

Commissioners to consider district representation plan

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

District representation was a topic on the minds of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners at its last meeting.

The topic, which was last brought up in 1992, was part of the board's goals they discussed in February, according to Chairperson Willie McIntosh.

"At this point, we're trying to bring back up the history," McIntosh said. "At one time they had a workable solution that all parties agreed on."

McIntosh said the current board is contacting members of the 1992 Board of Commissioners to get its input on the topic.

No action was taken from the '92 Board of Commissioners concerning district representation.

"We have to have something that we can bring to the public," McIntosh said.

McIntosh said he wanted to

talk to the '92 board to see what they went through, and draw from that. He said he wants to find out everything before they bring it to a vote, which could come possibly in August.

"We have to have something we can introduce to the public," McIntosh said. "Everyone wants to feel like they're represented."

Nothing would change if the public voted against the issue.

"If not, we would stay where we are," McIntosh said. "We need to have our homework done before we introduce anything to the public."

Commissioner Ronnie Hawkins, who motioned for the issue to be studied during the Tuesday meeting, said it was one of the things he based his campaign on.

"I asked the commissioners for a work session in August to tell us the procedure to use," Hawkins said.

Hawkins said he wanted to have a committee formed of

various individuals, mayors of municipalities, Board of Election Officials and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The issue would be voted on in a non-binding referendum, and if it is a success, enacted the following year.

"The commissioners need to stay out of it, other than to do what the people say," Hawkins said. "It would lessen the way the committee could look at it."

A balanced geographic representation was one reason Hawkins said the county needs district representation.

"There has not been a good breakdown of representatives from all over the county," Hawkins said.

Richard Hooker, who serves as an Executive Board Member for the NAACP and as a member of the Shelby City School Board, agreed.

Hooker said, with the elections of Mary Accor and

McIntosh, the issue has shifted from a racial issue to a geographic issue.

"There is now a track record that can justify that African Americans and other minorities can be elected from a county wide standpoint," Hooker said.

Cleveland County Board of Elections Director Debra Blanton said district representation would allow more people to feel they're being heard.

"When you can reduce the number of people represented within a limited area, the people feel they have a chance to get their opinions across," Blanton said.

Several county boards in North Carolina have a form of district representation.

Mecklenburg County elects six members of its board of commissioners by districts and three others at large. Guilford County elects nine districts and two are at large.

Cumberland County elects five members from two districts and two are elected at-large.

COACH

From 1A

He is not to reside in a household with minor children except his own.

He is not to engage in any sexual behavior with any minor child under the age of 18.

He is to report to his probation officer to provide a blood sample or DNA testing and pay the cost of the testing.

He is not to use, possess, control, distribute, sell, exchange or collect child pornography or erotica.

He is not to access any type of child pornography or erotica via computer technology.

He is not to reside in a home with internet access.

He is to submit to warrantless searches and seizures by the probation officer of his per-

son, vehicle and premises for the purposes of detecting or discovering child pornography or child erotica which are reasonably related to his probation supervision.

He is to pay for the victim's outpatient psychological treatment by certified mental health professionals, approved by the court, not to exceed \$250 per month or a total of \$15,000 during his 60-month probation period.

He is to surrender his teaching certificate to the North Carolina Department of Education. He is not to seek or obtain employment as a teacher in a public or private institution in any grade K-12 during his supervision, nor is he to engage in any other employment where he would have contact with minor children.

WHITE

From 1A

Kings Mountain recently passed one of the most stringent gaming/zoning ordinances in the state. Over the past several weeks KMPD has issued a number of summons to persons affiliated with video poker machines that the City Codes Department has ruled in violation of zoning ordinances.

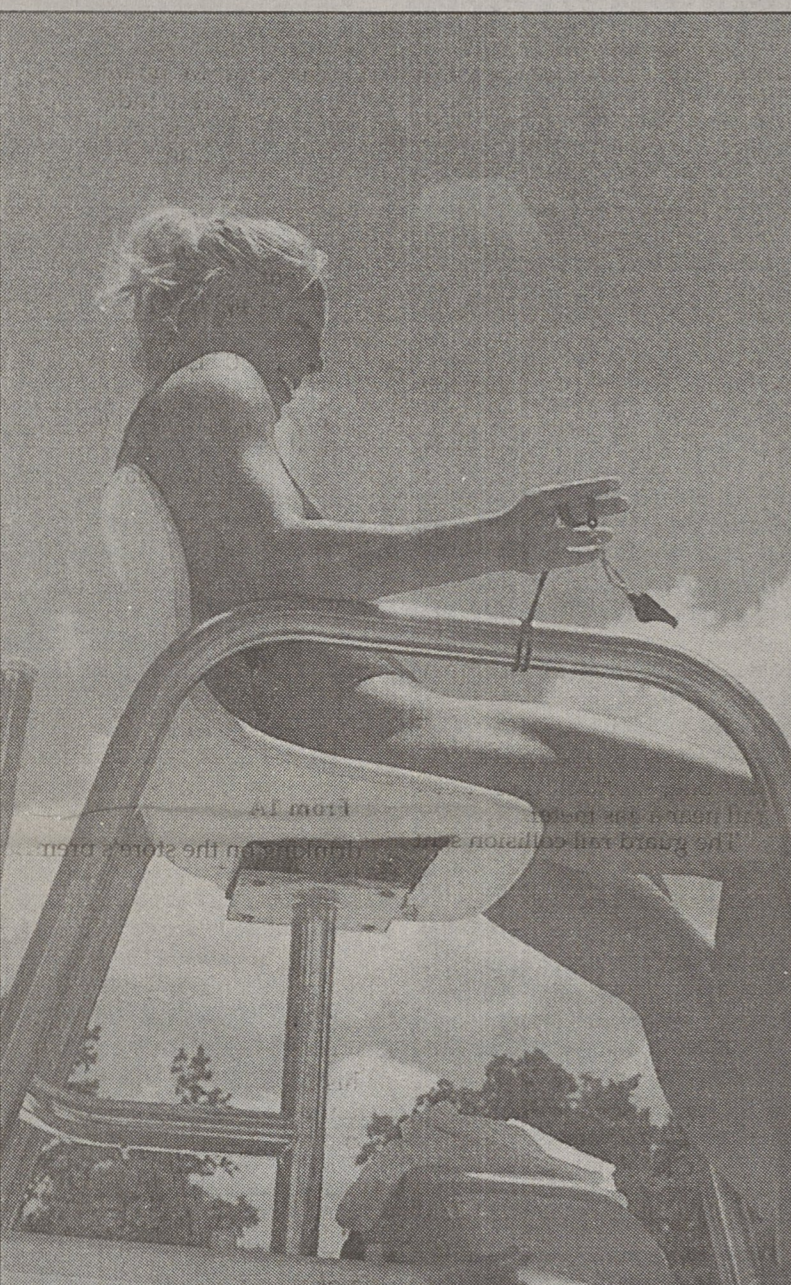
"I can't say it was the video poker people because I can't prove it," White said. "But I do think this is a personal retaliation against me and my family and this is a specific warning to the mayor and city manager and other council members that some people are saying they should be exempt from the rule of law. But this type of thing never works. This is doomed to fail, simply because 99.9 percent of the people in town are not going to tolerate this type of thing. It's a simple matter of

are you going to have criminals running the town or a responsible administration running the town?"

White is encouraging anyone with information about this latest incident to call either Det. Proctor or Chief Houston Corn at the KMPD, 734-0444.

"The reward is \$500 at this point and I hope that more contributions will be made to the fund," White said. "I am calling on citizens to speak out in this matter," he said. "This is a direct and arrogant attack upon the rule of law. The city of Kings Mountain has made great strides in recent years. We can't go backward. This criminal behavior is unacceptable. Every citizen should be outraged."

Det. Proctor said, depending upon what the investigation determines, charges in this case could run from a simple misdemeanor charge such as harassment to a federal felony charge if it is determined that the explosives used were illegal to possess in North Carolina.



BEN LEDBETTER/THE HERALD
Lifeguard Meredith Ware watches over a group of children at the YMCA pool recently. The children were part of a week-long camp at the YMCA.

BOARD

From 1A

pointment, the majority of the Board will be made up of persons who were not elected by the voters.

Filing for the outside city seats held by Jerry Blanton and Terry McClain, as well as the at-large member that will be appointed Monday, is now

under way at the Cleveland County Board of Elections and will continue through 12 noon Friday, August 3.

At the Herald's presstime, no one had filed for the School Board. Elections Board Chairman said Gaston County residents who also live inside the city limits of Kings Mountain are eligible to file for the at-large seat, but they must file in Cleveland County.

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SCHOOL

From 1A

Allen said Stewart is "very organized and is structured in her planning and implementation of the plans. We feel that will serve well the needs of the middle school."

Stewart, who has been employed by KMDS since 1976 and held assistant principal's positions at KMMS and Grover Elementary prior to being promoted to Curriculum Specialist, said she welcomes the challenge awaiting her at KMMS.

"Kings Mountain has an excellent school system under the leadership of Dr. Larry Allen," she said. "We have many supportive people working toward a common goal, to help our students be the best they can be."

"I feel at home in our school system. I am excited about going back to Kings Mountain Middle School as principal to work with the faculty, staff, students and parents."

"With God's guidance, I will do my best with this important work."

Stewart holds a B.S. in Elementary and Middle Grade Education from Gardner Webb University, and a Master of Arts in Middle Grade Education from Western Carolina University. She received a Certificate or Advanced Study in Education and Certificate in School Administration from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

She began her career with KMDS as a teacher's assistant and later taught fifth grade at Grover and seventh grade at KMMS.

She is the daughter of the late Elmer and Lula Hardin. She and her husband, Mack, live on Bethlehem Road. They have one son, Tracy, and daughter-in-law Christina.

In other action Monday, the Board:

- Was urged by local resident and UNCC professor John Jones to do something about the discrepancy between White and minority students in AG programs. He said Kings Mountain's minority percentage is 27.6%, but only 6.5% of students in AG programs are minorities.

"That's some discrepancy," he said. "There must be an increase in the numbers of minorities in AG programs" if the School System is to close the achievement gap.

Jones said there were no minority students in the AG program at Bethware School last year. "There have to be some students out there that qualify," he said, and he urged the School System to start their closing the gap efforts at that school.

- Awarded bids for milk, bread and food commodity storage for next school year to Merita, Peeler Jersey Farms, and PYA Monarch, respectively.

- Heard a report from Child Nutrition Director Patsy Rountree that unpaid charge accounts for student meals last year amounted to \$1,826.99. She said that the school system

has a policy of not denying any student a meal. School Board member Stella Putnam suggested that she contact PTOs to see if they would be willing to establish an "emergency" fund to help pay for the meals, and also pursue other ideas that may help curtail the problem.

- Heard first reading of policies relating to technology equipment donations to the school system; technology in the educational program; inter-net and educational program; and student promotion and accountability. The donation of equipment policy is a new policy under consideration; the others are mostly changes in policy that are required by law.

- Approved its Board goals for the 2001-02 school year.

- Was given an update by Dr. Allen on the progress of Kings Mountain Intermediate School. He said laying of the exterior walls is almost complete, and after that workers will begin laying the interior walls. He predicted the school will "be in the dry" by October.

- Approved several amendments necessary to balance the 2000-01 fiscal year budget.

- Released three students to Cleveland County and accepted one from Cleveland County.

- Approved the following personnel matters:
Contracts: Kent Blandford, language arts, KMMS; Lori Wilbanks, science, KMHS; April Blaine, math, KMMS; Adam Elliott, science/trainer, KMHS; Margo Green, language arts, KMMS; Margo Alexander, math, KMMS; Hilda Kiser, first grade, Bethware (interim), and Laura Chalk, third grade, Grover.

Resignations: Beth Martin, math, KMMS; Carol Elliott, language arts, KMMS; Laura Dixon, assistant principal, KMMS; Lynn Coggins, third grade, Grover.

Classified: Glenda Crawford, teacher assistant, Grover (interim); and Patsy Huggins, hearing interpreter, KMHS.

Retirement: Glenda Crawford, teacher assistant, Grover; Hilda Kiser, first grade, Bethware.

Transfer: Jenny Hollifield, third grade East, to Elementary AG.

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