan and begin update of the zoning ordinance, \$10,000; finish the thoroughfare study, \$1600; finance department chairs and calculator, \$575; meter reader walkie talkie, \$500; aging program coordinator upgrade to 30 hours a week, \$7200; and sanitation truck, one quarterly lease purchase payment, \$7,657, for a total of \$180,882.

To be paid from the Powell Bill Fund: leaf machine, three year lease purchase, \$19,600; Gold Street traffic signals, \$16,500; street resurfacing, \$90,000; and Hawthorne RR crossing signals,

\$16,800 or a total of \$142,900.

To be paid from the Cemetery Trust Fund: replace pickup with a new pickup with a hydraulic dump, \$16,500; curb and gutter Hillside Drive from Rosedale to North Drive, \$4,000; landscaping for old pool, \$3500; new gas eternal flame, \$500; carryover paving from prior year's budget, \$5,775 or a total of \$30,275.

To be paid from the water and sewer fund: arbitrage payments on the 1989 bond issue, \$118,000; Tate Terrace sewer line replacement, \$12,000; replace water treatment plant filter controls, two of the four, \$5,000; Davidson and

City Lake dams design, \$5,000, dam construction costs, \$150,000; construct in-house a shed cover for the WTP sludge drying beds, \$7500 or a total of \$297,500.

To be funded from the electric fund, arbitrage payment on the 1989 bond issue, a total of \$14,850.

To be paid from the gas fund, replace service truck, \$13,500; gas line extension \$70,000; gas appliance rebate programs, \$10,000 or a total of \$108,000.

To be paid from the sanitation fund is \$36,000 for equipment purchase on lease payment agreements.



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Another vote in three years

GROVER - Three years from now Juanita Pruette says she will try again to get a beer and wine referendum passed in Grover.

The referendum for package sale of beer and wine was defeated by 20 votes last week as a record number of Grover voters went to the polls.

"I want to clarify something that was in the newspaper and let everyone know that I worked at the "Wets" headquarters all day June 1," said Pruette, responding to a statement made by a poll watcher that she was on her job in Kings Mountain.

"I can't believe the people of Grover didn't approve this referendum and keep our money working for us in Grover instead of South Carolina," said Pruette. She circulated the referendum petition effort in Grover in 1980 and again in November 1992. She said passage of the referendum would have been the final step in landing a grocery store for the area.

Grover has voted only twice on the beer and wine issue in recent years, defeating it both times.

Personnel Services to open in downtown

Personnel Services Unlimited Inc. will be opening their new office at 235 S. Battleground Avenue in Kings Mountain June 14.

A ribbon cutting will be held at 12 noon. Open House will be held the week of June 14-18.


Area residents are invited to tour the new business and register for door prizes.

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