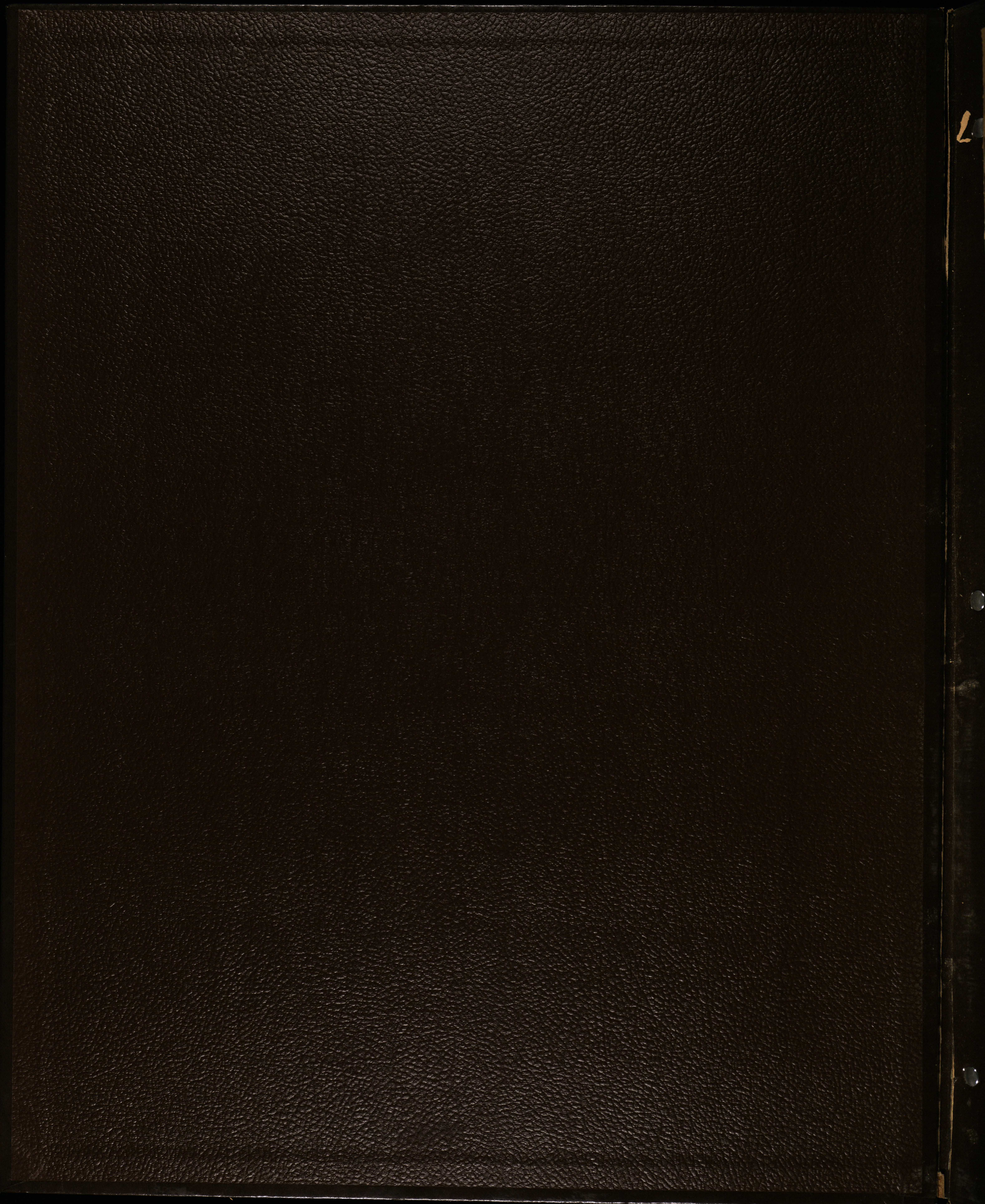


JAN 1971



STEWART LOSES SUIT



By **BOB BAIN**
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — The Supreme Court today ruled that deputies of Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart are subject to the state's Civil Service Act.

In an opinion written by Associate Justice Jack Pope, the court affirmed a previous decision by a trial court and reversed a decision of the Court of Civil Appeals.

Stewart had sued County Judge Howard Green and the county's Civil Service Commission, seeking a declara-

tory judgment that persons appointed by him as deputies are not employes subject to the Civil Service Act of 1971.

Stewart, the opinion said, contended that none of the employes was an employe as that term is defined by the Civil Service Act.

Any possible conflict between a statute which authorizes an assessor-collector to appoint deputies whose acts shall be as binding and valid as if done by the assessor-collector and the state constitution which says an assessor-collector shall perform "all the duties" of the office is avoided by words in the statute, said the opinion.

The statute (Articles 7252) authorizes

hiring deputies "to assist" the assessor-collector.

"The constitution and the statute are thus harmonized since it is the assessor-collector who is charged with all the duties and it is the deputies who 'assist him' in the performance of those duties," the opinion explained.

The Supreme Court held that the deputies "do not act in their own right but in the right of the assessor-collector" who is constitutionally charged with the whole duty of the office.

Noting that Stewart has 150 full-time employes plus as many as 75 temporary employes during peak seasons, the opinion said:

"We conclude from the words of the constitution and the statutes that there is one office for the Tarrant County assessor-collector, not 225 offices."

County Official Feels Position Still Right

Reed Stewart said here today he is not bitter about losing the civil service lawsuit, but he still believes that he is right in asserting that his deputies are constitutionally exempted from a state civil service statute which covers county employes.

He said he has talked to his attorney already today and a motion for rehear-

ing will be filed before the state Supreme Court.

However, Stewart said, since the ruling was apparently unanimous, the motion will probably have little effect.

As far as trying to appeal the ruling into the federal courts, Stewart was non-committal.

He referred to the court ruling as "a liberal trend in the courts that is taking place all over."

He said, "If we're under it (civil service), I'll just work with it as best I can."

—Associated Press Wirephoto
ENDS TRIP — Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger smiled as he stepped from his plane at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland last night amidst a steady drizzle as he returned from his week-long trip to the Middle East.

Salary Bill Favored By Commissioners

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Former Rep. Joe Shannon Jr. of Fort Worth was chairman of the committee and he conceded today that that feature of the report is the one drawing most of the attention.

"THE COMMITTEE believes that the present system is inefficient and ineffective," Shannon wrote in the final report.

"County government should be answerable to the people, not to the legislature."

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"That's the only business-like way to do it."

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FORT WORTH

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1971

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By JOHN LUMPKIN

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Funding for the proposed system, which represents a drastic change from the present system, would come from the sale of revenue bonds by the county, the committee said.

The group, called the Tarrant County Solid Waste Coordinating Committee, began last fall studying the area's waste collection and disposal situation. Members have conducted hearings and reviewed information, but have expressed disappointment at almost negligible response up to the present time from county municipalities.

ONLY ONE MAYOR, Bob Hampton of Hurst, and one city councilwoman, Mrs. Polly Nelson of Colleyville, attended Friday's session at the courthouse as guests to hear the committee's recommendations. All county mayors were invited, said Green.

"A pollution-free environment cannot be achieved without the expenditure of money, but the ultimate cost to the public through a failure to act will be far greater," the committee warns in its report that was made public at the session.

The committee report claims the current status of waste control in the county "is further evidence of the need to adopt a comprehensive, county-wide disposal plan." It points out that waste control here presently is a mixture of public and private resources.

"The present system is uncoordinated, not fully regulated, and provides inadequate and/or uneconomical disposal services to some residents of the county," the report says.

THE COMMITTEE, now chaired by Hurst City Councilman Bruce Willis, set a timetable for commissioners to act on its proposals. "We have kind of checked it to commissioners at this point," explained Willis.

By March 1, commissioners should have approved appointment to a special task force, which would aid in defining requirements for a complete professional study of the county's solid waste collection and disposal needs.

The task force would help interview consulting engineering firms that could do such a study at the cost of \$100,000.

Willis said that 75 per cent of the study's cost could come from the federal government.

A week after naming of the task force, commissioners should have selected the consulting engineer who would in turn help submit the application to Washington for the study funding. The committee thinks that the grant can be approved by Washington within the next two months.

BY MAY 3, commissioners should have awarded the consulting engineer study contract, the committee hopes.

The federal government grant carries two requirements, Willis noted. There must be a central county agency designated for handling solid waste—in this proposal, the county itself—and there must be coordination with regional or state agencies, he said.

Hampton praised the committee's proposals as being "real sound in my opinion."

"The alternative is not so sound. Maybe the committee was too kind not to mention it," remarked Hampton, referring to creation of taxing districts for solid waste systems such as he said was the case already in Galveston and Houston.

Green said the county has \$25,000 available this year for the study, but added, "The longer we wait, the more it (implementing a system) is going to cost us."

Committee member Jack Graham, director of public works for Fort Worth, then declared: "We're sending men to the moon and we're standing navel deep in garbage."

THE COMMITTEE report notes that Graham's office provides disposal facilities for 24 county communities in its three sanitary landfills, but that Fort Worth's master plan adopted in 1966 does not anticipate the city being the central disposal agency "for the major part of the county."

Operation of sanitary landfills to waste on Page 2

JEST A MINUTE

Appetizers are those little things you keep eating until you lose your appetite.

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this year above what they paid last year.

The National Association of Counties and the Hawaii State Association are co-sponsors of the three-day seminar next week. Commissioners said the trip will take one week.

Andersen and Richardson said the trip will be worthwhile. While they were conversing with newsmen about it, Commissioner Jerry Mebus sang a part of "Take Me Back to My Little Grass Shack."

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Press, Friday, February 19, 1971

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The Press, Sunday, February 21, 1971

13-A

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The committee, appointed last fall by County Judge Howard Green to study waste collection and disposal in the county, proposed Friday that the county assume responsibility for financing and operation of a county-wide waste disposal system.

HOWEVER, while the lengthy report was submitted by Stiff, Hurst City Councilman Bruce Willis, committee chairman, and Fort Worth Public Works Director Jack Graham, only Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus of Arlington sat in.

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"I was very disappointed at the reception we received," Stiff said, adding, "We feel we've produced and presented a good, sound report that is feasible and can solve the problem."

THE GROUP, tabbed the Tarrant County Solid Waste Committee, is recommending the county take over all public disposal sites, instituting a controlled landfill operation with each municipality continuing to collect its waste and pay the county for use of various landfills.

The proposal would include Fort Worth. The committee

further recommends private waste disposal operations be more strictly monitored by the county.

Funding for the venture would be through sale of revenue bonds by the county.

The committee recommends that by March 1 commissioners appoint a task force to help select a consulting engineer to study the county's solid waste collection and disposal needs.

The five-man group, which also includes Arlington Mayor Tom Vandergriff and Richland Hills Mayor Paul Daniel, has volunteered to serve as the task force.

COST OF THE study would be \$100,000, of which \$75,000 could be obtained from the federal government.

A similar study and report was made by the State Health Dept. in 1969, but went no further than the commissioners court.

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He said the committee met with many private disposal operators who said they were aware their operations were below par, but that they would not upgrade them unless forced to do so.

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1971

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Spurlock attacks bill giving power to commissioners

AUSTIN — Tarrant County legislators were decidedly divided today on House Bill 384, which would greatly expand the power of county commissioners courts throughout Texas.

Rep. Cordell Hull called a meeting of the Tarrant County House delegation in his office Tuesday afternoon to discuss the controversial bill that was discussed in a fiery meeting Monday of the House committee on counties.

The bill would allow commissioners courts to set the salaries of all officials and employees of a county, regardless of whether they were elected or appointed.

AN AMENDED version of the bill by Rep. Bill Clayton of Springlake exempts the county auditor and county purchasing agent, who are appointed by district court judges.

This has added significance in Tarrant County because factions of the judges and commissioners are constantly at odds.

After Tuesday's meeting, Rep. Gibson D. Lewis believed commissioners should set the salaries of other officials so the legislature wouldn't be continually asked to pass bracket bills for various elected officials around the state.

Rep. Joe Spurlock II spoke out vehemently against the bill.

He said it would give commissioners court too much power over officials and would take away the right of a department head to run his own department.

Spurlock said he believed legislation should be passed to make departments headed by elected officials completely autonomous from commissioners court and answerable only to the people.

SPURLOCK said he adopts this position from his experience as a Tarrant County assistant district attorney, a positive he gave up to become representative. He is the son of 96th Dist. Court Judge Joe Spurlock in Fort Worth.

He said the proposed bill would have the effect of allowing commissioners court to influence the operations of the district attorney's office.

Spurlock said Rep. David Finney and Rep. W. C. (Bud) Sherman are on his side in the issue, but Finney said later he is taking a wait-and-see attitude on the issue.

Lewis said he believes other members of the delegation agree with him.

"THIS BILL WOULD be creating an evil," said Spurlock. "I don't mind an additional 500 bracket bills each time the Legislature meets," he added.

"That's what we're down here for."

The bill suffered a setback in the committee on counties Monday. It had been rewritten and referred favorably out of one sub-committee. The committee voted to refer it back to a different sub-committee.

The new sub-committee is made up of Don Adams of Jasper, chairman; A. L. (Tony) Dramberger of San Antonio, Lauro Cruz of Houston, E. L. Short of Tahoka and James Kaster of El Paso.

Tarrant legislators said Tarrant County Comm. Dick Andersen has written letters asking them to support House Bill 384 in its entirety.

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\$11 MILLION IN HOSPITAL BONDS EYED

Peter Smith Expansion Included

By JIM MARRS

Hospital board members were expected to ask county commissioners later today to approve the long-range sale of \$11 million in revenue bonds for expansion of Peter Smith Hospital.

C. Jack Bean, a member of the hospital board, told the Star-Telegram that he plans to present his latest study of the hospital bond proposals to both the hospital board and county commissioners during an afternoon meeting.

"I'D RATHER not present any facts and figures of the program until I get to present this to the whole board," he said. "After all, this is who the report is for."

However, he did say that the presentation would be "for the whole package" and would deal with hospital expansion budgetary requirements through 1976.

The "whole package" Bean referred to is the estimated cost of completing the additional space in the county-supported hospital.

BEAN ADDED that the report will show that the bonds can be paid off through hospital revenue and he indicated

Turn to Proposal on Page 2

Proposal Expected On Hospital Bonds

From Page 1

that a lower tax rate in 1976 could be possible.

Currently, the hospital tax rate is 70 cents per \$100 valuation and hospital board members have already said they will have to ask that it be raised 5 cents next July to the statutory limit.

SEVERAL months ago commissioners were asked to authorize the sale of \$11 million in revenue bonds, something they would not approve at that time, saying they did not feel revenue would be sufficient.

The sale of revenue bonds does not require approval of the voters, as does the sale of general obligation bonds.

County Judge Howard Green today said, "These (the hospital's proposed bonds) will be self-liquidating revenue bonds and not tax obligated bonds."

GREEN ALSO said he feels the hospital board has done considerable "belt tightening" and that he feels the new proposals will be acceptable to the board and to commissioners.

TODAY, Richardson said, "We haven't decided anything."

However, Richardson and a reporter talked about the \$1 million proposal in his office yesterday morning and said an agreement had been reached.

This morning Richardson conceded that the entire sale of the bonds "is not the best business approach. If they've got something on paper, then I'll look at it on its merits."

Hospital Bond Sale Ruled Out by County

County commissioners informally agreed today they will not permit directors at Peter Smith Hospital to sell \$1 million in revenue bonds before the county's bond election scheduled for March 27.

Commissioners agreed unanimously they will insist that the hospital expansion bonds not be sold now for fear it might jeopardize passage of the county's \$8.6 million bond issue.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said he understands that directors of the hospital district intend to ask commissioners tomorrow that they be allowed to sell the \$1 million in bonds to continue the hospital's expansion program.

Several months ago, commissioners were asked by hospital officials to sell \$11 million in revenue bonds to finance completion of the expanding county-supported hospital.

COMMISSIONERS refused, saying they did not feel that enough income would be generated to pay off the bonds and to maintain the hospital.

At that time, though, Richardson and other commissioners agreed that they would authorize the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds in order to carry on the program.

C. Jack Bean, a new member of the hospital board, called for the accountant's study after the \$11 million proposal was turned down.

RICHARDSON said commissioners feel that some people who now favor the county's bond election next month might be a little reluctant to vote for the question if they heard that hospital

Turn to Hospital on Page 2

Green Defends Hawaii Journey

County Judge Howard Green today publicly defended the \$1,668 week-long trip that three county officials will take to Hawaii to attend an environmental seminar.

Green told newsmen at the start of the regular commissioners court meeting, "In view of the publicity given the trip over the weekend, I have done some checking.

"Most, if not all, of the metropolitan counties in the United States will be represented."

COMMISSIONERS George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Andersen and County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan received authority Friday to make the trip to the convention, which is sponsored by the National Association of Counties.

"I believe they will come back with ideas that will help modernize county government," Green said. "In the last four years, there has been more progress in county government in Tarrant County than in any other period."

Green noted that two commissioners — Richardson and Andersen — traveled to California and to Tulsa, Okla., several years ago to study juvenile detention centers.

"I THINK then I was critical of the trip, but as a result of it, we are going to have the best detention center in the United States. Tarrant County taxpayers were saved more than \$1 million by that trip."

Green did not mention that the architect of the center, Morris B. Parker, also traveled with the commissioners and that Parker and several other county officials had also visited detention centers in four other states in addition to the California and Oklahoma sites.

GREEN SAID that when he served as a legislator that he made trips to Phoenix, Chicago and Biloxi, Miss., and "I came back from each one a

better legislator." Green conceded that "the worst thing about this (Hawaiian) is where the convention is being held. If it were closer, there would probably have been nothing said."

Green was disturbed over several published accounts of the trip in which the county's \$8.6 million bond issue set for March 27 was also brought up.

IN OTHER action today, commissioners were asked to appropriate \$3,200 for a veterans memorial to be constructed at the Tarrant County Convention Center.

Hospital Bond Sale Ruled Out by County

From Page 1

bonds were being sold at the same time voters are being asked to approve another bond issue.

Commissioners in January deliberately called the bond election for late March because several other governmental bodies have indicated that they will call bond elections later this year, and the county officials wanted to be first.

In a related development, the president of the Tarrant County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, said that the group unanimously endorses the county's bond election.

"WE FEEL THIS Commission Court should be commended for fulfilling their obligations and setting up the bond election," J. W. Sifford said this morning.

"The need (for the bond sale) is dramatically apparent. The services the county performs must be properly housed to be effective.

"To wait any longer would be courting disaster, especially in the field of law enforcement."

DA Aide Explains Hawaii Trip Goal

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan today explained why he is going with two county commissioners on a week-long trip to Hawaii.

"The problem of solid waste (trash and garbage) disposal is going to be discussed," he said.

Morgan and Commissioners Dick Andersen and George "Skeet" Richardson are taking the tax-payer financed trip to attend an environmental seminar, a meeting being sponsored by the National Association of Counties.

RECORDS KEPT by the county auditor's office show that the county apparently does not belong to the organization. There is no indication any dues have ever been paid.

Green yesterday defended the expenditure of more than \$1,668 for air fare and hotel costs for the three men. That figure doesn't include food, cab fare and tips.

"I believe they will come back with ideas that will help modernize county government," Green said in a brief speech at the opening of the regular, weekly county com-

missioners court meeting.

"IN THE LAST four years, there has been more progress in county government in Tarrant County than in any other period."

Morgan attended a Friday meeting of a committee which has recommended sweeping changes in the handling of the solid waste problem here.

At that meeting, the committee which has been studying the problem since September, proposed that the county take over all collection and disposal of garbage and trash.

Only Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus represented commissioners court at that meeting.

Green was the one appointed to the committee last year, saying previous committees had been working on the problem but had been relatively inactive.

RICHARDSON was in his office, adjacent to where the meeting was going on Friday afternoon, but did not attend it.

After the meeting, Richardson questioned the report. He was skeptical that county municipalities would pay their share to the county in return for services rendered.

At the same time, Morgan hailed the report. He called it "the most significant thing that has happened up here in years and maybe ever."

Hemphill's title will be changed to "manager," commissioners agreed.

Green Says Support of Trip Not Linked to Bond Vote

County Judge Howard Green said Monday night his defense of three county officials making a \$1,668 trip to Hawaii at the taxpayers' expense should not be connected to the upcoming county bond election.

"If we didn't have an election, I would still think the same way," said Green.

Green opened Monday morning's meeting of Commissioners Court with several remarks concerning published accounts of the trip. Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Andersen and County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan will begin Friday.

THE TRIO WILL attend a seminar on ecology sponsored by the National Association of Counties and the Hawaii Association of Counties, they said.

They apparently will not be present next Monday when the court is expected to adopt the election order for the \$8.6 million bond referendum.

Green said at Monday's meeting that he had "done some checking" and found that most, if not all, of the major metropolitan counties in the nation will be represented at the seminar.

He said commissioners here would not have received any publicity about attending the seminar if its location had been closer to Tarrant County.

GREEN MENTIONED that commissioners had made trips several years ago to study juvenile detention centers around the nation.

"I think then I was critical of the (Tulsa) trip, but as a result of it, we are going to have the best detention center in the United States. Tarrant County taxpayers were saved more than \$1 million by that trip," Green said.

Green also said Monday night other government officials make trips and nothing is said of them. He said, "It depends on the fellows who

go," as to whether the trips are beneficial.

"SIXTEEN HUNDRED dollars is a drop in the bucket," he said.

In other action Monday morning, commissioners referred to the Tarrant County Convention Center board of managers a request that a memorial for war veterans be placed at the center. Commissioners were told by a veterans' organization official that the proposed memorial would cost \$3,200.

Commissioners were told the Tarrant County Central Labor Council endorses the election for sale of the \$8.6 million in bonds.

In other action, commissioners voted to change convention center manager Lou Owen's title to "executive

director." His duties will remain the same, as will those of present assistant manager William Hemphill.

Task Force On Waste Envisioned

Continued From Page 1

mittee urged commissioners to adopt.

GREEN SAID naming of the task force could be the first real positive action taken on solid waste by the county following the making of the recommendations.

"The problem is here. It will not go away. We can't sweep it under the rug," remarked Green.

He said that Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson is in favor of naming the task force group.

Each commissioner and the county judge will appoint two persons to the group and one member will be named for an "at large" post by the court, Green said.

"We're going to have to broaden our approach to this thing. We're going to try to get some officials from the suburban communities interested in serving," Green said. The coordinating committee at times expressed disappointment at the lack of attention suburban city officials paid to their study.

Green said naming the task force "is a start," but added that keeping up with the coordinating committee's timetable "is going to push us a little."

Richardson originally said he was wary of some of the recommendations of the coordinating committee, questioning the ability of suburban municipalities to pay "a fair share" of the costs of operating a county-wide waste system.

He also said he did not feel his precinct was represented by committee member Jim Stiff, with whom he has had differences in the past. The coordinating committee was appointed by Green.

Officials said privately Thursday that a compromise may have been worked out to get Richardson's approval of the task force in that Stiff will not be named to it.

Richardson recently called for a committee to be named by commissioners to study the coordinating committee's recommendations. Green said Thursday that the task force group could follow in line with what Richardson proposed.

Green Will Request Solid Waste Force

By JOHN LUMPKIN

County Judge Howard Green said Thursday he will ask county commissioners to approve appointment of a special task force to begin carrying out several recommendations of the Tarrant County Solid Waste Coordinating Committee.

Green said the appointment will be discussed at Monday's regular meeting of Commissioners' Court and that he expects favorable action.

In February, the coordinating committee made public recommendations for the handling of the solid waste problem after a study that it had made, beginning last September.

Although other groups charged with studying possible solutions to the collection and disposal of solid waste in the county have made similar recommendations in the past, little has been done subsequent to the making of the recommendations.

THE PRESENT committee,

chaired by Hurst city councilman Bruce Willis, urged the establishment of a solid waste system on a county-wide basis to be under the auspices of county commissioners.

To finance establishment of such a system, Willis' committee suggested commissioners sell revenue bonds.

Federal money, the committee noted, would be available for a complete engineering study at the cost of about \$100,000. The county would have to contribute one fourth of that sum, the committee said.

A special task force representing the county's interests should be appointed immediately, the committee said, to oversee application for the study grant and the hiring of a consulting engineer, while working with commissioners.

Green's proposal, to be considered Monday, has to do with the naming of the task force, the first item in a timetable the coordinating com-

Turn to Task on Page 2

\$1 MILLION NEEDED County Will Hear Plan for Hospital

County commissioners and Tarrant County Hospital District Board members Tuesday will hear a new plan for the much-discussed future expansion of Peter Smith Hospital.

Board member C. Jack Bean said he will present a report for expansion that covers what is not included in the 1971 hospital budget.

Bean, chairman of an ad hoc committee to study financing of the expansion, began the study last year after commissioners turned down a board request for \$11 million in revenue bonds to complete the hospital's building program.

"I have said this before, however. I believe the hospital can be self-sustaining. It can pay for itself in a business-like manner," Bean said. Earlier Monday, the nature

of Bean's report and what might occur at Tuesday's meeting was a matter of controversy.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson was quoted as saying he understood the hospital board was prepared to ask for \$1 million in revenue bonds for extramural financing in 1971.

The \$1 million is in the 1971 hospital budget. However, the budget does not specify how the \$1 million will be obtained.

Several commissioners after Monday's meeting are understood to have agreed informally that they could not authorize the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds at this time because it might jeopardize the upcoming \$8.6 million county general obligation bond election.

Hospital board chairman Sterling Steves said Monday night that Bean's plan would be for "a period of years."

He did not say that any immediate proposal for \$1 million would be discussed although he remarked, "We all know that we need approximately \$1 million this year."

County Judge Howard Green said he was confident commissioners would accept it.

He said he knew of no sentiment among commissioners to reject it or to reject any request for \$1 million in revenue bonds at this time.

Green said all the commissioners will be present at Tuesday's hospital board meeting and, in his opinion, would take action then.

2 Reject Plan for New Committee

Two county commissioners today scoffed at a proposal made yesterday by County Judge Howard Green that still another committee be named to look into the question of how to dispose of trash and garbage.

"What do we need another committee for?" Commissioner Dick Lewis asked.

"That would just be to have one committee check on another committee," said Commissioner Jerry Mebus.

GREEN yesterday afternoon suggested that each of the commissioners and he himself appoint two persons to serve on a committee that would study ways to implement recommendations made by a committee about two weeks ago.

Among those recommendations was that an engineering company be hired to conduct a feasibility study of the county taking over the disposal of all garbage and trash generated within Tarrant County.

That study, the committee said, would cost \$100,000.

The committee also proposed that financing of the project be handled through the sale of revenue bonds.

LEWIS WAS especially crit-

ical this morning of the idea of paying \$100,000 for a study.

"I've talked to several engineers and they told me they sure wanted a part of that," he said.

Mebus agreed. "We've got a situation here that we know is bad and that is going to get worse but having another committee is not the answer," Mebus added.

"Yesterday I was given a copy of a study made by the North Central Texas Council of Governments (COG)," he said. "That study includes Tarrant County and the other 10 counties around here."

County OK Indicated For Bonds, Tax Hike

County Commissioners reacted favorably Tuesday to a county hospital board proposal involving a five-year hospital financing plan and a 5-cent tax increase for 1972.

Commissioners gave indications they will approve the concept during a joint meeting with the Tarrant County Hospital District board at 9:30 a.m. Friday.

Hospital board member C. Jack Bean outlined for commissioners a plan for financing Peter Smith Hospital construction and improvement through 1976 with the gradual sale of \$11,175,000 in revenue bonds.

HE ASKED that Commissioners Court approve the total concept with the stipulation that the hospital board would return to commissioners each year for approval of that year's bond sale.

Revenue bonds are financed by hospital income, not by taxes.

Bean said the accounting firm of Leatherwood and Ward, with whom the plan was formed, has provided a set of guidelines which, if followed faithfully by the hospital board, should assure success of the plan.

Necessary immediately will be a hospital tax increase of 5 cents in 1972, bringing the district to its taxing limit of 75 cents per \$100 valuation.

NO FURTHER tax increase will be necessary, Bean said, and he said it is possible the tax rate can be lowered in 1976.

Judge Howard Green said Commissioners Court would try to reduce the county road and bridge tax by 5 cents next year to compensate for the hospital tax increase.

Commissioner George

"Skeet" Richardson said he would support the plan.

"Commissioners Court is not going to be a court that is stamped," he said. "Commissioners Court is one that is going to look at figures and try to recognize the needs of the community and, if at all possible, hold down as much as we can the expenses to the people who put us where we are."

"I firmly believe that your people have done an admirable job," he said.

"I assure you that I'll support your program. I have all the confidence in the world in what you've done and what your people have done... I'll support it on a year-to-year basis," Richardson said.

RICHARDSON also said the commissioners have no reluctance to approve the measure because of the upcoming county bond election.

The hospital plan stands "on its own merit," he said, "And I think we can prove to the people that the county is going to stand on its own merit in putting forth this bond election."

"I do believe the people are going to pass the bond election," he added, and said he does not believe the hospital plan "has a whole lot to do" with the bond election.

Bean said if a national health program for the indigent is passed by Congress the hospital will have a "tremendous surplus" by the end of 1976 and the tax rate could be lowered.

Even if the national health program is not approved, the hospital district will not have to ask for a further tax hike, he said.

THE PLAN CALLS for the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds this year, probably next summer; \$2,475,000 in 1972; then \$6,250,000 in 1973, and the final sale, \$1,450,000 in 1974.

Bean said his financial planning committee and the accounting firm also had studied the effects of a complete halt of hospital improvement.

"As best we could determine, somewhere between June of 1973 and February of 1974 this hospital district would be totally and completely bankrupt," he said.

\$8.6 MILLION ISSUE

Bond Vote Set For March 27

(Related Story on Page 4A) Commissioners Court today formally called for the county's \$8.6 million bond issue election for March 27.

The action was a formality since 4 commissioners, about six weeks ago had called the election for that date.

However, under state law, the call for the election must be made formally within 30 days of the election. Three members of Commissioners Court voted for calling the election.

THE OTHER two members, Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Andersen, were attending an environmental seminar in Hawaii.

They have said, though, that they favor the bond election.

In the notice of election read by County Judge Howard Green, the four propositions that will be voted on provide for the issuance of the bonds for a period of up to 40 years.

Earlier, County Auditor Jack Benson had said that bonds would probably be 20-year issues.

THE PROPOSITIONS, which will finance capital improvements if approved, also do not provide that any interest ceiling be placed on the bonds.

Benson said last week he believes the bonds will carry about a 4.6 per cent interest rate.

At that amount, the county over a 20-year period would pay \$4.1 million in interest.

The bond issue call also provides that ad valorem taxes may be raised to pay off the bonds if necessary.

BENSON HAS conceded that taxes might have to be raised if a nationwide depression occurs, but he does not think that the increase will be necessary.

The four proposals are that bonds be sold for:

—County jail expansion and remodeling of the old criminal courthouse, \$1.9 million.

—Construction of a records building, \$5 million.

ORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

A FORT WORTH-OWNED NEWSPAPER

91ST YEAR, NO. 24

HOSPITAL BOND SALE APPROVED

30 Are Seized In Drug Raid

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP)—Kansas Atty. Gen. Vern Miller quietly led more than 150 law enforcement officers into this sleeping university town at 3 a.m. today and within three hours 30 young people had been booked on drug charges.

Those arrested ranged in age from 16 to 24. The charges brought against them are for sale or possession of narcotics, including LSD, cocaine, hashish, and marijuana.

had been at work in Lawrence since December, buying drugs from pushers.

"We actually didn't find as many drugs on campus as we thought we would," said Miller, without elaboration. He said the university had not been advised of the raid.

Fred Howard, acting director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, said, "We did go into Oliver Hall, which is a university-operated dormitory and we made at least two arrests."

\$11 Million Expansion Plan Eyed

Commissioners Court today unanimously approved the sale of \$11,175,000 in revenue bonds for the expansion of Peter Smith Hospital.

Commissioners, on the motion of Dick Andersen, took the action—which had been expected—in a joint meeting with members of the Tarrant County Hospital Board. Officials of the two groups

Legislators Await Redistricting Word

Tarrant County's eight-member-House legislative delegation is keeping an anxious ear on the office of Rep. Delwin Jones and the tentative redistricting plan outlined by Jones.

Legislators in Dallas and Bexar (San Antonio) Counties have been angered by Jones' plan which gerrymandered both counties to distribute big chunks of their populations to rural districts.

AS CHAIRMAN of the House Redistricting Committee, Jones issued the plan as an "ice-breaker" and has succeeded in angering Houston politicians in addition to those from Dallas and San Antonio. Jones refused a request by 16 of Harris (Houston) County's 19 representatives for single-member House districts.

He said he was "real sincere in thinking that single-member districts are not the answer to a fair and impartial representation of a limited area" such as a city.

Tarrant County at present has an eight-man representation in the House and districts of two senators are within the county.

JONES SATURDAY had not announced redistricting plans for the county.

Federal courts have insisted that districts be equal in population. Jones thinks the courts would tolerate a population spread of 5 per cent between the biggest and smallest house district and 10 per cent on congressional districts.

He also expects the Supreme Court to say before the legislature adjourns May 31 whether it will require single-member House districts.

Unlike Jones, Sen. J. P. Word of Meridian has "laid low," not making any public statements or issuing any early redistricting plans.

JONES' COMMITTEE is

holding hearings around the state to get the public's ideas. But the Senate committee is not.

The House and Senate each plan to redistrict themselves and not tinker with one another's plans.

Redistricting for Congress, however, holds a possibility of conflict between the liberal, urban Senate and conservative rural-controlled House.

Big Growth Foreseen At Hospital

Continued From Page 1

assumptions with which to begin the study, such as taxes to be collected and increased patient receipts.

Although the accountants would not express any opinion as to whether some of the assumptions would become a reality, they did say that the bond debt requirement could be fulfilled if the assumptions are "indeed actually experienced."

The self-control to which Steves said the board is committed is a review every 90 days by commissioners of the plan. The plan presumably would be changed, officials indicated, if revenue and other factors do not match expectations.

The expansion program, of necessity, would also have to change, they pointed out.

According to the plan commissioners approved, bonds would be sold on the following schedule: 1971, \$1 million; 1972, \$2,475 million; 1973, \$6.25 million, and 1974, \$1.45 million.

Steves said the money also is expected to provide financing of "some planning" for phase five of the expansion program. Phase five includes additional work on the hospital's out-patient clinic and emergency room, both of which Steves termed "at near-capacity" at present.

He said the hospital board intends to keep commissioners "fully aware of what we are doing" in connection with the commissioners' periodic reviews of the financing plans.

"There's a real spirit of harmony and unanimity between all of us," Steves said.

HOSPITAL DISTRICT TO GET IMAGE 'FIX'

The Tarrant County Hospital District Board of Directors is beginning a campaign to change what it feels is an incorrect public image of the district's facilities, board chairman Sterling Steves said Friday.

"I think a lot of people think it is a poor excuse for a hospital," said Steves.

"We have a good staff—a good staff of physicians and a good nursing staff—and we have an emergency room which is certainly the best in the county. We hope we are improving the standard of care for the medically indigent," he remarked.

He said taxpayers should know, however, that the hospital's intentions are to give

Aura of Amity Around Commissioners May Not Survive Post-Election Tests

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Something new has been added at the courthouse.

Call it harmony, if you want. Or maybe truce would be a better word.

Whichever word you decide on, though, the effect is the same.

Charges and countercharges usually sounded against each other loudly and being whispered in private.

There's one major reason for it—the coming county bond election.

All five members of Commissioners Court, some of whom have not been reluctant in the past to hurl barbs and gibes at each other and at other officials, now are working in concert. It's a unanimity rarely seen around Weatherford and Main.

In that bond election, on March 27, Tarrant County voters are being asked, in effect, to give county officials a vote of confidence.

At stake is more than just whether \$8.6 million in bonds will be sold to finance capital improvements. At stake is the question of whether voters have \$8.6 million worth of faith in their elected officials.

Camouflaged, partly, by the harmony or truce of the bond election issue is another issue that lends itself to the period of verbal inactivity.

Undertones from it will be felt long after the bond issue question has been settled by voters. Simply, the issue at stake is which faction freshman Commissioner Jerry Mebus will line up with.

Mebus, who succeeded C. H. "Punch" Wright, is being wooed by County Judge Howard Green and by Commissioners Dick Andersen, Dick Lewis and George "Skeet" Richardson.

Despite their temporary ceasefire, there is still some animosity between Green and Richardson. As a man who knows both well once said, "they have trouble getting along because they're too much alike."

Both are former legislators, both are competent in the political arena and both are moderate to liberal in their philosophies.

Some issue is bound to come up one of these days that will find the two, Green and Richardson, on separate sides of the political fence. Both will need al-

lies on the court. That's where Mebus comes in.

In the past, Lewis generally has been the swing man on different issues that came up. Sometimes Andersen has been in that role. It would be the vote of one or the other that made the three-to-two majority.

Wright, who didn't seek re-election could generally be counted on to go along with Green, which was often against Richardson. On different issues, Andersen or Lewis would generally second Richardson's motions and the other, more often than not, went along.

Now, to a degree, that may have changed. And Mebus may be part of the reason.

Mebus has brought to Commissioners Court an enthusiasm for the job that is seldom seen in elected officials. He is also taking the time, and sometimes the trouble, to ask questions and then to do something with the answers.

Mebus deserves much of the credit for making the annual budget talks just before, and right after, the first of the year as painless as they were. There were some charges and some countercharges, but the sessions were nothing like those in years past.

Nothing controversial, though, has come up since those budget talks, so the question of which way Mebus will lean is as yet undecided.

One of the major tests could come this summer when commissioners will have to set the county tax rate.

Mebus has said that he wants to merge the road and bridge fund, which this year is \$2.25 million, with the general fund. This is something County Auditor Jack Benson has urged since he took office about 18 months ago.

Andersen campaigned on that merger but since he was elected in 1968 his feelings have changed somewhat. However, he must run again next year and politics will again enter the picture.

Green, who has long urged county reform and who preaches it to whomever will listen, has often said he would like to see the two funds merged, so there could be a three-to-two vote on the question.

Neither Richardson nor Lewis would like to see the two funds merged. They prefer the arrangement under which all the commissioners get equal amounts, each spending his share as he chooses for roads in his precinct.

By combining the funds, Benson said, greater economy and less patronage could result.

Green says the truce will go on. He is fond of saying that the harmony is of gold, not pyrite, and he dares observers to watch Commissioners Court after the bond election. The golden age and the singing of bluebirds will continue, he says.

Still, at times, you can almost hear the faint ticking of a time bomb in the background that is the Tarrant County courthouse.

FILM STRIP MADE

Bond Issue Wins Backing of UAW

The United Auto Workers and its Community Action Program have urged support of the \$8.6 million county bond election.

Local 218 of the UAW has about 12,000 members who work at Bell Helicopter Co., General Motors and Hobbs Trailers.

In a related development to the March 27 bond issue, the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and the Tarrant County Progress Committee have prepared a film strip of the conditions at the courthouse complex.

And the progress committee

will make the film strip and an accompanying lecture presentation to any group.

Persons interested in seeing the presentation should call Jerry Richmond at the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, 336-2491.

County commissioners have called the bond election to finance improvements at the courthouse.

Among these improvements are to be, if approved, construction of a records building, remodeling of the old courthouse and old Criminal Courts Building, expansion of the county jail, purchase of

two blocks of property for construction of a parking lot and the building of two sub-courthouses.

HOSPITAL BOND SALE APPROVED

30 Are Seized In Drug Raid

LAWRENCE, Kan. (AP)—Kansas Atty. Gen. Vern Miller quietly led more than 150 law enforcement officers into this sleeping university town at 3 a.m. today and within three hours 30 young people had been booked on drug charges.

Those arrested ranged in age from 16 to 24. The charges brought against them are for sale or possession of narcotics, including LSD, cocaine, hashish, and marijuana.

The attorney general said most of the arrests were made in rooming houses or residences just off the campus of the University of Kansas in this city of 45,000, including 18,000 University students

had been at work in Lawrence since December, buying drugs from pushers.

"We actually didn't find as many drugs on campus as we thought we would," said Miller, without elaboration. He said the university had not been advised of the raid.

Fred Howard, acting director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, said, "We did go into Oliver Hall, which is a university-operated dormitory and we made at least two arrests."

* * *

THOSE BOOKED at the Douglas County courthouse included 11 listed as university students. The other were mostly anti-establishment young people who live in old

\$11 Million Expansion Plan Eyed

Commissioners Court today unanimously approved the sale of \$11,175,000 in revenue bonds for the expansion of Peter Smith Hospital.

Commissioners, on the motion of Dick Andersen, took the action — which had been expected — in a joint meeting with members of the Tarrant County Hospital Board.

Officials of the two groups met Tuesday to discuss the proposed sale of the bonds, and at that time, tentatively agreed to the sale.

* * *

THIS MORNING'S action, which drew applause from hospital board members, means that the hospital expansion can be completed, said Sterling W. Steves, chairman of the board.

Under the agreement, which commissioners will review every 90 days, \$1 million in bonds will be sold this year.

Next year, \$2,475,000 in bonds will be sold.

In 1973, \$6,250,000 in the bonds will be sold, and the following year, the final \$1,450,000 will be issued.

* * *

TODAY'S ACTION means that there will be a 5-cent tax hike, bringing the hospital district's tax rate to 75 cents per \$100 valuation.

Tuesday, County Judge Howard Green indicated that a similar reduction might be made in the county's road and bridge fund.

County Auditor Jack Benson, before this morning's meeting, questioned whether the road and bridge fund — which was increased 6 cents in July — can be lowered by 5 cents.

The decision to sell the bonds was made with little discussion, and all four commissioners and Green praised the harmony with which recent talks have been conducted.

* * *

LAST YEAR, several commissioners and Steves fought bitterly over whether the bonds should be issued with the decision made then that they would not be.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson led the fight then. He contended that hospital board members had

Turn to Commissioners on P. 2

Bill on Setting of County Salaries Altered

A Texas House committee has made several major changes in a bill that would give county commissioners the right to set the salary of any county official paid wholly out of county funds.

At that time, several county officials here criticized the bill because, they said, it destroyed the "checks and balances" already written into Texas law about setting of salaries.

County Judge Howard Green said county auditors and purchasing agents need to have freedom to carry out their "watchdog" duties. Statutes provide that panels of judges hire, fire and set the salary of the purchasing agent and auditor.

County Auditor Jack Benson speculated that the district attorney exemption was put into the new version of the bill because, in some cases in Texas, district attorneys serve more than one county.

When the bill was originally introduced by Rep. Bill Clayton of Spring Lake early last month, it did not contain the exemptions.

Green said Thursday that the new version of Clayton's bill, with the exemption, satisfies him. He said he agreed all along with the concept of the bill to put more responsibility in commissioners' hands and bring local issues back to the local level.

The new version would give commissioners the right to set the salaries for themselves, the sheriff, the county tax assessor-collector, the county clerk, the domestic relations judges, the county criminal judges and others.

At present, salaries of these officials are set by acts of the state legislature. "WE OUGHT to get in line with other progressive counties," said Andersen.

It was Richardson who made the motion to join the association and it was also Richardson who several months ago was opposed to paying about \$1,000 per year to retain membership in the North Texas Council of Governments.

Commissioners during their regular meeting also voted to allocate up to \$1,000 for the Tarrant County Historical Survey Commission at the request of Dr. John Perkins, a representative of the group.

Commissioners Court today declared this week as "Open House Week" in the courthouse complex.

The resolution was adopted unanimously today as absentee voting on the \$8.6 million county bond issue election began.

County Judge Howard Green said no formal activities will be held and that no guided tours will be conducted during the open house week.

"They can just come and see for themselves whether improvements are needed," Green said after the resolution was adopted and he was questioned by newsmen.

Less than a half dozen persons had voted absentee shortly before noon today. The bond election, called to finance capital improvements at the courthouse complex, will be March 27.

'Port Board Proposes Deputy Patrol

Sheriff Lon Evans today told county commissioners that he and Sheriff Clarence Jones of Dallas have been asked to take over patrolling of the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport.

Evans said directors of the airport board proposed that he and Jones would each supply a sheriff's deputy around the clock until airport's completion, which is expected in the spring of 1973.

After that time, he said, the airport authority would probably hire its own security force. Commissioners told Evans to do what needs to be done now and asked the district attorney's office to prepare a contract since cost of the policing would be carried by the airport board.

In other action today, commissioners agreed to spend \$2,700 per year as dues for the National Association of Counties, which last week sponsored an Hawaiian junket taken by two of the commissioners, Dick Andersen and George "Skeet" Richardson.

"OPEN HOUSE SET FOR COURTHOUSE"

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Green Hits Ad on County Bond Vote

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County Judge Howard Green today branded as "just wild and highly erroneous" an advertisement that appeared in this morning's Star-Telegram which was critical of the county's \$8.7 million bond election.

It claims that the members have all voted against the four proposals, which the ad says total \$8.6 million.

THE ELECTION is not until March 27, and County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowan said today only 16 persons have voted absentee so far.

Green said, "I suppose that you have to expect that something that erroneous would come from the taxpayers association."

"They are just as confused about their facts as they are about the bond issue."

GREEN SAID that he doubted that any of the members of the group—and he said he does not believe it is as large as the group claims—have ever been in the courthouse to see how much the improvements are needed.

"I should stress that the responsible people of the county have endorsed this bond election," he said.

Larry Perkins is listed in the ad as president of the group, and Bob Strickland a candidate for the Legislature last year is listed as "counselor."

THE CHAIRMAN of the board of the First Southwest Co., whom the erroneous ad apparently referred to, today said his firm has never filed for bankruptcy.

"First Southwest is one of the largest investment banking firms in the Southwest," W. C. Jackson Jr. said.

"Our net worth is \$12.5 million... We have on deposit in banks in Dallas, Fort Worth and New York more than \$5.5 million in cash and we do not owe one dollar to any bank anywhere."

"THE FACT WE do not owe any bank is very unusual for an investment banking firm."

Green noted that First Southwest is serving as the investments advisers to the Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Airport Board, the Tarrant County Hospital District, Commissioners Court here and to numerous other taxing entities in Dallas and throughout the state.

JACKSON said that he was going to demand that the two men and the Tarrant County Taxpayers Association retract immediately the erroneous reference to the financial status of the firm.

"If they don't, we will sue for libel," Jackson said.

Neither Perkins nor Strickland, who is not an attorney, could immediately be reached for comment this morning.

Commissioners Name 11 to Panel on Garbage Disposal

Commissioners Court today appointed 11 men to serve on a task force committee on trash and garbage disposal.

Each of the commissioners and County Judge Howard Green named two persons to the group and an 11th was named at large.

The committee was organized to review a report recently made by another committee, which recommended that the county assume control of all garbage disposal. The group will hold its first meeting at 1:30 p.m. Friday to elect a chairman.

COMMISSIONER Dick Andersen named Mayor Wayne Wilson of Benbrook and Mayor Joe Pate of Everman.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus named Tommy Watson of Mansfield and Kurt Schnellbach, public works director in Arlington.

Commissioner Dick Lewis named City Manager Floy Ezzell of Grapevine and James R. Hubbard, city councilman at North Richland Hills and manager of a private garbage disposal firm.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson appointed Larry Graham, head of the county sanitation department, and Richard Gray, who has a garbage disposal firm in Azle.

GREEN NAMED Mayor Paul Daniels of Richland Hills and City Councilman Bruce Willis of Hurst.

Jack Graham, Fort Worth public works director, was named the at-large member. Willis and Jack Graham were members of the Tarrant County Solid Waste Coordinating Committee which recently suggested that the task force be created to further study the problem.

Tax Raise Held Likely If Bond Issues Fail

County Judge Howard Green said Tuesday there is a strong possibility of a tax increase if the county's March 27 \$8.6 million bond referendum fails.

County officials have in the past said no tax increase would result from sale of the bonds, if they are approved by voters.

The bonds' sale would finance construction of a records building and improvements to the courthouse complex. The money also would be used to acquire downtown property for future expansion and to erect two more sub-courthouses.

Green said the county is committed to adding three floors to the jail and remodeling the old Criminal Courts Building for the district attorney's office, both of which are on the bond ballot.

He repeated what other officials have promised in the past—that the jail additions and the DA remodeling will be done with borrowed money if the bond proposals fail.

The expansion of the jail will have to be completed a floor at a time, due to the statutory limit on borrowing by the county, if the bond proposals fail.

"This will double the cost of the project, at least," predicted Green.

Repayment of the loans would come from money in the general fund. The extra burden on the general fund, which now amounts to about \$12 million, would necessitate a tax increase, he said.

Green said discussion of the possible increase in taxes as a result of a failure of the bond proposals has not been mentioned before, but that he expected to tell various civic organizations of the situation.

He said he also would stress the boost to the local economy the passage of the bonds would bring.

"This will be especially helpful to those in the building trades. We can provide 600 jobs in this construction if the bonds pass," he said.

D.A. ISSUES STATEMENT

Crime Unit to Meet On Coffey's Absence

The Tarrant County Crime Commission's executive committee will meet Wednesday to discuss the situation in the district attorney's office.

Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey has been absent from his office at least seven of the last 10 weeks, the Star-Telegram reported yesterday.

Edwin T. Phillips Jr., general counsel for the crime commission, said today the executive committee will analyze "the serious situation now prevailing" in administration of the DA's office and will discuss reports that Coffey is either "unwilling or unable" to perform his duties.

COFFEY, reached at a private hospital, answered the commission's announcement, saying:

"It is very unfortunate when a person becomes ill, but it is even more unfortunate when the crime commission has so little understanding about it."

Coffey asked that the name of the hospital and the town in which it is located, not be made public because of the number of telephone calls he would receive.

ASST. DIST. Atty. Jim Morgan, who is serving as acting DA in Coffey's absence, said Coffey is being treated for a disease caused by impure milk.

Morgan said that when Coffey was hospitalized earlier this year for initial treatment of the disease, that "the phone (in his hospital room here) rang off the wall."

Morgan said that on another occasion last year when Coffey was hospitalized for minor surgery, "people were trying to call him even while he was being operated on and one call got to him while he was in the recovery room."

"WHILE THE commission has been aware for some time of Mr Coffey's official inactivities and apparent lack of interest, speculation involving his office has become a matter of genuine public concern," Phillips said.

"This is particularly evident from the publication Sunday of an assessment of the office by the Fort Worth Star-Telegram."

Phillips said the commission will issue a statement about the situation Thursday.

Joint Purchasing Saving Money for County, Cities

By JIM VACHULE, Star-Telegram Contribution Editor (EDITOR'S NOTE: County Commissioner Dick Andersen and City Councilman Jess Johnston have proposed plans for cooperation designed to save city and county taxpayers money. This is one of a group of stories dealing with city-county cooperation and consolidation of services. The stories will appear periodically in the Star-Telegram.)

Both cities now are receiving the fluid through a joint purchasing agreement with the county—and the cost of the fluid is \$38 a carton for the county and the cities because of the mass purchasing power generated by the cooperative effort.

County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith, who is largely responsible for the mass purchasing effort, reported that the county government now is buying a variety of supplies and materials for 17 cities and towns.

"THIS AFFORDS all, and more especially the smaller entities, the maximum buying power of the county," Smith noted.

In another area, said Smith, the county purchasing department coordinates the needs of all county firefighter associations.

This effort, he said, involves development of specifications on all items used by the various departments together with the total bidding procedure to the final placement of the order.

The result is a cost reduction for all of an estimated 33 per cent, said Smith.

Not all savings are of this magnitude, but the idea of joint, cooperative purchasing is spreading—and saving taxpayers' money.

In some cases the saving is minimal, perhaps less than a half cent a gallon on gasoline or asphalt; yet savings, however small, are being made.

are aware they could buy their gasoline through the county cooperative arrangement for about 5 cents a gallon less.

But, pointed out City Secretary H. B. Wofford, Saginaw only uses an average of 2,400 gallons monthly and the town does not have its own storage and pumping facilities, which would be necessary and costly items if the town wanted to obtain its gasoline through the county. At present Saginaw, while paying more for its gasoline, uses the pumping and storage facilities of the company which provides the gasoline.

ON THE OTHER end of the scale, the City of Fort Worth maintains its own purchasing department, which is larger and buys more goods and materials than the county.

City officials have pointed out that perhaps eventually money could be saved

through a joint purchasing effort with the county and other governmental entities in the area.

However, they explained, before this could be accomplished there would have to be an expensive changeover in specifications and a county-wide standardization of equipment.

The various cities and other governmental units in the county use a wide variety of equipment, such as different kinds of typewriters using different ribbons, different paper towel holders that require different types of towels.

Thus, in order to put the purchasing on a single basis where all purchases could be made by one agency on a mass basis would require numerous expensive changes of equipment.

Despite the problems involved, a program of cooperative purchasing, aimed at get-

ting the lowest possible cost for the taxpayers, has been started.

While a good deal of progress in this area has been achieved, possibilities for the future appear to hold considerable hope for even more savings.

One of the agencies at work on the problem is the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

Bill Pitstick, executive director of COG, had this to say about the situation:

"IF WE CAN work out the legal mechanism and logistics it could be a profitable program..."

As Pitstick sees the situation, eventually the cooperative purchasing being done by Tarrant County could be area-wide system encompassing other cities and counties to achieve even larger savings.

The Council of Governments, he added, is exploring the possibility of purchasing contracts that in some cases would be on a state-wide basis—a basis that in his estimation would result in much

larger volume purchases and even lower costs.

FINALLY, HE said, he visualizes a "regional purchasing mechanism of some kind, jointly controlled by the local units of government involved, and a joint warehousing operation" designed to allow all units of government to purchase at the lowest possible prices.

Considering the problems involved in such an undertaking, Pitstick expressed belief that this kind of system is "far down the line."

In any event, though, it already is being demonstrated that cooperative purchasing results in lower costs and savings for taxpayers.

The question now is how fast and how far the county, the cities and other governmental entities can move in this direction?

Mergers Built Into Bond Proposal Package

Voting Now Made Inescapable on Subcourthouse and Parking Lot Propositions

By Z. JOE THORNTON

(Editor's note: This is the first in a series, which will run in the Morning and Evening Star-Telegram, on the county's \$8.6-million bond issue election March 27.)

A little more than \$8½ million is not so much money when you look at Tarrant County's annual operating budget of \$18,907,777.

It even is not so much when you remember that Tarrant County has more than 711,000 persons living inside its 900 square-mile boundaries.

Nor is it so much when you think this is only the second bond issue election ever called by county officials for capital improvements. (The first was for the Tarrant County Convention Center and Turnpike Stadium.)

Or, is it too much money?

Considering that the county's present bonded indebtedness is \$15,222,453, should county officials try to sell more bonds or wait until the amount is less?

Or, considering the general economic conditions in Tarrant County and across the nation, should a bond election even be called at this time?

Or, considering that some of the improvements called for could be delayed a little and paid for as constructed or remodeled, is any bond issue needed?

What is the \$8.6 million bond issue election all about?

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SALES TIME: 3-5 YEARS

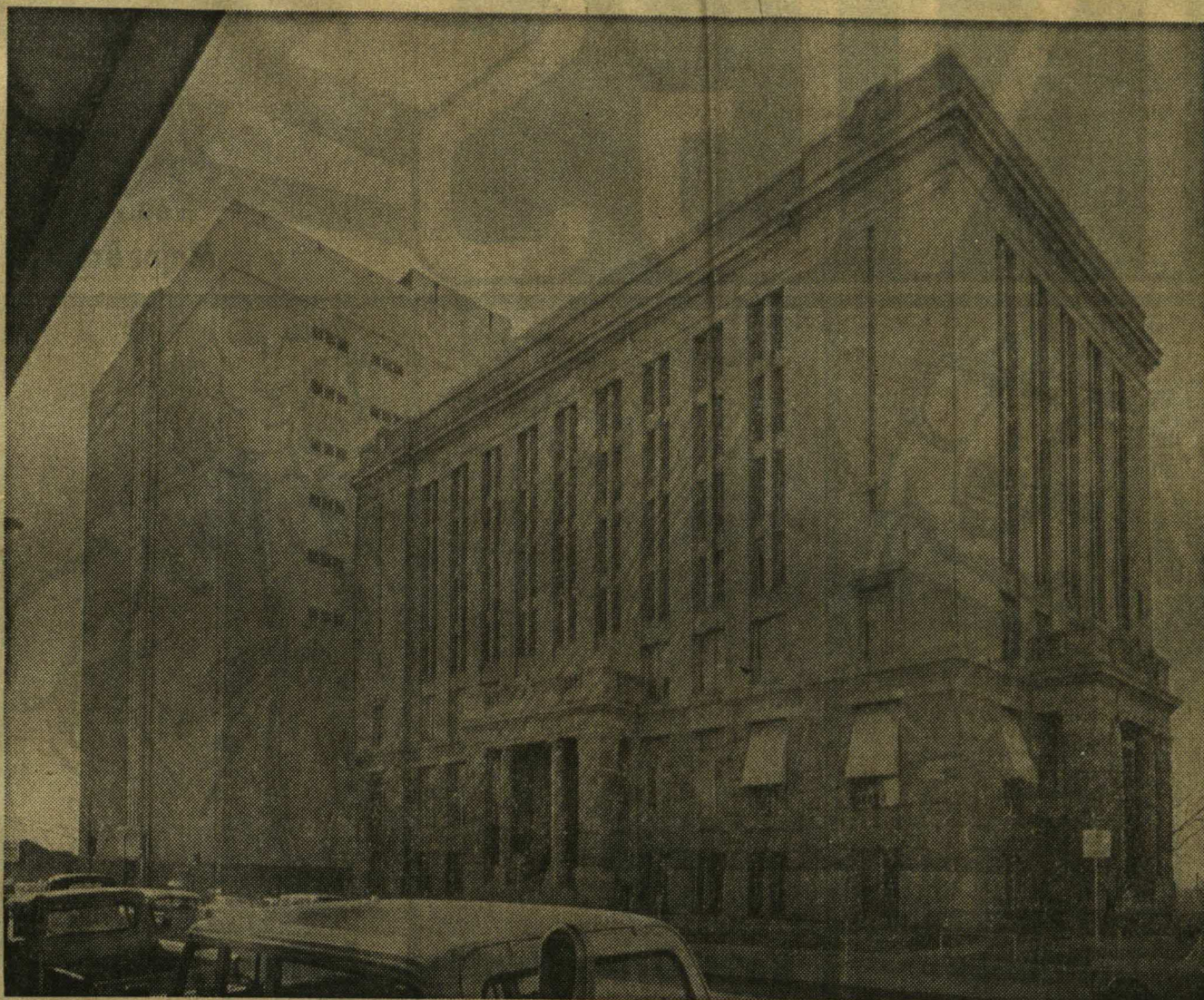
To get the answer to that question and to 117 more specific questions, the Star-Telegram talked to every county official connected with the election.

Briefly, here's how the \$8.6 million in bonds — to be sold over a period of three to five years — will be spent if voters approve the four propositions that will be on the ballots:

—Construction of a new Records building, \$5 million.

—Completion of three floors of additional cell space in the county jail and remodeling of the old Criminal Courts building, \$1.9 million.

—Purchase of property for a parking



NEW FACILITIES — The top three floors of the new Criminal Courts Building, left, will become jail space if the bond proposal is passed in March. The old

Criminal Courts Building, right, will also be remodeled under the same proposition, which calls for \$1.9 million in revenue bonds.

lot and remodeling of the old courthouse, \$1.5 million.

—Construction of two subcourthouses, on the county's South and West sides, \$200,000.

Originally, there were to have been six propositions.

County officials said a Dallas bond attorney told them that bonds could not be sold for purchase of property for a parking lot—that state law prohibited it.

Decision to merge the expansion of

the jail and the renovation of the criminal court building was made in an effort to have the law-enforcement package to sell to voters.

When county officials first began talking about the bond issue election, they conceded that the parking lot and subcourthouses were the least needed propositions on the ballot.

They also said they believed voters might be most apt to turn those down.

Now, however, a vote for remodeling

of the old courthouse must also be a vote for the parking lot.

• • •

PROTECTION TO YEAR 2000

The same is true with the jail and the criminal courts building package. A vote for or against either is a vote for or against both.

Commissioners Court, which formally will call the bond election Monday morning, is not legally bound to allocate the \$800,000 for a parking lot or the \$1.3 million for the jail expansion or for ei-

ther of the other two items called for in the merger of the two propositions.

Some opponents of the bond proposal have charged that the proposals were deliberately merged in order to confuse the voters, charges commissioners have denied.

Nowhere on the ballot, though, will a voter see that a parking lot is involved in the bond issue.

The closest allusion to that is where it says to vote for or against "the issuance of \$1.5 million of county courthouse-improvement bonds."

The only limitation that will be placed on commissioners is the restriction that they cannot use more than \$1.5 million for both the parking lot and remodeling of the courthouse.

The same limitation holds for expanding the jail and remodeling the Criminal Courts building. There's no limit on the amount spent for one or the other, except that no more than \$1.9 million can be spent.

County officials say that if all four proposals are approved, then the needs of the county will be taken care of until about the year 2000.

LONG-GERMINATING IDEA

The only area in which the prediction might not hold is that involving the county jail which has seen its expected usage more than doubled since it was completed eight years ago.

The bond issue to be voted on has a checkered history.

It first was proposed nearly three years ago by Commissioner Dick Lewis.

At that time, he was insisting that the idea of building a juvenile detention center also be put to a vote.

That was not done, though, and the center is to be formally opened next Sunday. Its cost of nearly \$750,000 has been paid for completely through the issuance of time warrants.

The center was not put on a ballot because many county officials, including the influential County Juvenile Board, feared it would fail.

Some county officials were originally wary of a bond issue for financing other capital improvements for the same reason.

Several times since Lewis first proposed it, the call for a bond election has been raised but, until it was finally agreed to have it in early January, the

idea for the bond election was just that—an idea.

Now county officials unanimously agree the Records building, completion of the jail and remodeling of the courthouse and Criminal Courts building are the most important items on the ballot.

But they also make arguments for the parking lot and subcourthouses.

Further stories in the Morning and Evening Star-Telegram will deal with each of the propositions.

★ ★ ★

Who Can Vote

WHO WILL VOTE: All voters who have registered in Tarrant County for 1971 and who have reached their 21st birthday by March 27 can vote. Pending action Monday by Commissioners' Court

the dual voting procedure will be followed separating those who have duly rendered property for taxation and those who have not. Atty. Gen. Crawford Martin will certify bonds only if both the total vote and the vote of the property owners favor the propositions, bond attorneys say.

WHERE WILL THEY VOTE: Commissioners have decided not to consolidate any voting precincts, although County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen asked them to do so. This will mean, said Cowen, that paper ballots will have to be used in about 30 of the county's 172 precincts. Also provided at all precincts will be affidavits for property owners to sign.

★ ★ ★

Wary Nod Issued Query Concerning Tax Increase

BY JOHN LUMPKIN

If the area economy deteriorates "like the worst of the Depression in the 1930s," approval of \$8.6 million of county general obligation bonds March 27 by voters could mean an increase of a nickel per \$100 valuation in county taxes.

That is the opinion, reluctantly expressed, of County Auditor Jack Benson.

He really doesn't want to talk about the prospects of depressions or of raising taxes. But some people ask him if there is any chance at all that taxes will be hiked as a result of the debt requirements of the bonds.

County commissioners predict with assurance that approval of the bonds will bring no increase.

They point to natural growth of the tax base, bringing in increased revenue to the county.

Benson says he foresees no turnabout in the growth factor.

He foresees that the county will realize \$700,000 in additional revenue each year in the future in steady increments. He bases his assumption on average increases of the past three years.

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COST OF NOT PROCEEDING RECKONED

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson claims that County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart "has worked harder on valuation this year," adding, "some of the rural property has doubled and it still is not what it ought to be."

Increased valuations bring about increased revenue, he notes.

Benson's answer about the 5-cent increase, it should be noted, was based on the problematical situation of no natural growth and no increased valuations.

He, like the commissioners, believes there will be no tax increase as a result of the bonds.

"Still, that's a hard question to ask an auditor," he says. "I don't know what our welfare requirements will be in 10 years, for instance."

Another thing neither he nor commissioners know exactly is the additional cost each year needed to put additional employees in the facilities they plan to provide with the money from the sale of the bonds.

They have some estimates and they say that "natural growth" and the increase in county business the facilities bring will mean no tax increase.

In a meeting with newsmen earlier this year, commissioners at first sidestepped a question about lowering taxes if there were no bond sale.

But County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan asked reporters a question in return.

"How much does it cost not to proceed?" he said. He pointed to inefficiency in the district attorney's office because of separated quarters in the two buildings. Money from the sale of the proposed bonds will put all DA staffers under one roof.

"With this kind of waste, it gets kind of costly," he said.

Then Richardson explained that some items proposed to be financed by the bonds could be done piecemeal over a period of years out of general revenue or from borrowed money. "But we would be proceeding without plan. This is the only orderly way to do it," he said.

Benson and commissioners contend the county's financial condition is more than healthy enough to undertake more bond obligations.

"As far as the legal limit is concerned, we have only scratched the surface. Harris County spends more on bond retirement and interest than we have in the general fund (about \$12 million)," he says.

Benson notes that the current bonded indebtedness of the county is \$11 million, all of which is for the Tarrant County Convention Center. "What we owe is peanuts—it is infinitesimal—in comparison with other counties," he argues.

He said as late as this past week that he expects to obtain 4.6 per cent interest requirements from the buyers of the new proposed bonds.

"There will be no trouble selling them," he said, referring to what he calls the county's "top" credit rating. "They will be snapped up like hot cakes," he claimed.

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INTEREST FIGURED AT \$4.1 MILLION

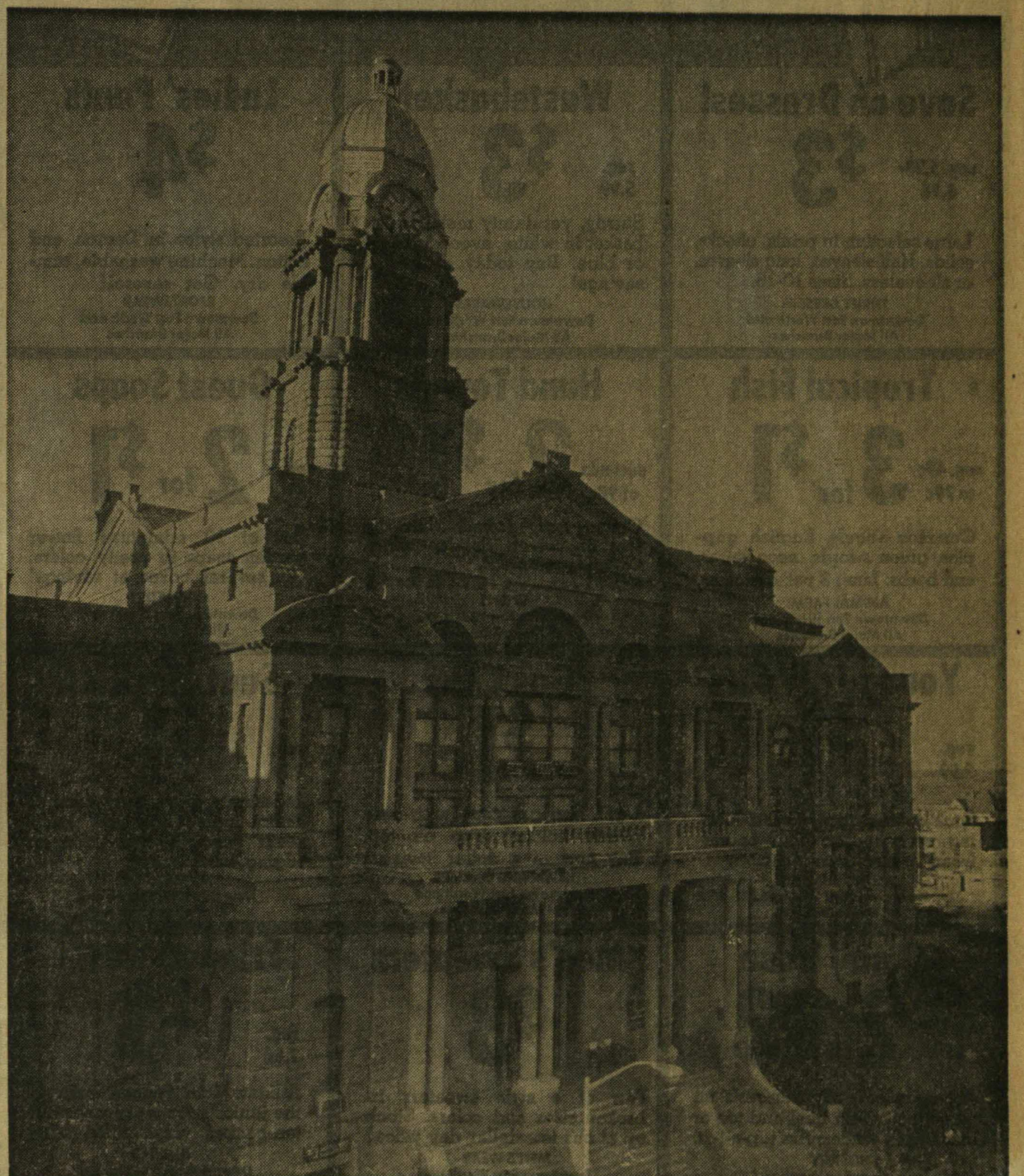
According to Benson, the new bonds will be sold in increments of \$1 million to \$1.5 million over a three- to five-year period as needed. He notes that not all work which the bonds will finance will begin at once.

Benson says that he doubts that no more than \$750,000 will ever be needed in any one year to pay both the principal and interest on the new bonds, which would be retired sometime during the final decade of this century. This year, the county is paying \$825,000 on convention center bonds.

He also estimates that the county's total bonded indebtedness, the indebtedness from the convention center bonds and from the new proposed bonds, will not exceed \$15 million to \$16 million at any time in the future.

Benson's figures show that \$4,153,800 in interest would be required over a 20-year period on the \$8.6 million in new proposed bonds if all the bonds were sold as soon as voters approve them.

Since the bonds will be sold in increments, he says the total interest could be a little more or less, depending on timing and prevailing interest rates.



—Star-Telegram Photos

TO CHANGE—The old County Courthouse, standing at the intersection of Main and Weatherford Streets, will be remodeled if voters approve a bond

proposal March 27. Remodeling of the courthouse is tied in with purchase and construction of a parking lot in one proposal. Cost will be \$1.5 million.

Ailing D.A. Seldom in Office These Days

By JOHN LUMPKIN

Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey, who was sworn in Jan. 1 for a new four-year term, has been absent from his courthouse office at least seven of the past 10 weeks.

Records in the auditor's office show he still is being paid his \$22,900 annual salary, plus his \$1,500-a-year car allowance.

Coffey's wife and his chief assistant, Jim Morgan, told a reporter last week Coffey is ill. Morgan is acting district attorney when Coffey is not in his office.

Neither Morgan nor Mrs. Coffey would divulge Coffey's whereabouts or the nature of his illness. Mrs. Coffey said

her husband was in an out-of-town hospital, but added she was not at liberty to say anything further.

MORGAN would not confirm that Coffey was out of town. "I'm sorry. I just can't say any more," Morgan said.

He said Coffey "is a very sick boy." He mentioned that Coffey ran a very high fever during January and was hospitalized here. He explained that Coffey chose to be treated at a place that would not be revealed at this time in order that he get rest.

Morgan said Coffey could not obtain the rest he needed during January because of numerous visitors and phone calls.

Coffey returned to his office the first of February and at the end of the second week attended a seminar in Houston that dealt with proposed revisions to the Texas Penal Code.

The district attorney experienced a relapse of his illness

Interpretive

"because he returned to work too soon," according to Mrs. Coffey.

COFFEY, even before his illness, had been relatively inactive as district attorney in the past few months, a stark change from his first 3 1/2

years in the position. Before the relapse mentioned by Morgan, Coffey told reporters privately that he had lost some of his earlier interest in the job.

He said he wishes to return to private practice. Although other criminal attorneys question the possibility, Coffey said there is now in Texas the opportunity for a defense lawyer to assume a state-wide practice, following the footsteps of aging attorney Percy Foreman of Houston.

Some members of Coffey's staff claim the DA's office is experiencing a morale problem because of lack of direction that should be supplied by Coffey. They suggest that

lack of direction impedes prosecution of criminal cases.

STATISTICS neither prove nor disprove their contentions, made in rather open "off-the-record" discussions with reporters and defense lawyers. No one in the office will make a public statement regarding the contentions.

Within the past month, Sheriff Lon Evans suggested that lack of prosecution was one of the reasons for the overcrowding of his jail. The jail list Evans compiled after the first of February shows that most inmates are awaiting trial, following the return of indictments in their cases.

A few are being held with-



FRANK COFFEY

out bond, but most are unable to post the bonds set in their

Turn to Coffey on Page 11A

Coffey Seldom in Office; Wife, Aide Blame Illness

Continued From Page 1

cases by a magistrate, Evans said.

One inmate, according to Evans' jail list, was arrested for burglary in June 1969 and subsequently was indicted but has yet to come to trial. The vast majority of inmates awaiting trial, however, have been in jail less than a year.

COFFEY HAS said in the past that statistics regarding the performance of his office are neither the best nor the worst in comparison with other DA offices in the state. Some persons close to the apparent morale situation say that only later this year will statistics illustrate its effects.

This is not to say the office has ground to a halt.

Numerous prosecutors, although somewhat inexperienced, are energetic in that they spend weekends searching out new evidence and new witnesses for a criminal case. The judges in whose courts they practice say that all they need is occasional advice from veteran prosecutors.

The veterans — what is left of their number, that is — supply what aid they can. There are not many veterans in the office as a result, in the past few months, of resignations and deaths.

The veterans who remain must spread among themselves the more complex cases, leaving them with little time to nurture the young prosecutors. One apparent example of the lack of veteran prosecutors is that two of the four felony courts are without chief prosecutors.

MORGAN AND other officials, including Coffey himself, have described the difficulty of recruiting veteran lawyers because of salary limitations. The veterans are being paid about \$15,000 annually, while their counterparts in private practice can earn substantially more than that amount.

Some staff members claim Coffey has not stayed close enough to the situation, resulting in the experience gap.

Another factor which some say increases the morale problem is Coffey's unannounced but widely circulated plans to retire. Speculation originally held that Coffey would retire at the end of January, but now the date has been pushed to April 1.

He has told several persons privately of his retirement plans and has knowledge that at least two of his staff members are beginning to campaign for appointment for his job. The appointment would be made by the governor.

EARLIER this year, Coffey indicated his awareness of a morale problem. He also indicated that the morale problem was partly the fault of his indecisiveness about the date of retirement and the lack of direction from himself.

Some cases now are being tried by the sole use of reports police furnish the district attorney's office. The large majority of cases are disposed of by plea bargaining or dismissal.

Plea bargaining — that of recommending a term of years for a sentence, sometimes probated, in exchange for a plea of guilty — is nothing new. A national magazine recently called the procedure pervasive in the American system of justice.

Last year, a young high school student received a 10-year probated sentence for sale of heroin after a plea of guilty. He still has six drug cases pending against him.

WHEN THE youth was charged, the case gained local attention. Prosecutors promised future disclosures

that the youth had connections with underworld types in Dallas and possessed enough money to have a foreign bank account.

Some persons within Coffey's staff question whether the probated sentence falls in line with Coffey's announced program of being "soft" on drug experimenters and "hard" on so-called pushers.

The youth reportedly introduced hard drugs to numerous other high school students.

To his credit, perhaps, Coffey withstood attacks from other public officials about his "soft" policy on experimenters when other jurisdictions were seeking long prison terms in narcotics-possession cases.

Now, those jurisdictions are quietly beginning to give probated sentences, particularly for marijuana possession cases, officials here say.

Coffey still has a "court of no record" for unofficial probation. No indictments are returned in such instances and the charges are dismissed if the alleged offender lives up to the terms of the unofficial restrictions.

AND STILL, with Coffey's tacit consent, the misdemeanor or appeals court for traffic violation convictions continues to operate on the basis of a complete plea docket. No trials are held and lawyers work out among themselves, and the judge, which cases will be pleaded guilty and which will be dismissed.

When Coffey first took office in 1967, he promised he would rid the town of organized crime. Police say that gambling, prostitution and other related offenses are, to a large extent, under control now.

His prosecutors have obtained record jury verdicts, one of 300 years for rape.

Coffey led a fight against alleged illegal activities by vending machine companies, testifying before a legislative committee.

A part of his bright political future was a possible candidacy for governor. When he announced he would run for re-election, no one chose to attempt to attack the record of his first four years in office by opposing him. His tenure has not had the taint of internal scandal.

He instituted several reforms in the management of the office, including upgrading salaries despite numerous run-ins with county commissioners and despite his contention that the salaries are still not high enough to attract veteran lawyers.

SOME PERSONS close to the situation are wondering if the ameliorating effect of these reforms will be lost, if Coffey continues to have an inactive role, as they claim.

Morgan last week said the office has a morale problem. He said, however, that lack of leadership is not the cause. He denied that there is lack of leadership and that Coffey is maintaining contact with the office.

"A large part of the decisions still are Frank's — not mine," said Morgan. Morgan said the morale problem is seasonal, but may not be as serious this year as it was last year. "The first year we were in office was the worst, since we had never gone through it before," said Morgan.

He said Coffey, himself and other office superiors began last fall planning for the seasonal morale problems, which he called "the March doldrums."

THE OFFICE is having to prepare for summer recesses of the courts with the knowledge that any case not closed now will have to be processed at the first of the fall, Morgan said.

"It's all muddy now," said Morgan.

He said there is a tendency to walk away from the problems experienced each year at this time. "The weather also has something to do with it," Morgan said.

Morgan pointed out that the office currently "has a ridiculous logistics problem." He noted that part of the office is housed in the Criminal Courts building, where all of it was in the past, and part in the old Criminal Courts building next door and up a flight of stairs.

For the time being, the possibility of the DA's office being under one roof again depends on the passage March 27 of Proposition No. 1 on the county election bond ballot. The proposition asks for approval of the sale of bonds to remodel the old Criminal Courts building.

COMMISSIONERS originally indicated to Coffey that funds from the sale of Turnpike Stadium to Arlington might be used to remodel the offices. No firm promise was made, and commissioners later chose to allocate the money for pay raises for all county employees.

Regardless of how the situation came about, the DA staff members are under severe strain because of scarce desk space and the separation of important records in one building or another.

"Right now, it's not a disaster. We were fearful of that last fall," said Morgan of the office's problems. He said the cramped office situation was one of the reasons he originally felt the situation this spring would be worse.

Morgan said that Coffey's possible retirement may be an additional factor in this year's "March doldrums," but he added he could not determine to what extent. "It's not that perceptible," he said.

THERE IS a review in the works now by superiors in the office of all personnel, Morgan disclosed. "We're going to drop a few balls. No office is perfect," Morgan said.

He said that he and Coffey are re-establishing lines of authority. He said that any alleged lack of leadership on Coffey's part has nothing to

do with the prospects of reorganization.

"We're already starting discussions, attorney by attorney," he said. Morgan said that when all the reports of the superiors are finished in regard to the personnel situation, the attorneys will be called in for a conference. "We're going to be quite candid with them," he said.

He added, however, that the DA's office "is not a military organization. This is a law firm. You just don't get mad and fire people."

Superiors in the office say no problem has resulted from two assistant district attorneys, Bill Knapp and John Bady, seeking the governor's consent to succeed Coffey. To help avert any such problem, they say, Asst. Dist. Atty. Rufus Adcock acts as district attorney when Morgan is absent.

Morgan said several more staff meetings will be called subsequent to the one about two weeks ago to explain plans for a line of authority. It was learned that, at that first meeting, Morgan also told the new staff members assembled that they should expect some public criticism of the office in the near future.

Whatever the reasons for having to institute fresh lines of authority, at least one assistant believes they are needed soon.

He told a reporter, "The way it is now, everybody around here is calling each other 'sir.'"

House Approves County Pay Plan

The Texas House of Representatives voted final approval Friday to a bill severely altering the methods of setting the salaries of county employees. A move that has upset Tarrant County commissioners.

The four commissioners earlier this week sent a telegram to Rep. Bill Clayton of Springlake, who originally introduced the salary bill, that said they have been obliged to withdraw their support of the legislation.

The bill has changed considerably since Clayton introduced it last month. Clayton is chairman of the House Committee on Counties.

"We told them not to bother with all the amendments. We don't need the amendments," said Commissioner Jerry Mebus Thursday.

ONE OF THE SIGNERS of the original telegram, Mebus said he sent personal

grams Wednesday night to the eight members of the Tarrant County legislative delegation, pleading that they "try to kill the bill."

None of the delegation voted for the bill on final reading, according to Commissioner Dick Andersen. On an earlier reading, two members did.

The amended bill now goes to the Senate for a vote on the establishment of a "Board of Compensation Adjustment" in each county to ratify any salary recommendations by commissioners.

The bill allows county commissioners to set the amount of pay, office and travel expense and all other allowances for county and precinct officials and employees who are paid wholly from county funds, exempting certain offices.

However, the salaries and expenses recommended by the commissioners would have to be ratified by the adjustment board with a majority vote of the total membership.

EXCLUDED FROM the pay-setting powers of the commissioners are district attorneys wholly paid by state funds, probation officers, county auditors and purchasing agents and all of their staffs.

Judges of all courts of record and justices of the peace were also exempt from the bill and district judges would continue to set court reporters' salaries from each district.

The adjustment board would be composed of all officials within the county who are paid wholly from county funds and who are elected on a countywide basis.

An amendment calling for the county judge, sheriff, county and district clerk, tax-assessor-collector, county treasurer and county criminal district attorney to sit on the board was defeated.

This apparently means county criminal judges, domestic relations judges, probate judges and the county court-at-law judge would be on the board.

HOUSE SPEAKER G. F. "Gus" Mutscher called the bill, which was finally passed 74-63, "a good piece of legislation." One of his aides, former Tarrant Rep. Joe Shannon Jr., reportedly was seeking support for the bill among House members.

County Judge Howard Green said of the bill, "They'd be better off if they didn't pass it. The situation now is very much confused.

We'd be better off if we keep what we got rather than something completely wild like they apparently have down there."

Coffey Silence Hit by Counsel

The general counsel of the Tarrant County Crime Commission said today he is "disappointed that Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey has not, as yet, made a public statement about whether he will resign from office."

Edwin T. Phillips Jr. made the comment this morning shortly before the crime commission was to hold its annual general membership meeting.

AT THAT meeting, Phillips said, the group will be told of the recommendations, released to reporters about two weeks ago, of the executive board of the unofficial group.

Among those recommendations was that Coffey, who is hospitalized in Galveston, make a statement regarding his plans.

There has been speculation that Coffey, whose second four-year term began Jan. 1, will step down in the near future.

Phillips said he had been assured that he would have a statement from either Coffey or his chief assistant, Jim Morgan, before the noon meeting.

MORGAN left Sunday on a junket sponsored by IBM and returned shortly before the meeting.

In his newsletter to the members of the dues-paying group, Phillips noted that:

"Coffey served the county well during his initial term as DA and we charge no fault with the then direction of his office, its efforts to try felony cases . . . and his availability to other law enforcement agencies, public forums and private citizens.

"His lack of activity in recent months in the discharge of his duties as a public servant may well result from illness, a desire to retire from office or other factors not publicly known.

"THE PUBLIC is increasingly aware, however, of the breakdown in his administration of office and is entitled to know what the DA intends to do about it."

Phillips concluded that if Coffey does plan to resign, he should "say so and fix a date."

If he does not, he should return to his public duty or offer an explanation as to why he cannot do so."

Coffey's doctor said last week that it will probably be several more weeks before Coffey can be released from the hospital. The doctor said Coffey is suffering from a neurological ailment.

Judge Pay Hike Bill Disgruntles Some

Some county employees were grumbling today over a legislative bill introduced yesterday that would give district judges a \$4,000 per year raise, all of which would come from the county's general fund.

As introduced in Austin, the bill would provide that in addition to the \$20,000 per year paid judges by the state that they would receive the raise as a supplement to the \$8,000 they already receive from the county.

THE EXTRA money ostensibly is paid for the judges to sit as the Tarrant County Juvenile Board. However, the board generally meets for less than an hour eight or nine times a year.

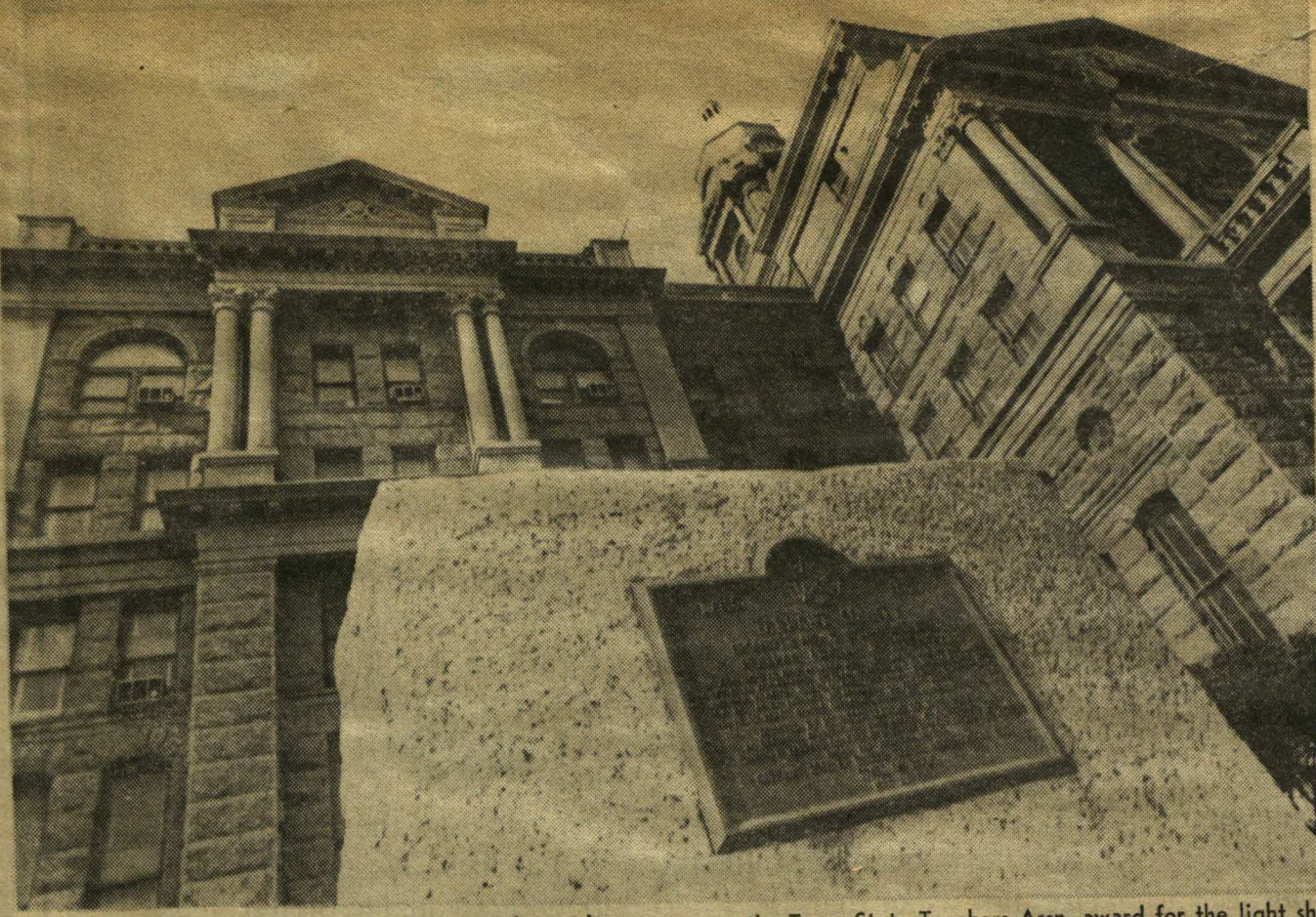
"It was the judges who kept us from getting a raise last summer," said one county employe this morning.

"Now they go down crying to the legislature saying they need more money. What about us? Don't we need more money, too?"

THE EMPLOYEE, a clerk who makes less than \$500 a

month, was referring to a court action last summer in which the county employes' union sought to have their salaries raised by 6 per cent although County Auditor Jack Benson refused to certify that there was money available for the raises.

Another employe said, "I bet Benson won't refuse to certify the raise (if passed by the Legislature) for the judges. In fact, I'd even give you odds on that."



Texas landmark may be removed to make way for light shed

Bond issue, No. 3

Proposed parking lot creates controversy

By FRANK PATRICK

Proposition No. 3 on the bond election ballot will call for "the issuance of \$1.5 million of county courthouse improvement bonds."

Although it won't be mentioned on the ballot, what this really means is \$800,000 for the purchase of a downtown block of property for a county parking lot, and \$700,000 for remodeling the old courthouse.

There is no legal requirement that either amount of money be spent for either project. More or less could be spent on either, as long as the total doesn't exceed \$1.5 million.

PROPOSITION NO. 3 has been the most controversial item, even among commissioners themselves.

Some commissioners at first felt a parking lot wasn't needed. Others — principally first-term commissioner Dick Andersen, one of the earliest and most vocal backers of a county bond issue — held out for it.

Originally, the parking lot proposal was to be listed separately on the ballot. But, in a late switch, it was lumped with remodeling the old courthouse.

Commissioner George (Skeet) Richardson said the decision was taken on the advice of bond attorneys, who said "antiquated" statutes made it impossible to list the need for a parking lot in a bond proposal.

But some observers and at least one highly-placed county official question the reasons for such a listing.

AS PROJECTED, at least one city block as yet unselected but adjacent to the courthouse complex — would be bought and razed.

On the site, there would be 266 car spaces. One possible site mentioned is the two-block area directly east of the courthouse, which includes a couple of bars, pawn shops and an auto paint and body shop.

Another possible site is the 1½ blocks directly west, where the old Everybody's Department Store was.

That area would be more expensive. Backers of the land acquisition part of the proposal say it is a hedge against inflation.

"The need for parking space around the courthouse is evident," said County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan.

"But more importantly, the county will always need more space, and buying the property now is a hedge against higher property costs later."

COUNTY EMPLOYEES now have a free, 200-car lot behind the Criminal Courts Bldg., with about 75 spaces reserved for judges, grand jury members and for members of

(Editor's Note: This is the third of four articles explaining the county's upcoming bond election.)

the Sheriff's Dept. and District Attorney's Office.

It is usually full before 8 a.m. There are additional spaces around the courthouse, some with meters. Several of those are reserved for constables and other county officials.

Critics of the proposal have offered opposition for two reasons.

First, they feel another lot isn't needed. Second, they fear commissioners could decide for some reason to buy a relatively expensive piece of property.

"I have enough trouble paying my own parking tickets," one citizen said. "Why should my money be used for a county lot? I think the whole thing is an exercise in empire building."

OFFICIALS SAY THAT users of the lot — most would be county employees — would be charged. The rate isn't definite. Auditor Jack Benson said a lot could produce as much as \$26,000 in revenue annually.

If the county does constrict a records building, then the old courthouse would obviously need to be remodeled when many of its offices are vacated.

The old courthouse could be used then to house additional courtrooms established by the legislature.

In the past decade, the legislature has created four domestic relations courts, two criminal district courts, two county criminal courts and a district court.

With a growing backlog of cases, that pace should be matched or surpassed in the 1970s.

Other areas of the courthouse would be used to give more space to title companies. State law requires the county to allot room to these companies, which currently are squeezed together in the courthouse basement.

COMMISSIONER RICHARDSON feels the county could form a closer relationship with its legislative delegatin in Austin by providing office space for them at the courthouse.

In any event, remodeling of the courthouse is several years away. Work on it would not begin until the new records building is occupied, in about five years.

Then remodeling would consist of wiring, paneling and carpeting refinements. Some walls would be repainted. Outside, the courthouse — a landmark, and one of only 50 Texas buildings in the National Register of Historic Places — would remain the same.

'Commissioner' Bill Faces House Trouble

Star-Telegram Austin Bureau
AUSTIN — A bill allowing county commissioners courts to set salaries of most county officials and employees is apparently going to have trouble in the House.

Representatives debated the proposal almost two hours Tuesday without even a vote to pass it on to a third reading. Debate will continue Wednesday.

The counties bill, as it is presently written, would repeal most laws setting compensation of county employees and allow the commissioners courts in all counties to set salaries and allowances with certain exceptions.

District attorneys, probation officers, county auditors and purchasing agents and their staffs would not be affected by the proposed legislation.

A floor amendment adopted Tuesday also exempts "judges of all courts of record and justices of the peace" from the pay-setting authority of commissioners.

UNDER THE bill, the commissioners courts could not set compensations except at a

regular meeting of the court and after 10 days notice which would include the amount of the proposed raises published in a newspaper in the county.

District judges would set the court reporters salaries for each district.

Another amendment to be submitted Wednesday would create in each county a "board of compensation adjustment" composed of all officials within the county who are paid wholly from county funds and who are elected on a countywide basis.

The salaries, personal expenses and allowances of all elected county officers as set by the commissioners court would have to be ratified by the new board, under the proposed amendment.

BRIEF SESSION DRAWS APOLOGY

Commissioners Court met for about a minute this morning, conducted routine business and then adjourned.

Several members of the court then spent about two minutes apologizing to a Tarrant County Junior College government class that had come to watch the meeting.

The apologies were for how short the meeting was.

Volunteer Firemen Held Favorable to Bond Sale

County Fire Marshal Mason Lankford told county commissioners Friday he has talked to several volunteer firemen "and I haven't found any opposition to the bond issue."

Lankford also told commissioners that a meeting of volunteer firemen from throughout the county will be conducted Sunday to discuss the bond election further.

Voters in Tarrant County will be asked March 27 to approve the sale of \$8.6 million in general obligation bonds to finance courthouse improvements.

"We will bring this (the in-

formation) to them, and I'm sure that they will push the bonds," he said.

Also in the informal meeting of Commissioners Court Friday morning, two representatives of the Tarrant County Historical Society asked commissioners if they were interested in hearing details of a proposal to construct a historical plaza between the courthouse and the Trinity River.

Commissioners agreed that they would like to hear the proposal, which will be made after a study has been completed.

County Ponders Offer to Lease Space Downtown

County commissioners took under advisement Friday a proposal by Tandy Corp. that the county lease part of a building now occupied by Meacham's downtown store.

Meacham's soon will move from the downtown area, explained Herschel Winn, chief counsel for Tandy operations.

Winn offered commissioners, at what he said was a low rental rate, the option of leasing the fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth floors of the facility at 5th and Houston.

Commissioners have suggested that space could be rented to store records or expand offices, since voters failed to approve a proposition in last week's bond election that would have financed construction of a \$5 million records building.

In other action at an informal session Friday, commissioners instructed the county public works department to submit plans for piecemeal remodeling of the courthouse.

Also failing to gain approval in the bond election was a \$1.5 million proposition for "county courthouse improvement bonds," part of which would have gone toward remodeling the courthouse.

Green, Cowen Predict Bond Issues Approval

By JOHN LUMPKIN
County Judge Howard Green and County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen have predicted victory in Saturday's \$8.6 million bond election because of the expected low voter turnout.

The county is seeking approval of four bond propositions to finance expansion and remodeling of county facilities that will directly affect virtually every county office.

Cowen earlier this month forecast a turnout of about 60,000 voters — about one-fourth of the number of 1971 registered voters in the county.

"I SEE NOW that is going to be way, way long," said Cowen. He would not give a specific revised estimate.

Approximately 140 persons will have voted by absentee ballot by Saturday, said Cowen. He said late Tuesday that 137 persons had cast absentee votes, but that several ballots have yet to be mailed in.

Absentee voting in person closed at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

"From the gossip around

that I get, all the propositions are going to carry," said Cowen.

He said there has been no organized opposition to the proposals, eliminating that number of potential voters from coming to the polls Saturday.

"And there is no particular interest among anyone else except for the people that are definitely for it (approval of the bonds)," he said.

GREEN AGREED with Cowen's reasoning. He noted that while there is no organized opposition, there is organized support.

"It seems to me that things are breaking better than I expected. I'm beginning to believe we've got a good chance on all four of the propositions," he said.

He said that when the election was called, he felt that Proposition No. 1, which deals with expansion of the jail and remodeling for the district attorney's office, and Proposition No. 2, which concerns the construction of a \$5 million records building, would pass.

Now, Green said, he also believes that approval of bonds for the two sub courthouses and for courthouse remodeling and acquisition of downtown property will be gained.

"We can survive without those two, but we need them. The first two are absolutely critical," he said.

SOME CONTROVERSY originally surrounded Proposition No. 3, a \$1.5 million Turn to 2 Predict on Page 2

2 Predict Approval Of Bonds

Continued From Page 1

item termed "courthouse improvements."

Commissioners say they will use some of the money for property acquisition for immediate parking and future expansion and the rest for courthouse remodeling for the offices to be vacated by moves to the records building.

As it is listed on the ballot, Proposition No. 3 does not mention specifically the property acquisition or remodeling.

Commissioners have not said which property they will acquire. They would not be in violation of the law if they spend all of the \$1.5 million on property acquisition and none on courthouse remodeling, or vice versa.

Green said he has made about 20 speeches to area civic groups, many of whom have passed resolutions endorsing the bond proposals. The proposals have the endorsement of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, the Fort Worth Jaycees and several labor organizations.

HE SAID MOST questions directed to him concern the possibility of a tax increase as a result of the future retirement of the bonds, once they are approved.

Green and other county officials contend there will be no such increase.

"The main thing is that there will be a tax increase if the proposals don't pass," he said.

"I know, of course, that it sounds like a threat, but it's not. We will have to raise taxes if they don't pass because

House Tentatively OKs Board to Approve County Pay

Star-Telegram Austin Bureau
AUSTIN — House members tentatively approved a bill Wednesday which would set up in each county a "board of compensation adjustment" to ratify any salary recommendations suggested by a commissioners court.

The initial version of the bill designed to give county commissioners pay-setting authority and sponsored by Rep. Bill Clayton of Springlake was amended with a substitute by Rep. Paul Silber of San Antonio. The new version passed to a third reading on a 74-66 vote.

Of the Tarrant County dele-

gation, only Reps. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis and Tommy Shannon voted for engrossment.

Under the bill, the commissioners court of each county could fix the amount of pay, office and travel expense and all other allowances for county and precinct officials and employees who are paid wholly from county funds with certain exceptions.

However, the salaries and expenses recommended by commissioners would have to be ratified by a board of compensation adjustment with a majority vote of the total membership.

The board would be composed of all officials within the county who are paid wholly from county funds and who are elected on a countywide basis.

Such a board would not, however, have the power to increase or diminish the salaries and expenses set by the commissioners court.

Excluded from the pay-setting powers of the commissioners are district attorneys wholly paid by state funds, probation officers, county auditors and purchasing agents and all of their staffs.

Judges of all courts of record and justices of the peace

were also exempt from the bill.

District judges would set court reporters salaries for each district.

The bill would repeal most laws setting compensation of county employees since currently, the legislature must set the salaries and expense allowances of county officials and employees.

The temporarily approved bill states that the commissioners shall not exercise their pay-setting authority except at a regular meeting of the court and after 10 days notice published in a newspaper of

the intended salaries, expenses and allowances to be raised and the amount of the proposed raises.

The amended bill says in arriving at the compensation and expenses to be paid officials and employees, commissioners shall consider the financial condition of the county and the duties and needs of the officials and employees.

Also included in the proposal is a section stating, "nothing in this act is intended to affect the lawful procedures and delegations of authority heretofore established in any county for the purpose of set-

ting the salary of county and precinct employees . . ."

In other House action, representatives voted not to concur with Senate amendments to a House bill permitting an injured worker to choose his own doctor for treatment under provisions of the work-mans compensation law.

The House-passed version would allow the injured worker to choose a doctor or chiropractor from a panel—the Senate version removes the panel provision.

A conference committee was appointed to adjust the differences.

'Got to Do Something,' Mebus Says

By JOHN LUMPKIN
County Commissioner Jerry Mebus said Sunday he has already formulated alternatives to the three county bond proposals that failed in Saturday's election.

"These are thoughts that have popped into my mind. They may come to naught, but we have just got to do something," the Precinct 2 commissioner said.

Mebus said he hopes that other commissioners will "explore" the possibilities. He is willing to listen to other suggestions himself, he said.

In an extremely tight turnout of about 18,000 voters, only the first proposition in the proposed \$8.6 million bond package gained approval. It provided for expansion of the

county jail and remodeling of office space for the district attorney.

Voters turned down bond financing for a \$5 million records building, two additional subcourthouses, remodeling of the courthouse and acquisition of downtown property for parking and future expansion.

To alleviate the need for more space in the courthouse complex, Mebus said he would like to investigate the following:

—A multilevel parking facility behind the Criminal Courts Building to be financed by revenue bonds.

—Construction of the sub-courthouses "in years to come" out of general county funds.

—Microfilming of older records at the courthouse and transferring the original copies of those records to a rented warehouse.

Officials claimed a new records building was necessary because, for example, the county clerk has been forced to store property records in racks in the hallways of the courthouse.

County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen said Sunday that since the records building can not be constructed with bonds at this time, "I'm just going to have to take over another hallway or pitch a tent on the courthouse lawn."

Mebus said he realized commissioners may have to ask voters again to approve bonds for the records building

—the proposal that, of the three that failed, came the closest to passing.

"We could just come straight back and ask for it again to show the public the urgency of this thing," he said.

"When all this quiets down a little, I am going to get one thing done. I'm going to have the inside of the courthouse painted," Mebus remarked, adding that the paint "will cover a multitude of sins."

County Judge Howard Green said he intends to give commissioners "a pep talk" at the regular meeting of Commissioners Court Monday.

Upset by stories which he said he felt took a negative approach, he contended the

election "was not a defeat at all."

"We came a long way since January when people said the (Fort Worth) Chamber of Commerce would not support us on this thing and we didn't know what the newspapers thought about it. The law and order proposition was why there was an election in the first place and it was more important than the rest of the proposals combined," Green declared.

"When we consider how far we came, I don't think we should hang our heads. I learned a long time ago that you don't get everything you want," he said.

Green promised commissioners will continue to be Turn to Commissioner on Page 2

Commissioner Lists Possible Solutions

Continued From Page 1

harmonious after the bond election, despite claims from others that the court signed a peace pact only while it promoted the bonds.

"I'm not going to cross Richardson and he is not going to cross me," Green said. Green and Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson in the past were at odds in regard to various county issues.

In other bond developments, Cowen said he would check Monday into reports of persons in at least one precinct casting ballots as property owners because they merely owned an automobile and not any real property.

Cowen said persons voting as property owners must have "duly rendered property for taxation" during the last rendering period. In Tarrant County, the tax rolls are based only on real property.

Non-property owners were permitted to vote Saturday, but their votes were counted separately from those of property owners. Cowen said that if the practice was widespread in the precinct "and somebody contests it, we'll have to throw the whole box (precinct results) out."

Cowen also gave the voting results from the county's tallies, which differed slightly from the results furnished the Texas Election Bureau Saturday night. Cowen's tallies, completed Sunday, will remain unofficial until the official canvass of the vote later this week.

His tallies reflect the same general results of those of the bureau—that three of four issues failed by both the total vote and the vote of the property owners.

The tallies are:
Proposition No. 1 (jail, DA): total for—10,231, against—7,802; non-property owners for—823, against—329; property owners for—9,408, against—7,473.

Proposition No. 2 (records building): total for—8,450, against—9,452; non-property owners for—715, against—410; property owners for—7,735, against—9,042.

Proposition No. 3 (courthouse improvements): total for—8,039, against—9,797; non-property owners for—693, against—413; property owners for—7,346, against—9,384.

Proposition No. 4 (subcourthouses): total for—7,146, against—10,689; non-property owners for—633, against—491; property owners for—6,513, against—10,198.

Total vote: 18,275.

GD Worker To Assume County Job

County Commissioners Monday hired Leroy Erwin, a General Dynamics employe, to replace Public Works Director Steve Champeaux.

Champeaux, 64, is to retire in April. Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said the longtime county employe currently is on sick leave and is not expected to return before the retirement date.

Erwin, who commissioners said has a master's degree in mechanical engineering, was hired for a three-month probationary period at \$1,203 a month.

In other action, commissioners voted May 5 as Tarrant County Employee's Day and appropriated \$200 for a ceremony for employes at the Tarrant County Convention Center.

Commissioners also approved payment of \$27,005 to C.R. Law Tax Records, Inc., for preparing delinquent tax records required by state law.

The firm has performed the service in the past. The records must be prepared every four years for each year since 1939.

County Auditor Jack Benson said the county is owed almost \$4 million in delinquent taxes, dating back to 1939. He said much of that sum "is uncollectable."

Mr. Leroy Erwin is the new Public Works Director for Tarrant County.

Mr. Erwin is married and resides at 6725 Fortune Road with his wife, *Blanche* and comes to us from General Dynamics.

Tarrant County is extremely fortunate to obtain the services of Mr. Erwin at a time when our building and expansion program is booming.

Mr. Erwin's qualifications speak for themselves and includes such honors as Valedictorian of his High School Class, going on to obtain a Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering, picking up along the way memberships in the National Honor Mechanical Engineering Fraternity. He also is a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, Air Pollution Control Association, American Society of Quality Control, and the National Management Association. ~~He is~~ *and is* also a registered *Professional* Engineer in the State of Texas.

Mr. Erwin not only collects degrees in Engineering, he gets out and puts his knowledge to work. He has vast experience in the engineering field having been the Project and Bridge Engineer on the 88 mile Turner Turnpike in Oklahoma and various other projects. He is ~~also~~ well versed in the Ecology field which is fast becoming our number one national problem. Mr. Erwin is very active in Civic Affairs and is readily available for consultation on Engineering problems within the Community.



2 PROPOSE NEW VOTE ON BUILDING

Records Site Held Crucial

Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis today said they may request that all members of Commissioners Court call for another bond issue election for construction of a county records building.

The two commissioners made their recommendations after this morning's routine Commissioners Court meeting, and 10 days after a bond issue proposition on the facility was defeated.

COMMISSIONER Jerry Mebus and County Judge Howard Green expressed reluctance in calling the issue so soon after the defeat of the proposition.

Commissioner Dick Andersen, the fifth member of the court, was vacationing in Spain.

Richardson said that he may call for the proposition to be placed on the ballot "as soon as possible."

He also proposed that the election be held on a Tuesday instead of a Saturday in hopes that more voters would turn out.

ABOUT 18,000 voted in the March 27 bond election. That was less than 8 per cent of the registered voters in Tarrant County.

County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen and Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, both of whom have pleaded many

New Vote Is Asked on Site For Records

From Page 1

times recently for more space, encouraged the commissioners to call the second bond issue election.

Both said they feel the issue this time can be passed.

Cowen noted that the records building proposition failed to carry by less than 1,000 votes.

"THE REASON it failed is because too many people tied it to the proposition that called for remodeling the courthouse and building a parking lot," said Richardson.

He added that the one proposition that passed, which called for expansion of the jail and for remodeling of the old criminal courts building, received the bulk of publicity.

"I think that our situation (the lack of space) is as critical as the jails," Cowen said.

Green said he needs time to consider whether the issue should again be presented to voters so soon.

"I DEFINITELY feel that the economy is on the upswing, but I don't think that we should hold another bond election until it is a little sounder," he said.

One of the reasons most often cited for the defeat of the other three proposals is the state of the economy.

"I recognized the necessity of the records building and by fall the economy might be better," he added.

Richardson and Lewis both said they oppose remodeling of any buildings the county does not now own but they have been given the chance to lease or buy.

FRIDAY commissioners were told they could lease four floors in the old Meacham's Department Store downtown.

County Auditor Jack Benson also suggested then that the county could buy "at a very good price" the old Everybody's Department Store property just west of the Civil Courts Building.

Benson did not tell commissioners how much the old property would cost.

Richardson said after Benson told of the offer that he went to look at the old building.

"IT IS PRETTY deplorable," he said. "We would end up spending more for remodeling it than we would for a new building, and it would just hold one department."

Cowen's and Stewart's offices would have been moved into the new building had the issue passed and will still be moved if the bond election is again called and if it is successful.

County Salary Bill Mutilated in House

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COUNTY ELECT
Bond Ba
Cost—\$1.
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3 of 4 Bond Proposals Fail in Light Turnout

The county bond March 27 cost about \$1.9 million, county officials said today.

Total cost of the election which 18,254 persons expected to reach \$34.1 million.

The total cost was normal, but the cost was considerably higher because of 11 turnout.

...
FEWER THAN 30 per cent of the county's registered voters cast ballots in million bond election only one of the four proposals was approved.

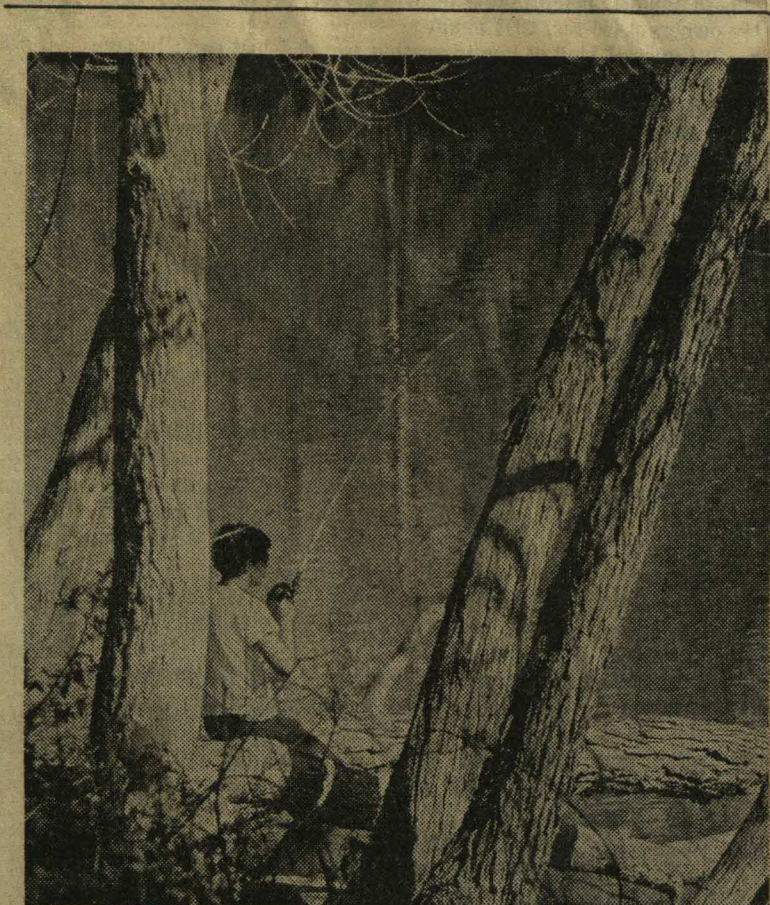
The most expensive were recorded in Precinct 7 where the eight voted into the salary of judges—cost \$16.81 per vote.

In Precinct 7 only votes were cast, amounting to \$15.57 per vote.

...
RECORDS KEPT county auditor's office there were 33 precincts of the 172—where it cost more than \$3 for each vote.

...
Most of the expense went for the sale of election judges.

The rest of the cleanup fees and for the voting machine polls—have not been tallied.



EARLY START — Ricky Martinez, 18, of 1210 Pecan gets an early start on a weekend of beautiful weather as he unlimbers his fishing rig in the Trinity River at

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By Z. JOE THORNTON
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"WE GOT WHAT was most necessary," he said, referring to the one proposition that passed — a \$1.9 million issue for expansion of the county jail and for remodeling of the old Criminal Courts Building.

"It will be more costly as we go about doing the job piece-meal."

"But when the Legislature talks of a half billion tax bill and with grocery bills having gone up steadily since 1967, I am sure that no one would want to raise taxes to pay for what we have done."

COUNTY Auditor Benson said the \$1.9 million bond issue would be sold "as fast as we can get it."

He said he might not be able to schedule a bond sale until next year.

Plans for the new records building will be discussed at the next meeting of the county commissioners.

Piece-meal Improvements Seen In Spite of Defeated Proposals

From Page 1
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The members—Mrs. Michael Lee Brown, Mrs. Ed W. Sampson Jr. and Mrs. Joe Tilley Jr. — told commissioners the City of Fort Worth seems prepared to cooperate in the venture.

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COMPUTER PURCHASE AT ISSUE Benson Scored on Trip West

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Jail and DA Funding Get Voter Approval

Election Analyzed—Page 8A
By JOHN LUMPKIN
Less than eight per cent of the county's registered voters told county commissioners Saturday that only one of four proposed expansion projects—the so-called law and order project—should be financed by general obligation bonds.

The decision of the approximately 18,000 persons who cast ballots in the county bond election affects plans for construction or remodeling of facilities that were to serve all 711,000 citizens of Tarrant County.

Approximately 233,000 persons were eligible to participate in the election, in which commissioners were seeking approval of sale of a total of \$8.6 million in bonds. The ballot listed four propositions.

Unofficial totals from all 172 voting precincts showed that only Proposition No. 1, calling for the "issuance of \$1.9 million of county jail and county office building bonds," passed.

THE UNOFFICIAL totals for Proposition No. 1, as provided by the Tarrant Election Bureau, were:

Total vote—for, 10,159; against, 7,702.

Non-property owners—for, 845; against, 332.

Property owners—for, 9,314; against, 7,370.

Attorney General Crawford Martin has ruled that, in light of Supreme Court decisions regarding bond elections, the total number of voters, as well as the total number of property owners, must approve bond proposals before he will certify the bonds for sale.

However, litigation is pending in federal courts in regard to the dual balloting procedure advocated by Martin and used in Saturday's election. The litigation is preventing the sale of bonds approved by Fort Worth voters last fall.

COUNTY OFFICIALS CALLED Proposition No. 1 the "law and order" proposition because it would provide funding for completion of three floors of the county jail and for remodeling of three floors of the old Criminal Courts Building to house the district attorney's office.

The officials put top priority on Proposition No. 1, claiming they would borrow the money for the jail and the DA's office if the proposition failed. They said the work needed to begin immediately.

They put just as much priority on Proposition No. 2, which asked for approval of the sale of \$8 million in bonds for construction of a records building.

The records building would have housed many county offices, including the county clerk, tax assessor-collector and auditor. All currently are in the courthouse, working under what Commissioner Jerry Mebus calls "intolerable conditions."

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Election at a Glance

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	Proposition 1 For Against	Proposition 2 For Against
Non-property Owners	845 332	731 442
Property Owners	9,314 7,370	7,674 8,798
Total	10,159 7,702	8,405 9,240

	Proposition 3 For Against	Proposition 4 For Against
Non-property Owners	720 468	649 523
Property Owners	7,370 9,214	6,460 9,993
Total	8,090 9,682	7,109 10,516

Piecemeal Remodeling Of Courthouse Ordered

County commissioners today instructed the new director of the county's public works department to begin preparing plans for a piecemeal remodeling of the old county courthouse.

Improvements to the old building, if authorized, would be paid for from the county's general fund since voters here last Saturday voted down a \$1.6 million bond issue, most of which would have gone for the remodeling.

Commissioner Dick Andersen made the suggestion during an informal meeting of Commissioners Court this morning.

In other action relating to the bond issue, in which only one of four propositions was approved, and in dealing with the problems of more space for offices and records, commissioners informally:

—Set April 30, tentatively, as the date to open bids on the remodeling of the old criminal courts building.

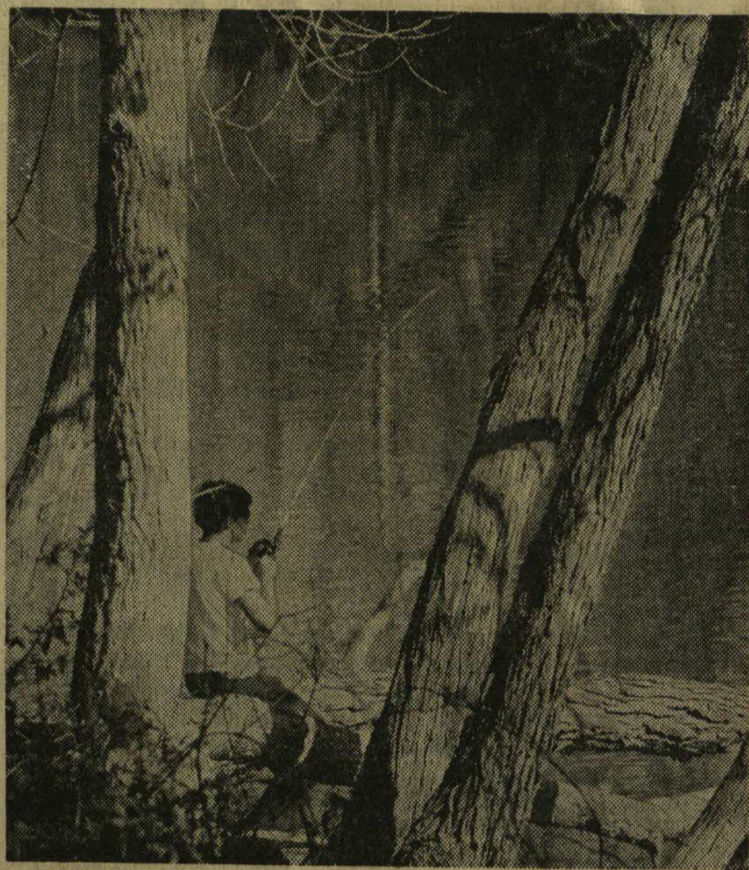
—Heard a proposal by Herschel Winn, chief counsel for Tandy Corp., that the county lease up to four floors in the downtown building from which Meacham's is being moved.

Winn offered commissioners, at what he said was a low rental rate, the option of leasing the fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth floors in the building at 5th and Houston.

Either offices or records could be kept in the facility, he suggested.

Commissioners took the proposal under advisement.

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the construction of a records building failed in the March 27 county board election.

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Extend the power of county commissioners to fix salaries and control their budgets? Far from it. As it passed the House, the measure would take away most of the salary-setting powers the commissioners now have, restricting them to authority over the

pay of a relative handful of elected officials and their employes. And even that authority wouldn't be final. It would give the final word to a board which would include the very officials about whose pay the commissioners were supposed to have the say.

In other words, the salaries would be determined by the Legislature in some cases, by the district judges and the county judges in others, and by the affected officials in still others. The commissioners would be left with virtually no power over the spending of taxpayers' money for salaries except to rubber-stamp what others might do.

Surveying what the amendment storm had done to the simple bill he sponsored, Rep. Bill Clayton of Springlake was quoted as saying "Well, at least it may be a start in the right direction." That's a little like a farmer finding good in the wrecking of his barn by a tornado.

If the bill passes the Senate in anything like its present form, county self-rule and county taxpayers will be badly damaged. Not only the Tarrant County commissioners who are the putative fathers of the bill but all other county commissioners had better bestir themselves to fight any thought of adoption by the Senate of what the House has produced.

Way Seen for Proposals

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"But when the Legislature talks of a half billion tax bill and with grocery bills having gone up steadily since 1967, I

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COUNTY AUDITOR Jack Benson said this morning that the \$1.9 million in bonds will be sold "as soon as possible."

He said that all the bonds might not be issued at once.

"We will have to draw up a schedule and see when we will need the money," he said.

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Green said the speech had been made a week ago, and later he told reporters that their "negative reporting" was one of the reasons for the three issues being defeated.

GREEN NOTED that the entire bond issue was endorsed "by everyone that we asked except for the volunteer fire fighters."

He said that he and other

county officials are grateful for those endorsements and for the support given the bond election.

Asked specifically what priorities will be placed on making additional room for the storage of county records and for more storage space, Green said, "We'll probably take a look at that building that (County Tax Assessor-Collector) Reed Stewart asked about last fall."

HE WAS referring to a request made by Stewart that a multi-story building a block south of the courthouse be purchased for his office to be relocated in.

He said it would cost about

\$150,000.

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A PLANNING firm advising the committee, Lawrence Halprin and Associates of San

Francisco, has suggested that the area between the courthouse and the Trinity River become a green space and that an overlook be situated near the river.

The committee members said Fort Worth owns some property north of the courthouse and is interested in acquiring it.

They said the county might purchase two small parcels of land, now privately owned, between Bluff Street and the river to the east and west of North Main.

THEY SAID matching federal funds are available for the purchases.

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"I don't think he has any business doing that, and especially he has no business doing it since he is trying to get us to buy a computer," remarked Richardson.

IN OTHER ACTION, Lewis and Richardson urged that the county resubmit a bond proposal for financing of a \$5 million record building to voters.

A proposition concerning

one, not under Benson," said Richardson.

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart and County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen have some computer services performed for their offices now on a contract basis. They both expressed pleasure with Commercial Computer Service, Inc., the local firm with whom they have contracted.

"If they weren't doing a good job, you can be sure I would get someone else," said Cowen.

BESIDES BENSON, another auditor's office employe, County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan, Sheriff Lon Evans and a district judge were said to be in California on a trip sponsored by IBM.

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County Will Seek Remodeling Bids

County commissioners Monday instructed County Auditor Jack Benson to advertise for bids to remodel three floors of the old Criminal Courts Building.

Funds for the remodeling will come from the sale of bonds voters approved Saturday.

The bonds for remodeling, planned so the district attorney's office again can be housed in the same building, were a part of Proposition No. 1 on the bond ballot.

The proposition asked voters to approve the "issuance of \$1.9 million of county jail and county office building bonds."

COMMISSIONERS SAY they hope to use about \$600,000 of the \$1.9 million for the DA's office. Currently, the office's facilities are in both the Criminal Courts Building and the old Criminal Courts Building.

"Let's go full steam ahead in this thing . . ." said Commissioner Dick Andersen.

About \$1.3 million from the bond sale will be used to complete three floors of the county jail. Plans by architect Earl Koeppel for the jail expansion are almost complete, said Benson.

Commissioners authorized Benson to advertise for bids for the jail expansion, once the plans are completed.

The commissioners' action came after County Clerk W. "Red" Cowen gave them the official totals from the election.

Commissioners offered alternatives Monday to the proposals that failed.

COMMISSIONER George

"Skeet" Richardson said the proposal for the \$5 million records building might be included in a future bond referendum.

County Judge Howard Green, contending that he is "not in the least dismayed" at the outcome of the election, said the county may purchase a three-story vacant building south of the courthouse for expansion of County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart's office.

Stewart last year urged commissioners to buy the building. Money for the building would come from general revenue.

Green also said there will be no tax increase, temporarily.

Commissioners promised voters there would be no tax increase if the bond program passed, but Green warned of a tax increase if it did not.

GREEN SAID Monday that a tax increase would have resulted if bonds for the jail expansion and the DA's office remodeling had not been approved.

"This is the one thing that we had to do immediately," said Green. He said that, had the so-called law-and-order proposition failed, tax would have been increased so the work could be paid for out of the general revenue.

Plan One OK'd

Continued From Page 1

9,240 against; non-property owners, 731 for to 442 against; property owners, 7,647 for to 9,240 against.

It came closer to passing than either Proposition No. 3 or Proposition No. 4, to which some officials attached lower priority in relation to the first two.

THE TOTAL VOTE FOR Proposition No. 3, a \$1.5-million courthouse improvement package, was 8,090 for and 9,682 against; non-property owners 720 for, 468 against; property owners, 7,370 for, 9,214 against. Officials said they would have acquired downtown property for immediate parking and future expansion with some of the money and remodeled the courthouse with the remainder.

The voters were the most emphatic in their rejection of Proposition No. 4. With the sale of \$200,000 in bonds that the voters did not approve, commissioners would have built a sub-courthouse in West Fort Worth and another in South Fort Worth.

Proposition No. 4 failed in the total vote with 7,109 for and 10,516 against; non-property owners 649 for, 523 against; property owners 6,460 for, 9,993 against.

"I guess I kind of live in another world. I just can't believe it. I thought we were going to win all of them" remarked Mebus.

"We'll make it all right with what we got. But we really need the space," he said. "We can get along without the parking. We always have," he said.

COMMISSIONER GEORGE "Skeet" Richardson suggested that the \$5-million bond proposal for the records building would be resubmitted to voters in the future. "That's the only way we can get that kind of money," he said.

Saying he did not want to sound "like sour grapes," Richardson still claimed that lack of private subscriptions hindered bond promotion campaigns.

"I talked to people on the street and none of them knew what this thing was all about," Richardson said.

He commended the work of attorney Estil Vance Jr., chairman of a citizen's committee advocating the bond program. "He (Vance) just didn't have the funds, though," Richardson said.

"The people spoke for governmental austerity and, as far as I am concerned, that is what they are going to get," County Judge Howard Green said.

He said he has learned that "Saturday is no longer the day for people to vote," referring to the low turnout.

OFFICIALS SAID THE DA's office and the jail will be adequate until the year 1990, once the improvements to which voters agreed are finished.

Acting Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan, filling in for ailing Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey, said he was "gratified" that funding for the DA's office is now provided. The remodeling will put the DA's office under one roof again and alleviate what one attorney calls "boiler room" conditions.

"The climate for the bond election was not good generally and we knew it . . . The voters attached that much importance to law and order and rightly so, we think," he said. Morgan earlier this year said the fact that some DA staff members were in one building and some in another influenced the staff's morale.

Sheriff Lon Evans' jail capacity will double, once the three floors to be financed by the bonds are completed. He said Saturday night that the expansion will end overcrowding in the jail.

"Some of the younger element now can be segregated from hardened criminals, which we hadn't been able to do before," he said.

Proposals Turnout and DA Funding Voter Approval

Election Analyzed—Page 8A By JOHN LUMPKIN

More than eight per cent of the county's registered old county commissioners Saturday that only our proposed expansion projects—the so-called order project—should be financed by general bonds.

decision of the approximately 18,000 persons who cast the county bond election affects plans for construction of facilities that were to serve all 711,000 citizens at County.

Approximately 233,000 persons were eligible to participate in the election, in which commissioners were seeking approval of a total of \$8.6 million in bonds. The ballot listed four proposals.

Official totals from all 172 voting precincts showed that Proposition No. 1, calling for the "issuance of \$1.9 million for jail and county office building bonds," passed.

UNOFFICIAL totals for Proposition No. 1, as provided by the Tarrant Election Bureau, were: 10,159 for, 10,159 against, 7,702.

Property owners—for, 845; against, 332. Non-property owners—for, 9,314; against, 7,370.

County General Crawford Martin has ruled that, in light of Supreme Court decisions regarding bond elections, the total of voters, as well as the total number of property must approve bond proposals before he will certify the results.

However, litigation is pending in federal courts in regard to the balloting procedure advocated by Martin and used in the county's election. The litigation is preventing the sale of bonds approved by Fort Worth voters last fall.

COUNTY OFFICIALS CALLED Proposition No. 1 the "law and order" proposition because it would provide funding for completion of three floors of the county jail and for remodeling of three floors of the old Criminal Courts Building to house the district attorney's office.

The officials put top priority on Proposition No. 1, claiming they would borrow the money for the jail and the DA's office if the proposition failed. They said the work needed to begin immediately.

They put just about as much priority on Proposition No. 2, which asked for approval of the sale of \$5 million in bonds for construction of a records building.

The records building would have housed many county offices, including the county clerk, tax assessor-collector and auditor. All currently are in the courthouse, working under what Commissioner Jerry Mebus calls "intolerable conditions."

Proposition No. 2 failed by about 800 votes — 8,405 for to 9,210 against. **Turn to Plan on Page 2**

Election at a Glance

The unofficial election results of Saturday's bond election are:

	Proposition 1 For Against	Proposition 2 For Against
Non-property Owners	845 332	731 442
Property Owners	9,314 7,370	7,674 8,798
Total	10,159 7,702	8,405 9,240

	Proposition 3 For Against	Proposition 4 For Against
Non-property Owners	720 468	649 523
Property Owners	7,370 9,214	6,460 9,993
Total	8,090 9,682	7,109 10,516

Piecemeal Remodeling Of Courthouse Ordered

County commissioners today instructed the new director of the county's public works department to begin preparing plans for a piecemeal remodeling of the old county courthouse.

Improvements to the old building, if authorized, would be paid for from the county's general fund since voters here last Saturday voted down a \$1.6 million bond issue, most of which would have gone for the remodeling.

Commissioner Dick Andersen made the suggestion during an informal meeting of Commissioners Court this morning.

In other action relating to the bond issue, in which only one of four propositions was approved, and in dealing with the problems of more space for offices and records, commissioners informally:

—Set April 30, tentatively, as the date to open bids on the remodeling of the old criminal courts building.

—Heard a proposal by Herschel Winn, chief counsel for Tandy Corp., that the county lease up to four floors in the downtown building from which Meacham's is being moved.

Winn offered commissioners, at what he said was a low rental rate, the option of leasing the fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth floors in the building at 5th and Houston.

Either offices or records could be kept in the facility, he suggested.

Commissioners took the proposal under advisement.

Crime Commission Chooses Head Ponders Coffey

Edward A. Dietz was named president yesterday of the Tarrant County Crime Commission during a meeting in which the chief topic of interest was ailing Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey.

About 20 persons attending the meeting heard the commission's general counsel, Edwin T. Phillips, hint that a new study might be made of the DA's office.

THE OLD study was released three weeks ago and in it the executive board of the unofficial commission concluded that Coffey was ill, that there appeared to be morale problems in the office and that Coffey should issue a public statement about his intentions to return to office or retire.

Coffey has not yet issued such a statement. He is hospitalized in Galveston for treatment of what his doctor calls a neurological disorder.

The district attorney, who has not worked since he began a second term Jan. 1, has said he will issue a state-

ment when his health permits.

"WE ARE sympathetic with the illness of public officials and we would not want to do anything that would cause harm while Mr. Coffey

remains ill," Phillips said. "But there is a public duty which transcends even these considerations.

"It (the public) did not vest in Mr. Coffey the power to designate another person to act as DA," he said in reference to Asst. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan who is now running the office.

PHILLIPS SAID the govern-

nor is the "only one" who can appoint an acting DA—the office holder can not.

"If Mr. Coffey does not return certainly by June 1, then it would be time for the governor to appoint someone in Coffey's stead," he said.

Phillips stressed that commission members are not questioning Coffey's integrity, and he said he does not mean to discredit members of the

DA's office.

"THERE ARE no existing facts to justify filing suit in district court for removal of Coffey," Phillips said.

Other officers elected were Roger C. Hunsaker, first vice president; James L. West, second vice president; John Barry Hubbard, treasurer, and Wirt M. Norris Jr., secretary.

CRIME PANEL MEETS

New Study on DA Hinted by Group

New officers of the Tarrant County Crime Commission may re-examine the district attorney's office and return new recommendations, commission general counsel Edwin Phillips said Wednesday.

After the statement by Phillips, the board of directors of the citizens' group elected new officers at a luncheon meeting at the Sheraton-Fort Worth.

The previous officers meeting, behind closed doors in March, recommended that ailing Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey make a statement regarding his future intentions. The officers set no deadline for such a statement.

They said it could be made at a time "consistent with" Coffey's recovery. They noted that Coffey has been absent from his post as DA most of this year.

IN WEDNESDAY'S meeting of about 20 persons, the board of directors accepted the recommendation of the old executive committee.

Phillips, during the meeting and after it, expressed concern that Coffey has not made the statement. "If it's done in the near future, that's fine. There is no problem," he remarked.

However, he said new commission officers could reapproach the district attorney's situation if Coffey continues to maintain his silence.

Coffey, his doctor said, is recuperating in a Galveston hospital from a virus-like malady that has yet to be identified. Side effects of the disease have caused extreme exhaustion and "neuro-physical" problems, the doctor said.

"We are sympathetic with the illness of public officials and we would not want to do anything that would cause harm while Mr. Coffey remains ill. But there is a public duty which transcends even these considerations," Phillips said in a report to commission members.

"IT (THE PUBLIC) did not vest in Mr. Coffey the power to designate another person to act as district attorney," Phillips said in reference to the apparent appointment by Coffey of his chief assistant, Jim Morgan, to head the office.

Phillips said that, as he understood the law, the governor is the "only one" who can appoint a district attorney pro tem, if the office of DA is vacant for any reason.

If Coffey does not return "certainly by June 1," then it would be time for the governor to appoint someone in his stead, Phillips told a reporter.

Phillips and commission board members stressed in several "findings of fact" that they were not attacking Coffey's integrity. They also said that they do not wish their statements to reflect negatively on DA staff members.

There "are no existing facts to justify" filing suit in district court for removal of Coffey, Phillips told board members.

COFFEY HAS said he will make the statement that the commission, an unofficial group, proposes. He also said he decided to make the statement regarding his future plans before the old commission officers made their recommendation.

New commission officers are: Edward A. Dietz, president; Roger C. Hunsaker, first vice president; James L. West, second vice president; John Barry Hubbard, treasurer, and Wirt M. Norris Jr., secretary.

Dr. Edward Guinn, retiring city councilman, will replace the late Raymond Buck on the 15-member board of directors.

In other commission activity, Sheriff Lon Evans told members that completion of county jail expansion is about "18 months away." Jail expansion is being financed by voter-approved general obligation bonds.

Benson Calls Trip Very Educational

County Auditor Jack Benson today called an expense-paid trip by IBM to California to view the firm's electronic data equipment "very educational."

Benson said, though, that it will be up to county commissioners—who were not invited on the trip—to ultimately make the decision on whether the expensive equipment should be purchased.

COMMISSIONER George "Skeet" Richardson charged this morning that Benson "is wasting his time and the taxpayer's money since the court has gone on record as saying that improving the county's space situation will get the top priority."

Richardson repeated today his belief that "Benson does not have the authority to make such trips." The auditor has also gone on an expense-paid trip to New York to view the same company's models.

The most recent trip, on which Benson and 10 other courthouse officials and employees went, was aimed at the judiciary and law enforcement, Benson said.

SHERIFF LON Evans and his chief deputy, Earl Brown, and Asst. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan and two others from the DA's office also went on the trip.

Evans said that the demonstration showed "that we could stop all the duplication among the records kept by our office and the district clerk's office and the judges."

He stressed, though, that "I

am not pushing this thing. It is being done in other big cities and some small ones and it might be good here."

District Judges J. E. "Dutch" Winters and Walter Jordan also made the trip, as did two representatives from the district clerk's office.

"I'VE GOT to see more," said Winters. "I am not ready to make any recommendations."

The county auditor, who has urged that the county buy its own electronic data equipment, said any recommendation for purchasing the IBM equipment will have to be made by Evans, the board of district judges—who hire Benson—and the district clerk's office.

DA to Stay in Post, Aides Told in Wire

By JOHN LUMPKIN Frank Coffey intends to remain district attorney of Tarrant County, his staff learned Thursday afternoon.

Announcement of Coffey's plans came in a tersely worded telegram to Jim Morgan, first assistant district attorney.

Morgan called a staff meeting about 3 p.m. and read the wire. He told a reporter that the announcement was greeted by "some cheers and applause."

The wire said: "Dear Jim, I have today been informed that I can expect complete recovery in the very near future. Therefore it is my intent to remain criminal district attorney of Tarrant County . . ."

MORGAN, WHOM Coffey named to act in his stead during Coffey's absence, said he could not interpret the meaning of the words, "very near future."

Nor could he say that he construed the wire to mean that Coffey will complete his four-year term that began Jan. 1. Other staff members said they believed he would.

Coffey is undergoing treatment in a Galveston hospital for what his doctor terms "extreme exhaustion," resulting in complications of a "neurophysical" nature.

The exhaustion stemmed from weathering out an attack of a virus-like disease which remains unidentified. The doctor said lack of identification is "not unusual" in such rare diseases.

WHILE COFFEY was in the Galveston hospital, newspaper stories quoted persons who felt that his unavailability in recent months and speculation about his possible retirement hindered the functioning of his office.

About the first of the year and prior to his being hospitalized, Coffey would not confirm retirement rumors. He

said at the time he planned to retire after certain programs were instituted in his office.

Reports from his office and from his doctor said Coffey has been staying either in a hospital here or in the Galveston hospital for most of 1971.

An unofficial citizens' group, Tarrant County Crime Commission, called for Coffey to make a public statement in regard to his intentions at a future date "consistent with his health."

MORGAN MET WITH commission officers in a closed session in March, to explain the situation.

He admitted to reporters that the office was experiencing some problems. He said, however, that the problems were expected long before Coffey became inactive because of the illness.

Late in March, Morgan said publicity surrounding the Coffey situation had caused a side benefit to the office. It encouraged staff members to increase their activity, he said.

Morgan did not go into detail after he released the telegram to reporters. "I think it speaks for itself," he said.

HE SAID HE hesitated to

"put words in Frank's mouth."

"I am very relieved," Morgan said of Coffey's announcement.

Persons commenting on Coffey in the newspaper stories always said they were not attacking Coffey's integrity. They would say that they felt Coffey's first term as DA was marked by effective prosecution and leadership.

After Coffey became DA in 1967, his political future was considered to be very bright. Associates of Coffey and Coffey himself said earlier this year that he eventually desires to return to private practice.

DURING COFFEY'S absence, several persons expressed an interest in Coffey's \$24,400-a-year job in the event of Coffey's retirement.

As late as Wednesday, Tarrant County Crime Commission members expressed concern that Coffey had not announced his intentions.

Coffey said shortly after the appearance of the first news stories that he planned to make a statement. He said he decided to make such a statement before the commission recommended him to do so.

Back on Job Soon, Coffey Wire Says

Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey ended months of speculation yesterday afternoon when he sent his chief assistant a telegram that read, ". . . it is my intent to remain criminal district attorney of Tarrant County."

Coffey, who has been hospitalized in Galveston for more than a month for treatment of neurological disorders, also said in the wire read to members of his staff and later to reporters that "I have today been informed that I can expect complete recovery in the very near future."

CHIEF ASST. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan, named acting DA by Coffey while he is absent, said there were cheers and applause when the telegram read to the staff members.

There had been indications that Coffey would step down from the office and probably return to private practice. Coffey began his second term Jan. 1.

He became ill shortly afterward and was hospitalized here. He was released for a short time later, then entered the Galveston hospital.

FOR SEVERAL days, the whereabouts of Coffey was not announced in order that the DA could get away from phone calls and visits that he

said plagued his stay in the hospital here.

Last week Coffey's doctor in Galveston said he could be released in three or four weeks.

Apparently, it will be sooner than that, although Morgan said he does not know what "in the very near future" means.

Had Coffey resigned, Gov. Preston Smith would have appointed his successor.

25 Precincts May Be Abolished--Cowen

At least 25 of the county's 172 voting precincts may be done away with, County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen said today.

Two of the four members of Commissioners Court, who were present at an informal meeting, agreed that small precincts within city limits are not necessary.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson added, though, that some of the small rural precincts will be kept as a convenience to voters living in the country.

Cowen said that all urban precincts will have at least 500 voters.

"IT'S A LOT easier to have an election for more than 3,000 voters than it is for a couple of hundred voters," Cowen observed.

The county clerk, whose office is responsible for the mechanics in operating the elections, said there are now three voting precincts in Tarrant County which have more than 3,000 registered voters.

He has urged that the maximum size of a precinct—now unofficially recognized as 3,000—be increased to 5,000. "With voting machines, we could easily handle 4,000 or 5,000-voter precincts," he said.

COWEN NOTED in suggesting that commissioners ultimately approve the changes that in several of the precincts, located in Fort Worth, a voter lives within three blocks of two different polling places for separate precincts.

Richardson said he feels that the years-old custom of having the small precincts goes back to when a voting precinct with 400 qualified voters "was a large one."

With the growth of Fort Worth and Tarrant County that no longer holds, and 400 is considered a small precinct by current standards.

Morgan is drawing up new voting precinct lines.

At the same time, county commissioners have begun looking at redistricting the four commissioners' boundaries.

Richardson estimated that there is as much as a 10,000 person difference in some of the precincts now.

Several years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court in a suit aimed at Midland but which affected virtually all Texas counties, ruled that commissioners' precincts must be as nearly equal in size as possible.

IN THE West Texas case, 97 per cent of the population lived in the city in one commissioner's precinct, while the other three per cent lived in the other three precincts.

Richardson said that the Hurst-Ealess-Bedford area

25 Vote Precincts May Be Abolished

Four years ago when the new commissioners' boundary lines were drawn, a committee—composed of the people who are now studying the voting precinct changes—recommended the modifications.

This year, it will be up to commissioners to redraw their own boundaries.

One of the unusual things that came out of the committee's changes was that the then-Precinct 1 Commission Bryan Henderson was cut out of his precinct, so the boundary had to be gerrymandered to keep him in the precinct in which he was running for reelection.

Henderson lost the race to Dick Andersen.

"is one of the biggest growth" regions in the county.

That is in Commissioner Dick Lewis' Precinct 3.

Richardson said also that his Precinct 4, located primarily on the county's North Side, is the slowest growing.

Both the redistricting projects, those involving voter precincts and commissioners' precincts, will be completed by early summer.

MORGAN NOTED that the last time any commissioners' redistricting was done "it was real drastic. This time it should not be so drastic."

Piecemeal Remodeling Of Courthouse Ordered

County commissioners today instructed the new director of the county's public works department to begin preparing plans for a piecemeal remodeling of the old county courthouse.

Improvements to the old building, if authorized, would be paid for from the county's general fund since voters here last Saturday voted down a \$1.6 million bond issue, most of which would have gone for the remodeling.

Commissioner Dick Andersen made the suggestion during an informal meeting of Commissioners Court this morning.

In other action relating to the bond issue, in which only

one of four propositions was approved, and in dealing with the problems of more space for offices and records, commissioners informally:

—Set April 30, tentatively, as the date to open bids on the remodeling of the old criminal courts building.

—Heard a proposal by Herschel Winn, chief counsel for Tandy Corp., that the county lease up to four floors in the downtown building from which Meacham's is being moved.

Winn offered commissioners, at what he said was a low rental rate, the option of leasing the fourth, fifth, sixth and eighth floors in the building at 5th and Houston.

Either offices or records could be kept in the facility, he suggested.

Commissioners took the proposal under advisement.

Y'brough to speak on May 5

Former U. S. Sen. Ralph Yarborough will be main speaker at Tarrant County Employees Day May 5.

County personnel director Jodie Colvard made the announcement today.

County employees will be honored at a 7:30 p.m. session in the Convention Center.

County employees who have been with the county five years or longer. Yarborough will present a pin to the longest employee in terms of service, county Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart.

Stewart has been associated with local county government since 1921.

"As far as I know this will be a first ever for Texas," Colvard said. He said the purpose of the program was to help bolster morale of county employees.

"Just counting employees and members of their families we should have 1000 people there," Colvard said. He added that he hoped a great many citizens would turn out for the program.

"I think the people of the county should see the employees who are working for them. Generally speaking, the salary scales for those employees aren't too high and it takes dedication to remain in county service," Colvard said.

RALPH YARBOROUGH, TEX., CHAIRMAN
 JENNINGS RANDOLPH, W. VA.
 HARRISON A. WILLIAMS, JR., N.J.
 CLAIRBORNE PELL, R.I.
 EDWARD M. KENNEDY, MASS.
 GAYLORD NELSON, WIS.
 WALTER F. MONDALE, MINN.
 THOMAS F. EARLETON, MD.
 ALAN CRANSTON, CALIF.
 HAROLD E. HUGHES, IOWA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

721 Brown Building
 Austin, Texas 78701
 April 2, 1971

M. Jodie Colvard
 Personnel Administrator
 Tarrant County Court House
 Fort Worth, Texas 76102

Dear Personnel Administrator:

This confirms our oral conversation of March 29 and your letter of March 30. I plan to be with you at the Awards Day Ceremony on Tarrant County Employees Day at the Convention Center, 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 5.

In keeping with your offer to assist, yes I have a request to make. Please confer with County Judge Green and advise me whether my talk should be five minutes, ten minutes, or fifteen minutes, in order to fit in properly with the entire program. It will be a pleasure and a privilege to participate in this program. And I consider it a high honor to have been invited.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Ralph W. Yarborough
 Ralph W. Yarborough
 721 Brown Building
 Austin, Texas 78701

RWY/pd

Saturday Morning, April 3, 1971

9-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

County Ponders Offer to Lease Space Downtown

Any improvements done in the bond election was a \$1.5 million proposition for county courthouse improvements. "county courthouse improvements," part of which will come from the county's general fund.

Commissioners have suggested that space could be leased to store records or expanded offices, since voters failed to approve a proposition in last week's bond election that would have financed construction of a \$5 million records building.

In other action at an informal session Friday, commissioners instructed the county public works department to submit plans for piecemeal remodeling of the courthouse. Also failing to gain approval.

EDITORIALS:

State Should Bear Judges' Pay Raise

It's always easy to spend the other fellow's money—and that is what the State Senate was proposing to do when it voted to raise the pay of civil and criminal district judges in Tarrant County by \$4,000 a year. In another burst of generosity, it also acquiesced in mandating the same pay raise for Dallas County's district judges.

And why not be generous? After all, the raise in the judges' pay is not going to cost the state anything. Assuming that the House goes along with the Senate action, it will be the taxpayers of Tarrant and Dallas counties who will pay—and without any choice. For the bill piloted through the Senate by Sen. Don Kennard of Tarrant County would raise the part of the judges' salaries paid by the county, not by the state.

That is what raises our hackles. If the Legislature, in its wisdom, thinks the pay of these officials ought to be raised, why does it not simply order an increase in the amount the state pays them? Why dictate that the local taxpayers must do it?

The judges are officials of the state. The state now pays those in this county \$20,000, but this is supplemented by a payment of \$8,000 a year

by the county. The latter is on the theory that the judges perform some services for the county, such as acting as members of the juvenile board. The workings of inflation and the increasing volume of litigation may justify a raise for the judges. But any increased burden upon them has to do almost entirely with state business, and it is our firm view that the cost of any deserved pay increase should be borne by the state.

In the last 10 years the state and county shares of the judges' pay have increased in about the same proportion—the state's from \$12,000 to \$20,000, the county's from \$4,900 to \$8,000. If the county is now forced to raise its payment to \$12,000, the local taxpayers will be bearing a disproportionate part of the cost of what is essentially a state service.

For inescapable new financial burdens to be imposed upon local governments by the Legislature is nothing new. It has been done time and again, but is an unwarranted interference with home rule. It is bad in principle and in practice. As we have said before, the Legislature often shows a blithe unconcern for the well-being of counties and cities over which it holds almost life-and-death powers.

DEMOCRATS

Officials To Eye Filing Fee

County Democratic Chairman Dr. J. D. Tomme has called a meeting for 4 p.m. today to discuss with county officials their suggestions on what the state should do about filing fees for political parties.

"We have several alternatives," Dr. Tomme said, "and I don't intend to make any suggestions. I just want to lay them (the alternatives) out and see what they (the officials) say."

A THREE-JUDGE federal court in Dallas ruled about four months ago that the state's filing fee requirement for primaries—in which candidates are assessed in order to have their names placed on the ballots—is unconstitutional.

The federal court did leave open a narrow avenue which Democrats and Republicans are exploring.

A "reasonable" filing fee may be assessed, the court held.

Filing fees in Tarrant County for county offices and for district attorney and judges are not reasonable, the court held.

HERE, candidates must pay 7 per cent of the full salary they would receive if elected.

For example, district judges who now make about \$28,000 per year had to pay more than \$8,000 in filing fees.

In the past, most incumbents have not objected to the filing fee, probably because it served as a deterrent to anyone running against them.

ALSO, MORE than half the fee is usually refunded after the elections because only the amount required to conduct the election is spent. The rest is returned to those who filed.

The attorney general has appealed the federal court decision to the United States Supreme Court.

"It does not look like we have any chance, though, of getting heard before the filing deadline next spring," Dr. Tomme said.

March 30, 1971

Mr. Ralph Yarborough
 721 Brown Building
 Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Yarborough:

I am writing to confirm our conversation of March 29th regarding your appearance at the Special Awards Day Ceremony for Tarrant County Employees.

Mr. Yarborough, the Commissioners' Court has proclaimed May 5, 1971 as Tarrant County Employees Day and we plan to have the awards ceremony at the Theatre in the Convention Center at 7:30 P. M. on May 5, 1971.

Our program is dedicated to all County Employees, with special recognition to those who have five or more years service with the County. This special recognition will be in the form of a service pin.

The program is to be very simple in order to keep a reasonable time schedule. We will have the Invocation, introduction of County Judge Green, each of the four County Commissioners, and then your speech. At the conclusion of your speech, I would like for you to kick-off the Award Ceremony by presenting a 30 year pin to Mr. Reed Stewart, who has been with the County the greatest number of years. I would also like to ask you to present a 20 year pin to Commissioner Dick Lewis, the only Commissioner who will receive a pin.

Mr. Yarborough, we are looking forward to your appearance on May 5, 7:30 P. M. and if we can do anything to assist you, please ask.

Sincerely,

Jodie Colvard
 Personnel Administrator

JG/j

TARRANT COUNTY
SPECIFICATIONS FOR PREPARING FLOOR AND INSTALLATION
OF NEW CARPET

SCOPE: The work to be done includes the furnishing of all labor, supervision, tools, materials, equipment, appliances and services necessary for and/or incident to the preparing of floor and installation of new carpet. This shall include proper adhesives, seams, cement, edge strips, carpet attachments, etc. Vendor to furnish all necessary materials, supervision, tools, etc., to install approximately yards of new carpet according to the following carpet specifications.

1. Pile yarn with;
 - a. 4 ply
 - b. Space dyed then plied
 - c. .234 pile height
 - d. Round cross section of fiber
 - e. 4900 denier (2450/2ply)
 - f. 8.0 rows per inch
 - g. 1/8 gauge
 - h. 32 ounces pile yarn weight per square yard
 - i. Antron III nylon
 - j. Static control 3.0 kilovolts as tested under AATCC-34
 - k. Density factor 4924
 - l. Weight density factor 157,536
2. Primary backing to be first quality polypropylene consisting of 4 ounces per square yard.
3. Secondary backing to be 28 oz. latex unitary, glued directly to the floor.

County Democrats Favor Filing Fee

A minority of the county's elected office holders have agreed to perpetuate, with slight modification, the state's Democratic party primary filing fee system.

At a meeting yesterday afternoon, called by the county's chairman of the party, Dr. J. D. Tomme, the dozen who attended the meeting said they will go along with the so-called "Luna plan."

STATE Democratic party officials are considering asking the Legislature to make it the law.

That plan was introduced by Earl Luna, a Dallas attorney who is chairman of the Democratic party in Dallas County.

It calls for the assessment of a filing fee of five per cent of the total salary of the office—only slightly below the 7 per cent charge assessed in Tarrant County during the primary races last spring.

A three-judge federal court ruled in December that the state's filing fees for primaries are unconstitutional. The decision is being appealed.

Under the Luna plan, candidates who say they can not afford the filing fee would have to sign an oath stating they were unable to pay.

THIS OATH would be reviewed by the county chairman, who in turn would either certify that the name could be placed on the ballot or would deny it.

In event the name was not placed on the ballot, the candidate could file a suit in district court seeking to have his name placed on the ballot without payment of the filing fee.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson who did not attend yesterday's meeting, said today that he is opposed to the Luna plan.

"Can you think of anything as stupid as a candidate for a public office having to sign a pauper's oath because he cannot afford to pay a high filing fee?" Richardson asked.

"As long as I have been running for public office I have known that if you put up a large filing fee you were going to get at least half of it back," he said.

County Auditor Jack Benson and County Judge Howard Green took a wait-and-see attitude Monday to pronouncements that commissioners could lower county taxes in July.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said earlier Monday that in July, the statutory time for establishing the 1972 tax rate, the rates could be lowered by at least 6 cents per \$100 valuation and maybe more.

Last year, commissioners raised the tax rate for the road and bridge fund from 2 cents to 8 cents per \$100 valuation.

"We can see now that there was no need to raise that tax," Andersen remarked.

Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis have made similar statements in the past.

Andersen went a step farther by saying the rates for the rights-of-way fund—now at 29 cents—and for the general fund—currently 80 cents—also could be lowered. He said he could not predict how much the reduction could be.

"Everybody would like to cut taxes," Green told a reporter.

unreasonable. Five per cent of the salary is certainly not reasonable."

Nearly 50 elected officials could have attended the meeting, not counting members of the local delegation of the legislature who will have to vote on the issue.

THOSE ATTENDING the meeting scoffed at the idea of a small filing fee.

"We'd have a ballot a mile long," said Dr. Tomme. "We'd be in serious trouble paying for the election."

He added that "what we have now is a barrel of snakes."

County Clerk W. R. "Red" Cowen said that the secretary of state has drawn up a proposed bill that he will ask the Legislature to pass.

That bill would set statutory filing fees to be paid for each public office with the money going to the state's general fund.

Cowen, as he does now, under that bill would still conduct the primary elections but then the state would reimburse the county.

At the time the federal court ruled against the filing fees, it stated that state officials could assess a reasonable fee.

Attorney A. L. Crouch, who led the fight against the filing

fees on behalf of perennial candidate Theodore Wischkaemper, said today he disagrees with the Luna plan.

"IT'S HARDLY better than what the court said was unconstitutional," he said. "It certainly isn't reasonable to expect a candidate to put up more than \$5,000 to run for district judge when you know in advance that he will get at least half of it back."

The filing fee system is designed strictly for the incumbent.

"As to what's reasonable, some state and federal courts have ruled that a fee of \$1 is

Green, Benson Wary Of Tax-Cutting Talk

County Auditor Jack Benson and County Judge Howard Green took a wait-and-see attitude Monday to pronouncements that commissioners could lower county taxes in July.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said earlier Monday that in July, the statutory time for establishing the 1972 tax rate, the rates could be lowered by at least 6 cents per \$100 valuation and maybe more.

Last year, commissioners raised the tax rate for the road and bridge fund from 2 cents to 8 cents per \$100 valuation.

"We can see now that there was no need to raise that tax," Andersen remarked.

Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis have made similar statements in the past.

Andersen went a step farther by saying the rates for the rights-of-way fund—now at 29 cents—and for the general fund—currently 80 cents—also could be lowered. He said he could not predict how much the reduction could be.

"Everybody would like to cut taxes," Green told a reporter.

BUT HE added: "To be realistic, I think we should wait until rate-setting time. We do have a space problem that has to be resolved and it will be resolved only through the expenditure of tax funds."

Green said that any consideration of lowering the tax rate "should come after we merge our funds wherever possible."

Green has long campaigned for merging the road and bridge fund, funds providing for precinct road work, with the general fund.

He said that a "serious effort" will be made later this year to gain approval of the

CLEAR AIR IN STOCK SCANDAL

Thorough Inquiry Advised by Ralph

AUSTIN (AP)—State officials named in a stock scandal would profit from a thorough investigation if they are innocent, former U.S. Sen. Ralph Yarborough said Sunday.

Yarborough answered reporters' queries on the weekly television and radio panel show "Capital Eye."

"I've had a personal experience with this," he said. "I was one time falsely accused of having received a large sum of money from Billie Sol Estes at the time he went bankrupt and was tried in federal court."

"The FBI sat in my office for days. The Senate had a committee, headed by Sen. John McClelland, to thoroughly investigate. The House had a committee, headed by Congressman Fountain of North Carolina. They found there wasn't a word of truth in it."

Yarborough said he is "seriously considering" running for

governor next year since the stock scandal has prompted support for him to do so.

The mail urging him to run for office is two or three to one in favor of a race for governor, but "it's too early to reach a decision," he said.

"I think it's very unfortunate that the Texas Legislature won't fully investigate (the scandal), because some of the people charged might be exonerated. It's a laughing matter over Texas—I say that not critically, but just as a matter of news, because I'm traveling around," Yarborough told reporters.

"Of course, I wasn't flattered to be investigated," he said. "But when I was falsely accused in the 1964 campaign of having taken the money, I was terribly happy that they had dug into everything and showed this was an absolute lie, because if people had believed it, I would have been defeated."

STATE STOCK SCANDAL IS CITED

Yarborough Eyeing Governor Race

AUSTIN (AP)—Former Sen. Ralph Yarborough, D-Tex., says a so-called stock scandal is causing him to think seriously about running for governor in 1972.

He added yesterday in a radio and television appearance that a thorough investigation of the quick-profit dealings alleged by the Securities and Exchange Commission would benefit state officials linked to the transactions, provided they are innocent.

Yarborough answered ques-

tions from newsmen on the weekly show "Capital Eye."

Concerning the state officials named in the stock deals, the former U.S. senator said:

"I've had a personal experience with this. I was one time falsely accused of having received a large sum of money from Billie Sol Estes at the time he went bankrupt and was tried in federal court."

"The FBI sat in my office for days. The Senate had a committee, headed by Sen. John McClelland, to thoroughly investigate. The House had a committee, headed by Congressman Fountain of North Carolina. They found there wasn't a word of truth in it."

Yarborough said mail urging him to run for office is two or three to one in favor of a race for governor.

"I think it's very unfortunate that the Texas Legislature won't fully investigate (the scandal), because some of the people charged might be exonerated," he said.

Hotel, Motel Tax On Rooms Asked

By JOHN LUMPKIN

County Commissioner Dick Andersen proposed a county occupancy tax—possibly three per cent—on motel and hotel rooms Friday.

Andersen told other commissioners that revenue from the tax would finance a county-operated convention bureau whose main function would attract business for the Tarrant County Convention Center.

"We could make it one, two or three per cent," he said.

Other commissioners expressed reservations about the legality of such a move. They said they should first ask the district attorney's office for a legal opinion.

ANDERSEN said that counties can establish an occupancy tax, as long as the money is earmarked for a convention bureau.

Told of Andersen's proposal, an official of the Tarrant County Hotel and Motel Association said he would "resist a thing like this."

Association vice president Robert Hardwick noted that hotel and motel occupants already pay a three per cent state room tax.

He also said that some area hotels and motels pay a one per cent levy to the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce's convention and visitors fund committee on a voluntary basis.

"FRANKLY, I feel the set-up with the Chamber is just fine," commented Hardwick, general manager of the Sheraton-Fort Worth. "I have hardly ever seen a more productive operation than the one here," he said.

"If it (the proposed tax) were three per cent, then the persons coming in would have to pay a total of six per cent... if we tax too high, that is something to take under consideration," he said.

"The business is not that good here yet. We should want to attract business, rather than detract it," he said.

He added, however, that his bookings show that the Chamber of Commerce operation is becoming more successful.

About 20 hotels and motels participate in the Chamber fund, said Mrs. Jo Ann McBride, secretary to hotel and motel association president Neal Hoppers.

ANDERSEN said the tax could generate as much as \$300,000 annually. He suggested that the county could use the \$41,000 it appropriates annually to the chamber's convention and visitors fund for operation of its own bureau.

He said that other areas which compete with Tarrant County for conventions have bureaus financed by occupancy taxes.

"I'm trying to get this thing off the homeowners here," he contended.

"We spent \$20 million building this thing and we said we would make a go of it," he said.

Andersen said he felt promotions by a county-operated bureau could put the convention center in a position to make a profit. The center has shown a deficit in its first three years of operation, but the deficit is declining.

Hardwick warned that a county occupancy tax would necessitate his hotel—and probably others—to withdraw from the Chamber's voluntary program.

He said that voluntary participants from Arlington have begun to leave the program because of the two per cent occupancy tax preliminarily approved there.

Andersen said he has learned from Fort Worth city officials that the city cannot lend any promotional support to the convention center. "So, we're just going to have to do something ourselves," he said.

Richardson Given OK On Resurfacing of Road

County commissioners Monday gave Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson permission to resurface a road leading to Camp Carter.

He told them the camp is a charitable, nonprofit organization.

Richardson said that commissioners have adopted guidelines concerning free work done for private organizations. One of the guidelines is to obtain approval from other members of the court.

In other action, County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen



WORK AHEAD—New County Criminal Court No. 3 Judge Don Burdette checks through cases that are a part of the backlog pending in the court.

Burdette Veteran Of Tough Chores

By JOHN LUMPKIN

If the frying pan for Asst. Dist. Atty. Don Burdette was the lengthy and difficult Sunday closing law proceedings, then County Criminal Court No. 3 could be the fire.

Burdette, 43, will be sworn in Tuesday morning to be judge of the misdemeanor court, replacing the late Marvin Simpson. County Criminal Court No. 2 Judge J. C. Duval will administer the oath.

County Criminal Court No. 3 has exclusive jurisdiction in appeals from courts not of record—that is, municipal and peace justice courts. Its operation in the past has come under attack from city councils and city officials.

IT IS INVOLVED in legislation this session in Austin.

County Commissioners Monday morning appointed Burdette to the \$20,800-a-year post. Their vote was unanimous, but almost until the time they voted, the appointment caused considerable behind-the-scenes maneuvering and open verbal conflict.

Burdette was not a party to the controversy. Apparently a

JEST A MINUTE

What is it about getting hitched that makes a woman think she's got to nag?

The Texas Supreme Court recently upheld a temporary Turn to Hard Work on Page 2

Coffey, Out of Hospital, Returns to Office Here

By JOHN LUMPKIN

Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey returned to his Old Criminal Courts Building office briefly Thursday afternoon for the first time in two months.

Coffey was released about 10:30 a.m. from St. Mary's Hospital in Galveston where he had been a patient during his absence. Doctors there said he has recovered from a neurological ailment.

He took a commercial flight to this area and then went immediately to his office.

DURING COFFEY'S absence, speculation about his resigning his \$24,400-a-year post arose. Last week, Coffey said in a telegram from Galveston that he intended to remain district attorney.

Also during the absence, Coffey came under attack from sources quoted in news articles and from an unofficial citizens' group, the Tarrant County Crime Commission.

Coffey declined to comment on the criticism Thursday night.

He said he has been told by doctors to be "kind of on a convalescent basis" at first, while he reassumes office responsibilities. He was admitted to St. Mary's Feb. 22.

gan has become a candidate for another job, that of judge of County Criminal Court No. 3.

"I personally think Jim would make an outstanding judge on any bench. And there is a great challenge on this bench," said Coffey. The court primarily handles appeals from corporation courts.

Coffey said he "hates to lose" Morgan, if Morgan is named by Commissioners' Court Monday over a number of other candidates. Morgan came in the DA's office in 1967, the first year of Coffey's administration.

"But the need of the county is such that it goes toward that bench instead of our office," Coffey remarked.

HE SAID HE WAS "enthusiastic" about the possibility of federal grants to assist his office, especially in the area of computerization of cases.

Morgan and several county officials early last week toured IBM facilities in California and were given explanations about federally assisted computer programs for law enforcement.

Coffey said he intends to work for the programs in the next few weeks.

"I'm also real proud of the bond election, too," he said.

County voters March 27 approved the sale of bonds for remodeling the Old Criminal Courts Building so that Coffey's staff and records could be under one roof.

Coffey once told reporters that he did not want to leave the position of district attorney until better provisions for the DA's staff were made.

Relaxed Coffey, in His Office, Tells Officials He Will Remain

Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey, acting relaxed and looking well, today assured other elected officials here that he will remain in his post.

Coffey, who has been ill most of the year, was released from a Galveston hospital yesterday morning and returned to Fort Worth.

For about an hour yesterday, Coffey was in his office. He returned this morning, and one of his first items of business was to visit briefly with county commissioners before they held an informal meeting.

COFFEY told reporters that he was with his doctor to work on a convalescent basis.

Coffey said he was surprised that news of his release from the hospital at 10:30 a.m. yesterday beat him to Fort Worth.

"I caught a commercial flight from Galveston and touched down at Love Field about 12:30," Coffey said.

On the way from Dallas to

Fort Worth, I heard on the radio that I had been released."

AT THAT, Coffey smiled and added, "I guess you'll have to find something else to write about now."

Coffey probably was thinking about—but did not say—that his illness has probably been the most publicized of elected in Tarrant County, ever elected in Tarrant County.

He scoffed at rumors now circulating that his chief assistant, Jim Morgan, is seeking the appointment as a County Criminal Court judge because Coffey will immediately resign.

"THAT COULDN'T be farther from the truth," he said.

"Jim is a competent attorney who would make a good judge... That court needs to be straightened out and Jim could do it."

Coffey said he is proud of the job that the attorneys in his office have done during his absence for treatment of a neurological ailment.

Officer Relieved Of Criticism of Drive

Army has re-occupied a key role in the defense of Fire Base 6 in the Central Highlands, which had been under siege for more than two weeks.

These informants said Miller, a 25-year Army veteran who was an infantry officer in the Korean war and is now on his second tour in Vietnam, was relieved primarily for two reasons:

—He told an American Broadcasting Co. correspondent during the siege of Fire Base 6 that the allied operation against North Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh Trail supply network in southern Laos apparently was a failure. He said it had failed to meet its objectives of destroying Hanoi's supply distribution base. Miller said the North Vietnamese were proving this by sustained combat at Fire Base 6, which is about 14 miles from the tri-border region of Laos, Cambodia and South Vietnam.

—A television crew to film helicopter dropping napalm on positions around Fire Base 6 was in his own helicopter.

Criminal Court Judge Here Dies at Age 55

County Criminal Court Judge Marvin B. Simpson Jr., 55, whose public service career here spanned three decades, died today after a month's illness.

Simpson was a former county judge, peace officer, state legislator, corporation court judge and Birdville school board member. He died about 7 a.m. today in a hospital.

ALSO AMONG his principal interests as county judge were countywide sewerage and waste disposal systems. He also helped start a pension program for county workers.

Simpson won the Democratic nomination for county judge in July 1958. In August

of that year, then County Judge Gus Brown resigned and Commissioners Court named Simpson—who was scheduled to start his own elective term Jan. 1, 1959—as county judge.

Assumption of the county

Turn to Judge on Page 2



MARVIN B. SIMPSON JR.



MARVIN B. SIMPSON JR.

U.S. Force in Vietnam at Lowest in 4 Years: 296,500

SAIGON (AP)— American troop strength in South Vietnam has dropped below 300,000 for the first time in more than 4½ years, the U.S. Command announced today, and a field commander disclosed new tactics to compensate for the further cutback of American forces.

A weekly summary said a total of 296,500 American servicemen were in Vietnam last Thursday, a drop of 5,400 during the week. The total included 223,100 Army, 40,500 Air Force, 18,000 Marines, 14,800 Navy and 100 Coast Guard.

THIS WAS the smallest force since Aug. 13, 1966, when a total of 296,000 American troops were in the country. United States strength reached a maximum of 543,500 in April 1969.

President Nixon has ordered the American force reduced to 284,000 by the end of this month, and he announced last week that another 100,000 would be withdrawn by Dec. 1.

Lt. Gen. Michael S. Davis, commander of the U.S.

of about 7,500 U.S. combat troops will remain after May 1 in his area, Saigon and the 11 surrounding provinces.

THESE TROOPS, he said, "will form a highly mobile and powerful reaction force capable of moving anywhere, anytime at a moment's notice to counter any enemy threat and supplement our Vietnamese allies."

"We will continue to provide training, logistical and air mobile support to the Vietnamese," he added.

Meanwhile, North Vietnamese troops shot down an American helicopter 90 miles south of Da Nang yesterday then ambushed an infantry force trying to reach the survivors. The U.S. Command said 11 Americans were killed

and eight were wounded.

ENEMY LOSSES were not known.

"The helicopter must have been on a visual reconnaissance mission, took ground fire and went down," said a United States spokesman. "Ground troops were sent in on a search-and-rescue mission, and the enemy apparently headed the same way for the helicopter."

Perhaps 100 to 150 men from the 11th Brigade of the Americal Division were in the rescue force.

The North Vietnamese lying in the jungled hills ripped into the lead column with rocket grenades and small arms fire. U.S. helicopter gunships, fighter-bombers and artillery broke up the attack.

THE U.S. Command said one helicopter crewman was killed and two others were wounded in the crash, while 10 American infantrymen were killed and six were wounded in the ambush.

Three other U.S. aircraft were shot down Sunday while supporting South Vietnamese

Funeral Wednesday For Judge Simpson

Funeral services for County Criminal Court Judge Marvin B. Simpson Jr., long active in state and county government, will be at 1 p.m. Wednesday at First Christian Church.

Place of burial will be announced later.

Simpson, who was named judge of County Criminal Court No. 3 after the death of Judge R. Wright Armstrong Jr. in January 1967, died about 6:45 a.m. Monday in a Fort Worth hospital.

He had been ill about a month.

County Judge Howard Green said county commissioners agreed Monday afternoon to close the courthouse from noon to 2 p.m. Wednesday for Simpson's funeral.

Green, who defeated Simpson in the Democratic primary in the spring of 1966, called for a moment of silent prayer at the beginning of the weekly meeting of Commissioners Court Monday morning.

Simpson, whose public service covered three decades, had been Tarrant County judge for eight years when defeated in the primary.

DURING THAT period, voters approved \$16.5 million in bonds for the Tarrant County Convention Center and Turnpike Stadium and it was during Simpson's tenure that most of the construction was done.

He considered the bond vote and the center construction as perhaps his most important accomplishment as county judge.

Simpson, contending the center was necessary for the area to compete for convention business with other Texas cities, campaigned vigorously over his county officials and community leaders for approval of the bonds.

With the campaign's success, Simpson traveled with county officials, architects and others around the country to study convention center and stadium construction to incorporate the best features into the facilities here.

"One of the biggest things ever to happen in Tarrant

County—the convention center—is something you had a lot to do with," then County Auditor J. M. "Star" Williams told Simpson as he presided over Commissioners Court for the last time.

SIMPSON ALSO took pride that he helped from a loosely knit group of municipal officials to solve common problems.

He also was interested in countywide sewerage and waste disposal systems and helped start a pension program for county workers.

Simpson, 55, of 3133 Gerome in Richland Hills, was a Fort Worth native who had lived here most of his life.

He graduated from North Dallas High School and attended TCU and the University of Texas at Austin before graduating from the law school of Cumberland University in Tennessee about 1936.

Simpson opened a law practice here and was elected to the first of three terms in the Texas Legislature in 1941.

During World War II, he served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Maritime Service.

After twice campaigning unsuccessfully for district attorney and seeking appointment, again without success, as judge of County Criminal Court and the new probate court, Simpson won the Democratic nomination for county judge in July 1958.

Then County Judge Gus Brown resigned in August and commissioners named Simpson to take the post before his own elective term began Jan. 1, 1959.

In January 1967, after being defeated by Green, Simpson re-entered private law practice.

But R. Wright Armstrong Jr., judge of County Criminal Court No. 3, died a few days later and commissioners chose Simpson to replace him after Simpson finished first in a Fort Worth-Tarrant County Bar Association preferential poll.

ARLINGTON Mayor Tom Vandergriff, when Simpson ended his service as county judge, wrote a letter to then Gov. John Connally suggesting that Simpson be appointed an administrative assistant to advise Connally of problems encountered by county government.

But Simpson was appointed to the criminal judgeship before action was taken on the suggestion.

He also had served as a corporation court judge and as a Birdville school board member.

Simpson, considered a Democratic party loyalist and active in various civic organizations, was named worthy grand patron of the state Order of Eastern Star in the mid-1960s.

He was the first area man in some three decades to achieve the top-ranking male position of OES.

Simpson is survived by his wife; a son, Marvin B. Simpson III of Norman, Okla.; two daughters, Mrs. Herbert Allred and Mrs. Jimmie Shannon, both of Fort Worth, and four grandchildren.

The family requests that expressions of sympathy be made in the form of contributions to the American Cancer Society or the American Heart Association.

Judge Choice May Be Based On Interviews

Some county commissioners indicated Sunday night the new judge of County Criminal Court No. 3 would come from several candidates interviewed during a closed-door session at the courthouse Friday.

However, of the commissioners contacted—Dick Andersen, George "Skeet" Richardson and Jerry Mebus—only Andersen would voice support of a particular candidate.

In fact, Mebus said commissioners agreed Friday not to do any public speculating about who would succeed the late Marvin B. Simpson Jr.

Mebus and Richardson commented the new judge would come from the group interviewed Friday.

When asked if this left out County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan, who was not invited to the session, Richardson said, "I would think so, yes."

MEBUS SAID he was "not at liberty to say."

Andersen, an early Morgan supporter, said the assistant district attorney was not interviewed Friday because commissioners had spoken with him informally about the job earlier.

He added that he was still committed to Morgan and would nominate him if he discovered during an informal session before the regular public court meeting Monday that the nomination would be seconded.

"I didn't have it (the second) when I left Friday," Andersen added. He said he had no other commitments.

Richardson said he had made no firm decision on whom to vote for and did not plan to nominate anyone.

"There are some candidates whom I prefer," he said, "but I have no commitments."

HE SAID that the fact commissioners plan to talk over the appointment before the Commissioners Court meeting "shows commissioners can work together and discuss things."

Mebus said he has made up his mind for whom he will vote, but left open the question of whether he will make a nomination.

Commissioner Dick Lewis could not be contacted for comment.

Commissioners noted that they had extracted a pledge

from all the candidates that, if selected, they would clean up the backlog of cases, reportedly some 30,000, and change the operating procedure.



NEW JUDGE — Don Burdette, left, was sworn in this morning as judge of County Criminal Court No. 3. Among those present for the ceremony — at which Burdette was presented a new gavel — were his wife; defense attorney Ron Quilan, center, and Sheriff Lon Evans.

Candidate Interviews Dim Morgan Chances

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan's chances for being named judge of County Criminal Court No. 3 grew slimmer Friday as county commissioners interviewed 13 other candidates for the post.

Commissioners apparently came to the courthouse Friday morning unaware that they would spend nearly 6½ hours in a closed session discussing the controversial nomination.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus had invited Douglas Duke, a young Arlington attorney, to come to Commissioners Court to meet other commissioners. There is some speculation Mebus may nominate Duke.

MEBUS SAID Friday afternoon he still remains uncommitted in the race to fill the vacancy caused by Judge Marvin Simpson's death Monday.

Several other candidates appeared, after they heard commissioners were considering a suggestion by Mebus to interview candidates.

Commissioners then instructed a secretary to call still other persons who have expressed an interest in the \$20,800-a-year job.

The session Friday—attended by all four commissioners, but not by County Judge Howard Green—was a sharp contrast to the charges hurled back and forth among court members earlier this week.

GREEN SAID he remains committed to Morgan, who is Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey's chief aide.

Commissioner Dick Andersen told a reporter after the session that Morgan "still has my commitment, but it doesn't mean much." He said that he did not feel Morgan has the necessary majority of the courts' votes.

Andersen said he does not plan to nominate Morgan. "What's the use of bringing his name up now?" Andersen said. Andersen was understood to be for Morgan earlier this week, but has been away from the courthouse with a virus.

This means that Morgan, who apparently had an inside track for the job earlier in the week, probably will not be nominated Monday. Green has no authority to make a nomination, but the county judge in Tarrant County traditionally has not initiated motions or nominations.

MORGAN HAS expressed vexation at the nature of the

criticism hurled at his candidacy.

Neither Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson or Commissioner Dick Lewis, both of whom remain against Morgan, would say after the interviews whom they favor. "We'll just have to wait until Monday," said Richardson.

"I got to admire Jerry on this (the interview proposal). It was a great idea. It shows we're moving out of the political end of it and into getting a qualified man for the job," said Richardson.

Commissioners said political party membership was not expressly introduced into the discussions with the candidates, although all or at least nearly all, are Democrats. Richardson and Lewis said earlier in the week that they were hesitant to approve Morgan because he is a Republican.

"This was a real eye opener for me," said Richardson of the interviews. He said he

was told County Criminal Court No. 3, which handles primarily traffic appeals, has a backlog of 30,000 cases.

"We aren't going to be for a man who plans to just work four or five hours a day," he said.

"I'm delighted with the selection we have," said Andersen.

Those who were interviewed include former County Criminal Court No. 2 Acting Judge Hal McConnell, Fort Worth Corporation Court Judge Joe Drago, Asst. Dist. Atty. George McManus and Don Burdette and attorneys Jake Cook, Glen Hausenfluck, Grady Hight, Marshall Hines of Arlington, Leo Ferris, Dennis Morrow of Hurst and Claude Latson.

WINDOW WASH

See-Through Coming Back

You may not have noticed it. They've been dirty so long. But windows in the Civil Courts Building and the Old Court-house are being washed.

It boggles the mind. They've been virtually opaque for years.

Bids for cleaning them were taken about four years ago but were thrown out because all were considered too high.

County custodians said then that the windows themselves were too high and they could not wash them.

So they were left dirty.

Early this year, county commissioner Jerry Mebus said "something has got to be done" about the dirty windows.

So now courthouse custodians are washing them periodically after they finish their regular cleaning assignments.

"We've been doing it for a while now," said Earl Careathers. "We're doing it as we get time."

You may not have noticed it—they've been dirty so long, you probably haven't looked at them.

And you have to look close, at that, to see a clean one yet.

'Era of Harmony' Shatters on Squabbles Over Judgeship

By Z. JOE THORNTON

IT WILL be Monday before a successor is named to County Criminal Court No. 3 Judge Marvin B. Simpson Jr., who was buried yesterday afternoon.

But it will be long after that before the dust and smoke being raised over who commissioners court should appoint clears.

And the ensuing squabble, with its charges and countercharges, has shown that the loudly proclaimed "golden era of harmony" at the courthouse has turned out to be pyrite (fool's gold), after all.

What the fight is all about, purely and simply, is politics. It's been brewing since Simpson, who died Monday morning, was first admitted to a Fort Worth hospital.

NO SOONER had he been admitted when rumors began circulating around the courthouse that his illness was terminal.

Several persons interested in the job began hinting to their friends and openly told commissioners court they were interested in the job should it become vacant.

They—those who asked for the job—now are being criticized for doing that.

Perhaps, morally, it is wrong. But it is part of the political system that dominates the courthouse, that pervades its every nook and cranny and spreads over all its workers from the lowest-paid janitor to the highest-paid elected officials.

COMMISSIONER George "Skeet" Richardson, who is now critical of Asst. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan for having asked for the job several weeks ago, perhaps forgets that he did the same three years ago during the lengthy illness of then Commissioner Rosco Minton.

Richardson, though, did not make his pitch to county commissioners.

He went instead to the Democratic precinct chairmen several months before Minton died and was assured they would vote for him.

Then, after County Judge Howard Green appointed (now Judge) Gordon Gray to briefly fill the spot pending a meeting of the chairmen, Richardson got the right to have his name placed on the Commissioners Precinct 4 ballot.

He was elected in November to a four-year term.

YESTERDAY Richardson told reporters that hours after Simpson's death Green "was trying to get us to appoint a successor before Marvin Simpson was buried."

"Then he (Green) called for a moment of silent prayer during the (commissioners court) meeting. I think that was hypocritical."

Of Richardson's charges, (and similar ones by Commis-

sioner Dick Lewis) that Green tried to get their support for Morgan hours after Simpson died, Green this morning issued a terse statement which read:

"The accusers know the details and untruth of their statements and probably deeply regret making them. Unfortunately, such statements do reflect on our democratic process, but our nation did survive the McCarthy era."

Green said his response is aimed at the statements made by the two commissioners, not at them personally.

THE NAMES of several other persons are also being mentioned as possible appointees to the judgeship that pays \$20,800 per year and which deals almost exclusively with cases appealed from municipal courts.

They include former Public Defender Glenn Hausenfluck, who reportedly has the backing of several of the influential district court judges, Asst. Dist. Atty. George McManus, Grapevine attorney Dave Austin, Clyde Thomas, Earl Morgan of Hurst, Douglas Duke of Ar-



—Star-Telegram Photo DON BURDETTE

Assistant DA Named Judge

By Z. JOE THORNTON

DON BURDETTE, one of the chief assistants in the district attorney's office, today was unanimously named judge of County Criminal Court No. 3. Commissioners Court members, who reached their decision in a brief meeting before the formal vote, praised the

43-year-old Richland Hills resident.

AS RECENTLY as Friday, when commissioners interviewed 16 prospective candidates for the post to succeed Marvin B. Simpson Jr., Burdette was not one of those being mentioned as front runners.

County Judge Howard Green, who had something to do this morning with Burdette's selection, did not attend the Friday interview session.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus, who proposed the interviews, praised Burdette saying, "I think we have selected a very good man for the job."

COMMISSIONER Dick Lewis, in whose precinct Burdette lives, moved that Burdette be named to the \$20,800 per year judgeship.

After Mebus seconded the motion, Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said that "we looked for someone who would put in a good week in court."

Richardson said that Burdette often works 50 to 70 hours per week in the DA's office, where he has filled a number of jobs since he started there in November 1966.

ONE OF THOSE jobs was as the attorney in the county court, who is responsible primarily for handling cases appealed from municipal courts.

In an interview with report-

Commissioners Meet With Candidates for Criminal Court Judge

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County commissioners meeting behind closed doors this morning interviewed several of the attorneys who have expressed an interest in being appointed judge of County Criminal Court No. 3. The interviews were informal and apparently only one of the four men questioned was invited.

A SPOKESMAN for Commissioners Court said no formal invitations were extended.

ed, "they just came up here."

Yesterday, Commissioner Jerry Mebus proposed that commissioners meet with any of the half dozen or so who have said they would like to be appointed to the \$20,800 per year job as successor to Marvin B. Simpson Jr., who died Monday.

Commissioners Court will make the appointment Monday, ending what has been the largest amount of courthouse in-fighting of the year.

ALL FOUR county commissioners began meeting with the applicants shortly before 10 a.m.

County Judge Howard Green was conspicuously absent as the routine weekly informal meeting of the court began, only to be recessed in order to go behind the closed doors.

Yesterday afternoon, Green refused to comment on Mebus' suggestion that they talk to judge hopefuls today.

"I've made up my mind who I'm going to vote for," Green said.

"I HAVE said all along that I am for (Asst. Dist. Atty.) Jim Morgan."

Douglas Duke from Arlington was the first to be questioned this morning.

Mebus, who is also from Arlington, had remained non-committal during the week about whom he will vote for. It was learned this morning that Mebus Monday will nominate Duke, whom he invited to appear, for the post.

IF MEBUS does appoint Duke, it will almost mean that a compromise candidate will have to be selected.

Mebus' vote has been considered as the pivotal one since Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis are opposed to Morgan while Green says he and Commissioner Dick Andersen are supporting Morgan.

Besides Duke, attorneys Marshall Hines, Clyde Thomas and Leo Ferris also

showed up for the questioning.

Most of the lawyers, however, who have asked that they be considered for the appointment did not show up for the questioning, probably because they were not invited and did not know that the interviews were to be conducted.

ALL FOUR commissioners said they have received "many" phone calls and letters from attorneys advising them that they are qualified and willing to serve.

The president of the Fort Worth-Tarrant County Bar Association confirmed today that Green turned down a proposal that the bar hold a preferential poll to determine the attorneys' choice for judge of the court that primarily handles appeals from municipal courts.

David Belew, who made the offer that was rejected by Green, noted that both Simpson and his predecessor, Wright Armstrong Jr., who also died in office, were appointed after bar polls.

AFTER ARMSTRONG died more than four years ago, the court was without a judge for more than two weeks prior to Simpson's appointment.

Green and apparently Mebus, however, attempted unsuccessfully last Monday to make the appointment prior to their next regular meeting Monday.

Prior to the meeting and only minutes after Simpson died, Green notified commissioners of the death and urged that Morgan be given the job.

At the conclusion of the otherwise routine meeting, Mebus moved that it be recessed rather than adjourned.

COMMISSIONER George "Skeet" Richardson, who is leading the opposition to Morgan's appointment on the ground that he is a Republican, blocked the recessing motion and the meeting was adjourned.

Had the meeting been recessed, instead, Commissioners Court could have been reconvened at any time during the week.

Others who have expressed an interest in the appointment are Grady Hight, also of Arlington; Earl Morgan of Hurst; Joe Drago III, corporation court judge in Fort Worth; Dave Austin of Grapevine; Glenn Hausenfluck, and

George McManus.

BEFORE commissioners began their interviews this morning, Mebus said he does not expect any recommendation to be made.

"We just wanted to meet as many of these people as we could."

benefits early in the session in defiance of Nixon's wishes.

He had asked for a 6-percent boost included in the welfare bill to help win passage of his reform proposals.

BUT THE Democrats instead tacked it onto a measure he had to have immediately—a \$35-billion increase in the national debt limit. It was quickly signed into law.

Democrats also moved swiftly against unemployment.

They pushed through the Senate a \$1.75-billion bill designed to provide at least 150,000 public-service jobs this year. Early House action has been promised.



NICE DAY—Spring put on day, with pleasant temper; a clear sky. It was a fit

CUT IN COUNTY TAX PLEA OF ANDERSEN

6-Cent Reduction Forecast

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County Commissioner Dick Andersen today said he believes county taxes can be lowered as much as 6 cents and probably more.

"If we sharpen up our operation we can cut taxes quite a bit in July," Andersen said in an interview after the regular Commissioners Court meeting.

"I KNOW THAT the other commissioners are interested in saving money and I'm sure that the rest of the county officials are too."

Commissioners Court each July sets the county tax rate for the following year.

And Andersen said he feels certain that commissioners will vote to lower by 6 cents the county's road and bridge tax that last year was raised by that amount.

"We can see now that there was no need to raise that tax," he said.

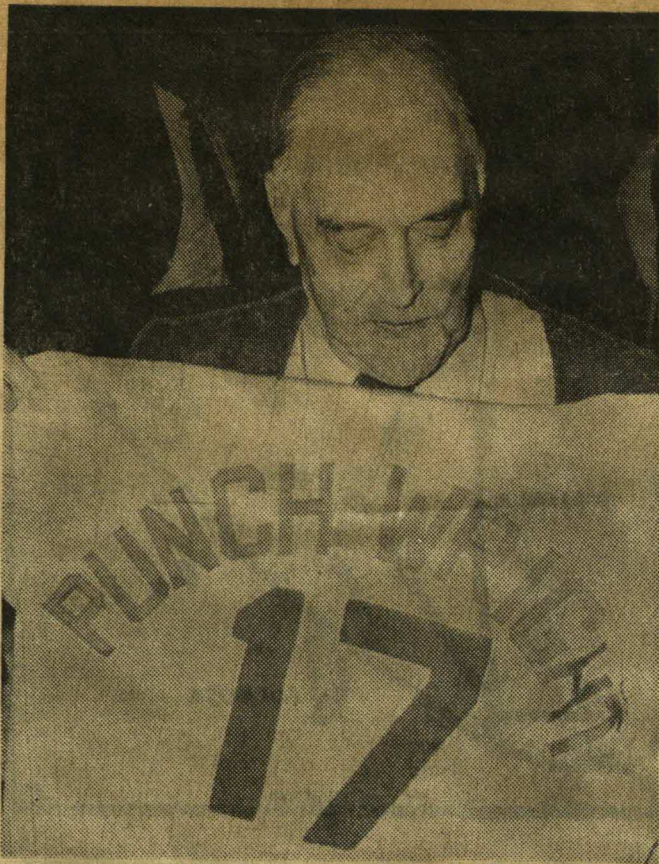
"I VOTED against it then and I will vote against it again."

In addition to raising the road and bridge fund 6 cents—to the present 8 cents per \$100 valuation rate—commissioners also voted to raise by 5 cents the county's right-of-way tax. It is now 29 cents per \$100 valuation.

Commissioners Dick Lewis and George "Skeet" Richardson have also said they believe the tax rate can be lowered.

Andersen said he also feels that the county's general fund tax, which now stands at 82

Turn to Andersen on Page 2



—Star-Telegram Photo

NEW CLOTHES—Arlington honored a native son, retired County Commissioner C. H. "Punch" Wright, 77, Saturday night at dedication ceremonies of a park named in his honor and during high jinks at a dinner attended by nearly 100 friends.

ARLINGTON — A happy place named for a most happy fellow was dedicated here Saturday.

The place is C. H. "Punch" Wright Park, a wooded area surrounding Turnpike Stadium off Copeland Road, just south of the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike.

The most happy fellow, C. H. "Punch" Wright, 77, who retired Jan. 1 after 20 years as County Commissioner of Precinct 2, matched wits Saturday with Arlington Mayor Tom J. Vandergriff who dedicated the park.

"THIS PARK includes the stadium, which has been impressively enlarged and improved, and the Seven Seas, which is going to be one of the most exciting and happiest of all places," said Vandergriff.

"Appropriately it is being named to honor this, a most happy fellow, who served with great leadership served Arlington and Tarrant County.

DIES, COWEN AT ODDS

Drink Ballot Due, but Who'll Vote?

Confusion surrounds the liquor-by-the-drink bill and who will be able to vote in the local option election May 18.

County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen believes that registered voters living in an area that makes up nearly two-thirds of Tarrant County should be allowed to vote.

Secretary of State Martin Dies Jr. says differently.

IN A LETTER sent to county clerks in all the counties

where liquor can be sold in part or all of the county, Dies said, "your county will hold a local option election for the sale of mixed beverages in the area or areas that now permit the sale of all alcoholic beverages . . ."

The one word "all" in Dies' letter is what he and Cowen differ on. Cowen, a former legislator, contends that the Senate bill which authorized the liquor-by-the-drink referendum does not specify areas

where all alcoholic beverages are legalized.

ROUGHLY only residents of Fort Worth will be able to vote in the election under Dies interpretation.

If Cowen's reasoning is followed, then residents of Arlington and several other suburban cities in which beer or wine now is sold could also vote.

County Judge Howard Green said this morning that commissioners will formally

call the election for May 18 — the same day voters throughout Texas will cast ballots on four proposed constitutional amendments.

GREEN AND Cowen have asked County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan to prepare a brief on who should be allowed to vote.

Absentee voting will begin here Tuesday, one day after commissioners formally call the election.

FW Asks Lewis' Aid on Street Job

Fort Worth officials have asked Commissioner Dick Lewis for assistance in patching and resurfacing Beach Street from Springdale to Broadway.

In that area Beach serves as a boundary line between Fort Worth and Haltom City.

JACK GRAHAM, public works director of Fort Worth, told Lewis in a letter that neither city has the money now to fix the heavily traveled street.

Lewis said today that "I'll do everything I can to help them."

Graham's letter noted that funds of both cities "have been depleted" because of higher than anticipated right-of-way costs on other street and highway projects.

It also noted that Haltom City officials have spent all the bond money voters allocated for street repairs several years ago and that there are no plans for another bond election.

THE LETTER said, too, that Fort Worth's bond funds which were approved for expenditure last year by voters are tied up in litigation in a federal court lawsuit.

The request for assistance in a Fort Worth project is unusual in that city officials have not often asked county commissioners for help.

Commissioners, traditionally, have aided the smaller cities in the county but for the most part have left Fort Worth alone.

In recent years, commissioners have volunteered assistance which has been met with mixed reaction.

CITY OFFICIALS did not object when the county gave \$50,000 to construct a scenic road through Fort Worth's Trinity Park.

There was some foot-dragging on their part when Commissioner Dick Andersen volunteered to pave a stretch of Hulen Street that links Loop 820 with Old Granbury Road.

And Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson was told he could not pave streets in a residential area on the North Side because residents living on other streets in the area had to pay a city assessment for having their streets surfaced.

What irked Richardson at the time was that he had earlier been allowed to pave an area around a meat packing plant that was within two blocks of where he wanted to pave the residential streets.

"THEIR (FORT Worth officials) policy is not very consistent," Richardson said today.

"I, too, intend to help them all I can but I think that we should get together and see what we can and can't do.

"I don't mean to be critical because I think we can work together."

Richardson and Lewis agreed that Tarrant County commissioners might follow their counterparts in Dallas County on a project in which each commissioner takes responsibility for a certain number of thoroughfares that link Dallas with its suburbs.

"THEY VOTED A \$99 million bond issue over there for that," Richardson said. "We don't need a bond issue for it, but I think we ought to look into the possibility of it."

Both commissioners said

they are looking into a joint effort in which they will split costs of acquiring right-of-way for extending Rufe Snow Drive in North Richland Hills from where it dead ends at Hightower Road to Bursey Road.

The extension would be for a little more than a mile and would cut off about five miles drive for persons who have to make a detour to get to the neighboring cities of Richland Hills and North Richland Hills.

NEWS-TRIBUNE

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Heading the list is Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, who started work at the courthouse in 1921 as a field man for Tax Assessor Lee Freeman.

Next to Stewart, whose service spans 45 years, is Lee Bourland, assistant head of the Public Works Department, with 40 years.

COUNTY PERSONNEL Director Jodie Colvard said 443 employees are eligible to receive the pins, which will be awarded for five, ten, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years service.

The ceremony — to which the public is invited — is the first of its kind in Tarrant County and is believed to be the first of its kind in Texas. Each gold pin has a diamond for every five years of service.

Ex-Senator Ralph Yarborough will be principal speaker. Yarborough himself is a longtime public official.

Continued on Page 2



Haltom Studies Glass Tanks For Gasoline

A request to permit installation of fiberglass underground gasoline storage tanks in Haltom City was to be considered by the City Council tonight (Thursday).

The fiberglass tanks, now prohibited by city ordinance, have been approved by several safety organizations. Fire Chief Bill Davis is recommending that they be permitted in Haltom City.

Non-leaded gasoline tanks of fiberglass material are being used in other cities.

es Bogusayers Pay

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to be paid to the district clerk's s unencumbered balance. The as for a counterfeit \$20 bill that

only takes cash from lawyers, ens who pay for a records check. and checked and couldn't find said he did not learn of the k in which the district clerk's m that they were deducting the

one." Boorman promised. "We as they walk out (after paying in)." passed about a week before that a rash of counterfeit \$20

county clerk. If his (Wood's) opinion If Arlington residents are al- lowed to vote.

Wood's opinion that the re- sults could be thrown out. If Arlington residents are al- lowed to vote.

GREEN ALSO CHALLENGED W. C. "Red" Cowen's ruling. "We are of the opinion that he lives in wet precincts," he said.

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Also William Roberts, James Careathers, Willie Mae Lowe, Laura Whit, James Greener, Eloise Johnson, W. W. Matthews, Gordon Gray, Grady Drennan, J. J. Sturch, H. V. McCombs, Charles English, Alfred Reynolds, John Pemsell, Evert Carter, Mary Lou Gardner, Eva Barnes, Juanita Gonzales.

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ALSO VIRGINIA BASS, De- lores Hogans, Beulah White, Betty Alexander, Amelia Coleman, D. W. McMillan, Amos Sellers, Gladys Yung, Marjorie Westmoreland, Billy June Klapper, Earl Thomp- son, Cecil Alexander, Betty Cobb, Abraham Medford, Ernest Knight, Carl Roberts, Joseph May, Lee Adley, Paul Reed, J. W. Wilson, Jack Eaton and J. B. Bell. Also Bruce Lee, W. H. Wool-

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ABSENTEES CAST

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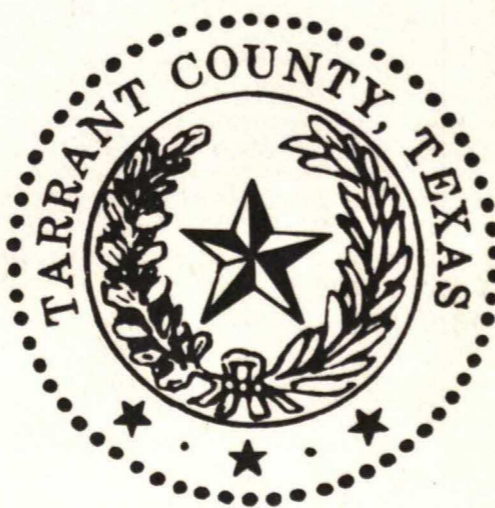
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Graves was unavailable for comment Friday, but a secretary in his office said he had indicated that a person would be hired in the near future.

TARRANT COUNTY



SPECIAL AWARD DAY CEREMONY MAY 5, 1971

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- COMMISSIONERS:
- PRECINCT 1 R. T. (DICK) ANDERSON
- PRECINCT 2 R. L. JERRY MEBUS
- PRECINCT 3 R. F. DICK LEWIS
- PRECINCT 4 GEO. SKEET RICHARDSON
- SPEAKER RALPH YARBOROUGH

Drink Vote Stirs Issue In Tarrant

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Also Bobby Blackwell, Claude Beard, Lloyd Tillery, George Weatherly, William Sanders, Clara Barnes, Jess Bower, M. V. Johnston, Glynn Penn, Ruby Reed, A. L. Ansley, John L. Graham, William Woodward, William Cheek, Madrin Huffman, Ansel Greer, Wilfred Kearney, Alfred Gloff, Earl Foster, David Strather, William Hastings, Morgan Vaught, Jack Ray, Ruby Milliken and Orville Raymond, Jr.

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Randall Wood, director of elections in the secretary of state's office, said in Austin Saturday that "some legal problem" could be created by the commissioners' decisions.

* * *

COMMISSIONERS have announced they will call elections on the mixed drink proposal in all county precincts where any alcoholic beverage is now sold — which includes beer, wine and liquor.

Therein lies the controversy.

Secretary of State Martin Dies Jr. has stated that elections will only be lawful where all alcoholic beverages are sold legally.

One of the areas in question is Arlington. Fort Worth and some small areas outside the city allow all alcoholic beverage sales. Arlington allows only the sale of beer.

* * *

WOOD INDICATED that if Arlington is allowed to vote in the May 18 election and the result is decided by a narrow margin, there could be grounds for a contested election, on the basis that persons who were not entitled to participate influenced the outcome.

However, Green called the secretary of state's opinion a "dry opinion." We don't want either a wet opinion or a dry opinion, only a legal opinion."

"The county legal advisor (Asst. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan) has read the law and I

Turn to Drink on Page 2

Drink Vote Stirs Issue In Tarrant

Continued From Page 1

have read the law and we both are under the opinion that the intent of the state legislature is to permit everyone the right to vote on this who lives in wet precincts," he said.

"We are of the opinion that a wet precinct is any precinct where any alcoholic beverage is sold — and beer is certainly an alcoholic beverage under the statutes."

* * *

GREEN ALSO challenged Wood's opinion that the results could be thrown out if Arlington residents are allowed to vote.

"If his (Wood's) opinion holds, then I can see how the Arlington election could be invalidated. But I don't see how it would affect the remainder of the precincts in Tarrant County," he said.

Meanwhile, State Sen. Joe Christie of El Paso, sponsor of the liquor - by - the - drink amendment to the constitution and of the legislation signed into law Wednesday by Gov. Preston Smith, said the final determination on who can vote rests with the local county clerk.

Tarrant County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen goes along with commissioners. Christie said he feels sure Cowen's ruling would stand up against any challenge.

* * *

WOOD SAID THE secretary of state made his interpretation after checking with legislators as to the intent of the mixed beverage statute.

The legislators said there was never any intent for the May 18 election to allow mixed drinks in any area where liquor may not now be sold, Wood said.

The director of elections also noted that there are five other counties in the state in which beer only is sold and that "we have no indication that any of the counties will try to hold mixed drink elections in beer only areas."

Dallas County Commissioners voted Thursday to allow the mixed drink election in only one peace justice precinct — and only in part of that precinct.

Under their interpretation, only justice precincts which now allow the sale of all alcoholic beverages can participate in the election.

Precinct 1 in Dallas County was originally all wet, but when the rambling precinct annexed more territory in 1969, that portion remained dry. The dry boxes in that county — roughly half the qualified voters — will not be allowed to vote May 18.

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NEWS-TRIBUNE

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Vol. 3, No. 44

April 29, 1971

5 Cents per Copy, \$2 per Year

County to Honor Employees

443 Veterans In Spotlight on Awards Day

Tarrant County will turn the spotlight Wednesday on the men and women who serve the taxpayers faithfully year after year.

Veteran county employees will be honored with gold service pins at a special awards ceremony at 7:30 p.m. May 5 at the Convention Center.

Heading the list is Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, who started work at the courthouse in 1921 as a field man for Tax Assessor Lee Freeman.

Next to Stewart, whose service spans 45 years, is Lee Bourland, assistant head of the Public Works Department, with 40 years.

COUNTY PERSONNEL Director Jodie Colvard said 443 employees are eligible to receive the pins, which will be awarded for five, ten, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years service.

The ceremony—to which the public is invited—is the first of its kind in Tarrant County and is believed to be the first of its kind in Texas. Each gold pin has a diamond for every five years of service.

Ex-Senator Ralph Yarborough will be principal speaker. Yarborough himself is a longtime public

Continued on Page 2



Haltom Studies Glass Tanks For Gasoline

A request to permit installation of fiberglass underground gasoline storage tanks in Haltom City was to be considered by the City Council tonight (Thursday).

The fiberglass tanks, now prohibited by city ordinance, have been approved by several safety organizations. Fire Chief Bill Davis is recommending that they be permitted in Haltom City.

Officials Will Decide Drink Vote

Related Story on Page 6A

Tarrant County Commissioners will decide Monday who will be allowed to vote in the May 18 liquor-by-the-drink election, but what they decide could be invalidated by officials in Austin.

County Judge Howard Green said Saturday, "We want to follow the law. All we want to do is give the people of this county a fair crack at what they have already voted on and what the legislature voted (into law)."

Clerk Takes Bogus Bill; Taxpayers Pay

Someone got to District Clerk Jim Boorman's office for \$20 and now the taxpayers are taking care of it.

County commissioners were handed the routine various claims this morning, which they will authorize Monday for disbursement from county fund.

One claim listed is for \$20 to be paid to the district clerk's budget from the general fund's unencumbered balance. The payment to Boorman's office was for a counterfeit \$20 bill that appeared a month ago.

Boorman explained that he only takes cash from lawyers, real estate men and those citizens who pay for a records check.

"We checked and checked and checked and couldn't find out who did it," he said. He said he did not learn of the counterfeit deal until the bank in which the district clerk's revenue is deposited notified him that they were deducting the \$20.

"There won't be another one," Boorman promised. "We watch them now, and as soon as they walk out (after paying fees), any \$20 gets close scrutiny."

Boorman said the bill was passed about a week before articles in newspapers revealed that a rash of counterfeit \$20 bills had appeared in the area.

JUNE April 29, 1971

First County Awards Set

Continued from Page 2

Aubrey Hurley, J. E. Blessing, Edna Carson, Georgia Clark, and Lillian Clary.

Also Edith Cahill, Bruno Pietrowski, Clyde Sprowl, A. T. Finley, Amour Stewart, Charles Wright, Mary Cross, J. W. Bradley, G. W. Stewart, M. W. Sessom, W. C. Myers, J. J. Richardson, B. C. Dunlap, Weldon Hollers, Ida Busby, Alner Pulliam, Mayme Corly, Mynah Dupree, Anita Hatfield, Lydia Goughly, Jean Giles, Margaret Keating, Joyce Thompson, Eva Jordan and Patricia Wells.

Also Louise Holley, Ruth Little, M. F. Nelson, H. R. Golden, John Brady, Rufus Adcock, Ann Martin, the late Marvin Simpson, Tony Crabtree, B. B. Lee, J. A. Carpenter, Dallas Pope, Effie Mae Traugh, Melba Raley, Carl Ramsey, Ivan Stine, Vivian Slaughter, Maxine Smith, Henry Justice, Hazel Klapper, Bessie Fulton, Genevieve Barnes, Francis Beene, Amy Sadler and Bobby Cloyd.

Also William Roberts, James Careathers, Willie Mae Lowe, Laura Whit, James Greener, Eloise Johnson, W. W. Matthews, Gordon Gray, Grady Drennan, J. J. Sturch, H. V. McCombs, Charles English, Alfred Reynolds, John Pemsell, Evert Carter, Mary Lou Gardner, Eva Barnes, Juanita Gonzales,

White, Billy Pyles, Bob Ashmore, Lenora Wilson, Preston Sheffield, J. E. Winters, Byron Matthews, Charles Lindsay, Louis Owens, Ethel Tillery, Wade Chapman, Joel Clifton, Claudia Chapman, Preston Spauldin, Mary Beckman, Velma Dunlap, Laura Kirkland, Helen Norwood, Everett Skelton, Patricia Whiteside, LaVonne Bowman, Eric Hill and J. T. Maroney.

Also Morris Shepherd, Cleo Pierce, Queen Ester Cole, Azelia Scarborough, Kenneth Bailey, Earl Edwards, Claude Caldwell, James L. Johnson, Betty Mae Wesley, Benjamin Stevens, A. C. Yeager, Henry Shaw, A. W. Daniels, Vicente Aguilar, Robert Williams, Guadalupe Coronada, Hazel Harris, Neva Cooper, Fred Pattillo, Floyd Norris, Dell DeHay and N. V. Wilshire.

ALSO IRENE ARMSTRONG, Ruth Garrett, Sidney Levenson, Edgar Samuel, Ruby Lee Smith, L. C. Shankles, Andrew Fournier, Karl Howard, Ruby Jones, Elsie Rehr, James Brady, Paul Ford, Odie Tallant, Mavis Mitchell, Varney Ludington, Carl Hearne, Frank Hardisty, Harold Evans, Orpha Jo Cato, James McCain, Dora Shaw, Richard Hill, Anna Lee Massey, Vincent Quintero and Joe Chapman.

Also Bruce Lee, W. H. Wool-

ridge, Weldon Faris, Charles Bussey, H. M. Cates, John Miller, Jack White, George Hutchison, Lawrence Lambeth, Curtis Ballard, William Morrow, Virgil Roberson, Thomas Walden, Johnnie Gober, Alfred A. Lewis, Wayne Hitt, Earl Brown, Virginia Bigley, Verne Ellis, Donald Thompson, Jack Whitley, Ewell Humphrey and Lynn Fisher.

Also Hazel Backwell, Edith McCormick, Dorothy Wrinkles, John Forbes, Travis Sheffield, Charles Murray, Scott Moore, Walter Jordan, Mamie Oppie, Olive Caddell, Mary Baggett, Morris Howeth, Earl Bogard, H. Butler, Cordia Havron, Norma Bushager, Anna Jo Glass, Betty Jo Love, Ruth Shaw and Rachael Tuggle.

ALSO IRENE ARMSTRONG, Ruth Garrett, Sidney Levenson, Edgar Samuel, Ruby Lee Smith, L. C. Shankles, Andrew Fournier, Karl Howard, Ruby Jones, Elsie Rehr, James Brady, Paul Ford, Odie Tallant, Mavis Mitchell, Varney Ludington, Carl Hearne, Frank Hardisty, Harold Evans, Orpha Jo Cato, James McCain, Dora Shaw, Richard Hill, Anna Lee Massey, Vincent Quintero and Joe Chapman.

Also Val Rodgers, Dorothy Latham, Jerry Wood, LaVance Hunter, James Seaberry, Ruben Reese, Glen Denny, Clytee Maddux, Louise Ball, Ila Stewart, Roscoe Turner, Cecil Knox, Charles High, James Killian, Warren Strawderman, Eldon Pitts, Jacob Cordinas, Jerry Worsham and Harmon George.

Also Bobby Blackwell, Claude Beard, Lloyd Tillery, George Westherly, William Sanders, Clara Barnes, Jess Bower, M. V. Johnston, Glynn Penn, Ruby Reed, A. L. Ansley, John L. Graham, William Woodward, William Cheek, Madrin Huffman, Ansel Greer, Wilfred Kearney, Alfred Gloff, Earl Foster, David Strather, William Hastings, Morgan Vaught, Jack Ray, Ruby Milliken and Orville Raymond, Jr.

ABSENTEES CAST

Drink Vote Lure To County Voters

(Related Story: 5B)

Early indications are that the local option mixed beverage vote will draw persons to the polls May 18 who might not have bothered otherwise.

On the ballot in all areas of the county are four state constitutional amendments. Also appearing on ballots in approximately two-thirds of the county is the mixed beverage proposition.

Voters in five of the county's eight peace justice precincts can decide whether they want the sale of cocktails in their area.

At the end of the third day of absentee balloting at the courthouse Friday only one person from a dry JP precinct had cast an absentee ballot.

All other 67 persons who voted are from wet areas and the mixed beverage proposition was on the ballots that they used.

"We're running a little ahead of the normal schedule on absentees," said County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen. He indicated that the mixed beverage proposition was the cause.

Cowen said there still is no change in the election set-up in which voters in the dry cities of White Settlement, Saginaw and Benbrook will not be permitted to cast ballots in the local option mixed beverage elections in their otherwise wet JP precincts.

Dallas County Commissioners voted Thursday to allow all voters in JP Precinct 1 there to cast mixed beverage ballots, even though some live in dry areas, such as Preston Hollow and University Park.

Cowen said he had received no new word from any agency in Austin concerning how the

Plant Post Watered; No Sprout

County commissioners in December agreed to pay a \$5,000 portion of the annual salary of a county ornamental horticulturist, but the Texas Agricultural Extension Service has not hired one.

Horticulturist programs already are under way in Austin, Dallas and San Antonio. The extension service, part of Texas A&M, supplements salaries in addition to recruiting for the position.

Associate extension director Dr. D. C. Pfannstiel, reached by phone in College Station, said Friday that several months' time for recruitment is not unusual.

"We feel that as a part of this dynamic program, a poor man would be worse than no man," he said.

Pfannstiel said the horticulturist would work primarily with persons dealing in the lawn and garden products and greenhouse business. He would provide up-to-date information for these persons so that they could pass the information along to gardeners and homeowners.

County agricultural agents, whose primary duties are for farming, "have been inundated with requests" from homeowners and commercial ornamental plant growers for help, Pfannstiel said.

The horticulture program is designed to eliminate this burden, he said.

The county horticulturist here would work in County Agent Gene Graves' office. Some commissioners were unaware that they had approved the program.

Graves was unavailable for comment Friday, but a secretary in his office said he had indicated that a person would be hired in the near future.

TARRANT COUNTY



SPECIAL AWARD DAY CEREMONY MAY 5, 1971

- COUNTY JUDGE HOWARD L. GREEN
- COMMISSIONERS:
- PRECINCT 1 R. T. (DICK) ANDERSON
- PRECINCT 2 R. L. JERRY MEBUS
- PRECINCT 3 R. F. DICK LEWIS
- PRECINCT 4 GEO. SKEET RICHARDSON
- SPEAKER RALPH YARBOROUGH

TARRANT COUNTY



SPECIAL AWARD DAY **CEREMONY** **MAY 5, 1971**

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COMMISSIONERS:
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PRECINCT 4 GEO. SKEET RICHARDSON
SPEAKER RALPH YARBOROUGH

PROGRAM

INVOCATION..... REV. MELVIN LIVESAY
 INTRODUCTION..... HOWARD GREEN
 AWARDS..... DEPT. HEADS
 INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER..... HOWARD GREEN

15 YEARS

Collier, Reed Martin, Hazel Kirtley, Juanita Dillow, Robert Owens, Faye McLean, John Bright, Martha Reynolds, Jesse Harlan, J. C. Rutland, W. O. Hodges, O. D. Anderton, Nolan Rohr, Morris Hampton, William C. Spurgeon, W. M. Knowles, Janet Cooper, Opal Walker, Lottie	Courtner, O. L. Pool, N. H. Bayless, Lillian LaMontague, Charlene Craik, Harold Reid, Ray Rhine, Luther Kemp, William Godfrey, H. G. Weddle, Bryant Jones, W. A. Fowler, Lee Partain, R. E. Avary, Irene Pettigrew, Christine Caine, Ouida Rawson, Dorothy Brown, Jessie O.	Alexander, Wayman Johnson, Ida Hawes, John Boorman, J. W. Carr, Julia Griffith, Edna Daniels, Isaac Monasco, John Truitt, Thomas Winn, G. P. Mathney, S. L. Gillespie, E. P. Vaughan, Thomas Lane, Floyd Boyd, Sylvia Wheeler, William Locker, Minnie	Young, Juanita Hudson, Grace Emery, Alvin Hurley, Ann Wally, Edgar Roberts, Carroll Hill, Lawrence Rhodes, V. J. Lipscomb, K. Sparger, Cletis Sparks, R. B. Stephens, A. H. Miller, W. B. Houston, Dorothy Yeatherman, Mary Jewett, Ivey Garretson, Stell
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30 YEARS

Bell, Evelyn Hampton, William Jones, Cherry B. Sanders, S. H. Winfrey, Charles	Bourland, Lee Holden, C. E. Lloyd, Haynie Bell Stewart, Reed Wright, Elizabeth	Champeaux, Steve Hunderup, Mary Martin, Ed Tankersly, Velma	Gurley, W. B. James, Faye Bell Owens, Jim Throop, L. B.
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10 YEARS

Crabtree, Wallace Lee, R. E. Capps, Betty Johns, Horace Fitzgerald, Charlsie Clark, Dorothea Corley, Sarah Duvall, Jessie Shepherd, Marie Seiber, John Ratliff, C. H. Wiser, M. O. Hart, Floyd Evans, Lon Witthaus, John Dawson, Cecil Pressley, Ruth Graves, M. E. Gentry, Katherine Polk, Myrtle Hurley, Aubrey Blessing, J. E. Carson, Edna Clark, Georgia Clary, Lillian	Cahill, Edith Pietrowski, Bruno Sprowl, Clyde Finley, A. T. Stewart, Amour Wright, Charles Cross, Mary Bradley, J. W. Stewart, G. W. Sessom, M. W. Myers, W. C. Richardson, J. J. Dunlap, B. C. Hollers, Weldon Busby, Ida Pulliam, Almer Corly, Mayme Dupree, Mynah Hatfield, Anita Golightly, Lydia Giles, Jean Keating, Margaret Thompson, Joyce Jordan, Eva Wells, Patricia	Holley, Louise Little, Ruth Nelson, M. F. Golden, H. R. Brady, John Adcock, Rufus Martin, Ann Simpson, Marvin Crabtree, Tony Lee, B. B. Carpenter, J. A. Pope, Dallas Traugh, Effie Mae Raley, Melba Ramsey, Carl Stine, Ivan Slaughter, Vivian Smith, Maxine Justice, Henry Klapper, Hazel Fulton, Bessie Barnes, Genelle Beene, Francis Sadler, Amy Cloyd, Bobby	Roberts, William Careathers, James Lowe, Willie Mae Whitt, Laura Greener, James Johnson, Eloise Matthews, W. W. Gray, Gordon Drennan, Grady Sturch, J. J. McCombs, H. V. English, Charles Reynolds, Alfred Pensell, John Carter, Evert Gardner, Mary Lou Barnes, Eva Gonzalez, Juanita Maroney, Lorea Rawls, Homer Lee (Mrs.) Corley, Sarah Ruth Bateler, Margaret Buncik, Virginia McDaniel, Edna Corthay, W. A.
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25 YEARS

Clifton, Drew Hutsell, Marcus Tuck, W. J.	Franklin, Sammy Jasper, Euola Wilson, W. W.	Guyton, Frances Nash, R. C.	Harrell, Jessie Sloan, Mildred
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20 YEARS

Auerbach, Norman Couch, L. L. Dickson, Dorothy Groce, J. C. Johnson, Curtis Lopp, Mary Frances Pearson, Nell Ross, Lynn Wolfe, W. N.	Barnett, Owen Creecy, George Faris, Estelee Henry, Lee Krause, Ernest Martin, W. H. Pulliam Howard Stallard, Frances Yates, Mary	Bowers, Clarice Crow, Minnie Green, Claude Higgins, C. A. Lewis, Ralph McIntosh, Winnie Reynolds, Jareece Stewart, W. O. Young, W. M.	Chatman, Eula Daniel, Herman Glover, Maurine Hodges, J. A. Lewis, Richard Meissner, Mack M. Rose, A. B. Stoker, Forrest
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5 YEARS

Loftin, Ed Tracy, Martha Davis, Helen Cowen, W. C. Walton, Marie Alexander, Henry	Willingham, William Mackin, Melba McManus, George Rhoden, Dolouris Levitan, Peggy Wideman, Alice	Craig, Walter Parten, Robert Kerr, Wyatt Norris, Floyd Hardin, Lillian Dawson, Donna	Haire, T. J., Jr. Feaster, Connie Shaw, Lois Knapp, William Allen, Frank Danford, Mary
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OVERTIME LUCRATIVE

County Employee Outearning Boss

By JOHN LUMPKIN

A county building engineer is under a unique arrangement whereby he receives almost double his base salary because of huge amounts of overtime.

The engineer, Jacob M. "Jake" Cardenas, made \$11,204.60 in 1970 from a job in which he performs "semi-skilled work in the maintenance and repair of county buildings and associated equipment," according to the county employee's manual.

Cardenas' base pay for 1970, figured on a 40-hour week, was \$6,132. During the first four months of 1971, he received \$2,168 in base pay and \$1,675 in overtime, making his total pay average almost \$1,000 monthly.

COUNTY OFFICIALS said Tuesday no other county employee is able to work such hours. They could not recall any employee in the past, including the one Cardenas replaced, having such an arrangement.

Commissioner Dick Andersen appointed Cardenas to the job in January 1969 and Commissioners Court routinely approved the appointment, since the job was traditionally filled by the commissioner of the precinct Andersen represents.

Prior to that time, Cardenas was a county criminal court bailiff.

Andersen said Cardenas, who makes much more than his departmental superiors, is a longtime personal friend. He said he appointed Cardenas to the job "because he wanted to learn a trade."

ANDERSEN denied Cardenas' appointment was a result of political patronage. He said he had no direct knowledge of Cardenas working for his election in 1968, but added that he assumed Cardenas did.

Commissioner Dick Lewis said he became aware of Cardenas' overtime situation about a week ago. He said he had heard the situation "was political."

Andersen said he learned of Cardenas' arrangement around the first of the year. County payroll records reflect

that the arrangement began in July 1969.

"If that's news, you must be hard up. This must be a slow news day," Andersen told a reporter when he was questioned about the situation.

He blamed building engineers' supervisor Grady Bratcher for the situation. Bratcher said he "has left it up to" an intermediate supervisor to approve Cardenas' overtime. Bratcher has been in his job since January.

LEWIS SAID Andersen has been "trying to fire Bratcher" and wants Cardenas to have the job. Bratcher receives no overtime, but earns \$7,356 annually in regular pay.

Bratcher said Cardenas is supposed to work from 1 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily. "I never did get down there to follow him around to see if he's there," said Bratcher.

Bratcher signs an oath affixed to the bottom of each time slip that he forwards to the auditor. The oaths says the employee has worked the number of hours shown on the time slip.

Bratcher and Andersen said the engineer's duties are to turn on the heating or the air conditioning in the Civil Courts Building at 1 a.m. so that the building will be sufficiently heated or cooled by the time employees arrive.

"I DON'T know who else would work those crazy hours," said Andersen.

Lewis suggested that either another man be hired or that Cardenas work from 1 a.m. to 9 a.m. for an 8-hour shift. Andersen said he wanted to do "what is most economical."

Andersen said after he makes such appointments, he depends on the department head — in this case, Bratcher — to report to him. "I don't go snooping down in the basement all the time, although I turn to Setup on Page 2

JEST A MINUTE

Short skirts may make women look shorter, but they make men look longer.

Setup Puts Man's Pay Above Boss

(Continued From Page 1)

have a couple of times in the past," remarked Andersen.

County Judge Howard Green said he "was surprised and shocked" at the engineer's overtime situation, which for the first two weeks in January amounted to 4½ hours per day for 10 regular working days and 7 hours on a Saturday.

LEWIS SAID he would check further into the situation. He added that he did not think the situation "is fair" to other county employees.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson, asked about the situation, said that Bratcher should not be blamed.

"To pass the buck is not fair. We all feel that he is not to blame, maybe with the exception of one of us," Richardson said, referring to Andersen.

"If IT'S anybody's fault, it is the Commissioners Court—myself included. We all know about it for some time."

"Something doesn't go on for a year and us not know about it," Richardson said.

He noted that commissioners approved the salaries and overtime of their employees.

He said that both former county personnel director Job Hammond and present personnel director Jodie Colvard had "called it to my attention."

Drink Vote Due in All Wet Areas

Commissioners Court today formally and unanimously voted to allow all qualified, registered voters who live in areas where beer, wine and/or liquor is sold to cast ballots in the liquor by the drink election May 18.

They took the action after Asst. Dist. Atty. Rufus Adcock told them that the Senate bill providing for the election is worded to include all places where alcoholic beverages are sold, and not just where liquor is now sold.

TODAY'S ACTION taken by commissioners differs sharply from that in Dallas County, where only persons living in areas where liquor is sold in package stores will be allowed to vote.

Secretary of State Martin Dies Jr. also contends that the mixed drink bill was only to be voted on in places where all alcoholic beverages — and not just beer or wine — are sold.

The call for the election means that nearly three-fourths of all the qualified voters in Tarrant County will be eligible.

Persons living in all but five of the voting precincts within Fort Worth's city limits will be allowed to vote.

ALL RESIDENTS of Peace Justice Precinct 2, which includes the Arlington area, also will be able to vote on the measure.

Residents of Peace Justice Precinct 3, the Hurst-Euless-Bedford area, as well as residents of the Peace Justice No. 4 precinct area — Haslet, Keller and Watauga — will not be able to vote because those precincts are now dry.

Residents of Peace Justice Precinct 5, around Eagle Mountain Lake, can vote as can the residents of all but four voting precincts in Peace Justice Precinct 6, part of which is in Fort Worth.

Peace Justice Precinct 7, in the Crowley area, is wet for beer and voters there will be able to vote, but in Peace Justice Precinct 8, Mansfield and Kennedale, it is dry, and those residents may not vote.

COUNTY CLERK W. C. "Red" Cowen said that commissioners' action means that if the liquor by the drink election carried here that mixed drinks can legally be sold even though in some of those areas — such as in Arlington — liquor by the bottle could still not be sold.

Cowen had urged commissioners during the weekend to permit persons who live in areas where any alcoholic beverage is sold to vote.

County Judge Howard Green, before today's vote was taken, asked Adcock whether he had briefed the Senate bill.

ADCOCK, ACTING as the county's legal adviser in the absence of Jim Morgan, said that the two-part section dealing with the election could be said to be ambiguous.

He added, though, there is

no dispute on what the last portion of the section says.

It reads that commissioners shall print a ballot "in each area now wet for alcoholic beverages."

Earlier in that section, there is wording to the effect that the election be held only for persons — otherwise qualified to vote — who live in areas where liquor is legally sold.

COMMISSIONER Dick Andersen moved that the liquor vote be offered to all areas where beer or wine is sold as well as to areas where liquor is also sold.

Cowen said he and his clerks are closely checking to make sure that voters in dry precincts will not be allowed to vote.

Don't hold breath over tax decrease

County Commissioner George (Skeet) Richardson today warned taxpayers not to get their hopes up over a possible county tax decrease.

Speaking at the regular session of Commissioners Court, Richardson said the rising costs of county government could preclude a tax reduction even though the county stands to save more than \$2 million as a result of the state tax bill.

That bill, which adds an extra two cents per gallon to the current gasoline tax, would render the county's right-of-way fund obsolete.

The extra two cents would be used by the state to purchase right-of-way for state roads. Currently, the state and counties purchase right-of-way for state roads on a 50-50 basis.

Here, the right-of-way tax amounts to 29 cents for each \$100 valuation.

"That looks good on the surface, but it has to be looked into a little bit more," Richardson said.

Last week, County Judge Howard Green had termed a tax reduction an "apparent certainty."

Richardson cited high depart-

mental expenses as one reason for refusing to say without study that taxes could be lowered.

"If I were up for election next year I might also say taxes could be lowered," Richardson said.

"But I think it is misleading the public to say we can lower taxes without first studying the situation," he said.

Commissioners Court will meet in July to set the 1972 tax rate.

Hospital Board Gets Mixed Bag of News

Tarrant County hospital board got some good news and some bad news Tuesday.

The good news is that Peter Smith Hospital is in surprisingly good financial shape.

The bad news is that it will

not receive any federal Hill-Burton funds to help with its construction program.

REPORTS AND comments made at the board meeting indicate that both the hospital's urgent financial crisis and the board's conflict with county commissioners have been worked out.

Board member Jack Bean reported that for the first quarter of this year the hospital is operating about \$150,000 under budget.

"This is a good sign," Bean said. "I would like to make it perfectly clear that this hospital is doing an excellent job financially."

County Judge Howard Green said, "I don't think that we could be more pleased with the progress this hospital district has made since the first of this year."

"It's almost unbelievable... You are going to really raise the image of this hospital in the eyes of the public with the work you are doing," he told the board and hospital staff.

BOARD CHAIRMAN Sterling Steves reported that the State Board of Health has made its distribution of the \$4 million in Hill-Burton hospital construction funds allocated to Texas, and that Peter Smith was left out.

Previously Hospital Administrator William Taylor had expressed hope that the hospital would receive at least some "token" grant from the \$3 million in applications it had made for Hill-Burton funds.

"We regret this very much. But apparently somebody had a higher priority than this hospital, which is hard to believe," Steves said.

Steves also reported that the House bill for establishing a four-year nursing program to be operated by the University of Texas at Arlington and Tarrant County Hospital District was favorably received in committee.

He said he hopes the bill will be reported out of committee this week so it can be voted on in this legislative session.

Absentee Ballot on Drink Bill Tomorrow

Absentee voting in the liquor by the drink measure, as well as on the four proposed constitutional amendments, will begin at 8 a.m. tomorrow.

The absentee voting will be done on the fourth floor of the old courthouse downtown.

County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen has estimated that 30,000 will vote in the election.

Deadline for voting absentee is May 14, four days before the May 18 election.

900 employees--none can use paint brush

Tarrant County has about 900 employees—but not one of them is qualified to use a paint brush.

That situation arose today when personnel director Jodie Colvard said the county was having trouble finding workers willing to paint the interior of the old courthouse.

Colvard explained that the county's salary scale allowed \$5.12 per hour for such jobs, but that union painters would charge about \$5.60 per hour for the job.

County Commissioner George (Skeet) Richardson said he thought the county should pay union scales to get the job done if that were the only way.

But Commissioner Jerry Mebus said he still hoped cheaper labor could be found.

The painting of the courthouse will start as soon as painters can be found.

County voters brushed off the idea that the courthouse be remodeled in the county's March 27 bond election.

Commissioners turn down car allowance

The man who recommends to county commissioners whether or not an employee is entitled to a car allowance was in effect today turned down in his effort to obtain a \$100 per month allowance himself.

The request by county personnel director Jodie Colvard was one of the final items on the commissioners court published agenda for today.

But before the meeting began, the item was scratched out.

Colvard told reporters he had reconsidered his idea of obtaining the car allowance because "I can usually finagle a car if I want it."

One commissioner said: "He just couldn't get it." As part of his regular job, Colvard recommends or turns down requests to commissioners for car allowances from department heads and their employees.

Richardson Blasts Amendment To Create Ethics Commission

Proposed constitutional Amendment No. 1 to be voted on next week is "an insult to the Texas voter," County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said today.

"The amendment is an insult to the people of Texas... it's a slap in their faces," he said.

Amendment No. 1 calls for creation of a commission to determine ethics for members of the legislature.

IN ADDITION, the amendment provides that the six-member commission can recommend salaries for the legislature.

"All the members of that commission will have their salaries set by the legislature, so you know that they will recommend raises," Richardson said.

Creation of the ethics commission could have been done without a constitutional amendment, Richardson claimed.

However, legislators wanted their salaries raised "so they tacked that onto the end," he said.

VOTERS HAVE turned down three bids by the Legislature in the last six years for higher pay for themselves.

"What most people don't realize is that most legislators just work four months every two years," said Richardson, who is a former legislator.

"When you look at it that way, \$400 per month for two years is a pretty good salary."

He said also that fringe benefits are abundant for legislators.

ONE OF THE most common, he said, is for a representative or senator who is self-employed to pay his private office expenses from the state-provided legislative office allowance.

Representatives can receive as much as \$875 per month

during the two-year term while senators can receive up to \$1,750 per month for as long as their term runs.

Richardson said that another widespread abuse of the expense allowance is where a legislator will purchase hundreds of dollars worth of postage stamps, allegedly for the state office use, but will sell them to lobbyists and others and keep the money.

Commissioners Approve Building for Firefighters

County commissioners agreed Friday to study a proposal to construct a building that would provide offices, shops and storage space for county firemen.

County Fire Marshal Mason Lankford and several members of the Tarrant County Firefighters Association made the proposal after they gave a report of their group's activities last year.

Under the proposal, the county would sell property at 900 N. Commerce, which is currently lent to the associa-

tion to house special equipment used by all the county's fire departments.

The funds from the sale of the property would go toward the construction of the new facility for the firefighters.

"We need it bad," said Lankford, who could give no cost estimate for the facility.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson agreed, saying there "isn't one square foot of the old building (at 900 N. Commerce) that doesn't leak when it rains."

Commissioner Dick Andersen said the current facility, which Lankford said houses about \$500,000 worth of special equipment, is "so bad that you could charge people for a safari down there."

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan and County Auditor Jack Benson were instructed to report back to commissioners after they determined whether it would be legal to use the money from the property sale for the proposed building.

No Tax Cut Is Seen by Richardson

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today said taxpayers should not expect "any drastic" tax cuts for next year.

"The cost of county government is continuing to increase steadily and more money is needed," he said.

RICHARDSON'S comments, made after the regular meeting of commissioners, contrasted with earlier statements made by some of the other court members.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said last month that he believes county taxes can be cut, especially "if the department heads straighten up their operations."

And Friday, Commissioner Dick Lewis and County Judge Howard Green expressed hope that part, and possibly all, of the currently assessed 29 cents per \$100 evaluation right-of-way tax can be lowered.

THE POSSIBLE reduction could come about since the state is to begin making all right-of-way purchases after July 1 instead of the current 50-50 cost shared by the state and county.

Richardson said he wasn't sure whether the right-of-way tax could be cut "because I'm not sure how money for each of the state's counties will be apportioned."

HE SAID that rural counties might get more money, proportionately, than the metropolitan areas "because the legislature is so rurally oriented."

Commissioners early in July will set the county's tax rate for the coming year.

County auditor Jack Benson has said it is too early to predict whether taxes can be cut, and if so, by how much.

Area Units Band Together To Seek Anti-Crime Funds

Several law enforcement and judicial officials have joined the race for federal funds.

In a meeting yesterday, about 25 officials from Fort Worth and Tarrant County voted to form a committee, to be called the Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee for Tarrant County, for the purpose of seeking federal anti-crime grants.

ASST. DIST. ATTY. Jerry Loftin told the group it is the first of its kind here but all other large Texas counties have such groups.

"Dallas, San Antonio and Houston are all a year ahead of us on this thing... Our taxpayers are paying the taxes, so let's get our share," Loftin said.

Loftin explained that grants are available to Texas through congressional appropriations under the Omnibus Crime Bill and that the

state's appropriation would be about \$40 million.

DIST. ATTY. Frank Coffey, whose office called the meeting, and Loftin explained that coordination of governmental bodies and the departments within them is a requirement for many of the crime-fighting grants.

The officials authorized the North Central Texas Council of Governments to organize a coordinating committee, which may be made up of representatives from Commissioner's Court, sheriff's department, Fort Worth city manager's office, Fort Worth police department, county clerk's office, district attorney's office, Arlington City Council, county juvenile probation office, Fort Worth police juvenile division, the civil district judges and the criminal district judges.

Some officials privately questioned the future availa-

bility of federal funds for continuing programs, once they are initiated by federal money.

FORT WORTH Police Chief T. S. Walls told the group his department is saddled now with expenditures for programs started by federal money.

Jack Wood, a Fort Worth assistant city manager, said the federal money available is just "frothing on the cake." He said the greatest value to be obtained is the coordination of the various agencies.

CIVIL SERVICE PLAN

Commissioners Split on Merit Bill

Commissioners Court appears divided over whether a civil service bill for county employees will be approved by the court.

Currently, the Texas House and Senate have approved the civil service bill for Tarrant County, and it is being considered by a joint conference committee before being finally adopted and signed into law.

As written, the bill, which must be approved by commissioners or in an elec-

tion, would exempt employees of the district attorney's office.

A MOVE IS under way to get that exemption lifted, so the bill would apply to all county employees.

Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis said today they favor the implementation of civil service for all county employees.

County Judge Howard

Green, on the other hand, is opposed to the plan.

Commissioner Dick Andersen and Jerry Mebus said they haven't decided whether they will vote for or against the measure when it comes up.

"I'M GOING to drag my feet on this as long as I can," said Mebus.

"I can see some merit to it (the bill)," added Andersen. "But then, it has some drawbacks, too."

Several of the county's

lected officials, including Sheriff Lon Evans and County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen, are opposed to civil service.

THE MAJORITY of the county's 983 employees, however, favor civil service because they believe their jobs would be more secure.

"As it is now, they can be fired on the spot," said Richardson.

"Under this bill, it would take a board, and a hearing, before an employee could be terminated."

Richardson Assails Ethics Amendment

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson was sharply critical Monday of the proposed state constitutional amendment creating an ethics commission because of its provision that the commission recommend salaries for state legislators.

A former legislator, he said that he feels legislators already are paid adequately. "For four months' work, they get paid \$400 a month for two years and they get an expense account on top of that," he said. "People don't normally take that into consideration," he added.

Richardson contended that the legislature could have created an ethics commission simply by passing a bill, but that the salary recommendation provision forces the proposals to be put in the form of a constitutional amendment.

THE ETHICS commission amendment is one of four that will appear on ballots statewide May 18.

Legislators augment their salaries with abuses of the expense allotment, Richardson claimed. He warned of a move by the House of Representatives to increase the members' expense allotment from \$875 a month to \$1,750 a month.

Senate members currently receive \$1,750 a month, a result of an increase they gave themselves in a private session, he said.

Richardson said two common abuses of the expense allotment concern buying stamps and paying private office expenses with state funds.

A legislator will purchase hundreds of dollars worth of stamps allegedly for office use and peddle them to lobbyists for cash, Richardson said.

ALSO, HE said, a legislator who is in private business will retain his private secretary to be his legislative secretary, paying her out of his expense allowance while she continues to do work both for his private business and his legislative business.

"The amendment is an insult to the people of Texas. It is a slap in their face," Richardson said.

"All the members of the commission will have their salaries set by the legislature, so you know that they will recommend raises," he remarked.

In giving its reasons for backing the amendment, the state affairs committee of the West Texas Chamber of Commerce differs with Richardson.

IN A LETTER made public Monday, the committee says it feels "that adequate pay for legislators is needed."

The letter also notes that the ethics commission "will set out standards of conduct for members of the legislature."

In a letter recently sent to all Republican county chairman, Bexar County GOP Chairman Van Archer Jr. recommends that the amendment be defeated because, he claims, it "is entirely a demagogic political move by the 90-per-cent Democrat controlled legislature and its leaders to whitewash and cover over the current stock fraud scandal."

Three Reappointed To Hospital Board

Commissioners Court today reappointed three members to the Tarrant County Hospital District board of managers.

Named were Lyn Gregory, a former Hurst city councilman and building contractor, Marvin Stetler, president of First National Bank in Arlington, and architect George Crane.

The hospital board oversees operation of the county-supported Peter Smith Hospital. In other business, commissioners appointed Edith

McCormick, Mrs. Lois Harris and Mrs. Johnnie B. Lee as election judges for tomorrow's balloting. They will serve in voting precincts 18, 33 and 159, respectively.

Commissioners, meeting without County Judge Howard Green, also authorized county Purchasing Agent Ed Smith to begin buying regular gasoline instead of high-octane for a month's experimental basis. Smith said that buying the lower octane gasoline could save the county more than \$8,000 per year.

WELL, MAYBE THEY DIDN'T NEED PAINTER AFTER ALL

County commissioners this morning hired a painter, or at least they thought they did.

That made Commissioner Jerry Mebus, who has spearheaded the drive to hire a painter, very happy. Or at least he thought it did.

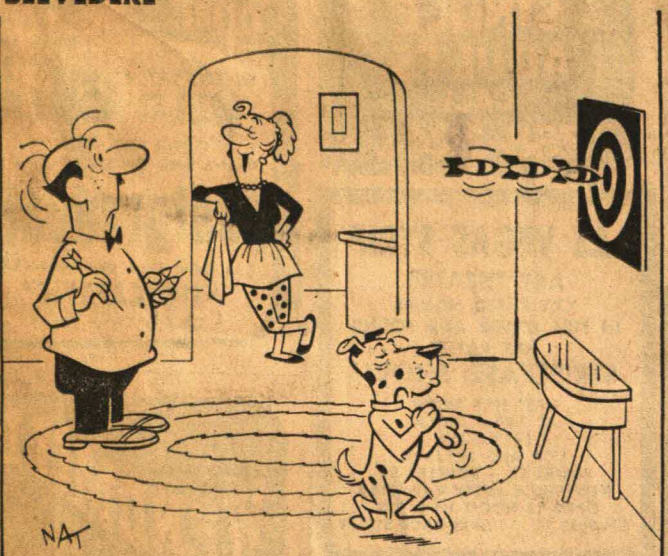
Just before the close of their regular meeting today, commissioners were told by County Personnel Director Jodie Colvard that he had found a man willing to be county painter for \$600 a month.

Commissioners voted to hire the man.

"I'm real excited about the painter," Mebus said. Seconds later, however, Colvard informed Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson privately that the man has gone to work for a large department store and will not be going to work for the county, after all.

Mebus said he wasn't so excited about the painter any more.

BELVEDERE



"LET'S SEE YOU TOP THAT!"

FIGURED IN DISPUTE

Deputy Constable Charged With DWI

Deputy Constable George W. Weatherly has been charged in Parker County with driving while intoxicated and with possession of a prohibited weapon.

Weatherly, the central figure in a dispute two months ago involving two members of the White Settlement police force, was freed on bonds totaling \$3,000 on the two misdemeanors.

A Department of Public Safety spokesman said that Weatherly was arrested Sunday as he drove erratically east of Weatherford.

THE CHARGES were filed late yesterday, said Parker County Clerk Tommy McDaniel.

Records kept by the county auditor here show that Weatherly is paid \$519 per month as deputy constable in White Settlement.

On March 10, Weatherly was charged with disorderly conduct after he was involved in a dispute with two White Settlement policemen who were investigating a traffic accident.

Weatherly complained that the police "toughed me up and nearly killed me."

WEATHERLY, 58, told his story before the Tarrant County grand jury.

The two police officers also appeared before the grand

jury and were no-billed in connection with any wrongdoing.

They said that Weatherly interfered with their investigation and that he was forcibly restrained only after he pulled a pistol from his truck's glove compartment and tried to aim it at one of the officers.

Last month, Weatherly was found innocent in Corporation Court of the disorderly conduct charge.

WHITE SETTLEMENT City Manager Jim Stiff this morning called for Weatherly's termination as a deputy constable.

"Because he is a resident of White Settlement, I do have concern for the quality of the law enforcement in our city . . . I hope that (Constable) Herman Daniels takes into consideration the . . . nature of his (Weatherly's) offenses.

Police department records in the suburban city show that Weatherly is appealing to County Criminal Court No. 3 a conviction of being drunk in public.

Records also show that Weatherly was charged with DWI in Parker County in 1968. That charge was later dismissed.

Daniels, who hired Weatherly, was not immediately available for comment.

NEWS TRIBUNE May 13, 1971

Talk of the Town

Next year's assignments worry Fort Worth school teachers. They hear the School Administration is striving to have 25 per cent of the faculty composed of black teachers, in order to continue receiving federal funds.

The teachers have not been able to obtain confirmation or denial of the rumors from school officials, and they are worried. Some teachers hear the administration will not give them jobs next September, but instead will hire black teachers who are not graduates of certified colleges.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER Skeet Richardson scored solidly with the voters when he said members of the Legislature don't work hard enough to merit pay raises.

He scored again when he said Commissioners Court should do all in its power to deal with a White Settlement deputy constable charged with drunk driving.

Richardson was on firm ground in each case. As a former legislator, he knows Austin. As a commissioner, he feels a responsibility for good government throughout the county.

Voters like having well-informed, sharp-eyed, outspoken courthouse officials on the job and Richardson is rapidly building that image for himself. One district judge said recently: "Skeet is often hard to get along with. The trouble is, he's so often right."

YOU'D THINK Southwestern Bell has enough to take care of without the squirrels. But the little varmints are at it again, and phone company workers are all over town these days repairing overhead cables.

The squirrels eat the lead off the cables and Southwestern Bell has to maintain a constant repair program. The squirrels eat lead all year around, but far more in the spring. The phone company thinks they need lead in their diet, and wishes they'd find a new source.

May 13, 1971 NEWS TRIBUNE

Courthouse Names In the News

When Keller High School students elect their student council tomorrow, they'll do so on a real voting machine. County commissioners agreed to let the students use a machine from the county's supply . . . David Henry Wagner is a new case worker with the Juvenile Probation Dept. . . . Hugh L. Reynolds has been named houseparent and Lonnie R. Reynolds dietitian at the Tarrant County Youth Center.

HAPPY DAY: Merit raises have been approved for Berla L. Dobbins of the Public Works Dept., Kathleen Hickey and Betty Hurley of County Clerk Red Cowan's staff, Karen Andrews of the Juvenile Probation Dept., and Amelia Coleman, Bill Perry and Dorothy Dell Latham of the Child Support Section . . . Thelma E. Bush, former hospital matron, is now a jail matron in the Sheriff's Dept.

TARRANT SALARIES DUE HIKE

Senate OK of Major Increases Expected

By BOB BAIN
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — Mandatory pay raises for top Tarrant County officials appeared certain today when the Senate is expected to approve a conference committee report.

As outlined in the conference committee's bill, the Tarrant County salary schedule would provide:

—\$28,000 a year for the county judge plus \$3,000 for serving on the county juvenile board. The present salary is \$22,300 a year.

—\$27,000 a year for county commissioners who now receive \$19,120.

—\$30,000 annually for the district attorney who now gets \$22,900.

—\$27,000 a year for the tax assessor-collector whose present salary is \$21,010.

—\$27,000 a year for probate, county court at law and county criminal court judges who now receive \$20,800.

—\$24,000 annually for the county and district clerks who now are paid \$19,750.

—\$18,500 a year for the county treasurer who now receives \$16,600.

—\$14,500 a year for peace justices and constables in precincts 1, 2 and 3 and the precinct 6 constable. State Sen.

Don Kennard of Fort Worth said precincts 3 and 6 were not presently at this level.

KENNARD, who furnished the figures on current salaries, said he added the Tarrant officials to a bill by Sen. Oscar Mauzy of Dallas that pertained to Dallas County officials.

Kennard earlier proposed a \$12,000 annual salary hike for district court judges which would be paid for with county funds. This increase was another bill which ran into trouble so it was shifted into the Mauzy proposal also, Kennard said.

Kennard said he decided to include all the county officials in the bill after learning what officials in comparable positions were receiving.

ALL BUT TWO Tarrant County officials will receive the same salary as their counterparts in Dallas County.

The Dallas county judge would be paid \$36,000 a year and the Dallas county treasurer would receive \$23,400 a year.

The pay raises are mandatory in that the legislation says the commissioners court "shall" set salaries of county officials as provided.

THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1971

County Taxes Won't Rise But May Not Drop, Either

County Auditor Jack Benson today said there will be no need for a county tax increase.

At the same time, however, Benson said it is too early to tell whether county taxes can be decreased.

SEVERAL COUNTY commissioners said earlier they hope the property tax rate, now 82 cents per \$100 valuation, can be lowered, possibly as much as 6 cents.

"I'm not sure that at this time I could recommend any tax decrease," Benson said. "I would like to, of course. It's just too early to say."

County commissioners in early July will set the county's tax rate for the coming year.

THERE HAD been speculation that much of, if not all, the county's special right-of-way tax, now 29 cents per \$100 valuation, could be dropped.

That might have been possible under the \$904 million new state tax bill passed by the House and Senate but which Gov. Preston Smith did not sign.

Under that tax bill, gasoline taxes would have been raised 2 cents per gallon with much of that money going to a fund from which the state and not the different counties would pay for all right-of-way needed for state and federal highways.

THE GAS tax provision was dropped in later legislative action, however.

Voters here in 1952 approved creation of the special right-of-way tax and set a ceiling of 30 cents per \$100 valuation on it.

The right-of-way fund cur-

rently has more than \$4 million in it. However, county officials have said that all that money and considerably more will be needed for right-of-way purchase for additional highways leading to the regional airport.

In addition, Fort Worth officials are planning a southwest freeway for which expensive right-of-way would be needed.

BENSON SAID that next year's operating budget, which will be set in January, will probably not be substantially greater than the \$19.1 million budget under which the county is now being operated.

The auditor said increases in new property on the tax rolls will take care of the need for additional money for operation.

County employes are expected to ask, as they do every year, for salary increases, and the legislature has approved pay boosts for most of the elected officials.

"I think we're in good financial shape," Benson said.

Election to Cover Changes In Constitution, Drink Bill

Overlooked because of the controversy over the mixed drink election here is another issue due voter attention on the same day — May 18.

The first half of the double ballot is asking Tarrant County — and all other Texas voters — to approve or not approve four changes to the state's much amended constitution.

THIS PART of the election, which is listed separately from the liquor measure, has been unpublicized for the most part since the mixed drink question was ordered onto the ballot.

Voters in only 46 counties, including Tarrant, are being asked for their approval or rejection of the mixed drink proposal.

Advocates of the measure say that its passage will help Texas in its bid to attract tourists and the money they bring with them for their visit.

So far, there seems to be no organized opposition, county officials believe.

ABSENTEE voting at the courthouse started at 8 a. m. today on both the constitutional amendments and the drinks legislation.

In a new development on the liquor controversy, County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen said late yesterday that results of the election will be tabulated separately, according to the peace justice precincts.

In effect, this will make five local option elections instead of the one that had earlier been called for.

WHAT THIS means is that if residents of Fort Worth approve the sale of mixed drinks but one or more of the other areas, including Arlington, doesn't approve, then Fort Worth bar owners can still sell liquor by the drink.

Cowen said only Benbrook has recently applied for a petition for the sale of an alcoholic beverage.

That request is for the sale of beer, for consumption of premises only, and its backers were narrowly defeated several months ago when they failed to get enough signatures.

After a petition has been signed with enough names, it is turned over to Commissioners Court, and the election is called.

COWEN SAID he has heard of efforts being made to hold similar elections in Watauga and Euless, but no petition has been requested.

(To get the petition started, 10 qualified voters must sign a letter asking that such a petition be started.)

Cowen has estimated that only 30,000 will vote in the election, even though all the county's registered voters may vote on the amendments.

Voters in all but 41 of this date, although some question remains on two or three other precincts of the county's 172 voting precincts may vote on the liquor question.

HERE'S WHAT the amend-

ments are all about:

—No. 1 would create a state ethics commission empowered to set rules of ethics for members of the legislature; assist state officers and legislative officers to investigate violations thereof, and to recommend compensation for members of the legislature and the lieutenant governor and to recommend improvements and economy in the legislative process.

—No. 2 would remove the limitation on the total state appropriation for assistance grants for the needy aged, needy disabled and the needy blind and would set limitations on the total state appropriations during any fiscal

year for assistance grants for needy dependent children and the caretakers of such children.

—No. 3 would provide that the legislature may propose an amendment to the constitution at any session of the legislature.

—No. 4 would authorize the issuance of \$100 million in bonds to provide financial assistance to cities and other public agencies for water quality enhancement purposes provide for the improvement and continuation of the water resources program and establish an interest ceiling on water development bonds at 6 per cent per annum.

Overtime man says, 'just doing my job'

Jake Cardenas, a courthouse custodian whose salary has caused a small furor around the building, said today he's just doing his job.

Meanwhile, some former county officials or current ones, have said they have been working overtime to solve the problem of Cardenas' over-12 hours per day. His super-time.

"I just do what I'm told," Cardenas said. "I come in every day at 1 a. m., and if anybody doesn't believe it, they can come down here and see," he said.

THE CARDENAS case caused comment when it was learned he made more than \$11,000 last year, nearly half of which was the result of overtime pay.

Records showed he works records, who all make much less money than he does, say his hours are from 1 a. m. to 1 p. m.

Cardenas comes to work early in order to start heating and air conditioning systems before other county employees arrive.

One person who commented on the strange situation was former county personnel director Nick Hammond.

HAMMOND SAID he was asked by County Commissioner Dick Andersen — the man who appointed Cardenas to his job — to keep the overtime

pay situation quiet until it could be worked out.

"He (Andersen) mentioned that we ought not to say anything about it a couple of different times," Hammond said.

Hammond said that he had made a study while he was still connected with the county and found no reasonable alternative to having the one employee work 12 hours per day.

"We talked about hiring another custodian, but the price would have been about the same and the additional employee would also have been given fringe benefits," Hammond said.

HE ALSO said the use of automatic control devices on the heating systems had been explored, but that it would cost too much.

Hammond denied the situation was a specific reason for his resigning his job with the county. "There are at least 50 more things like that that ought to be straightened out," Hammond said.

He blames such situations on "a diffusion of authority."

He said many officials were aware of the situation, but that none of them had the authority to do anything about it.

COMMENTS from other courthouse officials seemed to bear that thought out.

Cardenas' immediate supervisor, Jerry Worsham, said, "The man is just working the hours he was told to. Somebody has to do it. If a change is needed, Commissioners Court is the one that has to take responsibility."

Painters Say No to Work On Courthouse

Commissioner Jerry Mebus' campaign to freshen up the courthouse has hit a snag — money.

He and other members of Commissioners' Court were told Monday at their weekly meeting that a qualified painter cannot be found who will work for \$5.12 an hour.

Mebus wants parts of the courthouse to have a new paint job, but County Personnel Director Jodie Colvard said he "talked with several painters and some pseudo-painters" who will not work for less than the union scale of \$5.65 an hour.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson was in favor of paying "a few cents more" to obtain painters at the union rate, but Mebus said he wanted to delay action for at least a week.

Commissioners said county employees who can do paint work are tied up in other minor remodeling projects. Mebus was skeptical of paying the union rate because it is not consistent with salary rates for county employees, he said.

Cardenas Case Tied To Job Chief Quitting

Former county personnel director Job L. "Nick" Hammond said Wednesday he resigned because of "friction" in connection with situations like that of building engineer Jake Cardenas.

"I worked a long time on that (Cardenas) business," said Hammond.

Cardenas, who performs custodian's work and does minor repairs in the Civil Courts Building, has been allowed for the past 22 months to collect overtime pay that almost doubles his regular salary.

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson first revealed that Hammond resigned his post in February because of such friction and Hammond later confirmed Richardson's comment.

HAMMOND was the first person to serve in the post, created more than a year ago with the advent of the county job classification system. He was replaced by Jodie Colvard.

Hammond now is a business representative for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO.

About Cardenas' overtime arrangement, Hammond said he "was told to keep my mouth shut four different times on it." In 1970 Cardenas' total pay was \$11,204.60, including \$5,072.60 of overtime pay.

RICHARDSON said the Cardenas case "is an example of why we should have civil service." Legislation is now pending that would permit a civil service system for Tarrant County, although several county officeholders oppose it.

"When something is going on like this, an employee under civil service could come forward and speak up to rectify the situation without worrying about being fired," Richardson said.

Under the proposals, commissioners could not release an employee without a hearing before a board.

"But right now, even the job of the county personnel director is political. You can't blame some people for not speaking up if they fear they

are going to lose their job," Richardson said.

HAMMOND said the friction between him and commissioners and other officeholders was not personal, but was a result of "the system."

"They need a mandatory retirement age that will stick," said Hammond. Without it, he said, civil service would have many disadvantages as it would advantages.

The present retirement requirements of the county have a grandfather clause exempting county employees that were hired before Oct. 15, 1970. "That's the only way we could get it through," Hammond said.

Richardson said he was in favor of placing even such positions as his garage supervisor under civil service.

Commissioners have said that they will study the situation on Cardenas.

Constable Calls Deputy 'One of Best'

White Settlement Constable Herman Daniels today described his deputy, George W. Weatherly as "one of the best."

Weatherly yesterday posted bonds totaling \$3,000 in Parker County on charges filed Monday accusing him of driving while intoxicated and possessing a prohibited weapon.

Weatherly was involved in a dispute about two months ago with two White Settlement policemen investigating a wreck.

He was charged with disorderly conduct, but a jury in White Settlement's Corporation Court found him innocent.

Yesterday, County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said commissioners should study ways of dealing with such situations.

He said that Daniels "can hire who he wants, since he is an elected official" and that commissioners could not interfere with his employment practices.

"But the court could make it pretty rough around budget time next year," added Richardson.

Daniels today said he knew nothing of the charges filed against Weatherly in Parker County and could not make any comment.

He did say, however, that he planned no action against his deputy "at this time."

Yesterday morning, White Settlement City Manager Jim Stiff called for Weatherly's termination because "... I do have concern for the quality of law enforcement in our city."

Tarrant Cites Its Faithful Workers at Awards Event

Velma Tankersly was honored for working more than 36 years for Tarrant County last night.

Reed Stewart drew applause on being recognized for spending more than 47 years working for the county.

The telephone operator and the county tax assessor-collector were among more than 400 county employees recognized last night at the first annual county awards program in the Tarrant County Convention Center.

FORMER U.S. Sen. Ralph Yarborough was principal speaker at the program, which honored all employees who have worked more than five years at the courthouse.

During his speech, Yarborough said he is impressed with "the fidelity of the employees of Tarrant County."

He said that he knows of no other employe situation in the state that matches the one here.

"You don't hear of any quickie stock deals here," he said.

EARLIER, in an afternoon press conference, Yarborough charged that U.S. Sen. Lloyd Bentsen and Secretary of the Treasury John Connally are working together "to advance Lockheed Aircraft hundreds of millions of dollars."

The financially troubled aircraft firm is seeking governmental guarantees of more than \$200 million before it makes an order for Rolls-Royce jet engines so it can build supersonic transports.

"That's going to be an interesting situation to watch," said Yarborough, who was defeated by Bentsen in the Democratic primary last May.

He said that before Bentsen was elected to the Senate that he was a member of the board of directors of Lockheed.

gave up that seat.

YARBOROUGH also charged that Connally, with whom he has long feuded, was appointed by President Nixon to his federal post because Connally "is the best money-raiser in the United States."

He said he does not believe that American taxpayers should have to pay for "companies' mismanagement."

He said also that the American economy cannot substantially improve until the war in Vietnam is ended.

"Europe and Japan are as rich as they have ever been in their history," he said, "because they avoided the war."

Yarborough refused to answer questions about his political intentions although he acknowledged there is considerable speculation that he will run for either governor or for the Senate seat now held by John Tower.



CONGRATULATIONS—Lee Bourland, left, of the county public works department shakes hands with former Sen. Ralph Yarborough prior to ceremonies during which Bourland was mentioned for his 40 years' employment with the county.

County May Buy Property Owned by RR for Freeway

County officials are investigating the possibility of buying between 80 and 100 acres of abandoned railroad right-of-way that might eventually become part of a major freeway through Everman.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said today he has asked county public works director Leroy Erwin to investigate whether the Missouri-Pacific Railroad will sell the right-of-way to the county.

Andersen said part of the property has been offered to adjoining land owners for \$170

per acre.

"If we could pick this up for \$12,000 or \$13,000, I think we ought to do it," he said.

Money for the property would come from Andersen's road and bridge fund.

The acreage in question extends from Everman south to the Johnson County line, a distance of 6 to 7 miles, Erwin said.

Andersen said Fort Worth officials have indicated a need for a freeway in the general area by 1980.

But he said no work would

be started on the new road immediately.

"If we have to buy right-of-way like that later it will cost us \$3,000 per acre or more," said Andersen, a former city councilman in Everman.

Commissioners OK First Step To Finance Hospital Program

County Commissioners Monday approved the first step in what is to be a step-by-step program to finance \$11.2 million in improvements to Peter Smith Hospital.

The commissioners voted to permit the Tarrant County Hospital District board to apply to the state attorney general for approval of \$1 million in revenue bonds.

If the attorney general does as is expected and approves the bonds, the board will return to commissioners seeking approval to sell the bonds.

BOARD FINANCE Chairman C. Jack Bean said commissioners will be asked in June for a formal order authorizing the sale. Revenue bonds do not require voter approval.

Peter Smith Hospital Administrator William Taylor said the \$1 million will pay for completion of Phase III and the beginning of Phase IV of the hospital's five-phase construction and remodeling program.

Phase III provides for the completion of five lower floors of a tower that is being erected adjacent to the current hospital facility. The top six floors "will be shelled in," Taylor said.

Phase IV-A is a planning phase for the remainder of construction.

Several months ago commissioners agreed in spirit to the \$11.2 million program, but told the board they would reserve to right to approve the program in increments, while the board supplied them with up-to-date reports on revenue and expenditures.

COMMISSIONERS also told the board to make an effort to economize.

The board was lauded Monday by Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Andersen for economy moves and the reports.

Bean said that "revenue is higher and costs are lower" at the hospital than the board originally expected.

He also said the hospital's

budget also may experience a windfall near the end of 1971 because there are some indications that the lower part of the tower will be ready for occupancy around Nov. 1, rather than the originally projected Jan. 1. Earlier occupancy would mean additional revenue.

IN OTHER ACTION, commissioners—Approved an approximately one-mile extension of Rufe Snow Drive.

Agreed to draw up a resolution for Arlington Mayor Tom J. Vandergriff in conjunction with "Thanks, Tommy" week.

Took note that they would begin sitting as the Equalization Board in tax assessment matters June 7 and continue on successive Mondays until all matters are resolved.

Commended former hospital board members Joe Box and O. B. O'Dell for their service.

Hospital Bond Sale Application Okayed

County commissioners today voted to permit the Tarrant County Hospital District to apply with the state attorney general for the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds.

Such application is the first step toward actually selling the bonds which will be used to finance further construction of Peter Smith Hospital.

The \$1 million in bonds is the first increment of a planned \$11.2 million bond program to double the hospital's size to about a 500-bed capacity.

Several months ago, com-

missioners agreed in spirit with the bond program but reserved the right to approve or disapprove of it in increments such as was offered them today.

If the attorney general grants approval, the hospital board will return to commissioners for formal approval of the sale. This should be about the first or middle of June, board finance chairman C. Jack Bean said.

In other action, commissioners approved a Precinct 4 request for a one-mile extension of Rufe Snow Drive.

They also were notified that they would begin sitting as the Equalization Board in tax assessment matters June 7 and continue each Monday until those matters were completed.

Commissioners also praised Arlington Mayor Tom J. Vandergriff after Commissioner Jerry Mebus of Arlington told them this is "Thanks, Tommy" week. Vandergriff has been involved in numerous county projects including the Tarrant County Convention Center.

'Skeet' Seeks Study Of Constable Case

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said Tuesday commissioners should study ways of dealing with a White Settlement deputy constable who has been charged with driving while intoxicated.

Deputy Constable George W. Weatherly was free Tuesday after posting bonds totaling \$3,000 in Parker County on charges filed Monday accusing him of driving while intoxicated and possession of a prohibited weapon.

Weatherly figured in a dispute two months ago involving two members of the White Settlement police department. He was charged with disorderly conduct, but a jury in White Settlement's corporation court found him innocent.

Richardson said that Weatherly's boss, Constable Herman Daniels, "can hire who he wants, since he is an elected official." He said he did not know of a way at this time that commissioners

could terminate Weatherly, unless Daniels agreed to it.

"But the court could make it pretty rough around budget time next year," said Richardson.

Weatherly is paid from county funds.

Attempts to contact Daniels Tuesday evening were unsuccessful.

White Settlement City Manager Jim Stiff called for termination of Weatherly's service Tuesday morning. "Because he is a resident of White Settlement, I do have concern for the quality of law enforcement in our city," Stiff said.

Richardson suggested looking into ways that Weatherly's authority to be a peace officer under state regulations might be challenged and an official of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Certification said later from his Austin office that he hoped the county would furnish him information about the case.

WHEN COMMISSIONERS COURT turned down Fire Marshal Mason Langford's request for \$25 to purchase a percolator and coffee, Arlington Commissioner Jerry Mebus reached into his pocket and came through with a personal check.

Review in Filing Fee Case Asked

Attorney A. L. Crouch has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to affirm a federal court decision handed down in December that threw out the state's party primary filing fee system.

As an alternative, Crouch pleaded that the appeal made by state officials of the decision be dismissed.

Crouch is representing Theodore Wischkaemper, who ran unsuccessfully last year for county judge.

WISCHKAEMPER and two other men objected to the filing fee system, and filed the federal lawsuit that changed the Texas law.

All three cases were heard together in the one suit last fall, and the three-judge federal court ruled Dec. 21 that the filing fees were unreasonable and unconstitutional.

Wischkaemper, County Judge Howard Green and M. K. Fisher Jr. were assessed \$8,400 each by the Democratic Party.

GREEN AND Fisher paid their filing fees, but Wischkaemper did not.

In Tarrant County, candidates last year were assessed a filing fee of 7 per cent of the total salary for the term of office.

About half that amount was returned.

The federal court did hold in its ruling that a reasonable filing fee could be assessed.

IN HIS motion, Crouch says that "in Tarrant County, the incumbent office holders have regulated themselves out of opposition to such an extent that 77 per cent of all filing fee money received by the county Democratic chairman in 1970 came from incumbents. It would thus appear that the Texas statutes are designed to keep the rich out of the county jail and the poor out of the county courthouse."

The state Senate this week passed a bill that sets at 5 per cent of the salary the fee for primary elections.

Crouch called the amount "highly unreasonable" and not in line with the federal court ruling.

Cowen 'Surprised and Proud' At Big Turnout in Election Here

County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen said Wednesday he is "surprised and proud of the people turning out" for Tuesday's constitutional amendment election.

At the same time, Cowen released vote totals that his office will submit to Commissioners Court Monday for certification. Cowen's totals are unofficial until that time.

Cowen's records show that 50,247 persons voted in the election, conducted in conjunction with five local option mixed beverage elections.

HE HAD predicted earlier about 30,000 persons would go to the polls.

Cowen was hesitant to say the mixed drink issue brought out the increased number. He said that his records show no substantial increase in percentage of registered voters voting in wet areas in compar-

ison with those voting in dry areas.

Only the four proposed amendments appeared on the ballot in dry areas.

Cowen's figures, which differ only slightly from those reported Tuesday night by the unofficial Texas Election Bureau, are:

Amendment No. 1 (ethics commission which could recommend legislative pay raises) — 18,669 for, 30,172 against.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 (proposal of constitutional amendments at any session of the legislature) — 23,709 for, 28,481 against.

Amendment No. 3 (elimination of ceiling on aid to blind, old aged and disabled persons and establishment of \$55 million ceiling of aid to families with dependent children) — 24,104 for, 25,059 against.

Amendment No. 4 (issuance

of \$100 million in water enhancement bonds and hike in interest rate ceiling on water bonds from 4 to 6 per cent) — 28,656 for, 19,898 against.

Permission to sell mixed beverages in public bars was voted on in five of eight peace justice precincts, excluding those dry towns within wet precincts.

Cowen's totals for the five local option elections are:

JP Pct. 1—15,923 for, 10,057 against.

JP Pct. 2—4,741 for, 2,585 against.

JP Pct. 5—866 for, 503 against.

JP Pct. 6—3,149 for, 1,075 against.

JP Pct. 7—2,135 for, 1,279 against.

Andersen Joins in Protest Over Raises

By DAN MARTIN
Another Tarrant County commissioner today joined two fellow commissioners in voicing opposition to proposed pay boosts for 32 county officials.

The increases — estimated to cost \$165,000 per year —

were proposed by State Sen. Don Kennard in a rider to a bill approved by the state Legislature's conference committee which initially raised pay for Dallas County officials.

THIS MORNING Dick An-

dersen sided with Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus in opposition to the rider.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson is in at least partial agreement with the bill and County Judge Howard Green is somewhere in the middle.

Andersen, initially identified as a maneuverer in the Austin action to get the bill, this morning flatly denied any involvement with the bill.

"I am opposed to all of them (pay raises). I think the No. 1 priority is to give the taxpayers a little raise."

"I AM NOT opposed to pay raises as such. I really think Tarrant County ought to be on the same level with Dallas County and I hope we can reduce taxes and earn those pay raises at a later date."

"I am dedicated to lowering taxes. If we can earn it (the raise) by lowering taxes, then I am for it. But not until."

Doug Crouch, a former Tarrant County district attorney who now is the county condemnation attorney, also has been identified as a leader in the movement to up county officials' salaries.

He also denied any active participation in the move.

"I HAVEN'T talked to anybody about it," he said today when asked if he had aided Kennard in writing the proposal.

"Of course I wish I could have been of some help. I wasn't."

"I agree with (State Rep. Bill) Hilliard and (State Rep. Tommy) Shannon that our Tarrant County public officials are as good as the best and should be paid a salary not less than the best."

"But I haven't talked to anyone about it," he said. Commissioners Lewis and Mebus said yesterday they think the raises are ridiculous.

Richardson said he has nothing to do with the current proposal, but noted he has "never fought pay raises."

Green yesterday said he was "very flattered that Sen. Kennard was appreciative of the job that I'm doing, but I

Turn to Hike on Page 2

Hike in Pay Debated By Commissioners

From Page 1

have not sought a raise and have not talked to any member of the legislature about it."

LAST SPRING, prior to the primary elections, Green had said he was opposed to a pay increase for members of Commissioners Court.

The \$165,000 raise is slightly under one-half the cost of the 6 per cent pay raises the commissioners voted for about 900 county employees this year.

Lewis said he asked County Auditor Jack Benson if money would be available for the raises from this year's budget.

Lewis said Benson told him the money would be there.

"I'VE NEVER seen it fail in my 20 years around the courthouse that any time there was a pay raise voted for county (elected) officials there was always money for it. But they always say there is no money around when you try to raise an employee \$10 a week," Lewis said.

"I'll assure you now that if you went to get \$200 a year raises for the rest of the employees, you couldn't get it," he said.

"I think it's just ridiculous," he said.

Mebus agreed, noting that the proposed legislation is not permissive, but mandatory.

HE WARNED that the pay raises "would bring about complications" with the pay status of county employees. Earlier this year commissioners said they felt employee pay had been stabilized.

"In light of the economy . . . the people told us in the bond election they didn't want any more money being spent," he added.

Richardson argued for the increase, noting that "most officials here feel they work as hard as those in Dallas or Harris Counties."

He said no one ever questions the salaries of Fort Worth city officials, which he said in some cases are higher than county officials' pay.

UNDER THE proposal, Green's salary would rise \$8,700 per year, to \$32,800.

Commissioners would jump from \$19,120 to \$27,600, not including an \$1,800 per year car allowance.

Judges of county courts of records would hop \$4,000 to \$6,800 per year.

Other raise proposals range from \$1,800 for the county treasurer, most of whose duties have been assumed by the auditor, to \$7,100 for the district attorney.

County Republican Chairman Ed Palm said the whole thing is "just sickening."

"I DON'T THINK that the people of this county think that county commissioners are worth that kind of money. The thing that really concerns me is that elected officials seem to be completely out of touch with the reality of the situation, or the reality of the people's desires."

"This is evident in the way the legislature tried to cram a sham pay raise in Amendment 1," he said.

Commissioners, particularly

Two Don't Want 'Ridiculous' Raises

By JOHN LUMPKIN
Two county commissioners said Friday they do not want "ridiculous" pay raises—the second hike in two years—the Texas Legislature is expected to give them.

The raises apparently would apply to 32 elected officials here at an apparent additional cost to taxpayers of \$165,550 annually, based on proposals that have passed the Senate and now are pending in the House of Representatives.

The \$165,550 figure, based upon unofficial figures, is slightly under one-half the cost of the six per cent pay raises the commissioners voted this year for about 900 county employees whose salaries they control.

"I just think it is ridiculous," said Commissioner Dick Lewis. Commissioner Jerry Mebus agreed.

BOTH SAID they have made their feelings known by telephone to Rep. Gibson "Gib" Lewis, who claims he is prepared to fight the pay raises.

The pay raises have been tacked on a salary bill for Dallas County officials by Sen. Don Kennard, who says the idea was his own and no one else's. Legislators from areas not affected by such local bills generally concur with the votes of the local delegation.

A slight majority of the Tarrant County House delegation appears to favor the legislation, officials here say.

Lewis said he asked County Auditor Jack Benson if money will be available from this year's budget for the raises, which he said would take effect in September.

Lewis said Benson told him the money, apparently about \$55,000 for one third of the year, would be there.

"I've never seen it fail in my 20 years around the courthouse that any time there is a pay raise voted for county (elected) officials, there was always money for it. But they always say there is no money around when you try to raise

an employee \$10 a week," said Lewis.

HE COMMENTED on what he thought might happen if the bill for the elected officials was voted down. "I'll assure you now that if you went to get \$200-a-year raises for the rest of the employees, you couldn't get it," he said.

Mebus said the proposed legislation is mandatory, not permissive. Such legislation has doubled commissioners' salaries in the past 10 years.

"There's nothing else we can do except to let people know our feelings," he said.

He and County Judge How-

ard Green said last year that they did not want pay raises.

Green said Friday he was "very flattered that Sen. Kennard was appreciative of the job that I'm doing, but I have not sought a raise and have not talked to any member of the legislature about it."

MEBUS WARNED that the pay raises "would bring about complications" with the pay status of county employees. Earlier this year, commissioners said they felt employee pay has stabilized.

"It's just all out of proportion," he said.

Tarrant House Group Divided on Pay Hikes

By PATRICK MARTINETS
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — Tarrant County representatives indicated late Friday they were clearly divided on a proposal to give substantial pay raises to some top Tarrant County officials — and a move to block the legislation seemed certain.

Rep. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis of Fort Worth said he will ask House members to reject a conference committee report asking for the mandatory pay increases.

The Senate already has adopted the proposal and the House was expected to soon be asked to accept the report.

LEWIS SAID he would seek to refer the report back to the joint Senate-House committee approving it and would also instruct the panel to strike the pay raises for county commissioners and county judge. He said other raises included in the report should be retained.

Other Tarrant County representatives who said they will vote against the adoption of the report were Reps. Mike

Moncrief and W. C. "Bud" Sherman.

Reps. Cordell Hull, who served on the conference committee drafting the proposal, and Tommy Shannon and Bill Hilliard said they would support the measure.

Rep. David Finney and Joe Spurlock II were undecided.

"I AM OPPOSED to giving Tarrant County commissioners, who go around bad-mouthing the legislators pay, an increase in their salaries," said Sherman. "I am not opposed to giving district judges a pay raise and if they can separate those, then I might support it."

Moncrief said while he thought some county officials had earned and deserved a pay raise, "they are just too high."

Lewis said, "Many people need pay raises. The justices of the peace need a pay raise and some of the other judges need salary increases, but the commissioners and the county judge definitely do not need any pay increases."

He said, "This rider they

crashed into the base at dusk Friday.

One U.S. field officer said the bunker "took a direct hit with a time delayed fuse rocket that went through six feet of cover and then exploded."

"Just about everyone in the bunker was killed or wounded. Only four or five escaped. The bunker was near the mess hall and some men were eating."

"The bunker also serves as a club. Some men were in there having a few drinks—beer and soda — before the attack."

After the first two or three rockets hit the base, some men in the mess hall ran into the club bunker about 16 by

Turn to US on Page 2

JEST A MINUTE

The second day of a diet isn't so bad, for by that time you're off of it.

Gib Lewis fights big pay hike bill

By JOHN MOULDER
Press Contributing Editor

AUSTIN—Rep. Gibson D. (Gib) Lewis of Fort Worth said today he will try to scuttle Senate Bill 442 which would give huge pay raises for elected officials in the Tarrant County courthouse.

"I'm for pay raises, but pay raises of \$7000 and \$8000 a year are ridiculous," said Lewis.

The Senate yesterday concurred in a House-Senate conference committee report of the bill. In conference committee, Sen. Don Kennard of Fort Worth and Rep. Cordell Hull of Fort Worth got approval to add Tarrant County to a bill setting higher salaries for Dallas County officials.

Hull said he will ask the House today to concur in the committee report.

Lewis said he will make a motion that the bill be sent back to conference committee with instructions that Tarrant County be removed from the bill.

THIS WOULD set off a protocol tizzy in the House. Representatives as a courtesy vote for local bills. But when a big-city delegation splits, the House doesn't know how to vote. Most members vote "present" and let the delegation slug it out with the green and

red lights on the scoreboard. A few outside the delegation cast votes for the most influential faction, thus deciding the outcome of a local bill.

This happened yesterday on a conference committee report giving pay raises to Harris County officials. The Houston delegation split and almost 100 members pushed the present button, lighting up almost the entire board with white lights. Finally, the Harris County officials got their pay raise by a vote of 30 to 18.

Hull said he believes the pay raises are justified.

"OUR OFFICE-HOLDERS are more educated and more informed than ever before," said Hull. "I think we have some good people in the courthouse."

Doug Crouch, the county's attorney in land condemnation cases, worked with Senator Kennard in preparing the pay raise bill.

Two years ago, Crouch successfully lobbied through another pay raise bill for the Tarrant officials.

As amended in conference committee, the bill has several variations from the Dallas County pay plan.

For example, while the Dallas treasurer will receive \$23,400, Tarrant County Treasurer Bill Gurley will receive only \$18,500, about a \$2000 increase.

The salaries of Peace Justices Bob Ashmore and W. W. Matthews in Fort Worth and John Forbes in Arlington, as well as Constable Jim Owens of Fort Worth and Constable J. B. Bell of Arlington will remain at \$14,400, while Dallas peace justices and constables will get a raise.

WHY WERE the peace justices and constables left out?

"They didn't ask to be included in the bill," said Crouch.

However, Pct. 6 Constable Herman Daniels, Peace Justice Floyd Gray of Grapevine and Constable Lloyd Tillery of Grapevine were placed under the \$14,400 category, considerably more than the salary they receive now.

The bill reads that the officials will receive "not less than" the prescribed salaries.

Kennard tacked onto the bill a section which gives district court judges in Tarrant County a \$4000 pay raise. This would place their salaries at \$32,000 per year.

EVEN THOUGH a separate bill would have raised the judges' salaries, Crouch said it was added to the Dallas-Tarrant bill "as a matter of convenience."

County Juvenile Probation Officer Lynn Ross will receive a \$1000 pay raise under another section, compensation for serving as secretary for the occasional meeting of the county juvenile board.

Under the bill, County Judge Howard Green will be the highest paid official in the Tarrant County courthouse.

The bill provides that his salary be \$28,800, plus \$3000 for serving on the juvenile board. Add these and \$1800 he receives as a car allowance and you reach \$33,600—\$1600 more than the amount received by district court judges.

This is too much!

AN EDITORIAL

In 1965 county commissioners made \$14,000 a year, including car allowance.

They've had four raises since then. Last Jan. 1 they were hiked to \$20,920. Now Sen. Don Kennard has maneuvered through the Senate a bill which would skyrocket their salaries to \$29,400 a year.

From \$14,000 to \$29,400 in six years. That's 110 per cent.

We all know about inflation, but 110 per cent is ridiculous! This figure amounts to \$2450 a month, or \$565.38 a week. It's an insult to the people of Tarrant County.

Other county officials, even the rural peace justices, are due for similar fat raises. A real bonanza.

W. B. (BILL) GURLEY, who has the do-nothing job of county treasurer, was up for a \$8800 a year jump to \$23,400. Even the senator was a little sheepish about Gurley's increase. He raised Gurley only \$2000 to \$18,500 a year. He explained:

"I don't have anything against Gurley. I just don't think the office has that many duties to warrant so high a salary."

This Santa Claus package is tied to a local bill from Dallas and will be enacted into law unless some of our local representatives have the courage to fight it. Our senators didn't.

IT'S UP TO YOU, the readers and taxpayers, to let our legislators know how you feel about these whopping raises. You can reach the representatives in care of the House of Representatives, Austin, Tex.; the senators in care of the Texas Senate, Austin, Tex.

Or, if you had rather call or visit with our legislators during their home visit this weekend, their addresses are listed below:

Sen. Don Kennard, 3715 Potomac.
Sen. Tom Creighton, Box 546, Mineral Wells.

Rep. Mike Moncrief, 4036 Tamworth Rd.

Rep. Bill Hilliard, 5400 Warrington Pl.

Rep. W. C. (Bud) Sherman, 5280 Trail Lake Dr.

Rep. Gibson D. (Gib) Lewis, 5625 Schilder Dr. N.

Rep. Tommy Shannon, 3542 Ada.

Rep. Joe Spurlock II, 6505 Jameson Dr.

Rep. Dave Finney, 4819 Hope.

Rep. Cordell Hull, 3805 Springbranch.

These men will be happy to talk with you.

Let's stop this!

8-C Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Saturday Morning, May 22, 1971

EDITORIALS

Outsized Hikes in Tarrant Pay Bill

No one can say the state senators are pikers when it comes to raising the salaries of elected officials of Tarrant County. But why should they be? After all, they don't have to pay the cost. The Tarrant County taxpayers do.

A mandatory pay increase of more than 44 per cent for county commissioners, not counting their yearly car allowances. For the county judge, a 25.6 per cent hike, not counting either the \$3,000 a year he receives for serving on the county juvenile board or his \$1,800-a-year car allowance. For the district attorney, 31 per cent. For the county tax assessor-collector, 31.4 per cent. For the district and county clerks, 21.5 per cent.

Whew!

And these are just samples. The list runs on to embrace other officials, including district judges and the judges of county courts.

These generous raises rode piggy-back to Senate passage after being boosted by Sen. Don Kennard and Rep. Cordell Hull onto a bill to increase the pay of Dallas County officials. It was a local bill, and other members of House and Senate seldom interfere with passage of such measures unless someone in the delegation of the affected county (or counties) strongly objects. It's a matter of legislative courtesy; these legislators might some day want a local bill of their own passed.

And the Tarrant County part of it was attached in conference committee, after both houses had passed the bill affecting Dallas County. Under this quickie method there's no hear-

ing, no chance to dissent, no way to bring about a change. All the general membership of either house can do when the measure comes from the committee is to vote to adopt or reject it in its entirety.

That explains how such things get through. It doesn't explain why they are done—why, for instance, the pay of Tarrant County commissioners should be boosted nearly 100 per cent in two years, more than 110 per cent in the last six. If there is an explanation—we don't think there can be a justification—we'd like to hear it.

We're all aware of inflation and the rise in the cost of living. But with such boosts the county's elected officials will be keeping way ahead of the game.

Less than two years ago Commissioners Court put into effect a job classification plan for county employees. It was intended to put county pay on the level of comparable jobs in private business and industry and keep them there. But evidently what's sauce for the ordinary county employees' goose is not sauce for the elected officials' gander. There's a question as to whether such a boost would not make the pay for county elective offices more than the jobs, on any scale of reasonable values, are worth.

Outrageous, some said recently about the demand of railway signalmen for an increase of 54 per cent spread out over three years and when Congress gave them an interim increase of 13.5 per cent. What could be said about this outsized boost in county salaries?

For sheer unmitigated gall, nothing in recent memory can touch this week's legislative maneuvering to provide Tarrant County officeholders with whopping pay increases, some of them exceeding \$7,000 and \$8,000 a year.

Here are some of the salary boosts proposed in end-of-session, dark-of-the-moon conference committee finagling:

—County judge: From \$22,300 to \$28,000, not counting car allowance or \$3,000 for juvenile board duties, a base pay increase of 25.6 per cent.

—County commissioners: From \$19,120 to \$27,600, not counting \$1,800 in car allowance, a base pay increase of 44.4 per cent.

—District attorney: From \$22,900 to \$30,000, plus car allowance, a boost of 31 per cent.

—Assessor-collector: From \$21,010 to \$27,600, up 31.4 per cent.

—Judges of the probate court, county court-at-law and county criminal courts, from \$20,800 to \$27,600, up 32.6 per cent.

—County and district clerks: From \$19,750 to \$24,000, a 21.5 per cent boost.

This does not exhaust the bonanza list, but it provides a good idea of the pay raise caper engineered this week by Sen. Don Kennard, Rep. Cordell Hull and others.

The net effect of the pay grab would be raises averaging out to

something like 32 per cent for the officials involved. And for the county commissioners it would mean a doubling of their salaries in the last six years.

The monumental effrontery of these proposals is nothing short of amazing at a time when the public is justifiably concerned about unemployment, inflation and runaway costs of government at all levels. The "public be damned" attitude of the lawmakers involved shows up only the more vividly in the light of recent election results reflecting a clear-cut case of citizen discontent with their officeholders.

If a labor union official today were to demand immediate pay increases of 32 per cent, he would be castigated from coast to coast, and properly so, for selfish disregard of the public interest and the state of the economy. An equal amount of heat can be, and ought to be, applied to the legislators who this week in Austin contrived this outrageous end run on the Tarrant County taxpayer's purse.

It is impossible to imagine how these lawmakers could so thoroughly misread the mood of the citizenry, the temper of the times, to entertain any delusions regarding voter reaction. From all indications, the reaction is going to be prompt and passionate.

6-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Saturday Evening, May 22

EDITORIALS:

Pay Proposals Way Out of Line

Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Friday Evening, May 21, 1971

Pay Raise Stands Reviewed

Two of the three members elected to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court in 1970 voiced strong opposition to a pay raise for court members when they were running for office last spring.

The court—and other county officials—would be granted a whopping raise under a rider tacked onto a conference committee-approved bill yesterday.

However, during the primary elections last spring, both County Judge Howard Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus voiced emphatic opposition to a pay raise for Commissioner Court members.

George "Skeet" Richardson, seeking re-election to the court last year, took no strong position on a pay raise.

The three were asked a question on the pay raise issue, which stated in part: "... Would you favor raising the salaries

of members of the court?"

Green replied: "No."

Mebus answered: "No. I will not vote to raise my salary nor will I ask the legislature to do so."

Richardson responded: "This is one area where, again, I feel that a citizen's committee could recommend to the commissioners based upon studies in other counties. It might be noted that the commissioners receive salaries which are below those paid in other major counties, and below many of the offices in this county. For example—the city manager, the city legal adviser, the convention center manager, the water board manager and many other offices receive greater salaries than those of the county commissioners."

Today Green said he is neither for nor against the pay raise.

City Quick to Spot Slip

Remodeling work on the offices of County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart hit a snag today.

County maintenance workers apparently didn't get a city building permit to do the work, which began two weeks ago.

A notice by a city building inspector posted today revealed the oversight.

County Public Workers Director Leroy Erwin, asked about the lack of a permit, said he would have to look into the matter.

5/24/71

EDITORIALS:

Pay Raises Would Have Tax Effects

Excessive pay raises for Tarrant County elected officials, courtesy the Texas Legislature, apparently are dead, though not beyond the remote possibility of resuscitation. Any signs of life the salary-raising plan may show will not, however go undetected. It will no longer be the surprise package it was last week when, without notice, it hitched a ride through the Senate on a bill aimed at increasing the pay of Dallas County officials.

A new Senate-House conference committee will consider the measure, with the aim, according to Rep. Ben Atwell of Dallas, of deleting the Tarrant County raises. He probably will be glad to get rid of them. He and other Dallas County representatives and senators can be none too pleased that the furor raised by inclusion of the Tarrant County pay hikes brought House defeat of a local bill supposedly destined for easy passage.

Should new efforts be made to raise the pay of some or all of Tarrant County's officials, openly and on a more modest basis, that will present a different question. At least that will not be the major assault on the taxpayers' pocketbooks that the huge raises attempted last week would have meant. And the wording of any such pay-raise legislation should be "may" instead of "shall." That would remove it not quite so far from the

judgment and influence of affected taxpayers.

To say, as one county official was quoted as doing, that the \$165,000 in pay raises, some of them running as high as 44 per cent of present salaries, would in no way affect the county tax rate is of course nonsensical. The amount equals what 1.6 cents of the county tax rate will produce in a year.

County commissioners are talking of lowering next year's tax rate. Adding an expenditure of the amount of the proposed pay raises simply would mean the tax rate could not be lowered as much as it otherwise could be.

And such a raise could have widening ripples affecting the tax rate. How could a commissioner, after receiving a 44 per cent pay increase, in good conscience say "no" to a request from the body of county employes for raises of any percentage up to that figure? Even though the commissioners' raises would have been a no-choice matter mandated by the Legislature, it would have had a hand-tying effect in regard to county finances.

As for pay increases for the district judges, which may indeed come up again in the form of separate legislation, we say to the Legislature as we have said before: If the Legislature finds the judges deserve a raise in pay, let the state pay it instead of foisting the expense off on the county.

Public Outcry Major Factor in Killing Pay Hike

By PATRICK MARTINETS
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — The sting of public criticism over a pay raise proposal for Tarrant County officials was severe enough to contribute significantly to the measure's defeat and was still being felt here today.

Some members of the Tarrant County delegation openly conceded that fact and said more than 600 letters and telegrams from Tarrant residents, not to mention phone calls, had convinced them to abandon the pay plan for the county officials.

A check with all eight Tarrant representatives and Sen. Don Kennard's office showed 616 letters and telegrams and more than 300 phone calls

were received in 72 hours voicing protest over the proposed raises with letters still coming in today.

"BUT IF YOU want to point a finger at anyone, blame Skeet Richardson," Rep. W. C. "Bud" Sherman of Fort Worth said, "he is the one who killed the bill."

In a floor debate on the bill, Sherman spoke against acceptance of the report recommending the raises and urged members to deny the county raises, "since our commissioner Richardson has bad-mouthed our proposed legislative pay raises."

Sherman said today, "I am not mad at him (Richardson) anymore . . . I don't hold a

grudge against anyone. After I get even with him."

Rep. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis, who threw the first punch at the fattened salaries, apparently received the most mail — 150 letters and telegrams.

Here are some samples of the letters:

"Please have mercy on the taxpayers . . ."

"THIS IS a greedy, irrational idea and completely out of step with the needs of the taxpayers . . . If the commissioners are so unresponsive to the needs of the taxpayers, then their salaries should be fixed at their present level and not be allowed to change without the consent of the voters."

"Nobody is opposed to modest increases, but this thing was completely out of line . . ."

"We cannot stop you from voting as you personally choose while you are in office, but we can and will replace you and all others who disregard our wishes and interests . . . the sleeping and silent majority is awakening and becoming vocal . . . We must have some relief from these professional politicians that are giving us what they want us to have whether we like it or not . . ."

"It seems that many of our representatives and senators have forgotten who pays the bills and who votes them in."

REP. CORDELL Hull of Fort Worth, one of the original conference committee members recommending the raises, said he is being blamed for including Tarrant County in the Dallas County pay proposal.

"That was Kennard, not me, though I did sign the (conference) report," Hull said. "But after the people spoke, I was the one to take Tarrant County out of the bill."

Rep. Joe Spurlock II of Fort Worth, was also a member of the first conference committee, although he abstained from voting on the measure

Turn to Public on Page 2

Public Voice Helped Kill Pay Boost

From Page 1

when it reached the house.

SPURLOCK SAID, "We would have made a serious mistake by passing the bill and flying in the face of the voters. Now whether that is a reflection on the commissioners, I don't know, but we would have done wrong."

He added, "I have nothing to say or do about any more raises."

Rep. Bill Hillard of Fort Worth said he not only received letters from citizens but from church groups, garden clubs, PTAs and other service organizations.

"Sure there are many underpaid," Hillard said. "But, this is sure not the time to boost anyone's salary . . . the county officials are not suffering anyway since each one of them is making more than the average citizen."

HILLARD SAID the procedure of tacking Tarrant County onto the proposition in a conference committee, leaving no opportunity to amend the measure on the House floor, was "a bad step."

Hillard said, "We should have the full facts. When things like this happen we are misled. All of this protest has shown me that the average person can and does have a voice and affect legislation if they take the time to speak out."

Rep. Mike Moncrief of Fort Worth, who joined Lewis in the fight against the proposal, said of the possibility of another county official pay plan being maneuvered through the Legislature:

"I CAN'T GO with any pay raises and will not support a raise for any elected county official."

He said the judiciary is deserving of a salary increase "and they should have priority next session, but raises are out right now."

There is another bill resting in the House Rules Committee containing a \$12,000 annual salary hike for district court judges which would be paid for with county funds. The raise is permissive, not mandatory.

"Well, if it is permissive, it doesn't mean anything," Rep. Tommy Shannon of Fort Worth said. "Gosh, who would handle it?"

Tarrant Raise Proposal Dead

People's Opposition Credited in Rejection

By PATRICK MARTINETS
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — A controversial proposal to give Tarrant raises in their pay was pronounced dead and buried Monday by a new joint conference committee reviewing the matter.

In a brief meeting, House-Senate conferees signed a new report which strikes Tarrant officials completely from the bill, said Rep. Cordell Hull of Fort Worth.

Hull said Monday, prior to the committee action, "There may be a move to lower the raises somewhat. But I will not support that and I will not support any compromise that would take just the county commissioners and county judge out either."

HE SAID, "As far as I am concerned, the issue is dead."

The House earlier turned down the proposition after Rep. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis and four other Tarrant legislators succeeded in stalling House action on the pay hikes which in some cases meant as much as \$8,000 per year.

Then Monday, Rep. Ben Atwell of Dallas, House sponsor of the bill giving salary raises for Dallas and Tarrant County officials, obtained permission to form a new House-Senate joint conference committee to work on the measure.

Atwell, too, said he would attempt to remove proposed salary hikes for Tarrant County officials.

Rep. Mike Moncrief of Fort Worth, one who had joined Lewis in opposing the measure and one of the new conferees, said he would pull Tarrant County officials out of the bill altogether.

"We want Dallas to have their raises," Moncrief said. "But, it is the wrong time for Tarrant County officials."

He said, "If the report comes out with Fort Worth still in it, it will be over the strong objections of Hull and I. The people of Tarrant County have indicated they strongly oppose the raises and we are here to carry out their dictates."

REP. TOMMY Shannon of Fort Worth also withdrew his support for the pay increases, saying he changed his mind after reading statements of some elected officials regarding the pay increases and after receiving a number of

telegrams and letters criticizing the proposal.

"If I had known the officials' view before, my position on this would have been different," Shannon said. "When a man says he doesn't want it (the raises), then I am not about to force them . . ."

Commissioners Dick Anderson, Jerry Mebus and Dick Lewis said they opposed the pay raises.

Sen. Don Kennard of Fort Worth said he still favors the bill.

Lewis said while he has sympathy for judges and justices of peace on the pay raise issue, "if they want a raise all they have to do is go next door to commissioners court."

Lewis, a member of the House Committee on Counties, said his prime objection to the plan was the "mandatory" feature and the procedure by which Tarrant County officials were tacked on the bill.

"We have not allowed a single mandatory raise out of the counties committee all year because we felt it was bad precedent and just a bad policy," he said.

Machine Repair Has Icy Reception

Members of commissioners court got hot today over an ice machine.

After much discussion, they voted three to two not to have the machine fixed.

Fire Marshal Mason Lankford asked commissioners to authorize spending \$125 to fix the machine which the Tarrant County Volunteer Fire Fighters Association bought last summer for \$25.

The major reason for not fixing the machine was that it is not carried on the county inventory although the fire fighters have many other pieces of equipment in their care, which the county maintains, that are also not on inventory.

Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis wanted to have the machine fixed. Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Andersen and County Judge Howard Green went against the request.

In other action, commissioners were asked to appropriate \$3,500 to pay salaries of four "disadvantaged" college students who will serve as directors of a "Call-a-Teen" program this summer sponsored by the Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity.

Commissioners took the request under advisement for a week.

Tarrant Raises Dealt Severe Blow in House

Review Expected By Panel

By PATRICK MARTINETTS
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — A mandatory pay raise for Tarrant County's top officials was slapped down in the House Saturday after a mini-fight between Tarrant representatives erupted over the issue.

The proposal, however, is still kicking.

Among alternatives being considered to be sure the officials get a raise, is a move to reconsider the vote by which the proposition failed. Or a motion could be made to discharge a House-Senate conference committee writing the report and appoint new conferees to review the measure.

Another possibility is a request to suspend House rules in order to introduce and take up a brand new or modified pay raise plan. Rep. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis said he is considering such an approach which would provide for a 20 per cent across-the-board "permissive" pay raise for county officials.

The vote on adoption of a conference committee report calling for the pay increases went like this: 33 for, 49 against, 25 present and not voting and 38 not voting.

Voting against adoption of the report in the Tarrant County delegation were Reps. Lewis, Mike Moncrief, W. C. "Bud" Sherman, David Finney and Bill Hilliard.

Reps. Cordell Hull and Tommy Shannon, both of Fort Worth, voted for the increased county salaries. Rep. Joe Spurlock II was recorded present and not voting.

Rep. Ben Atwell of Dallas made the motion the House adopt the conference committee's report, already approved in the Senate, but Lewis offered a substitute motion.

Lewis said he wanted the report sent back to a joint panel with instructions from the House that Tarrant County commissioners and the county judge be deleted from the proposed raises. The raises for Tarrant officials were contained in a bill which

original Senate bill left the House, Tarrant County was not in the bill and during conference committee consideration, Tarrant County was added along with the mandatory feature.

Hull told members, "At one time the Tarrant County delegation favored this bill and I thought we would grant them (county officials) this so they won't have to come down here and ask for it."

He added, "The commissioners elected to serve the people will thank you."

Rep. Bill Hilliard said he was disappointed that delegation members had divided themselves over the issue, "but my people in Fort Worth who have elected me have told me in no uncertain terms they do not want any more pay increases."

He said, "They didn't send me here to vote my convictions . . . they want me to vote the conscience of my constituents."

As outlined in the conference committee's bill, the Tarrant County salary schedule would provide:

—\$28,800 a year for the county judge plus \$3,000 for serving on the county juvenile board.

- \$27,600 A YEAR for county commissioners.
- \$30,000 annually for the district attorney.
- \$27,600 a year for the tax assessor-collector.
- \$27,600 a year for probate, county court at law and county criminal court judges.
- \$24,000 annually for the county and district clerks.
- \$18,500 a year for the county treasurer.
- \$14,500 a year for peace justices and constables in Precincts 1, 2 and 3 and the Precinct 6 constable.

SPEAKING FOR THE Lewis motion not to accept the report, Sherman said he does not favor pay raises at this time for county commissioners "especially those who go around bad-mouthing legislator's pay increase proposals."

He said Tarrant County has served in the legislature who has "bad-mouthed our proposals to increase legislative pay — he ought to know better than that."

TARRANT PAY HIKE IN DOUBT

By PATRICK MARTINETTS
Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN—Proposed mandatory pay raises for Tarrant County officials apparently bit the dust today.

Rep. Ben Atwell of Dallas, House sponsor of a bill containing salary hikes for Dallas and Tarrant County officials, obtained permission to form a new conference committee to work on the measure.

Atwell earlier said when the

bill gets to a new committee he will attempt to remove the proposed salary increases for Tarrant County officials.

THE DEAN of the Tarrant County House delegation, Rep. Tommy Shannon of Fort Worth, backed away from the controversial pay raise plan for Tarrant officials and said flatly he will not support any move to bring the issue up for another vote.

And, Rep. Cordell Hull of Fort Worth, who has favored the pay increases, said as far as he is concerned the proposal is dead.

"After reading some of the statements elected officials made regarding the pay raises and after receiving a number of telegrams and letters I think this is not the time to make any changes in the pay," Shannon said.

"I will not vote to bring it

back up," he said, "and if I had known the officials' views before, my position on this would have been different."

Shannon said, "When a man says he doesn't want it (the raise), I am not about to force them . . ."

Rep. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis of Fort Worth said he has scrapped his plan to introduce a new bill giving "permissive" raises to the officials

but will continue to oppose the pay hikes as they are written in a House-Senate conference committee report already approved by the Senate.

Saturday, the House turned down the report after Lewis and four other Tarrant legislators succeeded in stalling House action on the proposition.

Hull and Shannon, along with Sen. Don Kennard of

Fort Worth, have sought passage of the raises.

Hull said today, "The people have spoken."

Kennard said he still favors the bill.

"I'm going to sit back and see what happens in the House of Representatives," Kennard said.

THE SENATOR stressed the additional pay from county funds proposed for district

judges was not "new."

Kennard pointed out the Senate already had approved such action in a bill by Sen. Mike McKool of Dallas which ran in the House.

With McKool's bill in trouble, Kennard said he asked Sen. Oscar Mauzy of Dallas if he could add the district judges' increase and then decided to include the other

Turn to Tarrant on Page 2

TUESDAY, MAY 25, 1971

RICHARDSON HITS GREEN, BENSON

Pay Raise Stand Held 'Hyocritical'

By Z. JOE THORNTON

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today called "hyocritical" County Judge Howard Green's and County Auditor Jack Benson's attitudes toward the county pay raise bill.

"They were opposed to having the county employes get 6 per cent pay raises this time

last year," Richardson said. "Now they want whopping pay raises for themselves."

RICHARDSON'S remarks this morning, made after the regular meeting of Commissioners Court, was the latest on the pay issue which, if passed by the legislature, would see 31 elected county officials get more than \$165,000 in salary boosts for the year.

Benson, when asked about Richardson's remarks, said, "That's not worthy of a comment."

Green was not immediately available for comment.

Richardson was referring to the refusal of Green last year to cast a deciding vote that would have given all county employes — elected and appointed — a 6 per cent cost-of-living hike.

MEMBERS OF the county employes' labor union, who do not legally have the right to bargain for salaries and benefits under state law, filed a lawsuit seeking the raise.

It was denied.

"If we had given it then, no one would have gone down (to Austin) to seek raises for themselves," Richardson said.

At the time the lawsuit was denied, Richardson warned that some county officials would seek legislative approval for their salary hikes.

"RIGHT NOW we have authority to approve pay raises

for elected county officials of up to 20 per cent," Richardson said.

"But not a single county official came to us . . . instead some of them went to Austin wanting an even bigger pay hike."

Neither Richardson nor Commissioner Dick Lewis, who also criticized Green and Benson, said they have urged that their salaries be increased. Nor would they say who has.

Several county officials have made numerous trips to Austin so far this year, and records of telephone calls from the county courthouse to

Austin show more calls to the capital city than usual.

RICHARDSON criticized Benson for saying that money is available to pay the officials' raises when "we're always hearing that there's no money for this or for that."

The outspoken commissioner also said newspaper coverage of the pay raise issue — which drew considerable local publicity, but none in Dallas where officials there are to receive similar pay hikes — has not been fair.

You (the Star-Telegram) ran an editorial criticizing us

Turn to Pay Raise on Page 2

Tarrant Pay Raise Bill Killed

Star-Telegram Austin Bureau

AUSTIN — The Tarrant County pay raise proposal was killed by a special joint conference committee here yesterday.

The proposal had drawn opposition from many county officials, including three commissioners — Dick Andersen, Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus.

House-Senate conferees struck the proposal from a bill which initially gave pay raises to Dallas County officials, State Sen. Don Kennard had added a rider giving raises to Tarrant officials also.

THE HOUSE earlier turned down the proposition. Rep. Gibson D. "Gib" Lewis led the fight against it.

Yesterday, Rep. Ben Atwell of Dallas, House sponsor of the bill giving raises to officials in both counties, obtained permission to form a new House-Senate joint conference committee to work out the measure.

Rep. Mike Moncrief, who joined with Lewis in fighting the Tarrant County portion of the act, was one of the new conferees.

"WE WANT Dallas to have the raises," Moncrief said. "But it is the wrong time for Tarrant County officials."

Rep. Tommy Shannon, who had supported the raises, withdrew his support for the increases, saying he changed his mind after reading statements by some elected officials regarding the pay increases and after receiving a number of telegrams and letters critical of the proposal.

"If I had known the officials' view before, my position on this would have been different. When a man says he doesn't want it (the raises), then I am not about to force them . . .," Shannon said.

Kennard said he still favors the increases.

New Phone System Will Start Monday for County Offices

JUN 14

There are going to be some new telephone numbers for the four buildings that make up the Tarrant County courthouse complex.

Starting Monday, all the numbers will be the same. 334-1111. That's the central number.

YOU'LL DIAL that number to get either the old courthouse building, the civil courts building, the criminal

courts building or the old criminal courts building.

You'll also be able to dial direct to different offices, something you can't do now. Beginning Monday operators working for the county won't say "courthouse" or "criminal courts building" or "District Attorney's office."

Instead they'll answer "county offices."

THE CHANGES are being made in the interest of efficiency, said Bill Serrault, division manager of Southwestern Bell Telephone Co.

The utility firm calls the new system "Centrex," meaning there's a central exchange instead of the various switchboards that have cropped up over the years as the courthouse and the number of its employees grew.

The different offices in the courthouse, for example, have nearly twice as many phones

as there are in the entire town of Haslet.

THEY HAVE 450 phones, which is 116 more than the community of Gordon has.

And they have nearly 100 more phones than Fort Worth has in city hall and its related offices.

Here's how the new phone set-up will work:

If you don't know the number of say, County Clerk

W. C. "Red" Cowen, you can dial 334-1111.

That'll give you the switchboard. Then the operator can ring Cowen for you.

IF YOU TAKE the trouble, though, to look in the new phone directory, which is being distributed now, you can find the Tarrant County section of the directory (Page 576) and see Cowen's number is 334-1195.

Since you know that number, there's no need to dial the 334-1111 number.

You can dial it directly.

It works the same way for all the other offices in the courthouse.

AS A CONVENIENCE, there is also a list of the most frequently called offices, including their new numbers, in the new directory.

The new system is going to

cost a little more than \$8,000 per month, considerably more than the average homeowner pays.

But then what home has 449 extensions?

Remember, though, the new system doesn't start until Monday.

Dialing the new number before then will get you a tape recorded message.

IT SAYS THE new number

doesn't go into effect until June 14.

It has taken more than three years to manufacture and install the new system.

Improved service might not be evident immediately as it will take callers time to learn the new system.

"But it shouldn't take too long," Serrault hopes.

In the meantime, adds County Auditor Jack Benson, "there's going to be a little confusion."

Friday Evening, June 11, 1971

Richardson to Ask OK On Como Street Jobs

Related Story on Page 4A

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today said he will formally ask Fort Worth City Council for permission to surface approximately five miles of unpaved city streets in several different areas, including Lake Como.

Richardson told reporters this morning that he is completing research for the proposed projects, and that it may be June 21 before he appears before the council.

In a related development, an informal poll of councilmen shows the city officials will probably accept the offer.

RICHARDSON, who estimates that materials for the project will cost about \$8,400, said streets in the Lake Como area will be the first to be surfaced if the project is approved.

Other areas included in the

proposal Richardson will make include:

—The part of the South Side that is in his precinct.

—Several blocks in the Central Avenue area.

—Several blocks in the Diamond Hill area, in Washington Heights and in Rosen Heights.

IN ALL, the proposed project will include more than 75 blocks.

Richardson said the streets will be resurfaced with two courses of crushed gravel and then sprayed with an asphalt top.

The streets would be built to county, not city, specifications.

Earlier this week, the question of paving in the Como

area drew heated response from Richardson because it was Commissioner Dick Andersen who proposed surfacing the streets on the city's West Side.

THE AREA is in Richardson's, not Andersen's, precinct.

This morning Andersen said he is pleased that Richardson has offered to do the street work.

"I will help him any way that I can," Andersen said.

Richardson said that if permission is given to construct the streets, he can probably complete the project before the end of the summer.

Tuesday Evening, June 15, 1971

Money Attracting County Attention

Money, as it sometimes does, is drawing the spotlight around the courthouse again these days.

First there is the question of whether the county's tax rate — that will be set next month — can be lowered.

THEN THERE was the awarding yesterday of a contract by county commissioners to a financial syndicate headed by Fort Worth National Bank for borrowing \$1.9 million through the issuance of capital improvement bonds.

And then there is the question of whether County Auditor Jack E. Benson will certify there is \$3,500 available to give to Fort Worth officials for a program to help 14 and 15-year-olds get jobs for the summer.

Commissioners also yesterday approved, on a split vote, the \$3,500 grant at the request of Mrs. Bertha Collins, a representative of the Mayor's Council on Youth.

Later in the day, however, Benson indicated that the "money isn't in the (county's) budget."

HE REFUSED further comment. Benson also would not say whether he would force commissioners to take him to court in an effort at forcing

him to authorize writing of the check.

Fort Worth National Bank, Republic National Bank of Dallas, Bank of America in San Francisco and First City National Bank of Houston submitted the lowest of a dozen bids received for the use of the nearly \$2 million.

Their bid was for an effective interest rate of 4.8461 per cent.

OVER A 20-year period, this means that the county will pay \$920,725 in interest for the use of the money to expand the county jail and to remodel offices in the old criminal courts building.

Benson said the interest rate is a good one. He said also that similar bonds in other areas of the country are drawing interest rates above 5 per cent.

There was one other question over taxes hanging around this morning.

Commissioners court, which sits three or four times a year as the county's tax equalization board, had its second meeting of the year yesterday afternoon.

IN CONTRAST with a June 7 meeting when nearly a dozen people showed up to protest higher tax valuations on their property, none came yesterday.

Tuesday Morning, June 15, 1971

IMPROVEMENT BONDS OK'D County Debt to Cost \$920,000 in Interest

Tarrant County taxpayers will spend more than \$920,000 in interest during the next 20 years to finance improvements for courthouse buildings.

That's how much it will cost the county to borrow \$1.9 million through the sale of permanent improvement bonds.

Commissioners Court Monday accepted bids for borrowing the money and of the dozen submitted, the lowest called for an effective net rate of 4.8461 per cent.

That bid was made by a syndicate composed of Fort Worth National Bank, Republic National Bank of Dallas,

Bank of America in San Francisco and First City National Bank of Houston.

County Auditor Jack Benson said late Monday that he is "proud of the interest rate" received.

He noted that a nationwide bond periodical said that officials from New York had to settle for an interest rate of nearly 5.1 per cent on bonds they sold last week.

Several of the bids received from eastern financial sources were for more than 5 per cent.

Money from the bond sale will be used to finance remodeling of the old criminal courts building and expansion of the county jail.

Tarrant Valuations Up by \$54.6 Million

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart today estimated that assessed value on property and improvements on the county's tax rolls increased by \$54.6 million for 1971.

Stewart, in a report filed with the state comptroller, said that the total amount of Tarrant County property subject to taxes is \$1,062,579,516.

The \$54,840,730 increase was brought about primarily, Stewart said, by new construction.

County Auditor Jack Benson will use the figures in determining what tax rate to recommend to county commissioners next month.

Commissioners Court in July will set the rate that presently is 82 cents per \$100 valuation.

Last year the increase was estimated at approximately the same, but later Stewart said the actual amount was close to \$80 million.

The figure, Stewart said, is a "conservative estimate."

He indicated that the actual figure, which will be determined in October, may be higher than the \$54 million.

Saturday Morning, June 12, 1971

COUNCIL TO GET RECOMMENDATION City Officials Mum on Paving Offers

By JACK SIMMONDS

City officials declined to comment Friday on offers by two county commissioners to pave some city streets but said a recommendation on the issue would be submitted to City Council in the near future.

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said Friday he would ask City Council for five miles of unpaved city streets including some in the Lake Como area.

The initial offer to do the paving in Lake Como was made by County Commissioner Dick Andersen who has subsequently been criticized for the gesture by Richardson.

Richardson accused Andersen of "playing politics" since Lake Como is in Richardson's district.

assessment paving projects are nearly exhausted. There will be no new money available until the city sells more bonds.

BONDS APPROVED for the purpose in the last capital improvement election Sept. 8 now have a legal cloud hanging over them.

The American Civil Liberties Union is sponsoring a suit challenging the dual voting procedure used by the city in the bond election. The votes of property owners and persons who had declared no property for taxation were separated. The ACLU claims this was a violation of the U.S. Constitution.

Until the suit is settled, the city can issue none of the bonds.

A major argument for permitting the county commissioners to pave city streets is that any type of surface would be better than the existing dirt streets.

"It doesn't make me any difference who does it," said Curtis Kirby, who has lived in Lake Como about 18 years. "It sure needs doing."

In addition to the Lake Como area, Richardson has proposed paving an area of the South Side in his precinct; several blocks in the Central Avenue area, and several in the Diamond Hill area in Washington Heights and Rosen Heights.

In all, Richardson proposes to pave more than 75 blocks.

He said the streets would be layered with two courses of crushed gravel and sprayed with asphalt.

City specifications call for curbing and guttering and a concrete topping.

Andersen said Friday he is pleased that Richardson has offered to do the work in Lake Como.

"I will help him in any way that I can," he said.

BOTH CITY Manager Rodger Line and Assistant City Manager Ralph Hardy were asked Friday what the official city attitude on the proposal would be.

Hardy said some recommendations would be forthcoming to the City Council but that he did not know at this time what they would be.

Line said he had some definite ideas on the subject but would not divulge them until a report is issued to the council.

One of the major problems in getting streets paved under the assessment program is

that many houses on unpaved streets are rented. Property owners do not want to pay their share of the paving costs — about one-half — although their tenants would like the convenience of paving.

CONSEQUENTLY, the landlords never initiate petitions for paving and nothing is done.

"We have been at a stalemate with the city on this for years," said one renter on a North Side street that is unpaved.

"The city won't pave the street because the house owners won't share in the cost. The city won't even let the county pave the streets because it might make somebody mad who helped pay to have his street paved. To me, that is ridiculous. Why would somebody in Tanglewood care if we have our streets paved out here?"

Teen-age Job Program Passed By Commissioners in Split Vote

County commissioners in a split vote today agreed to pay \$3,500 for a program to give jobs to underprivileged teenagers.

County Judge Howard Green cast what apparently was the deciding vote in approving the program that was first proposed about two weeks ago by Mrs. Bertha Collins, a Fort Worth city employee.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus voted against the allocation and Commissioner Dick Andersen did not vote although he indicated he was opposed to the program.

COMMISSIONERS George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis, along with Green, voted for the program.

Mrs. Collins, a representative of the Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity, said the Call-A-Teen Program will be for 14 and 15-year-olds.

About 300 will be in the program that will provide jobs for the rest of the summer.

Mrs. Collins said in addition to the county's contribution that \$4,112 will be provided by other sources.

Under the program, as outlined by Mrs. Collins, four offices will be set up to receive phone calls from persons wanting young people to work in and around their homes.

THE YOUNG people will be paid \$1.25 per hour.

Mrs. Collins noted that the 14 and 15-year-old age group is responsible for more than 1,400 crimes annually in the city.

Richardson said that he feels the program will be worthwhile "if we keep just one of these kids from going to jail or prison."

In making the motion to approve the grant, Richardson said that it would cost the county more than the \$3,500 to

house one person in county jail for a year.

ANDERSEN SAID he thinks the program is a good one but he questioned why Fort Worth, with an annual budget that he said was \$65 million, did not contribute anything.

Mebus said that he felt commissioners court was put in an embarrassing position by the request.

Monday Evening, June 14, 1971

F.W.N.B., 3 OTHERS Banks' Bid Low On County Bonds

A financial syndicate made up of Fort Worth National Bank and three other banks today was low bidder on buying \$1.9 million in bonds to be sold by the county.

The banks' bid was 4.8461 per cent.

The syndicate also includes Republic National Bank of Dallas, the Bank of America in San Francisco and First City National Bank of Houston.

Ten other bidders submitted higher rates.

The low bid is higher than the county had to pay several years ago for bonds sold for construction of the Tarrant County Convention Center and Turnpike Stadium.

On June 19, 1964, a Chicago bank syndicate, which included First National Bank of Fort Worth, was low bidder at 3.1131 per cent for a \$12 million bond issue.

About three years later the low bid on the sale of \$4.5 million in bonds was 3.6779 per cent.

Frank Medanich, bond agent with First Southwest Co., said the 4.8 per cent figure is a good one and that it "compares very favorably" in the current market with other bond issues for governmental agencies.

Money from the bond sale will go for enlarging the county jail and for remodeling of offices in the old criminal courts building.

Tuesday Morning, June 15, 1971

Richardson Hits Paving Proposal

By Z. JOE THORNTON
County Commissioner "Skeet" Richardson accused fellow Commissioner Dick Anderson of "running for re-election" in Anderson's offer to pave streets in Lake Como, which is in Richardson's precinct.

He said Anderson did not discuss his offer with him before making it.

"The first I knew about it was when I read it in yesterday evening's Star-Telegram," he said.

IN THE PAST, commissioners traditionally have maintained streets and roads only in rural areas and in small cities in the county.

It was Richardson who first broke this tradition by paving about 2½ miles of streets in Greenfield Acres, an addition annexed several years ago by Fort Worth.

City officials, at that time, said they did not have money to pave the streets, and Richardson's precinct employees did the work.

Shortly afterward, Richardson offered to pave every unpaved street in his precinct, made up largely of the northern portions of Fort Worth and Tarrant County.

"LOOKING BACK on that... Turn to Paving on Page 2

Tuesday Evening, June 8, 1971

Paving Bid Criticized By Official

From Page 1

now, I see that I made a mistake," Richardson said.

"I went through the proper channels, something that Anderson apparently didn't bother to do."

Jack Graham, director of public works for Fort Worth, told Richardson that his paving offer for the North Side was not acceptable to the city because of county specifications for street building would be used. County specifications are not as rigid as the city's.

Graham also told Richardson that the free paving for some parts of the city would conflict with the paving assessment program in which residents pay for half of the cost of paving the street.

LATER, Andersen offered to pave, and did, a section of Hulen Street which city officials said they could not afford to surface at that time.

In a written statement, Richardson noted that several times he had asked to pave streets in different parts of the city, including the Lake Como area.

"Some of these areas have never been paved and have been in continuous use for more than 100 years," he said.

Richardson said that a few weeks ago he talked to Stovall, City Manager Rodger Line and to other members of the council "about the possibility of a closer relationship with the city."

RICHARDSON said also that he "appreciates very much Andersen's generous offer as I am sure the city does."

"However, since Lake Como area is not in his jurisdiction, I would be willing to use his men and equipment and funds that he might have allocated in his road and bridge commitments to help me in this project if it is approved by the City of Fort Worth."

The Precinct 4 commissioner said also that he hopes the City Council and commissioners can lay out "clear guidelines" for the mutual benefit of both.

"It would seem unfair, for example, for the city to allow the county to spend thousands and thousands of dollars on Hulen Street and then disallow a \$400 or \$500 project in Lake Como or the North Side as has been done in the past."

Human Sword

Picketing Possible At TCCC During Closed Telecast

By JIM PALMER

The president of Tarrant County Humane Society Monday branded a scheduled closed-circuit telecast of live bullfights at the Tarrant County Convention Center "illegal and immoral" and threatened to picket the program Sunday.

John Burns said his organization opposed the telecast from Spain on two grounds: (1) The sport is illegal in this country; (2) It is being telecast in Fort Worth at a facility built with public funds.

"I FEEL THE telecast would be skirting the law, and it would make those responsible accessories to the fact," Burns said. "Even though the bullfights would originate in a place where they are legal, we feel showing them here would still be illegal."

Burns said members of his organization hoped to be on hand Sunday at the convention center to pass out flyers which, he said, "would reveal the truth about bullfighting." He also mentioned picketing as a means of demonstrating opposition to the program.

"WHAT IS really tragic is that the program, in its advertisements, appears to have the full prestige of the convention center and the county commissioners behind it. By showing at the convention center, the promoters seem to have the silent endorsement of these people."

Burns said his organization would "try to appeal on legal grounds to the people who could stop the telecast."

"We have recently written letters to Lou Owen (executive director of the center), the county commissioners, Congressman Jim Wright, the president of the National Humane Association and President Nixon."

High-Octane Gas OK'd For County

OWEN SAID late Monday he had received no communication from the Humane Society. "This is a nationally-known thing; it's not as if we're holding bullfights in the building. We're simply booking the program," said Owen.

"If I receive any claim as to the illegality of the telecast, my policy would be to take it to the district attorney's office and have them study the legal implication."

"I know this—if the program is not shown there will probably be legal ramifications. We have signed a good faith contract with Management Television Service out of New York."

OWEN ALSO took issue with the allegation that use of the convention center constituted a "silent endorsement" of bullfighting. "If we held the Republican Convention at the convention center I don't

Turn to Bullfights on Page 2

Commissioners Deny 6 Lower Tax Requests

County commissioners, sitting as the Tax Equalization Board for the first time this year, denied six requests Monday to lower 1971 valuations of rural property in prime development areas.

In all the cases, commissioners sustained the judgments of County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart.

In some cases, Stewart's valuations for tax purposes had tripled over last year.

The actions herald a change in the methods of assessing rural property in the county, particularly in the Mid-Cities area around the regional airport site and south of Arlington where the six protesters own property.

Stewart confirmed that he has taken under consideration this year the marketing potential of such land to greater extent than in the past.

He said that some property near the airport, now under construction, has been selling for \$10,000 an acre. In the past, much of the land has been assessed for tax purposes at \$100 an acre.

ASSESSMENT for tax purposes is generally about 30 per cent of the market value of the land, Stewart said.

Under Texas law, a person farming land that may be in a prime development area can apply for an agricultural exemption.

If he receives the exemption, he has to pay taxes only on the value of the land based on its agricultural productivity and not its market value.

Five of the six persons said they intend to keep farming the land they or their relatives own.

Commissioners instructed them to file for agricultural exemptions with Stewart, something that commissioners agreed has not been necessary in the past because of extremely low valuations.

Stewart said he has refused to grant agricultural exemptions in the past because of low valuations. He said he will consider each application in the future on its merits.

"I DON'T HAVE any alternative but to raise them (valuations)... I still think they are getting a good deal," said Stewart of the six persons to ask for decreases.

County Commissioner Dick Andersen told Stewart that he felt the low valuations "have been a rape to every homeowner in Fort Worth."

He said that he believes every person in the prime development areas will eventually sell their property, even though they may be farming it now.

Persons granted agricultural exemptions will have to pay taxes based on market value if they eventually sell the property.

Stewart said that property now being assessed of its market value will be carried on the tax rolls as such, even though an exemption is granted. When the property is sold, the owner must pay the taxes for the preceding three years based on market value, Stewart said.

In an unusual exchange, Andersen offered to buy—

Turn to Lower on Page 2

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Turn to Lower on Page 2

Tuesday Morning, June 8, 1971

Bullfights Draw Ire Of Society

Continued From Page 1

think anybody would accuse us of endorsing the party," Burns said he found out about the program only last week from a newspaper advertisement. "We plan to purchase an ad detailing our opposition, prior to the telecast," Burns said.

"It's simply ritualized killing of an animal... That bull never leaves the ring alive. It's a slow, painful death. Despite what Ernest Hemingway may have said, the risk to the matador is not great... The bull is doped up to begin with, and is in constant pain."

"WHETHER GOING to see the bullfight is voluntary or not, you're paying to see an inflicted, planned cruelty. We oppose it on both moral and legal grounds."

"Members of our organization protested to Channel 39 (KDTV) about its showing of Saturday night bullfights from Mexico. But I feel this is worse."

Kim Shurtleff, a student at Western Hills High School, last week began a petition campaign to prevent telecast of the bullfight.

"IT WAS a personal thing. How can it be illegal here and still be shown to an audience here? The idea of a bullfight sickens me."

"I used to see the bullfights from Mexico on TV. I never want to see another one."

"I only got about 20 signatures. I figured there wasn't time to do much more, so several of us composed letters to the people who could prevent the telecast," said Shurtleff.

Commissioner R. F. (Dick) Lewis said he has received no letters or petitions. "I don't know if it would be illegal or not. If it is illegal, action should be taken to stop it."

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Turn to Bullfights on Page 2

County Puts Halt to Use Of 'Regular'

County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith's plan to save an estimated \$10,000 annually by buying less expensive gasoline was quashed Monday by an order of Commissioners Court.

The county for the past two months has experimented with low-lead regular gasoline, instead of the premium grade, for vehicles owned by the county or operated by county employees.

Some of the gasoline is dispensed from a pump behind the Criminal Courts Building. Some of it goes into automobiles owned by the county employees who presumably are on county business.

Records show, however, that the peak period for the pump is Friday afternoon.

One commissioner said the reason for the change was because employees have complained that the lower grade gasoline caused engine deposits and makes the cars "run bad." He also said that Sheriff Lon Evans said the gas had had an adverse effect on the operation of patrol cars.

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LAKE COMO STREET WORK

City May OK County Paving

A poll of city councilmen Monday indicated the city may change its policy to permit paving of city streets by Tarrant County commissioners.

The poll was taken in response to an offer by County Commissioner Dick Andersen to "pave all of the unpaved streets in Lake Como free of charge."

If the council goes along with the proposal officially, it will represent a turnabout in the policy established by the previous City Council.

Last year, County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson paved some streets in a rental neighborhood on the city's North Side and was willing to pave more but was stopped by city officials.

The policy at that time was that the city should pave streets to its more rigorous standards, with curbs and gutters, through assessment paving projects.

Under this system, the city pays a portion of the paving costs and the balance is assessed adjacent property owners.

Adjacent property owners, most of whom rented their houses, were unwilling to support an assessment paving petition.

Some city officials and councilmen said they believed allowing the county to pave the city streets would not be fair to persons who had paid assessments for paving in the past.

Andersen said he would provide the same kind of paving as is used for county roads, if council agrees to the Como project.

"It would not exactly meet city specifications, but it would last 25 years," said Andersen.

"It would be better than what they have out there if it only lasted 10 years," said Councilwoman Margaret McDonald Rimmer Monday.

"I'm with him," said Mayor Pro Tem Ted C. Peters of Andersen's offer.

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Sale of Liquor at 'Port OK'd

Commissioners court today unanimously approved the sale of mixed drinks at the Regional Airport when it is completed.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson moved that the airport be allowed to sell the alcoholic drinks at the airport even though it is in a "dry" area.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus seconded the motion, which was then approved without discussion.

Commissioners did not approve the resolution calling for the drinks last week after Mebus and several other commissioners questioned the legality of the move.

The legislature during its last session authorized commissioners here to adopt the resolution that provides for the sale of mixed drinks only in the airport and its terminal and related buildings.

In other action, commissioners approved the hiring of John W. Tarlton as deputy constable in precinct 6. He succeeds George W. Weatherly, who resigned under pressure from city officials in White Settlement.

Richardson May Seek State Office

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson is considering making a statewide race for comptroller.

"I think that the people are sick and tired of the way their government in Austin is being run," Richardson said today.

"I think we need somebody there with young thinking." ROBERT S. Calvert, the incumbent comptroller, has said he will retire.

No one has yet announced for the post which oversees how state money is spent and makes sure that it is spent for what the legislature intended it to be spent on.

Referring to the Securities and Exchange Commission stock scandal in which several top governmental leaders, including Gov. Preston Smith and House Speaker Gus Mutscher, have been implicated, Richardson said he feels taxpayers are entitled to honest representation.

"Look at the man appointed by Mutscher to the second most important job in the state," said Richardson, referring to State Rep. Bill Heatley, chairman of the House appropriations committee.

"HE'S BEEN under investigation by several grand juries over the years and he's been mentioned in the stock scandal. Yet, he continues to be reappointed as chairman of the appropriations committee."

the appropriations committee."

Heatley has not been indicted by any of the grand juries that have studied his activities.

Heatley, along with Smith, Mutscher and others, reportedly made large profits in the stock transaction involving Frank Sharp, who last week received a probation sentence for violation of federal banking and securities laws.

Richardson served eight years in the legislature as a representative from Tarrant County.

HE STEPPED down three years ago to become county commissioner of Precinct 4, representing the north and northwest sections of the county.

While in the legislature, Richardson was a member of the state affairs committee, the banks and banking committee and the insurance committee.

He was the author of the state's minimum wage bill and he led the fight that abolished a proposed merit rating system for automobile insurance.

Richardson, who said he is being urged by friends throughout the state to run, also was a major opponent of several banking bills while he was in Austin.

ANDERSEN MAY ADD CITY JOBS

Andersen May Add Area Street Work

From Page 1 as soon as the contract is signed.

ANDERSEN, who has long urged more cooperation between the county and other governmental entities, estimates that the two cities would save more than 50 percent of what they are now having to pay for keeping up street departments.

"In Forest Hill, the council is faced with having to buy about \$200,000 worth of equipment," he said.

"They can save this since they would not need any equipment by our doing the work for them."

Andersen said he would not have to hire any additional county employees to handle the city street program.

"YOU CAN see how this could cut out the duplication of equipment," he said.

"Instead of buying three road graders as we have to do now, just one would have to be purchased."

Andersen said that he may also talk to officials from other cities about their also entering into the co-operative venture.

Several commissioners, including Andersen, have said recently that they want to develop closer ties with city officials and all four of the commissioners either have done or may do some street building and street maintenance in Fort Worth.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL amendment that Andersen intends to make use of provides that one governmental entity can contract with another for services.

The county tax office for several years has contracted with several suburban school districts and city governments to assess and collect their taxes.

This program began long before the amendment was passed.

Suburb Streets In Plan

Commissioner Dick Andersen today said he is considering a program in which his county employees will maintain city streets in Benbrook and Forest Hill.

"This program would probably save the two cities \$150,000 per year," Andersen said.

Using county equipment and his Precinct 1 employees, Andersen estimated that the two cities would pay approximately \$100,000 annually for the service.

THE PROGRAM would avoid duplication of equipment and manpower, the commissioner said.

"I have talked with the mayors of the two cities, and they both seem real interested in this," said Andersen.

The commissioner this morning instructed County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan to prepare a contract between the cities and county.

If the contract is approved and signed by the respective officials, this would be the first such agreement here made possible by the passage three years ago of Amendment 11 to the state constitution.

Andersen said he expects prompt action by the cities and said his men will take over the street maintenance

Suburbs Officials Back Street Plan

Two suburban city managers said Friday they were pleased with a plan by County Commissioner Dick Andersen under which the two cities would contract with the county for maintaining streets within the city limits.

Andersen said Friday the program would save the cities of Forest Hill and Benbrook \$150,000 per year by using county equipment and his Precinct 1 employees.

He said the two cities would pay approximately \$100,000 annually for the service.

"In Forest Hill, the council is faced with having to buy about \$200,000 worth of equipment," he said.

"They can save this since they would not need any equipment by our doing the work for them," he said.

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Andersen said that he may also talk to officials from other cities about a similar arrangement.

He has long advocated more cooperation between the county and other governmental entities.

IF THE contract is approved and signed by the respective city and county officials, it would be the first such agreement here made possible by a constitutional amendment three years ago permitting government agencies to contract with each other.

"He's (Andersen) got the people and the equipment and can handle it better than we can," Jett said. "He's been helping us in the past and has done a real fine job for us."

Jett said the mayor, who was out of town Friday, and Andersen had been discussing the proposal for a couple of months.

"If we could have a better street program than we have for less or even the same amount of money we would take a look at it and probably approve of it," Jett said.

Pierce said, "Dick (Andersen) agreed it's the time to start to do something (on co-operating) rather than just talk about it."

He said the program would provide better quality for less money.

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He said the program would provide better quality for less money.

ANDERSEN said he expects quick approval by the cities and said his men will take over the street maintenance as soon as the contract is signed.

He estimated the cities would save more than 50 percent of what they are now paying for street maintenance.

"In Forest Hill, the council is faced with having to buy about \$200,000 worth of equipment," he said.

"They can save this since they would not need any equipment by our doing the work for them," he said.

Andersen said he would not have to hire any additional county employees to handle the city program.

"You can see how this could cut out the duplication of equipment," he said. "Instead of buying three road graders as we have to do now, just one would have to be purchased."

Andersen said that he may also talk to officials from other cities about a similar arrangement.

He has long advocated more cooperation between the county and other governmental entities.

Commissioners Delay Decision On Sale of Drinks at Airport

Commissioners Court today delayed for a week a decision on whether to permit the sale of mixed drinks at the regional airport when it is opened.

Three of the five members of the court expressed reservations over the legislation that would permit sale of the drinks without a vote of the people who live in that area, which now is legally dry.

The legislation, called "strange" by Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson, provides that mixed drinks — but not beer or wine — can be sold in the terminal of the airport being built near Grapevine.

cials) can come down to Highway 183 and put up a cocktail lounge."

Morgan and a representative of the airport board, John Thompson, said that the legislation provides only that mixed drinks can be sold in the "area actually encompassed by the terminal buildings."

THIS apparently would rule out any lounges being built on any of the 18,000 acres that the airport is being constructed on except at the terminal.

Richardson said he questions whether the constitution was circumvented by the legislature when it passed the enabling legislation.

"It's strange," he said. "You usually get beer before you get mixed drinks on this type thing. They've left out the beer altogether."

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Andersen Criticizes Transfer of Funds

County Commissioner Dick Andersen criticized the shuffling of county right-of-way funds into the road and bridge fund and said Friday he wants to look further into the matter.

The procedure, in effect, provides more money for the county's general fund, which is sustaining the debt service and cost overruns on the Tarrant County Convention Center. It began before either Andersen or County Auditor Jack Benson were in office.

Andersen's comments came after Benson notified commissioners that the procedure, begun in 1966, should be kept for this year.

Benson recommended that the county tax rates, to be set next month, remain the same as they are now. That means the general fund rate would be 80 cents per \$100 valuation, the road and bridge rate eight cents and the right-of-way rate 29 cents.

There will be an estimated deficit of \$1,028,797 in the road and bridge fund under the recommended tax structure, Benson noted. The estimated deficit would be slightly smaller than the deficit for last year.

The deficit would have to be replaced by right-of-way money, according to the present tax structure.

Andersen also urged Benson to change some accounting procedures of the office, such as placing the operations of the purchasing agent's office and the county's department of public works in the general fund.

Presently, the operations are included in the road and bridge budget.

"Let's get everything out in the open because now it's all hidden," Andersen said.

Benson said he is estimating \$70 million in new property will have been added to the county's tax rolls this year. The commissioners this year are going along with the numerous increased valuations of property by Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart in prime development areas.

In the past, commissioners

have generally set tax rates recommended by the auditor, although earlier this year, they expressed hope that the rates could be lowered.

Still pending before them is a request to raise the tax rate for the Tarrant County Hospital District five cents per \$100 valuation.

District Judges Will Get \$2,000 Raise in Pay

District judges, who earlier this week authorized pay raises of \$3,000 for most of the court reporters, will themselves receive a \$2,000-per-year pay boost.

The raises for the judges, which also will affect domestic relations court judges here, are contained in the state appropriations bill signed earlier this month by Gov. Preston Smith.

THE SALARY hikes are effective Sept. 1, the beginning of the state's fiscal year. The increases will mean

that the state pays each district judge \$22,000 per year instead of \$20,000.

Not affected by the increases is the county's contribution of \$8,000 to each of the four criminal district judges and the six district court judges.

This will mean that district judges now will receive \$30,000 per year, a figure \$2,000 lower than they had earlier sought through an increase in the county's appropriation — a measure defeated because county commissioners would have received

raises of more than \$4,000 per year.

BECAUSE THE salaries of the county's four domestic relations court judges are tied to the total made by district judges, their salaries also will be raised to the \$30,000 per year level.

All that money, however, comes from the county's general fund and none of it from the state.

During the last two sessions of the Legislature, there have been efforts to get the state to pay the bulk of the domestic

relations court judges, as well as having them covered by the judicial retirement system.

Both efforts failed, however.

SALARIES OF court reporters were raised earlier this week from \$11,500 per year to \$14,500.

Their salaries could have been boosted by the judges to \$16,500.

District judges have been receiving regular raises, while court reporters have not received one since 1963.

County Tax Policy Retained Despite Questions

By Z. JOE THORNTON A majority of Commissioners Court agreed today they will continue a tax-collecting practice involving a special right-of-way fund that they concede is a betrayal of the voters' confidence.

The practice is one in which some monies collected for the right-of-way tax are diverted to the county's road and bridge fund.

The practice was begun in 1966 and since then more than \$3 million has been shifted from the right-of-way (ROW) fund to the road and bridge fund.

"CLEARLY, THE funds ought to be kept separate," said Commissioner Dick Lewis, the only member of Commissioners Court who was on the governing body when the practice was begun.

"It is a betrayal of the public's trust. Yet, we were told this was the only way we could get the (Tarrant Coun-

ty) convention center finished.

"That's why this was started."

Other commissioners agreed that they wish there were some other way to collect the necessary taxes.

County Auditor Jack E. Benson said there isn't.

"I didn't start this," said Benson, who has been in the post for about two years.

"IT WAS HERE when I came, so if there is anything wrong with it, neither I, nor the present (commissioners) court should be blamed."

The county auditor at the time the practice was begun was J. M. "Star" Williams, long acknowledged as the dean of county government finances.

At that time, in 1966, the convention center was almost completed but construction costs had been higher than expected and the county needed more than \$500,000 to finish it.

WILLIAMS SAID the bank agreed to honor an overdraft for the amount to cover the finishing costs.

Then, the retired auditor recalls he met with leaders of both Fort Worth newspapers to explain the problem to them and to describe the agreed-to solution.

"There was never any intention of betraying any confidence or of trying to pull off anything on anybody," he said.

"The law (which provides for the ROW fund) states that money collected (from the special tax) can go to constructing and maintaining farm-to-market and lateral roads."

He referred a questioner to the state law that sets up the

fund. That article, 704a, states that:

"THE FUNDS placed in the farm-to-market and lateral road fund shall be under the jurisdiction and control of the commissioners court of said county and all or part of said fund may be used in cooperation with the State Highway Dept. in acquiring right-of-way and in constructing and maintaining farm-to-market and lateral roads."

Williams said a lawyer in the attorney general's office agreed with him that the money could be transferred from the ROW fund to the road and bridge fund.

At the same time, the agreement was made to shift some of the money received from the ROW tax, commissioners lowered drastically the amount collected for servicing the road and bridge fund.

In 1965, 17 cents per \$100 valuation was collected for

County Tax Plan To Stay in Effect

From Page 1

road and bridge tax remained at 2 cents. In 1970, it was raised to the present 8 cents per \$100.

THE AMOUNTS transferred from the ROW tax varied during that period. In 1968, 9 cents was transferred, a year later, 22 cents was shifted and last year when the ROW tax was raised to 29 cents, 17 cents was moved to the road and bridge fund.

Benson said that in dollar amounts, this meant that of the \$2,126,000 collected last year from the ROW tax, some \$1,213,000 went to the road and bridge fund.

He said it is too early to say what amount will have to be transferred next year to maintain the road and bridge fund, which annually requires more than \$2.25 million.

Voters in 1962 approved the levying of a tax of up to 30 cents per \$100 valuation for the purchase of right-of-way.

Benson suggests that possibly the name of the tax is incorrect, that instead of being called a right-of-way tax, that it could more accurately be called a lateral road fund.

WHATEVER it is called, the tax is not a particularly broad-based one.

The first \$2,000 valuation of a homestead, for instance, is exempted from taxation by the ROW fund.

Thus corporations and large businesses pay the bulk of the ROW tax.

All property on the tax rolls is taxed for both the road and bridge fund and for the county's general fund.

Commissioners can set the road and bridge tax rate at up to 15 cents, 7 cents more than it is now.

The total county tax rate is now 38 cents per \$100 valuation, including the ROW tax of 29 cents. Eighty cents of that amount goes to the general fund.

The maximum that could be assessed is 36 cents.

As of yesterday, Benson said, there was about \$1.5 million on deposit drawing interest in the ROW fund.

over the purchase of all right-of-way. It passed, through the proposed gasoline tax increase, but was vetoed by Gov. Smith.

"Then, too, it's possible that the federal government might take over more of the right-of-way costs, we just don't know."

EVERY THOUGH there is the question of the way the funds are shifted, Benson said, "I don't know of any other major metropolitan county that is in as good financial shape as we are."

"Every other (major) entity has had to issue bonds for right-of-way purchase. We've always had the money."

Benson refused to speculate as some commissioners have, that bonds might have to be sold for the cost of buying land when and if the proposed Southwest Freeway is approved.

Right-of-way costs alone have been estimated at between \$20 million and \$30 million.

The auditor said that transferring from the ROW tax to the road and bridge fund will have to be done for several years to come.

COST OF paying off bonds for the convention center run between 5 and 17 cents of each 88 cents collected by the county for the general and road and bridge funds, he said.

Bonds for the major portion of the money borrowed, \$12 million, to pay for the center, will not be paid off until 1994.

A smaller bond issue of \$4 million, will not be paid off until three years later, 1987.

It's as Commissioner Lewis said:

"Maybe it really doesn't matter what you call it, the tax is still there and it's still the overburdened taxpayer who has to come up with the money."

THIS WOULD mean, he said, that the county would purchase up to \$2 million worth of right-of-way, since the state matches funds for major streets and highways.

Downside to be made upon the fund are uncertain, Benson said.

"We don't know what the state and federal governments will do," he said.

"They (state lawmakers) come into this last session of the legislature and taking

Skeet Fails to Back Job-Trimming Plans

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson would not say "no" Tuesday to County Judge Howard Green's job-cutting proposals, but he did not give a whole-hearted "yes," either.

Green earlier Tuesday told reporters he would recommend at Commissioners Court's July 7 meeting that a three-man committee be named to study the feasibility of the county's contracting for janitorial service.

He also said he favored elimination of four of the county's nine peace justices and four of the constables attached to those JP's precincts.

Green said he would not favor firing any of the approximately 50 custodial employees now on the county's payroll, but he would hope that such employees would not be replaced, once they resign or retire, he said.

if around-the-clock service were provided by the sheriff's office with a patrol car. "I don't know whether you're going to save much at all on that," he remarked.

Richardson also said that commissioners are going to have to redistrict "the all mixed-up" JP precinct lines before they think about consolidation.

"We need to take a study of feelings in the rural areas," he continued. "The small claims court, such as the JPs, they get things like hot checks processed without the merchant having to wrestle with the processes of bureaucracy."

"I FEEL WE COULD do away with them without suffering too much," said Green. He would not suggest at which ones "ought to be done away with," however.

State law provides that there must be at least one JP in each commissioner's precinct. Two JPs that Green said must remain are the two in downtown's JP Precinct 1, since they have by far the heaviest workload.

THE PROPOSALS for contracting for janitorial service and elimination of certain peace justices are not new. Green urged that a janitor's service be used when he entered office in 1967.

At the same time Green discussed the JP situation Tuesday, this term's grand jury was issuing a report calling for consolidation of peace justice courts.

"We further recommend that an appropriate system of 'checks and balances' be established by the county auditor to determine the benefit gains from these courts," the grand jury's report stated.

Green said his proposals could save taxpayers \$165,000 annually, an estimate that Richardson questioned. However, Richardson said the proposals "still are worthy of looking at."

"IN REGARD to the JPs and constables, it would just be a transfer of responsibilities from one elected office to another elected office, it seems to me," said Richardson.

"These constables operate a double function. Not only are they process servers, but they are also legal law officers that are needed in the county's rural areas," he said.

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Neither proposal is new. Both have been put forward before, but for one reason or another have never been accomplished. But, as Judge Green suggests, the growing expense of all government and certain or prospective increases in taxation make this a propitious time for action. The changes should appeal to the taxpayers, for they are in the direction of economy and probably of greater efficiency. Judge Green estimates that combined they would lower county costs by \$165,000 a year.

Under our present court setup there is still need for justices of the peace, but those in outlying areas are something of an anachronism, especially in an urban county. Their operations have been the frequent source of dispute and controversy, and they are scarcely models of what our judicial system ought to be. Only last year were they removed from the outdated fee system and placed on year-

ly salaries. This is a more satisfactory method of compensation, but it is also more costly to the county.

The law requires the county to have at least four justice precincts, but it is certain that the work of those that would be eliminated could be handled amply by the five that would remain.

The courthouse janitorial corps also has been the subject of much questioning and dispute. It is widely regarded as a haven for political appointees of the county commissioners, and its prowess with mop and broom has never earned for it the name of Mr. Clean.

Judge Green's suggestion is not for abrupt elimination of these custodians, but for appointment of a three-man committee to determine the feasibility, from the standpoint of cost and results, of contracting for cleanup services. Present holders of the jobs would not, under the proposal, be fired, but shifted to other suitable jobs or their places left vacant as they retire.

These would not be major changes in county government, but they are nonetheless worthwhile. Reform in county government comes slowly, and changes that would save the taxpayers money without loss of efficiency are rare indeed.



Her last 'hello'

Velma Tankersley, who has one of the best-known voices in town, retires today as switchboard operator at county courthouse. A post she has held for 34 years, Velma is giving up the telephone receiver for a fishing pole. Courthouse workers gave her a party today in County Probate Court.

3 Commissioners Voice Doubts About Reduction of Jobs

By Z. JOE THORNTON

Three of the county's four commissioners today indicated they are opposed to or seriously question a job-cutting proposal made yesterday by County Judge Howard Green.

Green proposed the abolishing the positions of at least four peace justices and four constables. He also recommended that courthouse custodians be assigned other jobs.

Another county employee, Garfield W. Thompson, charged that Green "slapped us in the face" by his suggestion.

THOMPSON, a courthouse custodian, is also president of the county's labor union and is a Democratic precinct chair.

could be realized if his proposals are accepted.

"THAT IS completely unrealistic," said Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today.

"He said that the janitors would be assigned to other jobs in the courthouse and that their salaries would continue. But then, he will have to pay more money to the janitor service.

"How can you save money by hiring more people?" Commissioners Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus also noted much the same argument in their opposition to the proposals.

ALL THREE commissioners also said they are opposed

MEBUS ALSO called for the appointment of a larger committee, and he suggested that a second committee might be created to study whether some JPs and constables should be eliminated.

Both Richardson and Mebus said they felt that County Auditor Jack Benson should not be on the committee because, as Mebus said, "he's already got his mind made up."

Several county officials, including County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen said they are opposed to having a janitorial service rather than the county-paid custodians.

"A lot of those janitors that the services pick up are just

temporary employees."

Richardson said also that the proposal to do away with some of the peace justices and constables is probably ill-advised since they do a lot of work including law enforcement, that most people don't think about.

Lewis agreed, and Mebus suggested that possibly the presidents of the Fort Worth-Tarrant County and Arlington bar associations and a foreman of the grand jury should be named to a committee to

would have to be hired if the constables are done away with.

"The hiring of additional people, which would have to include at least six sheriff's deputies and the purchase of several new automobiles, would outweigh any savings," Richardson said.

ALL THREE commissioners also said they doubted — as Green suggested — that they could find jobs for the displaced custodians.

Thompson said he believed that Green was trying to sell the taxpayers a bill of goods.

He said also that he had strongly campaigned for Green last year but "now I

County Employees' Pay a Step Ahead of Inflation, Study Shows

By JOHN LUMPKIN

The hue and cry across the country among local government employees is for more money to feed the kids, buy new cars and keep ahead of the bill collectors.

Tarrant County's employees sometimes have been no exception, although they haven't taken to throwing away the keys to drawbridges or prom-

oting massive, quasi-legal "sick-ins."

Maybe one of the reasons is that pay raises for them over the past five years have been running ahead of inflation, ahead of raises in the private business sector and, in some instances, ahead of raises for city employees here.

At least, an unofficial survey shows such is the case. County employe raises, ap-

proved by county commissioners and department heads, have been:

- 1967, \$20 a month.
- 1968, \$20 a month for all employees whose salary was less than \$10,000 a year.
- 1969, a raise at the first of the year and a raise at the middle of the year which gave a combined total of 12 per cent a year.
- 1970, about a 4 per cent hike on the average under institution of the job classification system.
- 1971, merit increases un-

der the classification system and an across-the-board 6 per cent hike for non-elected personnel.

Interpretive

County Auditor Jack Benson said this adds up to a 42 per cent increase in salaries of the average county employe between Dec. 31, 1966, and the present.

ELECTED officials probably will be quick to point out that their salaries proportionately have not been raised that much by the legislature, since the legislature failed to

pass a proposed pay raise bill this past session.

In the past five years, county elected officials have received, on the average, about 30 per cent in pay hikes from Austin lawmakers.

Meanwhile, district and county court judges voted to raise the pay of court reporters \$3,000 a year about a 26 per cent hike since 1967 — even though they were

allowed to give \$5,000 increases.

The judges said the increases "were in line" with increases of other county employes.

However, one source at the courthouse could have given the average employe's viewpoint when he said:

"FORTY-TWO PER cent of not much is still not much and 30 per cent of a lot (the officials' raises) is going to be a whole lot."

Asked to select a typical county employe, Benson said a clerical worker in the county's huge record-keeping departments would do.

His office compiled salary figures of five such employes, choosing those who have maintained the same jobs during the five-year period and who were not awarded any special raises by commissioners before the event of the classification system.

The classification system provides for merit and longevity increases, something for which the employes were at the mercy of commissioners before.

Of the five employes Benson studied, the lowest paid in 1966 made \$325 monthly and now makes \$502. The highest paid in 1966 made \$300 monthly and presently receives \$552.

U. S. DEPARTMENT of Labor statistics for Fort Worth show that a clerk typist here averaged \$351 monthly in November 1966 and \$463.67 in October 1970. This position's pay was increased 32 per cent in that time.

Benson described the five persons he studied as "clerk typists."

Between October 1970 and the present, salaries in the U.S. have increased about 4 1/2 per cent. This, added to the 32 per cent, still would be below what Benson's typical county employe has gained in the past five years.

A City of Fort Worth employe in compatible circumstances has been given hikes of "between 25 and 30 per cent" during the past five years, City Personnel Director Frank Priore estimates.

Or, it may mean that there will be no such request this year, as there has been in the past. Last year's request sparked a lawsuit and, according to one account, "a continuing controversy that's had more dramatic turns than 'Dark Shadows.'"

"We're in a belt-tightening period," freshman Commissioner Jerry Mebus said recently. "The voters told us in the bond issue that we ought to economize and that's what we're trying to do."

He said "the pay situation should settle down" in the next few months. "We're asking the department heads to go a little easier on it," he said.

City employes have had three across-the-board, 5 per cent "cost-of-living" increases since early 1967 and also hikes under the city's comprehensive classification program in 1969.

OFFICIALS SAY that inflation runs about 5 per cent a year. This would mean that average county employes have gained several steps on inflation since 1966.

One thing, however, that only county employes always must have in the back of their minds is politics.

Even though commissioners and other elected department heads say they no longer go by the spoils system, some patronage still exists at the county level.

County jobs are not protected by civil service and it is questionable whether commissioners will adopt such a plan in the immediate future.

At the time the classification system was instituted, commissioners said it was the first step toward ending patronage. In many cases, the system generally has worked to that end, although commissioners still have the right to approve or disapprove step increases.

WHAT DOES all this mean?

It probably means that commissioners will turn down any requests for across-the-board raises when budget time rolls around in December.

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Posts From

From Page 1

auditor, a district judge and a Tarrant County businessman.

GREEN SAID that if the committee finds the contractual plan workable he believes the service could be implemented by Sept. 1. He said also that it

Decision Leaves TCU 'Hopeful'

By JIM DAVIS

In light of yesterday's diverse Supreme Court decisions on government support

By Green

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County Judge Howard Green today called for doing away with four of the county's nine peace justices and four of the constables assigned to those precincts.

The county judge estimated that as much as \$165,000 a year could be saved if Commissioners Court adopts that and another proposed reform.

GREEN SAID he will formally make his recommendations to commissioners at their next meeting, July 7.

In those suggestions, he also will ask that a three-man committee be appointed to study the feasibility of replacing the county-paid custodians with a contracted janitorial service.

There are about 50 custodians working now in the four-building courthouse complex. The move, Green said, could save as much as \$100,000 yearly.

UNDER HIS plan, no one would be fired.

"There would be a gradual phasing out," he said. "The men would be transferred either to work in the precinct garages or courthouse offices and possibly at the Tarrant County Convention Center."

As the men retire, their jobs would not be filled. By contracting with a janitorial service, Green said he hopes that "we would have a cleaner, more attractive courthouse."

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Turn to Green on Page 2

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JOB CUTS PROPOSED

Monitor Now Starts Series

Savings Outlined By Green

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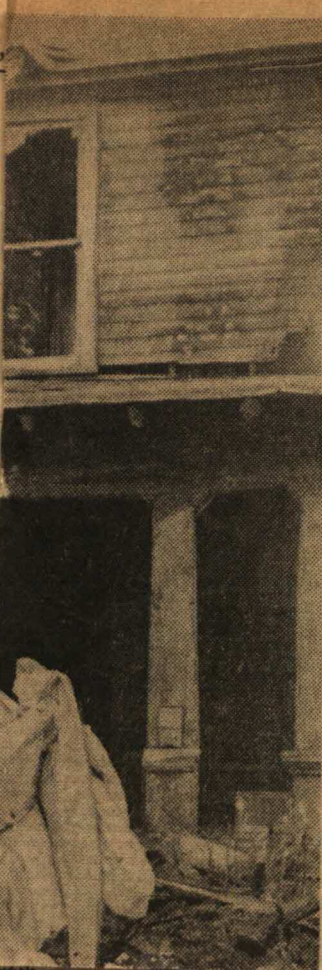
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could be realized if his proposals are accepted.

"THAT IS completely unrealistic," said Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today.

"He said that the janitors would be assigned to other jobs in the courthouse and that their salaries would continue. But then, he will have to pay more money to the janitor service.

"How can you save money by hiring more people?"

Commissioners Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus also noted much the same argument in their opposition to the proposals.

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MEBUS ALSO called for the appointment of a larger committee, and he suggested that a second committee might be created to study whether some JPs and constables should be eliminated.

Both Richardson and Mebus said they felt that County Auditor Jack Benson should not be on the committee because, as Mebus said, "he's already got his mind made up."

Several county officials, including Boorman and County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen said they are opposed to having a janitorial service rather than the county-paid custodians.

"A lot of those janitors that the services pick up as just

temporary employes . . ." said Boorman. "These people we have now have been on the job for years and are absolutely trustworthy," he added.

RICHARDSON said also that the proposal to do away with some of the peace justices and constables is probably ill-advised since they do a lot of work including law enforcement, that mist people don't think about."

Lewis agreed, and Mebus suggested that possibly the presidents of the Fort Worth-Tarrant County and Arlington bar associations and a foreman of the grand jury should be named to a committee to

would have to be hired if the constables are done away with.

"The hiring of additional people, which would have to include at least six sheriff's deputies and the purchase of several new automobiles, would outweigh any savings," Richardson said.

ALL THREE commissioners also said they doubted — as Green suggested — that they could find jobs for the displaced custodians.

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He said also that he had strongly campaigned for Green last year but "now I

County Employees' Pay a Step Ahead of Inflation, Study Shows

By JOHN LUMPKIN

The hue and cry across the country among local government employes is for more money to feed the kids, buy new cars and keep ahead of the bill collectors.

Tarrant County's employes sometimes have been no exception, although they haven't taken to throwing away the keys to drawbridges or prom-

oting massive, quasi-legal "sick-ins."

Maybe one of the reasons is that pay raises for them over the past five years have been running ahead of inflation, ahead of raises in the private business sector and, in some instances, ahead of raises for city employes here.

At least, an unofficial survey shows such is the case. County employe raises, ap-

proved by county commissioners and department heads, have been:

—1967, \$20 A month.

—1968, \$20 a month for all employes whose salary was less than \$10,000 a year.

—1969, a raise at the first of the year and a raise at the middle of the year which gave a combined total of 12 per cent a year.

—1970, about a 4 per cent hike on the average under institution of the job classification system.

—1971, merit increases un-

Interpretive

der the classification system and an across-the-board 6 per cent hike for non-elected personnel.

County Auditor Jack Benson said this adds up to a 42 per cent increase in salaries of the average county employe between Dec. 31, 1966, and the present.

ELECTED officials probably will be quick to point out that their salaries proportionately have not been raised that much by the legislature, since the legislature failed to

pass a proposed pay raise bill this past session.

In the past five years, county elected officials have received, on the average, about 30 per cent in pay hikes from Austin lawmakers.

Meanwhile, district and county court judges voted to raise the pay of court reporters \$3,000 a year about a 26 per cent hike since 1967 — even though they were

allowed to give \$5,000 increases.

The judges said the increases "were in line" with increases of other county employes.

However, one source at the courthouse could have given the average employe's viewpoint when he said:

"FORTY-TWO PER cent of not much is still not much and 30 per cent of a lot (the officials' raises) is going to be a whole lot."

Asked to select a typical county employe, Benson said a clerical worker in the county's huge record-keeping departments would do.

His office compiled salary figures of five such employes, choosing those who have maintained the same jobs during the five-year period and who were not awarded any special raises by commissioners before the event of the classification system.

The classification system provides for merit and longevity increases, something for which the employes were at the mercy of commissioners before.

Of the five employes Benson studied, the lowest paid in 1966 made \$325 monthly and now makes \$502. The highest paid in 1966 made \$390 monthly and presently receives \$552.

U. S. DEPARTMENT of Labor statistics for Fort Worth show that a clerk typist here averaged \$351 monthly in November 1966 and \$463.67 in October 1970. This position's pay was increased 32 per cent in that time.

Benson described the five persons he studied as "clerk typists."

Between October 1970 and the present, salaries in the U.S. have increased about 4 1/2 per cent. This, added to the 32 per cent, still would be below what Benson's typical county employe has gained in the past five years.

A City of Fort Worth employe in compatible circumstances has been given hikes of "between 25 and 30 per cent" during the past five years, City Personnel Director Frank Priore estimates.

City employes have had three across-the-board, 5 per cent "cost-of-living" increases since early 1967 and also hikes under the city's comprehensive classification program in 1969.

OFFICIALS SAY that inflation runs about 5 per cent a year. This would mean that average county employes have gained several steps on inflation since 1966.

One thing, however, that only county employes always must have in the back of their minds is politics.

Even though commissioners and other elected department heads say they no longer go by the spoils system, some patronage still exists at the county level.

County jobs are not protected by civil service and it is questionable whether commissioners will adopt such a plan in the immediate future.

At the time the classification system was instituted, commissioners said it was the first step toward ending patronage. In many cases, the system generally has worked to that end, although commissioners still have the right to approve or disapprove step increases.

WHAT DOES all this mean?

It probably means that commissioners will turn down any requests for across-the-board raises when budget time rolls around in December.

Or, it may mean that there will be no such request this year, as there has been in the past. Last year's request sparked a lawsuit and, according to one account, "a continuing controversy that's had more dramatic turns than 'Dark Shadows.'"

"We're in a belt-tightening period," freshman Commissioner Jerry Mebus said recently. "The voters told us in the bond issue that we ought to economize and that's what we're trying to do."

He said "the pay situation should settle down" in the next few months. "We're asking the department heads to go a little easier on it," he said.

Skeet Fails to Back Job-Trimming Plans

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson would not say "no" Tuesday to County Judge Howard Green's job-cutting proposals, but he did not give a whole-hearted "yes," either.

Green earlier Tuesday told reporters he would recommend at Commissioners Court's July 7 meeting that a three-man committee be named to study the feasibility of the county's contracting for janitorial service.

He also said he favored elimination of four of the county's nine peace justices and four of the constables attached to those JP's precincts.

Green said he would not favor firing any of the approximately 50 custodial employees now on the county's payroll, but he would hope that such employees would not be replaced, once they resign or retire, he said.

"I FEEL WE COULD do away with them without suffering too much," said Green. He would not suggest at which ones "ought to be done away with," however.

State law provides that there must be at least one JP in each commissioner's precinct. Two JP's that Green said must remain are the two in downtown's JP Precinct 1, since they have by far the heaviest workload.

At the same time Green discussed the JP situation Tuesday, this term's grand jury was issuing a report calling for consolidation of peace justice courts.

"We further recommend that an appropriate system of 'checks and balances' be established by the county auditor to determine the benefit gains from these courts," the grand jury's report stated.

Green said his proposals could save taxpayers \$165,000 annually, an estimate that Richardson questioned. However, Richardson said the proposals "still are worthy of looking at."

"IN REGARD to the JP's and constables, it would just be a transfer of responsibilities from one elected office to another elected office, it seems to me," said Richardson.

"These constables operate a double function. Not only are they process servers, but they are also legal law officers that are needed in the county's rural areas," he said.

He said it would cost about \$40,000 to replace a constable.

Another county employe, Garfield W. Thompson, charged that Green "slapped us in the face" by his suggestion.

THOMPSON, a courthouse custodian, is also president of the county's labor union and is a Democratic precinct chairman in the predominantly Negro Stop Six area.

"The minorities and the working people and the labor unions backed Green last year (in his re-election bid) and now he does this to us," Thompson said.

All commissioners but Dick Andersen, who could not be immediately reached for comment, said that Green failed to show them how any savings could be enacted through the recommendations made yesterday.

In that recommendation announced to reporters, Green said that savings of \$165,000

if around-the-clock service were provided by the sheriff's office with a patrol car. "I don't know whether you're going to save much at all on that," he remarked.

Richardson also said that commissioners are going to have to redistrict "the all mixed-up" JP precinct lines before they think about consolidation.

"We need to take a study of feelings in the rural areas," he continued. "The small claims court, such as the JP's, they get things like hot checks processed without the merchant having to wrestle with the processes of bureaucracy."

EDITORIALS:

County Plan Has Taxpayer Appeal

Two changes in county government recommended by County Judge Howard Green are so long overdue it is to be wondered why they were not adopted long ago. One calls for elimination of four out of nine of the county's justice precincts, the other for outside contracting for janitorial services for the four-building courthouse complex.

Neither proposal is new. Both have been put forward before, but for one reason or another have never been accomplished. But, as Judge Green suggests, the growing expense of all government and certain or prospective increases in taxation make this a propitious time for action. The changes should appeal to the taxpayers, for they are in the direction of economy and probably of greater efficiency. Judge Green estimates that combined they would lower county costs by \$165,000 a year.

Under our present court setup there is still need for justices of the peace, but those in outlying areas are something of an anachronism, especially in an urban county. Their operations have been the frequent source of dispute and controversy, and they are scarcely models of what our judicial system ought to be. Only last year were they removed from the outdated fee system and placed on year-

ly salaries. This is a more satisfactory method of compensation, but it is also more costly to the county.

The law requires the county to have at least four justice precincts, but it is certain that the work of those that would be eliminated could be handled amply by the five that would remain.

The courthouse janitorial corps also has been the subject of much questioning and dispute. It is widely regarded as a haven for political appointees of the county commissioners, and its prowess with mop and broom has never earned for it the name of Mr. Clean.

Judge Green's suggestion is not for abrupt elimination of these custodians, but for appointment of a three-man committee to determine the feasibility, from the standpoint of cost and results, of contracting for cleanup services. Present holders of the jobs would not, under the proposal, be fired, but shifted to other suitable jobs or their places left vacant as they retire.

These would not be major changes in county government, but they are nonetheless worthwhile. Reform in county government comes slowly, and changes that would save the taxpayers money without loss of efficiency are rare indeed.



Her last 'hello'

Velma Tankersley, who has one of the best-known voices in town, retires today as switchboard operator at county courthouse, a post she has held for 34 years. Velma is giving up the telephone receiver for a fishing pole. Courthouse workers gave her a party today in County Probate Court.

3 Commissioners Voice Doubts About Reduction of Jobs

By Z. JOE THORNTON

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In that recommendation announced to reporters, Green said that savings of \$165,000

could be realized if his proposals are accepted.

"THAT IS completely unrealistic," said Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today.

"He said that the janitors would be assigned to other jobs in the courthouse and that their salaries would continue. But then, he will have to pay more money to the janitor service.

"How can you save money by hiring more people?" Commissioners Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus also noted much the same argument in their opposition to the proposals.

ALL THREE commissioners also said they are opposed to Green's proposed three-member commission that he suggests naming to study the feasibility of the janitorial contract service.

Richardson proposed that if any committee is needed that at least five persons, one appointed by each member of Commissioners Court, be created.

"As far as I'm concerned, we don't need a committee," said Lewis. "I think that's why the people elected us, to make decisions for them."

"I don't care if they have a three-man or a 300-man committee."

MEBUS ALSO called for the appointment of a larger committee, and he suggested that a second committee might be created to study whether some JP's and constables should be eliminated.

Both Richardson and Mebus said they felt that County Auditor Jack Benson should not be on the committee because, as Mebus said, "he's already got his mind made up."

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Lewis agreed, and Mebus suggested that possibly the presidents of the Fort Worth-Tarrant County and Arlington bar associations and a foreman of the grand jury should be named to a committee to study the proposal.

All three commissioners agreed more sheriff's deputies and process servers

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He said also that he had strongly campaigned for Green last year but "now I don't know if I would do it again."

Thompson said he does not

Attempt at Another Wage Increase Fails

MARTINEZ — Supervisor James Moriarty's attempt to give sheriff's deputies and social service eligibility workers (EW's) a 2½ percent pay hike next Jan. 1 — above the 6 and ¾ percent they will receive this July 1 — failed by a 3-2 vote yesterday.

Instead, the Board of Supervisors voted to adopt the proposal of its management negotiating team headed by employee relations officer county personnel director F. Eric Emery.

That package provided for a general 4 percent pay hike for all the county's 4,800 employes, effective July 1.

It also gave several employe groups an additional 2½ percent salary increase, effective July 1. These included the deputies through the rank of sergeant, the EW's and several department heads, thus making their total pay raise 6½ percent.

The entire wage and benefits package will cost an estimated total in fiscal 1971-72 of \$2.9 million of this, \$2.2 million will be paid from county revenues and the rest will be paid from state and federal subventions. (The cost of the package last year was \$3,650,000, with 40 percent financed by the state and federal governments.)

Moriarty argued the board had committed itself last year to adjusting the eligibility workers' wages so they would be more in line with the pay of the public assistance unit clerks in the same department.

The EW's contended they do work of the same quality as the unit clerks and with more responsibility and more hazards to themselves yet are paid considerably lower salaries.

The EW's had sought a total pay hike in fiscal 1971-72 of 14 percent — 9 percent now plus 5 percent Jan. 1.

The deputies had also sought a total hike of 9 percent — 61 now and the other 2½ effective next Jan. 1.

Included in the fringe benefits is the county's first dental program. It will be mandatory for all workers. It will cost each employe a one-shot \$50 deductible fee. A single employe will pay \$2 a month toward the dental insurance plan, and the county will contribute \$4.15. Employes with families will pay a total of \$4 a month, against the county's contribution of \$9.15.

The package was drafted after the "management" team (Civil Service and administrator's aides) negotiated with county employe unions and associations.

Supervisor Edmund Linscheid, of Pittsburg, moved for acceptance of the county negotiating team's package offer. His motion was seconded by supervisor Warren Boggess, of Concord.

At that point, Moriarty made a motion to amend it and give the EW's and deputies an additional 2½ percent next Jan. 1. Supervisor Alfred Dias, of San Pablo seconded it.

On roll call, the amendment was defeated when Super-

visors Linscheid, James Kenny of Richmond and Boggess voted against it.

Linscheid's original motion then carried 4-1, with only Moriarty voting against it.

Eyeing n Plan

ture action in the matter of school desegregation," he said.

He said the board instructed Morgan to secure further information on routes the board may take.

"Members of the board are away from the city, and any decision that will be made — and 30 per cent of a lot (the officials' raises) is going to be a whole lot."

Asked to select a typical county employe, Benson said a clerical worker in the county's huge record-keeping departments would do.

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Posts Fro

From Page 1
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By JIM DAVIS
In light of yesterday's diverse Supreme Court decisions on government support

By Green

By Z. JOE THORNTON
County Judge Howard Green today called for doing away with four of the county's nine peace justices and four of the constables assigned to those precincts.

The county judge estimated that as much as \$165,000 a year could be saved if Commissioners Court adopts that and another proposed reform.

GREEN SAID he will formally make his recommendations to commissioners at their next meeting, July 7.

In those suggestions, he also will ask that a three-man committee be appointed to study the feasibility of replacing the county-paid custodians with a contracted janitorial service.

There are about 50 custodians working now in the four-building courthouse complex. The move, Green said, could save as much as \$100,000 yearly.

UNDER HIS plan, no one would be fired.

"There would be a gradual phasing out," he said. "The men would be transferred either to work in the precinct garages or courthouse offices and possibly at the Tarrant County Convention Center."

As the men retire their jobs would not be filled.

By contracting with a janitorial service, Green said he hopes that "we would have a cleaner, more attractive courthouse."

He said the three-man committee he will suggest should be made up of the county Turn to Green on Page 2

Posts From Tarrant Payroll

From Page 1

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* * *

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By JIM DAVIS

In light of yesterday's diverse Supreme Court decisions on government support

shouldn't take that long for commissioners court to vote to do away with nearly half of the county's peace justices.

The court now has the authority to do away with all but four of the justices.

State law specifies that there must be at least one JP for each commissioner precinct.

* * *

"I FEEL we could do away with them without suffering any," he said.

Green said he would leave it to the court to decide which of the peace justices could be done away with.

Two that would remain would be the two downtown courts, he said. They are peace justice Precinct 1, Place 1 and Place 2.

Only one constable, Jim Owens, is assigned to the precinct.

There are seven other constables assigned to the remaining seven JP courts.

* * *

DOING AWAY with the

courts and officers would mean a savings of about \$65,000 per year, Green estimated.

"At a time when state taxes are going up and when Fort Worth officials are talking about raising taxes, I think it's important that we begin to look at every way of cutting down costs," he said.

"In this way (through the proposals) we can cut costs and we will not hamper services offered by the county. Instead, they will be improved."

* * *

GREEN SAID he has talked to commissioners and "I have been pleased with the response. I've found no strong opposition to either of them."

The county judge first proposed the janitor service shortly after he went into office in 1967.

At that time, the lineup of the commissioners was considerably different than it is today. Only Commissioner Dick Lewis was on the court then.

Commissioners Discuss Ways to Lower Tax Rate

By JOHN LUMPKIN

County commissioners were talking again Friday about lowering the total tax rate, and apparently they were serious about the proposition.

They will officially set this year's tax rates for the county's general fund, road and bridge fund, lateral road or right-of-way fund and the county hospital district Monday morning.

Last year's total rate was \$1.87 per \$100 valuation.

Commissioners do not set the tax rate for the junior college district of the water improvement district.

By the end of Friday's day-long informal discussion, it was apparent that a decrease in the total tax rate depends to a large extent on whether they authorize a full five-cent hike in the hospital rate to its

statutory maximum of 75 cents per \$100 valuation.

Commissioners expressed concern that the hospital tax will not remain the same, but the increase may not be to the statutory limit.

Whatever the hospital tax hike is, it will have to be offset by decreases in the rates for the county's other operations to give an aggregate decrease. There was some indication that this, too, could happen.

Commissioners expressed concern that the hospital board has not discussed with them in the past few weeks what the district's actual needs for the coming year are estimated to be.

"I have asked the hospital to justify their requests. As of this hour, nobody has come to talk to me," said Commissioner Dick Andersen.

Andersen said he would not handle such discussions by telephone. "I don't want any tears or crybabies. I want the discussions to be on a sound business basis," he remarked.

Commissioners late last month attended a meeting of the hospital board at which they said they thought the hospital tax rate would be discussed. The discussion never materialized.

Now they said they have declined to attend a breakfast Monday morning for such discussions. "What good would that do? We have to make our decision right after that," said Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson.

There is some sentiment among commissioners that they have committed themselves to raising the hospital

rate to the maximum, since they accepted a financial report earlier this year that included such a recommendation.

At the time, commissioners also approved the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds for the expansion program at Peter Smith Hospital. The program eventually will need an estimated \$10 million more.

During Friday's discussions, Richardson said he did not intend to commit himself to a five-cent tax hike at once when he approved the hospital's program.

He suggested that the five-cent hike be made over several years' time in piece-meal fashion.

"What happens down the line when they need more money? I am opposed to having to call an election so that

we can raise the statutory maximum for the hospital tax," he said.

"The people I talk to are at their limit as far as taxes are concerned," he said.

He said he would support a compromise with the hospital board and first proposed that the hospital tax be raised two cents and the road and bridge tax be lowered at least the same amount.

This would leave the county's total tax rate the same at \$1.87 per \$100 valuation.

Last year's tax rate was 80 cents for the general fund, 8 cents for the road and bridge fund, 29 cents for the lateral road or right-of-way fund and 70 cents for the hospital.

County Auditor Jack Benson has recommended that the commissioners leave the general, road and bridge and

lateral road funds at the same rate this year. He was not called on in any financial matters of the hospital district.

Benson's recommendations would, in effect, increase the total tax rate because of any hike to the hospital district.

Richardson and Andersen, however, questioned Benson's projected revenue figures as being "low."

They also questioned an addition to his prediction of next year's general fund budget which calls for \$200,000 for "increased services and new positions."

"That's two cents right there on the tax rate and we don't know what it is," said Andersen.

Andersen then asked Richardson and Commissioners

Jerry Mebus and Dick Lewis why at least two cents could not be taken from the general fund and three cents from the road and bridge funds, making a total decrease of five cents.

Richardson and Mebus agreed that commissioners could do "some belt-tightening" in projects financed out of the road and bridge fund, which is divided equally among the four commissioners.

Lewis telephoned Benson and asked him about such proposed action. He quoted Benson's reply as being: "If that's what it is, then you'll have to live with it."

There was also word, according to commissioners, from hospital district finance chairman C. Jack Bean that there might be some agree-

ment on increasing the hospital rate less than five cents this year.

Bean told them he would report to them by Sunday night.

In the event that a hospital hike under five cents is unacceptable, commissioners said they would have to look to the other funds for more decreases.

A hike of under five cents for the hospital and a decrease of two cents in the general fund and three cents in the road and bridge fund would decrease the total tax rate.

"It's not right to penalize the county operations, however, for the hospital," Mebus said at one point. He and Andersen still said they were "in favor" of the hospital's program.

Thursday Morning, July 8, 1971

County Chiefs Set Study of Cutbacks

By BOB-RAY SANDERS

County commissioners, in a meeting that was almost as heated as the weather, decided Wednesday to appoint committees to study the feasibility of doing away with some of the county's peace justices and constables, and to contract janitorial service.

County Judge Howard Green announced last week that he felt the county could save money by abolishing four of the nine peace justice posts and four constables and by replacing the 54 custodians at the court house with a contracted janitorial service.

Green had said he would appoint two three-member committees to study the plans, but the court chose to have five-member committees to look into the proposals.

Commissioner Dick Andersen moved that each member of the court appoint one member to the committees to "hear the pros and cons" and report back to the court by Sept. 1 with recommendations.

Garfield Thompson, president of the county employees union, told the court that it would be a double expense on the county to contract janitorial service and continue to pay salaried custodians who would be gradually phased out by being transferred or waiting until retirement.

Thompson, a custodian, suggested that the court appoint a committee to study the feasibility of civil service for county employees.

Green said that civil service was not on the agenda, and when Richardson moved that a committee be selected to study civil service, Green cast the tie-breaking vote to defeat the issue.

"This to me is the most two-faced action I've seen," Richardson said of Green's vote.

Richardson said during the court meeting, "Just before the election, Judge Green wouldn't even mention it (civil service), we asked him... A year ago in this lobby he stood up and told the janitors that he was for civil service—he wanted their votes."

Richardson said he probably would make his appointments Monday. "I didn't do any calling over the weekend."

"I'm real pleased," said commissioner Dick Lewis. "I didn't have an appointment for either committee."

Thompson indicated that the civil service question probably would be placed on the commissioner's agenda Monday.

Commissioners also were given notice that 39 employees are due raises ranging from less than \$20 to more than \$100 per month under the job classification system. Most of the raises will go to employees of the sheriff's department, tax office and district attorney's office.

Personnel Director Jodie Colvard explained that the raises are already included in this year's budget.

He said that many employees have become eligible for reclassifications and scheduled merit increases because "this is the end of our six month's time period."

Richardson, who opposed abolishing the peace justices, constables and janitors, argued that Green's move was strictly political.

"He (Green) doesn't care about being progressive," Richardson said.

Richardson went on record in the meeting in favor of a proposal calling for all county judges to have law degrees.

He charged that Green is not qualified to handle the probate and sanity cases which are brought before the county court.

Richardson said Judge William McGee has asked to take Green's probate and sanity cases, but that the county judge has refused.

Green, a former legislator, said he was against civil service.

"I DON'T think it's progressive," he said. "We don't need it in the county. Nobody is losing his job by politics."

"I'm not going to be intimidated into voting for something that I'm against."

Green said he brought up the peace justice and janitor issues "when I got the votes. I put it on the agenda today (Wednesday) because I had the votes."

Three committeemen have been appointed to study the justice situation, and two persons were chosen to examine janitorial service.

To the justice study committee Green appointed David Belew, president of the Tarrant County Bar Association; Andersen selected Cal Druxman, advertising sales executive for KXOL radio; and Commissioner Jerry Mebus appointed Arlington attorney Bob McFarland.

Green placed John Hayward on the janitorial study committee, and Mebus named Weldon Ward.

RICHARDSON said he probably would make his appointments Monday. "I didn't do any calling over the weekend."

"I'm real pleased," said commissioner Dick Lewis. "I didn't have an appointment for either committee."

Thompson indicated that the civil service question probably would be placed on the commissioner's agenda Monday.

Commissioners also were given notice that 39 employees are due raises ranging from less than \$20 to more than \$100 per month under the job classification system. Most of the raises will go to employees of the sheriff's department, tax office and district attorney's office.

Personnel Director Jodie Colvard explained that the raises are already included in this year's budget.

He said that many employees have become eligible for reclassifications and scheduled merit increases because "this is the end of our six month's time period."

Commissioners OK Sale Of Hospital District Bonds

Tarrant County commissioners Wednesday authorized the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds for the Tarrant County Hospital District.

The bonds will be sold to Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Inc., at an interest rate of 6.591045 per cent.

After opening the four bids, the commissioners acted on the recommendation of the

hospital board in accepting the low bid.

High bid was submitted by Rotan Mosle at 7.23225 per cent.

The \$1 million worth of bonds is the first of several to be issued by the hospital subject to commissioners court approval.

Commissioners have agreed that the hospital district can sell up to \$11 million in bonds, provided it can be shown that

the county-supported hospital revenues will be sufficient to pay for them.

For each increment sold for completing the expansion at Peter Smith, commissioners must first authorize the sale.

Earlier this year, commissioners refused to permit the sale of the entire issue at the same time, although hospital officials argued that it should be done.

In a report on the financial

condition of the hospital, made in February, commissioners were told that revenue bonds could be paid off by the hospital if commissioners authorized their sale and if taxes were raised a nickel to their constitutional limit of 75 cents per \$100 valuation.

The tax rate is expected to be set at Monday's meeting of commissioners court.

4-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Tuesday Morning, July 13, 1971

OTHER RATES SAME

Hospital Tax Rate Hiked by County

County Commissioner Jerry Mebus declared property tax "is not based on the ability to pay" as he voted Monday for a five-cent hike in hospital district taxes for property owners.

Commissioners raised the hospital rate from 70 cents to 75 cents per \$100 valuation, which is the statutory maximum for the tax. They left the rates for the other taxes the same amount as last year.

Property valuations are generally based on 30 per cent of the property's fair market value.

Mebus said he feels there will be a taxpayer's revolt if taxes keep spiraling. He said he knew of at least two other governmental entities that plan to raise taxes this year.

"The property tax is inequitable. We've got to do something. Maybe, it is general revenue sharing," the freshman commissioner from Arlington suggested.

Property owners now will pay \$1.63 per \$100 valuation for the county's hospital district, general fund, and road and bridge fund.

ANY PERSON whose homestead's fair market value is above \$10,000—or valuated for tax purposes at above \$3,000—will also pay 29 cents per \$100 valuation of right-of-way tax for that amount above \$30,000 valuation.

This means the new county tax for a person with a \$10,000 home will be \$48.90, or an increase of \$1.50 over last year. Taxes on a \$20,000 home will be \$106.50.

The county's general fund rate remains at 80 cents per \$100 valuation, the road and bridge rate at eight cents and the right-of-way rate at 29 cents. As it has for the past five years, a portion of the right-of-way fund will be used to supplement the road and bridge fund.

Mebus also voted with the majority for the other tax rates besides that of the hospital district. He said he was saddened that he had to do so.

In voting for the hospital hike, Mebus warned that the hospital district must "support the guidelines" that the district and commissioners agreed to. Commissioners in the past have been critical of hospital finance practices.

MEBUS AND Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said they had hoped to lower taxes for purely county courthouse operations, but felt that "it was not justified" to penalize county operations in favor of the hospital district.

They declined to vote on a substitute motion by Commissioner Dick Andersen for lowering the rate of the general fund two cents and the rate of the road and bridge fund three cents.

Richardson voted against the nickel increase for the hospital district and told hospital advisory bond finance chairman C. Jack Bean that he would not support any future move to raise the hospital district tax ceiling.

Such a move would require the calling of an election by commissioners and a favorable vote by the people.

Andersen, Richardson and Mebus were obviously dissatisfied with the outcome of Monday's votes, even though Richardson and Mebus voted for the rates for the purely county courthouse operations and Mebus and Andersen voted for the hospital district hike.

THEIR STATEMENTS did not reflect the view of Green, who said:

OTHER RATES SAME

Commissioners OK Changes in Park

County commissioners today in a split vote agreed to changes in proposals for a privately financed park area adjacent to Tarrant County Convention Center.

Two commissioners, George "Skeet" Richardson and Jerry Mebus, voted against a resolution brought to commissioners court by Herman Smith, chairman of the TCCC advisory committee.

THE PARK to be constructed on property acquired by the Carter Foundation also will spill over onto land owned by the county and will require the vacating of one block of 14th Street.

Richardson and Mebus opposed the resolution because, according to them, the court was not given advanced notice of it and of the changes it incorporates.

One change will be the relocation of the Convention Center marquee to an undetermined spot at the expense of the foundation.

The foundation has acquired the property for the park not now owned by the

county and has agreed to pay for demolition and construction. The park's upkeep will be financed by the City of Fort Worth, Smith said.

THE RESOLUTION was not on the commissioners official agenda and it was this that Mebus and Richardson protested.

Richardson said he wanted to be warned of changes because, under original proposals for the park, he feared it would turn into a "seeping jungle" and a place for "the hippie trade."

He said he was also worried about public crossways in the park which will contain fountains and water displays as well as plant life.

Commissioners did not adjourn today but recessed until Friday. They will not meet next Monday because, according to County Judge Howard Green, three of them will be out of town.

OTHER RATES SAME

Commissioners OK Marquee Relocation

County Judge Howard Green Monday broke a Commissioners Court deadlock by voting "aye" to allow the marquee of the Tarrant County Convention Center to be relocated.

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan first ruled that the matter could be put to a vote, a ruling that Ired Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson.

"I don't want to be hard-headed about this thing, but we might as well throw the agenda out the window," said Richardson.

Last week, a move that Richardson supported to study civil service for county employees was ruled out of order by Green, since the matter was not on the agenda.

THE CONVENTION center issue, Richardson argued, was not placed on the agenda before the customary dead-

line last week so that it could be considered.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus agreed with Richardson's contentions that a resolution offered by convention center advisory board Chairman Herman Smith should not be considered until commissioners had more time to study it.

The resolution concerns the county's interests in a proposed park to be located south of and adjacent to the convention center. The park's construction will be financed by the Amon Carter Foundation.

According to commissioners' vote, they will make a small parcel of county land available to the foundation to be incorporated in the park.

THE MARQUEE is on that parcel of land.

Smith said the foundation has agreed to pay the cost of the marquee's relocation and to make several other changes in the park's layout, including elimination of an amphitheater.

In other action, more appointments were made for the committees to study peace justice and constable consolidation and the feasibility of contracting with a private firm for janitorial service.

Richardson named Mrs. Maxine Biggers to the JP committee and Willie Weathers to the janitors' committee. Lewis named Evans Karpenko to study JP's and Loretta M. Craft to study janitors.



STILL PUMPING — Harmon George Jr. rests on the red gas pump behind the Criminal Courts Building which he has been using to fill cars of some county employees for years. Thursday George learned that he will no longer have to fill tanks of four of his customers—county commissioners.

FREE GAS TO COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Little Red Pump Gaining Fame

By BOB-RAY SANDERS Harmon M. George Jr. makes his living by pumping gas from a little red gas pump, probably the most famous—and controversial—little red gas pump in the world.

George serves a select group of customers, and none of them pays for the gasoline. The little red pump sits behind the Criminal Courts Building, oblivious to the controversy which has centered on it in recent years.

George's clientele are courthouse employees who use their cars in their work.

FOR THE PAST three years George has been filling up the tanks of the employees' cars, including the automobiles of his immediate bosses, Tarrant County commissioners.

The commissioners court, which operates the county pump, is the center of the latest "little red pump controversy."

The commissioners last Friday voted to raise their car allowance to \$300 a month. It was learned Thursday that the same law which allows them to raise the allowance, prohibits them from getting free gasoline and oil.

The law provides that "each member of commissioners court shall pay all expenses in the operation of such automobile and keep same in repair free of any other charge of the county."

"That's exactly the way it will be," County Auditor Jack Benson said.

This would mean that no commissioners can get free gas from the pump at the courthouse or any other county-owned pump. It would also mean that no county employee mechanic at the precinct garages can do work for free on the commissioners' personal cars used on county business.

George pointed out that the commissioners' names are still included on a list which entitles them to free gasoline and oil.

"That (pump) is operated by the commissioners," he said. "We work for the commissioners and will continue to serve them until they tell us otherwise."

HE ALSO NOTED that in addition to the little red pump behind the courthouse, there are four other county-owned pumps—each located at one of the precinct garages.

There are about 190 cars on the free gasoline list, including county-owned vehicles, which consume about 20,000 gallons of the premium gasoline each month, George said.

George, who has worked for the county 19 years, recalls numerous occasions when charges of "employee abuse" of gasoline privileges have been hurled against some users of the pump.

It has been argued in the past that many of the persons on the gasoline list use their cars for more personal than county business, George said, but he is not qualified to say if the argument is true.

Commissioners, although they cannot lawfully get free gasoline anymore, may attempt to buy gas from the county at the low rate of 17

5-Cent Hospital Levy Is Only Tax Hike

County property owners were saddled with a nickel tax increase by reluctant county commissioners today, although individual attempts were made "to hold the line."

Commissioners approved a hike in the county hospital district tax rate from 70 cents to 75 cents per \$100 valuation, the statutory maximum.

Meanwhile, commissioners

sustained the recommendations of County Auditor Jack Benson in leaving the county tax rate for the general fund at 80 cents, the right-of-way fund at 29 cents and the road and bridge fund at eight cents.

THIS MEANS that this year's tax rate that furnishes revenue for 1972 county and

hospital operations will be \$1.94 per \$100 valuation. Last year's rate for the same operations was \$1.89.

First-term Commissioner Jerry Mebus voted with the majority in setting the tax rates, but he added, "This only penalizes the taxpayer."

He said he was fearful of a taxpayers' revolt.

At least two other taxing

entities in the county plan to hike their taxes this year, he noted, and he said that he knew of none that were going to lower such rates.

HE SAID, "Something has to be done because the property tax is an inequitable tax." He suggested that an alternate solution might be a general revenue sharing plan.

"All the money is going to the national and state governments in the federal (income) tax. We should see why we can't keep some of it here," he said.

Some commissioners late last week proposed among themselves ways to lower the total tax rate that they set. It apparently hinged on a compromise of not raising the

hospital tax to its statutory limit.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson today voted against the nickel hospital tax hike.

HE TOLD the hospital advisory board finance chairman, C. Jack Bean, that he originally had planned to offer a substitute motion for a three-

cent hospital tax hike.

At the same time, he said, he would support a three-cent reduction in other county tax rates.

He said that he felt county operations should not be decreased just for the hospital and referred to "long welfare lines" outside the courthouse.

Turn to Hospital on Page 2

4-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Thursday Morning, July 15, 1971

Car Leasing Held Cheaper to County

By JOHN LUMPKIN

County taxpayers apparently can now save approximately \$4,500 annually by allowing county commissioners to lease air-conditioned luxury cars to use for county business.

At least, rates quoted Wednesday by two area leasing firms indicate that such is the case.

Commissioners and County Judge Howard Green Friday raised their car allowances from \$150 per month each to \$300. On July 30, they will begin receiving \$3,600 annually for using their cars.

THE ACTION came two

days after their regular weekly meeting.

The proposal never was published on any agenda and commissioners did not inform reporters of the action. Commissioners were asked Friday if they took any action at that session.

They said they did not. The action came to light Tuesday. Normally, Friday morning sessions are informal. Technically, commissioners were legally in session from Wednesday until that time because they never adjourned Wednesday.

The vote for hiking the car allowances could have been

taken at 4 a.m. Thursday and apparently still been legal.

"I WANTED to adjust the car allowances and I voted for it. I thought it ought to be a court order to that effect," was the explanation that Commissioner Dick Lewis gave.

Commissioners used a recently passed law affecting counties with populations of more than 174,000 to increase their remunerations.

The law "authorizes," but does not require them to raise car allowances to \$300 monthly. Courthouse officials said the allowances are not taxable as salary.

Commissioners own their own cars and most of them are equipped with radio phones paid for by the county. The allowances are for in-county travel only, with commissioners receiving additional rebates for out-of-county trips on county business.

A SPOKESMAN for one leasing firm said his firm will lease a luxury-model sedan on a two-year basis for \$226.75 per month.

This includes most insurance, nearly all the car's luxury options, taxes, licenses and all repairs made for the first year under the car's warranty.

A spokesman for another firm said that a two-year lease could be made for either 12,000 miles per year or 20,000 miles per year on their vehicle.

This includes all repairs for two years and the luxury options, but the customer pays all the insurance costs.

He could make a deal for \$215 per month on the basis of 12,000 miles annually or \$225 per month for 20,000 miles annually, he said.

COMMISSIONERS, County Auditor Jack Benson said, can continue using the county's gas pump behind the Criminal Courts Building for free.

Figures show that the pump's busiest days are on Friday and Monday, although most courthouse offices are closed during the weekend.

It appears that monthly leasing of the luxury automobiles would be about \$75 less than the allowances commissioners will receive or a savings of about \$4,500 per year.

Lower-price model cars lease for about half of what the \$8,000 luxury automobiles do.

In their action, commissioners also raised the car allowances of the county clerk, district clerk, county auditor and county tax assessor-collector \$50 monthly.

COMMISSIONER Jerry Mebus, a first term, voted against the hikes. He said that they were not needed and that "advantage was taken of this law."

Another courthouse official Wednesday expressed his ire. Peace Justice W. W. Matthews, whose court has brought in nearly \$100,000 in revenue for the county in some years, said that he needed a car allowance more than commissioners because he is called from his home at night and on weekends for county business.

He currently receives a \$100 per month allowance and says he does not use the county gas pump.

"YOU CAN quote me on this. They sure do take care of themselves, but you have to go down to Austin to get a law passed to force them to give you what you need," he said.

He scoffed at commissioners' statements that county department heads and other officials should "tighten their belts" to keep taxes at the same level.

Matthews said he would ask for a 20 per cent increase in his salary next year, something that commissioners are authorized to do without legislative action.

July 15, 1971

BELT (MONEY BELT) TIGHTENING



—By Harold Maples, Star-Telegram Cartoonist

Commissioners Ride Better, They Decide

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County commissioners, who have urged that other county offices hold the line on spending, have doubled their own car allowances from \$150 to \$300 a month.

County Judge Howard Green, who is also a member of the court but only votes to break ties, also received the boost.

Commissioners took the action Friday, when they also raised the car allowances paid the county clerk, tax assessor-collector, auditor and clerk from \$100 to \$150 a month.

COUNTY AUDITOR Jack Benson said the increases for commissioners will take effect July 30.

The hike in expense money for the other officials is effective Sept. 1.

A move during the recently ended legislative session to give county officials pay raises was stymied.

The proposed increase was approved by the Senate, but defeated by the House after hearing from Tarrant County residents who opposed the matter.

IN ADDITION to the \$300 per month, commissioners and Green also will be able to draw gasoline from the county's "little red gas pump."

This is a gasoline pump behind the old criminal courts building which dispenses gasoline free of charge to many county employees.

In the past commissioners have paid for the gasoline they have gotten from the pump.

COMMISSIONER JERRY Mebus was the only commissioner voting against the measure that was passed after reporters had left the session.

Normally, commissioners do not vote on anything at their Friday meetings.

Commissioners, who have a fleet of county-owned cars and trucks at their disposal, say they use their private cars to supervise road maintenance.

Many times they ride with their supervisors, though, who are also receiving car allowances and the county gasoline from the little red pump.

Benson and the other county officials given raises have offices in the courthouse and rarely use their cars except to get to and from work.

GREEN SAID that he uses his car to get to meetings in

which he is representing the county.

Commissioners took their action three days before increasing by five cents per \$100 valuation the tax for the Tarrant County Hospital District.

While most members of the court had also expressed an interest in lowering the county tax rate, they voted to keep it at its current 88 cents per \$100 level.

Commissioners Dick Andersen and George "Skeet" Richardson actively sought an increase in pay from the legislature.

Andersen has also told county officials that they will have to tighten their belts in an economy program to cut the costs of operating the county government.

The little red gas pump has often been criticized.

COUNTY officials argue that giving gasoline and oil to employees is in effect a salary subsidy.

Most county employees authorized car allowances—which run from \$25 monthly (for only a few people) to the more common \$100 per month—are also permitted to get the free gasoline and oil.

Records kept by Benson show that the pump—there are actually two gasoline pumps—is most widely used on Fridays and Mondays.

Most county officials and employees, except those in the sheriff's department, don't work during the week end.

In a money-saving effort, commissioners several months ago voted to buy regular gasoline instead of premium.

THAT MOTION was rescinded, on a motion by Richardson, on the grounds that

The Last Say

The way the county commissioners had the nerve to give themselves a raise in the form of a car allowance of \$150 per month gets under my skin. What is it going to take to wake people up to the fact that we are being taken for a ride?

The amount of money taken by the commissioners is much larger than a lot of Social Security checks being received by our old people to live on a full month. It lacks only \$45 of being as much as I get after serving 20 years in the armed forces; and being hospitalized for eight months by an accident in Japan.

It is my belief that elected officials who have the authority to give themselves a raise whenever they feel like it should not have it. The people elected these men and I think we are the ones that should also have the last say on when or if they are given more or less money, as well as the last voice in any side benefits.

The commissioners previously were making \$19,200 per year. This would boost their pay to \$21,000 annually. Break this down and it amounts to \$403.84 a week, which is more money in one week's pay than the majority of our service personnel in Vietnam are getting for a full month of facing death.

JAKE H. FLESHMAN
1406 Bates, Arlington

Green Promises Car Funds Study

Another committee is to be added Monday to the lineup studying various reforms in county government, County Judge Howard Green promised Friday.

He said a majority of the Commissioners Court has told him they are in favor of "a blue ribbon" panel to investigate county car allowances, travel expenses and use of the county-owned gas pumps.

There already are committees named to study consolidation of peace justice precincts and contracting for janitorial services, eliminating most county-salaried janitors.

There are also committees studying county solid waste problems and county planning.

AT LEAST one of the committees has remained active in recent months and two others are just beginning to conduct organizational meetings. Two committees have apparently not met recently.

Green's suggestion about studying car allowances and use of county gas comes after disclosures that commissioners voted in relative privacy to increase their car allowances \$1,800 each per year.

Green said the action for the car hikes "was handled very badly" by commissioners. Other commissioners criticized newspapers for writing stories which allegedly destroy the public confidence in county officials.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said such stories "are nitpicking" and claimed that Dallas newspapers do not write such stories about county government.

After telling a reporter of the new committee proposal, Green said the stories have been "an excuse, an impetus" for commissioners to have car allowances and related matters studied.

HE SAID IT is necessary to appoint a committee of non-partisan laymen to formulate suggestions so that action in the future by commissioners on travel recommendations will not be subject to criticism of playing "politics."

Green gave reporters figures Friday that show 223 persons on the county payroll receive car allowances that augment their salaries. The allowances range from \$15 a month for four custodians to \$300 a month for commissioners and Green.

Most of the 223 persons are authorized to receive free gas from the county's gas pumps, the principal pump of which is located behind the Criminal Courts Building.

Green says he has never gotten free gas and, under the law authorizing commissioners to hike their car allowances, they can not continue legally to do so either.

MANY OF THE officials receiving free gas rarely leave the courthouse on county business. Some of the gas, however, goes to court bailiffs

Wasteful

People are really disgusted with our county commissioners. If they can't get a pay raise one way, they will find another.

We are tired of reading about the free gas pumps, etc. Why can't this wasteful indulgence be stopped?

Only one commissioner, Mr. Mebus, had the backbone to vote NO on this recent raise. That bunch at the court house doesn't know the meaning of thrift and economy.

The average citizen stays busy reading about raises here, raises there. All the time living expenses are higher. If it's not the city, then it's the county, the state and federal. Will it ever stop?

MRS. JOHN M. ETZEL

1104 W. Fogg

Saturday Morning, July 24, 1971

TWO WEEKS TO ACT

Tarrant Waste Study Role Hinges on Commissioners

Tarrant County can participate in a \$600,000 regional study of garbage disposal, but county commissioners must act to do so within two weeks, organizers said Friday.

The price tag for the county's share of the study would be about \$44,400. John Roark of the North Central Texas Council of Governments said.

Roark notified members of the task force committee studying county solid waste problems that COG's board of directors approved application for a study grant Wednesday.

The application, to be sent to the federal Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, is contingent upon local authorities' approval.

ROARK, COG director of transportation, said the grant application envisions a study lasting two years at a total cost of \$600,000. The study would incorporate data and make suggestions for an 11-county North Texas area, of which Tarrant and Dallas Counties are the hub.

The federal government would supply \$450,000. The remaining \$150,000 would be supplied by the counties in proportion to their populations.

Roark said the rural counties could be dropped from the proposals if they fail to approve the study or provide their share of the costs. However, he said Tarrant and Dallas counties' participation must be obtained.

COUNTY JUDGE Howard Green said that the study "is going to be real hard to sell to the (commissioners) court in such a short time."

Green was present at the solid waste committee meeting at which Roark presented the study proposals.

The solid waste committee, chaired by Fort Worth Public Works Director Jack Graham, was appointed by commissioners early this year after another committee appointed by Green offered suggestions and recommended a countywide task force.

Hot Glare

Thank you for turning the hot glare of the facts onto the county judge and Commissioners Court regarding their gouge of the taxpayers on their car allowance.

I hope to see more of this sort of thing by you on the city, school and county and state officials.

RAYFORD M. SHELTON
3508 Aster Ct.

Cause for Pride?

Are the County Commissioners proud of themselves? Do they still feel that they have real integrity? Do they feel that our children should look up to them as fine examples of good honest officials?

To deliberately fail to adjourn a meeting and then contend that it is still in session two days later—all in order to stick another \$1,800 a year in their pockets—is downright subterfuge.

Why do you need an additional \$1,800 car allowance? We were promised our taxes would not be raised—but the commissioners raised them. And now this.

JAMES H. REDFORD
6221 Windermere

'TOO MANY' GET FREE GAS

Mebus Says Privileges at Little Red Pump Abused

By Z. JOE THORNTON
County Commissioner Jerry Mebus today charged that some county employees 'obviously are taking advantage' of the little red gas pump.

are taking advantage of the county.
MEBUS SAID he thinks that a county motor pool may be the answer.

ances, from \$150 per month to \$300 per month.
'I didn't think at the time that they should have done it,' said Mebus, who voted against the hike.

COUNCILMEN UNHAPPY OVER COUNTY AUTO ALLOWANCES

The recent actions of county commissioners apparently have left a bad taste in the mouths of city councilmen.
'Maybe we could pass a charter amendment to give ourselves a \$300-a-month automobile allowance,' Mayor R. M. 'Sharkey' Stovall said at yesterday's council meeting.

EDITORIALS

Little Red Pump Good Study Topic

As the old story has it, you can do a lot of business if you have no regard for profits. And the strong suspicion is that that is how the so-called 'little red pump' near the Tarrant County courthouse is operated.

pointed a committee to study the whole matter of car allowances and free gasoline for county officials and employees.
We hope the committee does a thorough job, for there are a good many mysteries — or at least unknowns — surrounding the little red pump.

MEBUS, NOTING that the days the controversial little red gas pump are busiest are on Mondays and Fridays, said 'there is no excuse for that.'
Most of the more than 900 county employees don't work on weekends.

IN ANOTHER development, an Internal Revenue Service spokesman confirmed that the Commissioners Court members will have to treat their auto allowances as income.
Then, in order for any to be deducted, they must keep accurate records of what they spent for actual auto operation.

AS IT works, many county employees get car allowances for using their autos on county business ranging from as low as \$25 to as much as \$125 per month.
In addition, nearly all those permitted to receive a car allowance are also allowed to get free gasoline and oil at the little red pump.

SUGGESTIONS have been made from time to time that the county form a motor pool and that when needed cars be checked out from it so employees would not have to use their own transportation.
That suggestion has never been seriously acted on, either.

Commissioners court action which did not come to light until Tuesday, brought a new wave of grumbling from county employees, who contend that, for the most part, they are underpaid.
'You can quote me on this,' said Peace Justice W. W. Matthews. 'They sure do take care of themselves, but you have to go down to Austin to get them to give you what you need.'

Commissioners Raise Car Allowances, Blame Public Criticism on Newspapers

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Star-Telegram Staff Writer
When caught, blame the newspapers. It's an axiom that any cub reporter learns quickly. The ones in the business longer can't forget it either because they're regularly reminded of it.

There is, as surely as there is a Tarrant County courthouse, a confidence gap around the courthouse.
Commissioners simply have brought it on themselves. Newspapers, which at times can be justly criticized, have not in this case caused it.

Among other things, the committee will look into whether commissioners can justify paying themselves a car allowance of \$300 per month.
Commissioner Jerry Mebus, the only one to oppose the hike, has already rendered his judgment:
'It's certainly not needed. I keep careful records and I've driven about 7,500 miles since the first of the year.

Committees aren't always bad. Committees formed by courthouse officials, though, generally don't get much accomplished. An exception would have to be the two different committees who urged creation of the juvenile detention center.
There's a difference there, however. A majority of the commissioners court, in that case, wanted the center built.

THOMPSON ALSO accused the court of saying one thing and meaning something else.
'They talk about economy by doing away with us, yet they turn right around and waste even more of our money,' he said.
'They didn't have to give themselves the raises. The bill is permissive, not mandatory. Our civil service is permissive.'

Free Fuel Denied To Commissioners

From Page 1

about half what other motorists pay for it.
Traditionally some commissioners have gotten the cheaper gas and then have been billed for it monthly.

NONE OF THOSE officials normally leaves the courthouse on business during the day except to return to their homes.
Several county officials, including some members of Commissioners Court, worked actively to get themselves a pay raise from the legislature during the term that ended in May.

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'They didn't have to give themselves the raises. The bill is permissive, not mandatory. Our civil service is permissive.'

FREE FUEL TO OFFICIALS IS CUT OFF

Commissioner Dick Andersen has told county officials to cut down on spending, but then Andersen and other commissioners vote for and get an increased car allowance (double, no less).
Is this how they 'tighten their belts' to cut the cost of operating the county government?
We elect men who, hopefully, will serve us. It looks like all we elected are men who are out to get all they can, while they are in a position to do so.

AS IT works, many county employees get car allowances for using their autos on county business ranging from as low as \$25 to as much as \$125 per month.
In addition, nearly all those permitted to receive a car allowance are also allowed to get free gasoline and oil at the little red pump.

SUGGESTIONS have been made from time to time that the county form a motor pool and that when needed cars be checked out from it so employees would not have to use their own transportation.
That suggestion has never been seriously acted on, either.

Commissioners court action which did not come to light until Tuesday, brought a new wave of grumbling from county employees, who contend that, for the most part, they are underpaid.
'You can quote me on this,' said Peace Justice W. W. Matthews. 'They sure do take care of themselves, but you have to go down to Austin to get them to give you what you need.'

THOMPSON ALSO accused the court of saying one thing and meaning something else.
'They talk about economy by doing away with us, yet they turn right around and waste even more of our money,' he said.
'They didn't have to give themselves the raises. The bill is permissive, not mandatory. Our civil service is permissive.'

Red Pump Open, but At Cost

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Commissioners and the county judge won't get free gasoline from the little red pump after all.

MEBUS, NOTING that the days the controversial little red gas pump are busiest are on Mondays and Fridays, said 'there is no excuse for that.'

Commissioners simply have brought it on themselves. Newspapers, which at times can be justly criticized, have not in this case caused it.

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Commissioners Vote Selves \$1,800 Yearly Hike for Car Use

By JOHN LUMPKIN

County Commissioners soon will each begin receiving an additional \$1,800 annually for using their cars on county business, it was revealed Tuesday.

The commissioners voted in relative privacy Friday to authorize County Auditor Jack Benson to disburse to them \$36,000 monthly for car allowances. They now receive \$150 a month.

They also voted to raise to \$150, the present \$100-a-month car allowances of the county clerk, county tax-assessor collector, county auditor and district clerk.

Benson said Tuesday the

first increased payment for commissioners' car allowances will be on July 30. The other increases will take effect Sept. 1.

Benson's statement was the first public mention of Friday's action.

Benson was asked if the officials could continue to obtain gas at no cost from the county's gas pump. "I guess you could say that," he answered.

District judges apparently must approve the hike in remuneration to the auditor before it can take effect.

A check of the minutes of Commissioners Court re-

vealed that it approved an order authorizing Benson to "adjust and equalize car allowances as provided by law."

Benson said the legislature passed a bill which now permits the commissioners and other specific officials to receive the increased car allowances in counties of more than 150,000 population.

Benson, Commissioner Dick Lewis and County Judge Howard Green said the language of the Commissioners Court order means that the full increase will be allowed them.

Lewis and Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Ander-

sen earlier this year announced that the legislature should not give them raises proposed in another bill that did not pass until it was amended to delete Tarrant County.

Mebus said Tuesday he did not know of the car allowance bill until last week.

The nine hikes in car allowances will cost \$11,400 a year.

No one could say with certainty Tuesday that the car allowance hikes were either mandatory or permissive. Green said he did not feel that they were mandatory for commissioners to approve, judging from the language used in the legislation.

Mebus said he was led to believe the hikes were mandatory.

He voted against them anyway, court minutes show.

"I couldn't see it. I didn't think that any of us needed them, but I didn't make a big fuss about it. Let's just say that advantage was taken of this law," he said.

Mebus and other commissioners have made pronouncements recently about county "belt-tightening" as the time approached for them to set the tax rate. They raised the total tax rate a nickel per \$100 valuation Monday.

"I told the other commis-

sioners that I practice what I preached this belt-tightening thing. That's why I spoke against it (the car allowance hikes)," he said.

Andersen, Lewis, and Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson voted for the car allowance increases. The increases are supposed to be for "travel, car and depreciation," Benson said.

Lewis was asked if the action was in line with "belt-tightening." He laughed, but did not answer the question.

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan did not meet with commissioners Friday, but he said the action was legal.

He said he did not tell com-

missioners that the raises would be effective automatically, as Green told a reporter he said.

Green said Morgan indicated commissioners did not have to approve the increases in order to get them.

Morgan said he told commissioners that a court order was not necessary for the raises to be put into effect, but that the court must give the auditor some expression — perhaps, by letter — that they wanted the raises.

Commissioners met last week on Wednesday for their regular session.

The car allowance raises Turn to Officials on Page 2

did not appear on the court's agenda.

Minutes of the meeting reflect that the court did not adjourn, but neither did it formally recess until Friday morning. Hence, Morgan opined that the court still was in session Friday morning.

Green said the matter of the car allowance hikes could be brought up legally since no one objected that the proposals were not on the agenda.

Commissioners are in the habit of meeting informally on Friday mornings to review the routine or "various" claims that must be paid from their operating funds. They generally take no formal action.

Reporters either inquired with the court by phone or were present in the court at various times Friday, but none of the commissioners mentioned the hikes.

Green said the raises "will not make any difference as far as the tax rate is concerned. If you put a lot of stuff together like this, it does. But this was isolated."

He said he expressed an opinion that the matter should "have been held over to Monday," which would have been this week's regularly scheduled meeting.

He did not say he was opposed to the raises.

Including the new car allowances, Green will be paid \$22,720 a year.

FORT WORTH

WEDNESDAY, JULY 14, 1971

The Fort Worth Press, Sunday, July 25, 1971

3-A

Commissioners may discuss it

Car allowance isn't on agenda

By FRANK PATRICK

Members of Commissioners Court two weeks ago voted to give themselves a whopping raise in car allowances.

Now, the head of that body, County Judge Howard Green, says he hopes the court will appoint a committee to study wastes in the county car allowance system.

In the meantime, will members of Commissioners Court deny themselves the raise — from \$150 to \$360 a year — until the committee reports back?

THAT COULD BE a topic of conversation between Green and County Commissioners privately, but one commissioner says he

doubts if it will be discussed publicly Monday.

George (Skeet) Richardson Saturday night said he was for the committee.

But, since Judge Green broached the subject only Friday, Richardson said it could not be placed on the regular Monday agenda.

Other members of the court, including Judge Green, were not available for comment Saturday night on the possibility of naming the committee soon — or of abstaining from taking the raise.

"I try to be honest with the public and with newsmen," Richardson said. "I voted for the raise because I thought it was need-

ed, and I'm not going to renege on it.

"YOU KNOW YOURSELF how much it costs to keep a car running these days, and believe me, I use mine on county business.

"I think the committee could be a good thing. I would be interested in its report."

Richardson indicated he felt the subject may be used to political advantage by other members of the court. "I was there, and voted for it," he said.

"The other members, including Judge Green, were also there, and it could have been killed by any one of them."

COUNTY AUDITOR Jack Benson, a close

associate of Judge Green's, informed newspapers of the raise four days after it was voted on.

Reportedly, the new state law authorizing the car allowance raise for commissioners and other officials was unknown to commissioners until two weeks ago. A source who was there during the vote said Commissioner Dick Lewis was the one who told other commissioners of the law.

More than 200 county employees draw car allowances totaling over \$200,000 annually.

In addition, many county employees get free gas from a county gas pump behind the Courthouse.

Tuesday Morning, July 27, 1971

Strong Lights OK'd At Detention Center

County commissioners Monday authorized installation of more powerful lights at the juvenile detention center after a juvenile official said the center is being troubled by "vandalism and prowlers."

The new lighting at the Kimbo Road facility will cost between \$2,000 and \$2,500, chief juvenile probation officer Lynn Ross said.

ROSS DID NOT give details of the vandalism, but another juvenile probation officer said later the lettering on the building has been stripped off several times.

Commissioners also appointed a committee to study "executive salaries" and car allowances and free gasoline allotted to county officials and employees.

The action arose out of publicity surrounding commissioners' private action earlier this month doubling their car allowances from \$1,800 to \$3,600 annually.

The hike has been maligned in editorials and letters to the editor.

County Judge Howard Green said the five-man committee could recommend action on the matters to commissioners. Any action taken by the commissioners themselves without such a study could be criticized as being "politically motivated," Green said.

IN OTHER action, commissioners agreed to:

—Work for a meeting of themselves, the county's hospital district board and a Nashville, Tenn., private consulting firm to discuss the firm's proposal that it manage hospital operations and charge a percentage of the money they show they saved.

—Study proposals by the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce's committee on streets and thoroughfares that the county pay part of the costs of a comprehensive study of roads here. The study would cost an estimated \$20,000.

—Lease a building at 3208 Miller as a substation for the sale of food stamps which would, in the words of Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson, "clear up some of the lines we have at the courthouse" for stamp dispensing.

4-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Friday Morning, July 30, 1971

Civil Service Gets Support Of 2 Officials

By JOHN LUMPKIN

Two county commissioners said Thursday night they will work for immediate approval by Commissioners Court of civil service for county employees.

The comments of Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis came at a meeting in the Civil Courts Building sponsored by the 300-member county employees' union.

Richardson and others called the turnout of about 70 of the county's 900 employees "fine," but contended more did not come because of "pressure" by other officials who are against civil service.

Morgan Vaught of the county treasurer's office told a reporter after the meeting: "Let's call a spade a spade. Red Cowen's employees knew if they had been here they would be fired tomorrow."

VAUGHT, secretary-treasurer of the employees' union, claimed both County Clerk Cowen and chief juvenile probation officer Lynn Ross have warned their employees not to become involved in civil service proposals.

Under legislation passed this year, all counties with above 300,000 population can have a civil service system. Nearly all county employees would be covered by the system.

The system can be implemented by a majority vote of either Commissioners Court or by voters in a county-wide election.

The other three members of Commissioners Court besides Richardson and Lewis have been reluctant recently to take a stand on civil service. One member must join Lewis and Richardson to gain approval of the system.

Spokesmen at Thursday night's meeting said that Commissioners Jerry Mebus

and Dick Andersen professed support for civil service when they were campaigning for office.

UNION PRESIDENT Garfield Thompson said he was willing to wait until committees appointed recently by commissioners to study county policy complete their work before he presses for civil service.

Thompson, a custodian, said the county is "top heavy with committees," one of which is studying the possibility of the county contracting with a private firm for janitorial services.

"I'm going to push for it (civil service) and push for it soon," Richardson responded. Lewis said he was ready for civil service to begin "tomorrow."

Under civil service, commissioners would appoint a three-man commission to hear employee grievances and decide whether an official acted rightly in dismissing an employee.

The commission could administer competitive examinations, but present employees would not have to take exams to keep their jobs.

"All this bill means is job security," said former State Sen. Doyle Willis. A bill he unsuccessfully proposed two years ago was followed in drawing up the civil service bill that passed this past session, Thompson said.

Willis said, "You don't have to get out and work 10 hours a day for somebody to get elected as long as you're doing your job right."

AT PRESENT, elected officials in the county have almost autocratic powers concerning who works for them. When an incumbent is defeated, it generally means a shake-up in county personnel in that office.

Richardson said, "If newspapers are for progress in the county, they should editorialize for civil service. The county employees are still under the Dark Ages."

Union representatives, making a membership pitch at the end of the meeting, said that a union is needed to assist in enforcement of civil service. "This is not collective bargaining, but it's the next best thing," said one.

Waste Consultants Not Pushed as Need

A task force ordered by county commissioners to explore the county's solid waste situation is "not emphasizing at this point the need for consultants."

These were the words of Fort Worth public works director Jack Graham, who is chairman of the 11-member force appointed by commissioners in March.

The task force, a descendant of the Tarrant County Solid Waste Coordinating Committee, is nearing the end of its work.

Graham said Thursday the report of a task force subcommittee will be ready to be mailed Friday morning to members of the entire force.

While he stressed that the subcommittee report is preliminary and subject to amendments by the entire force, he did reveal that waiting for consultant studies will not be enough to cope with solid waste problems.

GRAHAM WOULD not comment on what effect de-emphasis of the need for consultants would have on a North Texas Council of Governments' proposal for a two-year, federally funded \$600,000 regional solid waste study.

A COG spokesman said last week that the county needs to act within two weeks to be a part of the 11-county study. He said such a study would be fruitless without both Tarrant and Dallas Counties' participation.

The task force has considered several management alternatives to the present fragmented disposal systems throughout the county, including:

OPERATION through an existing county department, creation of a new county department, contracting with an existing municipal unit to provide service for all the county, contracting with a private waste hauler and creation of a management system similar to the Tarrant County Convention Center with a solid waste advisory board.

The coordinating committee recommended that all solid waste operations be under county commissioners with the county health department acting as the enforcement agency.

Graham indicated the final report would be given to commissioners "about the middle of August."

Erwin Concerned About Bricks at New Courts Building

County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin today said he is "real concerned" about some bulging bricks in the construction-plagued new Criminal Courts Building.

"There is no immediate danger," Erwin said. "But I am worried and have asked an architectural firm to give me a detailed report about the building."

Erwin, on the job about three months, said he is familiarizing himself with the history of the building, a past that includes a lengthy lawsuit in which the county

sought to recover more than \$100,000 in damages for money it had to spend repairing allegedly faulty construction methods.

A DISTRICT court jury in Dallas, where the suit was

transferred on a change of venue, disagreed with the county's contention that the construction methods were faulty and awarded the county only \$730 in damages.

Erwin said there is a noticeable and substantial shift in the brick veneer on the southeast corner.

"From the type of construction, a slip form concrete with a brick veneer surface, this can sometimes be expected, Erwin said.

"From now on, it will have to be inspected at least once a year."

One of the major sources of concern, Erwin said, is that when additional steel is added as three floors are completed for additional cells, the extra weight may cause further changes in the facing.

"The concrete is elastic," Erwin explained. "It will flex and that additional steel may cause changes that we need to be prepared for."

ERWIN SAID that after he gets his report from the architects who today surveyed the building, he will give the results and recommendations to commissioners, probably next Friday.

He said he will also ask that the architectural firm which is responsible for enlarging the county jail investigate to make certain there will be no danger in enlarging the building.

Friday Evening, July 30, 1971

GREEN REPORTS ON COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Tarrant Image Not Matching Deeds

EDITOR'S NOTE: County Judge Howard Green prepared this "report on Tarrant County" and submitted it to the Star-Telegram. All statements and observations are those of Judge Green.

By HOWARD GREEN
Tarrant County Judge

There is no question that Tarrant County government has been more turbulent in the past few years than probably at any time in its history.

However, despite the controversies, the clashing of personalities and the name-calling, there has been more progress, more innovation in county government in the past 20 years than in the previous 40.

TO WIT:

—Construction of a multifaceted juvenile detention center that will aid in coping with the problems of the young for many, many years to come.

—Establishment of a job classification system that assures dedicated county employees of secure futures and fair financial reward; the same assurances they would receive if employed in private enterprise.

—Successful operation of the Tarrant County Convention Center, which is expected to bring more than \$50 million of additional revenue into the county this year.

—Establishment of a Child Welfare Unit, improving treatment and handling of dependent children as well as relieving the Juvenile Probation Office of the massive problems of the county's dependent children.

—Approval of construction of enlarged facilities at the county's Peter Smith Hospital.

—Approval by voters of a \$1,900,000 bond issue to complete the jail and renovate old criminal courts building and alleviating space problems for prisoners and providing offices for the district attorney and staff.

—Numerous suggestions and plans, some already implemented, to tighten the financial strings of the county and assure taxpayers the greatest return of services for each dollar spent.

These are but a few steps the county has taken in recent years to fit into a world that is ever changing.

YLL TAKE THESE issues each briefly.

However, first I would like one at a time and discuss to pass on some personal feelings regarding the progress I feel our county has made.

To succeed in a system such as ours, patience is the most important ingredient. Enthusiasm gets the best of some advocates. Too rapid a pace can destroy a worthwhile effort.

Because of the energy and ability of our elected officials, consultants and professional people on the county payroll, Tarrant County has overcome its own handicaps and serves now as a model for metropolitan counties throughout the nation.

Reaching this precipice has not been easy.

The bars, the errors we have all made have, however, been lessons well learned. And we've taken our human shortcomings, used them as foundation and now the county is ready for the growth and challenge certain to follow.

With your continued help — on civic committees, as critics, as concerned citizens — we, and you, cannot help but move forward with an unmatched and unwavering vigor.

There is a single long-range goal that now stands before us all. It involves overlapping of public services, something of dire concern to all who pay taxes.

The legislature approved a constitutional amendment in 1967, since ratified by voters, to permit some consolidation of local government — combining county and city government into a metro form of government that will save dollars while better serving the public.

THIS IS A TOP priority long-range goal.

More immediate are coordination of a waste-disposal system, reduction in the number of peace justice precincts from the 19th-century concepts and the implementation of a janitorial service for purposes of economy and efficiency.

Consolidation of governmental services is as inevitable as tomorrow. If the present jail facility becomes overcrowded and outmoded we must begin to think in terms of a regional jail and work with the Council of Governments to coordinate efforts dealing with many problems at all levels of government.

I fear there will be too much name-calling, too many unnecessary statements, but from a free discussion will come the finished products of a democratic system, and the public will be the winner.

Now, let's look at what's been done.

Heading the list of accomplishments, of course, has been the tremendous increase in facilities and appropriations for juveniles.

On Jan. 1, 1967, the monthly payment to parents of dependent and neglected children was a disgracefully low \$30 per child. The amount was upped by \$45 in August of 1968.

In 1966, the total outlay for the juvenile-aid program was \$186,548.29. For the first six months of this year, it was \$205,957.49.

Immediately after World War II, the late George Kemble and others fought a game but losing fight for a juvenile detention center. Efforts were not revived until the spring of 1966.

The Junior League and others began separate efforts that finally reached fruition more than four years later with the dedication of a \$750,000 facility at Sylvania and Kimbo in North Riverside. It is a beautiful structure, completed at a saving of \$1.5 million over one first recommended.

PERHAPS THE most significant development in the effort for improvement in the area of juvenile welfare was a survey in May, 1967, by a team from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Not only did the center come about as a result but also a child welfare unit was formed.

The contributions by an advisory committee headed by Larry Meeker were invaluable to the overall picture. It first recommended the HEW survey.

The proposed center was a hub of controversy for several months. Efforts were panned and ridiculed by some of the news media. Proposals always seemed to be losing every battle but wound up winning the war.

The facility now in operation attests to an unusual de-

termination and was attained through the give and take of democracy in the open.

Since Jan. 1, 1967, salaries of veteran county employees have risen to a level consistent with salaries of industry. Yet taxes have remained static.

When a job-classification system was first proposed in early 1967, it had no support from commissioners and, even though there was an almost violent dispute over it, it was conducted and the program successfully implemented.

It has been operated smoothly by Nick Hammond and now Jodie Colvard, the personnel directors. The system by which employees receive regular merit salary increases is a credit to Tarrant County.

The recent authorization by commissioners to sell revenue bonds and increase the county tax rate for construction of John Peter Smith Hospital has been another step in the direction of providing a broader spectrum of medical care.

MEDICAL CARE is not a luxury, but a necessity.

The revenue bonds and tax increase have paved the way for construction of a complete, modern workable hospital.

The 11-floor tower, along with the new construction south to start to the east and south of the present hospital structure, will assure Tarrant County the means of providing hospital care to the medically indigent and to the many victims of trauma who are brought to John Peter Smith Hospital.

The Tarrant County Convention Center is regarded nationally as the outstanding success of any building opened in recent years. The great success of the building is due to the planning efforts of the center's advisory board and to the far-sighted cooperation and encouragement given to the staffing of the building and support given to the Convention & Visitors Bureau by the commissioners.

The center has become the "model" for hundreds of planners from other cities from all over the North American continent since there is little, if any, error to be found in its total complex.

Many other new buildings, some of which have been opened since the opening of the Tarrant County Convention Center, have suffered from lack of bookings and from construction errors because the governing bodies in these cities did not realize the wisdom of supporting an adequate convention bureau nor in advance of its completion.

From the opening of the center in late October, 1968, through 1971, 64 conventions have been held in the build-

ing. The definite delegate expenditure for this 3-year, 3-month period amounted to \$19,991,610.12.

IT HAS BEEN estimated that these "new dollars," brought into the community and spent but earned elsewhere, turn over seven times before they lose their financial impact upon the community. This means that the impact on payrolls, purchases, taxes, etc. has been nearly \$140 million. This does not take into account the additional millions spent by out-of-town people attending open events in the center.

Next year will be a banner year for Tarrant County and its cities in that there are 18 definite bookings of conventions and trade shows. The delegates will spend \$7,165,857. in the county and, again applying the seven-fold factor, the financial impact will be nearly \$50 million.

The commissioners, after three years of study, requested the Texas Department of Public Welfare to set up a child welfare unit in Tarrant County to be administered by the state and mutually funded by the county and state. Prior to this action children classified as dependent and neglected were handled through the Juvenile Probation Department.

The new agency became partially operative in the late fall of 1969, and in March 1970

it moved into offices at 1216 Pennsylvania.

The division of the child welfare unit from the Probation Department has brought about improvements in that the JPD was relieved of this responsibility and could concentrate its efforts and budget to cope with one problem instead of two.

The aim is to do a complete evaluation of the child, physical and dental examinations and such psychiatric testing as is deemed to be needed, before placement in a foster home or institution. This will aid in a more complete adjustment of the child to the home, and protect him and the family as his needs and physical condition are known. As yet budgetary problems for this part of the program are not worked out.

THE GREATEST change in services is the development of a complete foster home program, regular supervision of children in licensed, high-quality homes, and intensive home-finding case work.

Foster parents, with the help of the staff, are organizing in order to give the best possible child care; regular meetings with staff offers insight, moral support, and exchange of ideas and suggestions for improvement on both sides.

A citizens committee has just been named to re-examine out-of-pocket expenses,



JUDGE HOWARD GREEN gives county report

such as the auto and gas allowances given many county employees and officials.

Despite our own efforts, an unbiased citizens' group taking a look at how the county allocates its expense funds cannot be a bad thing. If nothing else, it might well reaffirm the confidence we hope voters have in county officials.

The present commissioners' court is not afraid to temper with the status quo.

Commissioners, along with the county judge have committed errors, will continue to make them, and receive the shafts delivered to those living in the white light of publicity. But Tarrant County's government, though most assuredly imperfect, will continue to show improvement.

We may very well have the best county government in the country and the worst image. Members of the Commissioners Court and the news media must share the blame.

Perot OKs Offer For Highway Land

County commissioners Monday were notified that county millionaire H. Ross Perot is willing to accept \$204,300 for 27 acres of property needed for highway expansion in Arlington.

However, they authorized county condemnation attorney Doug Crouch to file condemnation proceedings against Perot, on the advice of county public works director LeRoy Erwin.

Erwin told commissioners condemnation action on the property, at the intersection of Texas 260 and Arkansas Lane, is needed because its title is clouded by other litigation.

In other action, commissioners delayed for a week action on amending the county's contract with Commercial Computer Services, Inc., for voter registration lists.

Joe Matthews, vice president of the firm, estimated that costs for preparing the lists will be about \$60,000.

County commissioners Monday authorized the county's condemnation attorney, Doug Crouch, to file a lawsuit against Dallas multi-millionaire H. Ross Perot.

The suit actually is a friendly one, and the only reason the suit was filed, according to county officials, is because title to the property is clouded.

Perot has been offered \$204,300 for little more than 27 Arkansas Lane and Texas 260

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart warned commissioners not to wait too long in considering the contract amendments because he must start preparing to meet the new law provisions in the near future.

He asked commissioners to accept the amended Commercial Computer Services offer.

County to Sue Perot But Nobody's Angry

County commissioners Monday authorized the county's condemnation attorney, Doug Crouch, to file a lawsuit against Dallas multi-millionaire H. Ross Perot.

The suit actually is a friendly one, and the only reason the suit was filed, according to county officials, is because title to the property is clouded.

Perot has been offered \$204,300 for little more than 27 Arkansas Lane and Texas 260

Civil service may change system

Car allowance fork in road is near

Two current county controversies may reach a fork soon—along the road county employees drive with car allowances.

The two controversies concern "out of pocket" expenses paid to county employees and the possible adoption of civil service which the employees want.

Civil service is expected to be debated by Commissioners Court soon since employees meeting tonight are expected to request commissioners to take a stand on the issue.

If the commissioners opt for civil service, it could render the county's own job classification system obsolete.

THE MAN in charge of that system, County Personnel Director Jodie Colvard, has unwittingly been brought into the middle of the car allowance controversy through his role in approving requested allowances from department heads.

It was learned yesterday that Commissioner Dick Andersen requested that the car

allowance of his precinct bridge foreman be raised to \$100 per month, making Andersen's workers the highest paid—in terms of car allowances—of any other commissioner.

The raise, which Colvard said was from \$60, was approved with Colvard's routine personnel report July 12.

When questioned about it, Colvard said he did not recall the raise and said he did not know why some precinct workers drew more in car allowances than others.

Critics contend Colvard rubber stamps requests from commissioners and a powerful department heads. Colvard also refused to take a definite stand when it was learned that a county building engineer, appointed

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FRECIINCT ROAD and bridge workers have county-owned autos and trucks available to them.

Anderson said these vehicles were being used by workers in his precinct and that one was not available to the bridge foreman. He said the foreman averaged about 100 miles daily in driving on the job to his auto.

Commissioner George (Sket) Richardson also pays his bridge foreman \$100 per month in car allowance.

Richardson said the heaviest road and bridge work is done in his and Andersen's precincts.

Pct. 2 Commissioner Jerry Mebus has no bridge foreman, since his is a highly-urbanized area.

Mebus is the only Pct. 2 official who draws a car allowance.

Tuesday Morning, August 3, 1971

Voter List Contract Delayed

Commissioners Held Off Decision 1 Week On Computer Bills

County commissioners today delayed for a week awarding a contract for compiling a list of the county's registered voters by computer.

County Gets \$1,244 In Fees From JPs

The five peace justices in outlying precincts supplied the county treasury with \$1,244 in "fees of office" during the first six months of 1971 while they collected a total of \$12,000 in salaries.

The JPs also have been given allowances for supplies and office rental.

The \$1,244 figure comes from records kept in County Auditor Jack Benson's office. The county has nine JPs, but the five in outlying precincts were put on salary this year for the first time.

Also for the first time, the five JPs were required to turn over to the auditor the fees of office — civil fees, vital statistics fees and court costs in criminal cases.

Despite the disparity between the cost of operating the courts and the fees turned in, Benson called the move by county commissioners to give the five JPs a \$400-a-month salary "some what of a success."

He said putting the outlying JPs on salary takes away the motivation of collecting more and more fees. He added that

he did not expect fees of office ever to equal operation costs.

In the past, he said, some of the outlying JPs turned in fees of office and some did not. The county's four urban JPs have been turning in fees and have been on salary for some time.

All JPs in the county still can keep remunerations from marriages they perform, Benson said.

Benson's records show fees of office turned over by each of the outlying JP courts in 1971's first six months are: William Egner of Keller (Pct. 4)—\$48.50; L. W. Pope of Lake Worth (Pct. 5)—\$347; T. M. Sheffield of White Settlement (Pct. 6)—\$509.50; Preston Sheffield of Rendon (Pct. 7)—\$68; and Agnes Kirk of Mansfield (Pct. 8)—\$371.

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1971

NINETY-FIRST YEAR, NO. 183

ERWIN BLASTS JUDGES

Commissioners Fees Held Legal

County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin today said commissioners court here has authority to set fees that should be paid to special commissioners for condemnation.

District judges, however, do not hold with Erwin's interpretation of the law.

Erwin, firing the latest in a barrage of blasts aimed at the district judges for setting high fees for commissioners in condemnation proceedings, gave reporters a 1961 copy of a manual prepared by the state highway dept.

THAT MANUAL notes that: "House bill 289 of the 56th legislature provides that the county commissioners court shall set the fees for services performed by the special commissioners at any amount the commissioners court may deem reasonable, but not less than \$5 for each day per cause while engaged in the performance of their duties."

It was Erwin and Commissioner George "Sket" Richardson who Friday raised the question of fees paid to special condemnation commissioners.

Commissioners court ordered Erwin to refuse to pay \$150 each to three condemna-

tion commissioners appointed by District Judge Harold Craik.

TODAY ERWIN gave reporters a copy of the state manual.

District Judge Charles J. Murray, who presides over the district judges' board, said that Erwin's interpretation of the law is all right as far as it goes.

Murray then showed reporters a full copy of the bill rather than the excerpt printed in the manual.

The remainder of the act provided that judges in county courts at law or district judges shall have authority to set fees for special commissioners from at least \$10 per day per cause.

"We interpret the law to mean that county commissioners shall set fees only in cases where the county judge has original jurisdiction in condemnation cases," Murray said.

"THE ACT IS specific in dealing with district courts' setting the fees for condemnation commissioners."

The Legislature earlier this year transferred jurisdiction from county courts at law to the district courts of all jurisdiction in condemnation cases.

The transfer was done in a Senate bill introduced by state Sen. Don Kennard of Fort Worth.

Erwin said that he bases his interpretation of the law on advice given him by former district attorney Doug Crouch.

Crouch earlier this year was named to be condemnation attorney for the county, replacing Jesse Brown, who held the post for many years.

County Gets \$1,244 In Fees From JPs

The five peace justices in outlying precincts supplied the county treasury with \$1,244 in "fees of office" during the first six months of 1971 while they collected a total of \$12,000 in salaries.

The JPs also have been given allowances for supplies and office rental.

The \$1,244 figure comes from records kept in County Auditor Jack Benson's office. The county has nine JPs, but the five in outlying precincts were put on salary this year for the first time.

Also for the first time, the five JPs were required to turn over to the auditor the fees of office — civil fees, vital statistics fees and court costs in criminal cases.

Despite the disparity between the cost of operating the courts and the fees turned in, Benson called the move by county commissioners to give the five JPs a \$400-a-month salary "some what of a success."

He said putting the outlying JPs on salary takes away the motivation of collecting more and more fees. He added that

Judge Duvall Gets In Line for Pay Hike

County Criminal Court No. 1 Judge J. C. Duvall is the second elected county official to say he wants a pay raise — possibly 20 per cent — next year from county commissioners.

Duvall wrote in a letter Tuesday to all five members of Commissioners Court:

"I do not see any reason why the Commissioners Court should consider public service of such a nature as to demand the lowest compensation; any official who feels that he has not justified compensation in proportion to the increased cost of living is evidently in recognition of his own deficiencies."

Duvall notes in the letter that commissioners have the authority to raise the salaries of elected officials 20 per cent, without the approval of the legislature.

He claims that county criminal courts "are being unjustly discriminated against."

His request brought no immediate rebuke from commissioners, who recently asked other county officials to economize.

However, Commissioner George "Sket" Richardson said all elected officials should decide whether they

Pay Raise Requested By Duvall

want raises and send a spokesman to commissioners in December when commissions draw up the 1972 budget.

Richardson said he agrees with Duvall in that elected officials should not have to go to Austin for raises, as has been the practice. He said county government should be responsible for the raises.

Duvall said that some commissioners are "100 per cent against such raises" and contended that "there appears no other alternative" than to seek raises in Austin.

"Letters are fine," said Richardson of Duvall's action, "but these people should appear before us at the appropriate time in December."

Richardson said he knew of no united move by elected officials to seek raises at this time. He said he felt officials would not have asked for raises if they had been given 6 per cent cost-of-living hikes this year, along with other county employees.

Several weeks ago, Peace Justice W. W. Matthews vowed to put a 20 per cent raise for himself in his 1972 budget recommendations. Matthews' statement came after commissioners raised their own car allowances and award-

Turn to Page 2

Pay Raise Requested By Duvall

ed car allowances to three other officials.

Duvall indicated he feels that county criminal court judges, who preside in misdemeanor cases, and the county probate judge should be paid as much as domestic relations court judges, who make \$28,000 annually.

A bid to raise the salaries of the county criminal judges here failed in the last session of the legislature. Public outcry over the salary bill, which included other county officials, caused bill sponsors to withdraw it.

"Some public officials have been reluctant to go on record concerning salaries," Duvall wrote.

He then referred to wage hikes granted this year to transportation, communications and steel workers and said:

"I am not at all reluctant to say that your county courts are being unjustly discriminated against, and I have no apologies for this stand."

Duvall said that two of the three county criminal courts have paid into the county in fines and court costs more than double what it costs to operate the courts.

Duvall currently makes \$28,000 yearly, but he said "a number of other Texas counties" pay other court judges "far in excess" of what the judges are paid here.

County commissioners today delayed for a week awarding a contract for compiling a list of the county's registered voters by computer.

Joe Matthews, vice president of Commercial Computer Services, Inc., proposed that his firm, which has been handling the voter lists for the county for the last two years, again compile the lists.

He offered called for the county to pay a program fee on \$18,000 and then a charge of 25 cents for each Tarrant County resident who registers to vote beginning Oct. 1.

MATTHEWS NOTED that this is the first year Texas will have a permanent voter registration system.

For that reason, he said, the cost of maintaining up-to-date voter registration lists will be increased.

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, who also handles the voter registration, urged commissioners to morning to award a contract to Matthews' firm.

"He's done us a real good job," Stewart said of Matthews and the Fort Worth-based firm.

UNDER THE voter registration law, as revised by the Legislature this year, residents may register any time prior to 30 days before an election.

Previously, the deadline was Jan. 31 for registering to vote.

Under the new law, anyone who votes in an election during the year is automatically registered for the coming year. Matthews proposed that second-year legislation set the voters would be 27 cents for each name.

Skeet now for consolidating JP precincts

County Commissioner George (Skeet) Richardson told an investigating committee today he thought some peace justice precincts could be consolidated.

He warned the five-member panel investigating the possibility of eliminating four rural JP posts that it should not go overboard, however.

TODAY MARKED the first meeting of the committee which was appointed by Commissioners Court several weeks ago after County Judge Howard Green said some \$60,000 annually could be saved by eliminating needless positions.

Richardson and Commissioner Dick Lewis, both of whom have in the past supported the role of the rural JPs, spent most of this morning giving their views to the committee.

Yesterday, Auditor Jack Benson revealed the five JPs in rural precincts contributed \$124 in fees of office to the county during six months of this year.

THE REPORTS were the first ever turned into Benson by the rural JPs under the express orders of Commissioners Court, which at the beginning of this year placed the five JPs on \$400 per month salaries.

The court put the JPs on a straight salary after hearing complaints that some of them had been pocketing fees without turning the money over to the county.

Civil service may be riding on Mebus' quiz

Whether county employes get a civil service program may depend on results of a private survey being taken by County Commissioner Jerry Mebus of Arlington.

Mebus today said he is questioning officials of various cities and other governments currently regulated by civil service.

"I still have an open mind on this issue, and we ought to make this a thorough investigation," Mebus said.

HE INDICATED HE would opt for civil service if it seemed to him to be warranted.

Mebus and Commissioner Dick Andersen, both of whom have, according to labor officials, gone on record for civil service in the past, now say they are undecided.

Commissioners George (Skeet) Richardson and Dick Lewis are actively seeking civil service for the county's 900 employes, claiming it would be a giant step toward elimination of political patronage here.

But Richardson said he will not bring the matter up before Commissioners Court before he thinks he has a chance of swinging Mebus or Andersen over to his side.

LAST WEEK ABOUT 70 county employes listened to Richardson and Lewis say they would try to have the system implemented.

County Judge Howard Green is opposed to civil service, claiming the county's year-old job classification system gives necessary job security.

COUNTY ACCOUNT LAW UPSET

Private Fund Audits Out

The county auditor's supervision of the sheriff's jail commissary and the district attorney's bad check fund will not now be required, County Auditor Jack Benson indicated Tuesday.

Atty. Gen. Crawford Martin

ruled Monday that a new law concerning the private funds is unconstitutional. The law was passed by the last session of the legislature.

The law provides that money earned in private business operated on public property

must be paid to the county. The auditor would handle such accounts.

"MY USUAL attitude is that I have to consider the attorney general's ruling as law until I hear otherwise," said

Benson. He said he would like to see the attorney general's opinion before making a firm judgment.

Under the law, Benson apparently would have the right to audit the sheriff's and DA's funds, as well as any personal remunerations received by county officials in private business done at the courthouse.

All remunerations apparently were to have been turned over to Benson.

Under what was called a "liberal" interpretation of the law, lawyers on the DA's staff would have been severely hampered in their private law practices. Most, if not all, DA staff members have outside practices.

SHERIFF LON Evans operates a commissary that provides prisoners with personal items, such as cigarettes, newspapers and toiletries.

Evans said any profits from the commissary go toward "what you might say is a welfare deal."

He said the profits pay for jail supplies, Christmas gifts, a Golden Gloves program and personal effects for prisoners who do not have money to buy them.

He said he also pays two men to operate the commissary and a bookkeeper to keep accounts. "After that, you don't have much left," he said.

THE COMMISSARY is available to an average of 500 jail inmates daily.

The district attorney's office draws interest on payments made to them by persons repaying bad checks they have written. The payments made are on deposit until they are disbursed to the check's original payee.

In the interim, the money draws interest. Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey said that the money now goes into "petty cash" funds in the DA's office.

THE MONEY never goes into the county budget as revenue, although Benson said the DA's office has offered to allow him to study the fund in the past.

No estimates were immediately available on how much business the jail commissary does or how much interest the bad check fund draws.

The new law exempted court reporters, whose private earnings for furnishing transcripts to lawyers can run into thousands of dollars, and peace justices, who are allowed to keep fees for performing marriages.

Evans said he felt the new law was unconstitutional when it was proposed.

"It is the sheriff's responsibility to furnish some things to prisoners. . . I think they would have a hard time proving this (the commissary) is private business, anyway," he said.

MARTIN RULED that the new law violated the 14th Amendment in not applying the law equally to everyone.

Evans said the law came about because of a feud between the Bexar County sheriff and a state representative there.

Coffey said he was pleased with Martin's opinion, which does not carry the weight of a court decision, in regard to the private practice of his attorneys.

"If we didn't have the private practice, we'd be looking around for a lot of lawyers," he said, referring to staff members' ability to augment their salaries.

"I believe the young ones especially should get the opportunity to develop a client relationship," he said.

Another class of county employes that might have been affected by the law are constables, who customarily receive tips from lawyers for whom they serve court papers.

"There is no way I could have checked that," said Benson.

Judge Duvall Gets In Line for Pay Hike

By JOHN LUMPKIN

County Criminal Court No. 1 Judge J. C. Duvall is the second elected county official to say he wants a pay raise — possibly 20 per cent — next year from county commissioners.

Duvall wrote in a letter Tuesday to all five members of Commissioners Court:

"I do not see any reason why the Commissioners Court should consider public service of such a nature as to demand the lowest compensation; any official who feels that he has not justified compensation in proportion to the increased cost of living is evidently in recognition of his own deficiencies."

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He claims that county criminal courts "are being unjustly discriminated against."

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want raises and send a spokesman to commissioners in December when commissions draw up the 1972 budget.

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Turn to Page 2

Others hitting commissioners for pay raises

As a result of secretly raising their own car allowances, county commissioners may face a flurry of requests from county department heads who want pay raises of their own.

Judge J. C. Duvall yesterday sent a letter to commissioners asking that the body raise the salaries of county criminal court judges who now make \$20,000 annually.

Duvall is the second official to announce he would try to get a pay raise in the wake of the commissioners' action.

A few weeks ago, Peace Justice W. W. Matthews delivered a broadside against commissioners by saying "they look out for themselves and not anybody else."

Matthews vowed to put a 20 per cent raise for himself in his budget recommendations. Commissioners will draw up the 1972 budget in December.

Withholding of Pay For Board Ordered

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County commissioners told County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin Friday not to pay a \$450 bill authorized by District Judge Harold Craik as payment to a three-member condemnation board.

Commissioners informally agreed Friday afternoon the payment was too high, said Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson.

"I'm not saying there is anything dishonest about them getting that much money for three hours' work," Richardson said, "but it (the amount) seems way out of line."

CRAIK, WHO IS serving as a visiting judge in 153rd District Court from which he was retired two months ago, said,

"I figured they earned it or I would not have authorized it."

Craik said also that he does not believe commissioners have authority to refuse to pay a bill authorized by a district judge.

"I don't think they have anything to say about it," Craik said.

County records show that on Tuesday, Craik authorized payment of \$150 each to Milton Wright, Del Barron and J. D. Thompson.

The three sat as commissioners of a condemnation case involving property in Mansfield needed by the state for right-of-way.

Records kept by Erwin, Turn to Withholding on Page 2

County OKs Bids On Vote List Job

Commissioners Court tentatively agreed Friday to call for bids for the electronic data processing of voter registration lists even though a Fort Worth firm has already made a proposal for the job.

Commissioners and County Judge Howard Green took the action around noon after a two-hour informal meeting in which they discussed, among other things, the proposal made by Commercial Computer Services, Inc., and offers from two other computer firms.

Commercial Computer Services has held the contract to prepare the voter lists for the last two years and County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart has urged commissioners to award the contract to the firm again.

FRIDAY MORNING County Auditor Jack Benson said he had renegotiated the proposed contract with Joe Matthews, vice president of CCS.

Benson said Matthews had agreed to lower to \$10,000 from \$14,000 the amount of his original proposal made Monday to commissioners.

At that time, Matthews estimated it would cost approximately \$90,000 to register 300,000 Tarrant County voters.

For each voter registered the county is paid 40 cents by the state under terms of the new Texas Election Code.

The commissioners' action, in wanting to take the bids, differs in that normally they do not take bids for professional services.

FOR EXAMPLE, they have not in recent years sought bids for services of architects, even though they have allocated millions of dollars in county improvements.

Earlier Friday, during the informal meeting, a spokesman for National Share Data Corp. urged that bids be taken for the service.

The spokesman also urged that consideration be given to hiring that company as computer consultants for the county when it purchases a

computer and begins handling its own electronic records keeping.

Both Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis argued that in one way it is unfair to seek bids now since a proposal has already been made and publicized.

"On the other hand, since you're talking about this much money, I think we should have been planning on bids all along," said Lewis.

FRIDAY'S ACTION by commissioners is much like that of two years ago when CCS was first given the contract.

At that time, the firm also had made a proposal only to have another company come in the day the contract was to be voted on with an offer to do the work at a lower price.

Because that firm was not located in Tarrant County, favorable consideration was given Matthews' firm.

Also Friday morning, two representatives from Honeywell, Inc., appeared before commissioners to discuss electronic data processing.

Last Friday the Honeywell firm was authorized to conduct a study of the county's projected computer needs and to submit a bid for the sale of the equipment to the county.

BENSON SAID he believes commissioners agreed to seek bids for the service as a means of avoiding criticism.

He said also that his office is preparing specifications from which the bids will be sought.

Commissioners at their regular meeting Monday apparently will have to vote formally on the bid taking since no official record was kept of the Friday meeting.

Commissioners took their informal vote behind closed doors after reporters had left the morning meeting.

Richardson said the vote was taken in Commissioner Jerry Mebus' office "so that we wouldn't be bothered by anyone interested in the outcome."

Friday Evening, August 6, 1971



STREET PAVING IN COMO . . . county crew surfaces in city

—Star-Telegram Photo

RICHARDSON'S CREWS BUSY

Lake Como Street Surfacing Starts

Street surfacing, delayed by rains and wet grounds, was begun this morning in the Lake Como area by County Commissioner George

"Skeet" Richardson's Precinct 4 employes.

Archie Payne, Richardson's precinct foreman, said work was started in the 5200 block of Wesleyley, near the children's day care center.

Richardson said his crews also will surface Blackmore and Bourine Streets in the West Side community.

AFTER THE asphalt-laying, Richardson said, the crew would then move on to other areas, first in Lake Como and then possibly to other parts of the city.

However, Richardson said he doubts that work in the Como area can be completed before the weather gets too cool to squirt the asphalt surface over the gravel base.

"I don't mean to be critical," Richardson said, "but the city has dragged its feet on this."

"I told them about a month ago that I would be ready soon to start work and gave them a list of the places that I hoped to do first."

"THEN ABOUT two weeks ago, I notified them that I still hadn't heard from them and again asked for their authority. It was this long in coming."

Richardson was given permission to work on the streets in the area after fellow Commissioner Dick Andersen first

proposed that he be allowed to do so.

The area is in Richardson's precinct and commissioners rarely ever cross precinct boundary lines to do work.

Andersen then volunteered to help Richardson in paving

the Como area. He said he was making good a political promise made when he was running for commissioner because at that time Como was in Andersen's precinct, rather than in Richardson's.

Withholding of Pay For Board Ordered

Continued From Page 1

who first questioned the payment since in the past commissioners rarely have been paid more than \$50 each for serving, show that real estate appraisers hired by the Texas Highway Department said the property in question is worth \$67,110.

The property, records show, is owned by Thurmond W. Galloway.

ERWIN SAID the three-member condemnation commissioners board earlier this week reassessed the property's worth and increased it by 21 per cent over the state's recommendation.

The new figure, Erwin said, is \$81,698.

Richardson said that in addition to ordering Erwin not to process the bill for payment that County Auditor Jack Benson also was ordered not to sign the vouchers for payment.

"We also told Erwin to request that a jury trial be held to determine the value of the property," Richardson said.

The Precinct 4 commissioner also said that this is the second time in as many weeks that the same three men have increased property valuations above state recommendations.

The first happened July 26, Richardson said, when District Judge Clyde Ashworth named the same three men as condemnation commissioners.

DURING A HEARING on that day, which also involved property in the Mansfield area, Richardson said, the state set a valuation of \$44,245.

The commissioners for the condemnation process raised the property's value to \$51,040, an increase, the commissioner said, of 17.7 per cent.

That property, records show, is owned by Albert Stone.

District court judges earlier this year were given jurisdiction of condemnation cases in Tarrant County by the legislature.

Prior to that, all condemnation cases were originally filed in Judge Drew Clifton's County Court-at-Law.

Several Fort Worth attorneys for years fought to get jurisdiction of condemnation cases transferred from Clifton's court to the district courts.

Clifton generally authorized payments of \$35 to his commissioners.

DISTRICT CLERK Jim Boorman later Friday said there are no guidelines for district judges in setting fees paid commissioners.

"Several weeks ago Judge James Wright paid commissioners \$25," Boorman said.

"Then, a little later, Judge Walter Jordan in a related condemnation case, authorized payment of \$45 each, and then Judge Craik came along and authorized the \$150."

Craik said he set the \$150 figure because "there was a lot of money involved in the case and there was a lot of work done by them in deciding it."

Court house observers said this is the first time in many years that commissioners have said they will refuse to honor the payment requests made by a judge here.

Judge Terms Payment 'Proper'

Judge Harold Craik of 153rd District Court said Monday his authorization of a \$450 payment to a three-member condemnation board was a "proper amount" which he fixed "according to the work that was done and the responsibility involved."

If anyone is dissatisfied, the judge added, he has a right to file a motion with the court against the payment. "I'd be glad to hear it," he asserted.

Judge Craik said that the appraisers — members of the condemnation boards — are paid as part of the court cost. The court cost is paid by the county.

If a motion is not filed, the judge said, the appraisers will have to be paid.

EARLIER MONDAY LeRoy Erwin, county public works director, had said that he will try to find if there are regulatory measures to limit the amount judges can allot the appraisers.

He suggested that board members be paid between \$50 and \$75, rather than the \$150

County, Colleyville Sued Over M...hap

A \$300,000 suit was filed in 153rd District Court Monday against Tarrant County and Colleyville by two persons who said a hole in Wade Road triggered an auto accident Jan. 1 that resulted in serious injuries to two girl passengers.

Harvey V. Williams Jr. and Bobbie F. Dennis alleged that striking the hole, four-tenths of a mile south of Sparger Road in Colleyville, damaged the auto's steering mechanism and caused the car to collide with a tree.

Condemnation boards assess the value of private property prior to its purchase by the county for rights-of-way. Appraisers typically spend less than a day on each case, said Reynolds. And frequently a board can handle three cases in a day, he said.

Those land condemnation bills will be paid, anyhow

County commissioners decided today to go ahead and pay a controversial bill to three special land condemnation commissioners.

They agreed informally to do so after balking at the step last Friday, claiming the bill was too much.

The bill authorized by Dist. Court Judge Harold Craik called for each commissioner to be paid \$150 each. The commissioners are Del Barron, J. D. Thompson and Milton Wright.

At the same time, Commissioner Jerry Mebus said he still thought the trio had appraised property in Mansfield too highly and that Commissioners Court might appeal their appraisal in court.

AT FIRST, commissioners said they felt the district judges should not have the power

to pay sums such as \$150 to appraisers for only a few hours work.

But a portion of a state law cited by Dist. Court Judge Charles Murray apparently changed their minds.

The same three men were also authorized payments of \$100 each for appraising another tract of property in the Mansfield area for Judge James Wright.

Land condemnation cases until this year were conducted by commissioners appointed by County-at-law Judge Drew Clifton, who usually paid commissioner \$25 each per case.

TODAY'S ACTION also came after a statement by attorney Harold D. Hammett, who worked closely with legislators to re-

move jurisdiction from Clifton's court. In a statement, Hammett called criticism of the fees "short-sighted."

Hammett cited the heavy responsibilities of the special commissioners and pointed out they would receive much more for rendering such judgments in private cases.

He contended the special commissioners now receive more than they did formerly, but they earned it.

"Over the long run, having cases fairly decided at the special commissioners' level will save the county money by reducing the need to hire outside attorneys to represent the county at a condemnation trial," Hammett said.

Officials to Seek State Job Funds

County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin and the county's personnel director Jodie Colvard later this month will go to Washington, D. C., to try to get a portion of the \$11,780,000 that has been appropriated to the state under President Nixon's recently announced emergency employment act.

"We are trying to find out what we can get for use in Tarrant County," said Colvard.

While in Washington the two men will attend a conference sponsored by the National Civil Service League.

The President said earlier this month that he is allocating \$1.7 billion for the emergency employment of persons for the year.

From that amount allocations are to be made to the 50 states on a population and on an as-needed basis.

County to seek for job funds

Two county officials will go to Washington, D. C., later this month to try to procure funds under the recently-signed Federal Emergency Employment Act.

County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin and Personnel Director Jodie Colvard make the trip to try to get funds to hire additional county workers.

Under the new Emergency Employment Act, Texas is being allocated \$11.8 million of the available funds.

Colvard said that while in the capital city he will attend a meeting of the National Civil Service League.

County commissioners are expected to consider changing over to civil service soon.

COURT COSTS ARE CITED

Appraisal Fee May Save Money

The \$150 fee authorized to be paid to three appraisers—special commissioners on a county condemnation board—may save the county money, a Fort Worth attorney says.

"Over the long run, having cases fairly decided at the special commissioners' level will save the county money by reducing its need to hire outside lawyers to represent the county in a condemnation (jury) trial," said Harold D. Hammett yesterday.

HAMMETT, WHO worked

with the Tarrant County Bar Association to place control of the boards under district judges, spoke in defense of the fees after they were recently criticized.

Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin said he thought District Judge Harold Craik was paying the appraisers too much.

Hammett said strong personal feelings caused him to respond to Erwin's statement.

The appraisers are highly qualified professionals and even if they net \$25 to \$40 an

hour on an important case, Hammett said, that is no more than they would receive in private practice.

So by having professional appraisers in the first place, Hammett said, the county can

avoid numerous appeals for which attorneys would have to be hired by the county.

"The judges are trying to give them (the appraisers) fees that are commensurate with their abilities," Hammett said.

Whiteness of Sand Caused by Silica

PANAMA CITY, Fla. — The whiteness and softness of the sand on the beaches of Northwest Florida are ex-

plained by its high silica content. Because of the oval shape of each grain, the sand does not pack down.

Commissioners OK Federal Grant; Richardson Dissents

Commissioners Court today agreed to accept \$472,000 in a federal aid program which Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson called "a Mickey Mouse program."

At the same time they agreed to accept the aid under an unemployment bill signed recently by President Nixon, commissioners voted to restrict the power given to County Judge Howard Green under details of the bill.

As proposed, Green and the mayors of Fort Worth and Arlington are named as program agents in administering the \$1.1 million aid package for Tarrant County.

COMMISSIONERS unanimously objected to Green's being solely responsible for overseeing the county's expenditure of its share of the aid package.

After much discussion, Green agreed that he would act with the "advice and consent" of commissioners in deciding how the money will be spent.

But before voting on the restriction, and while Green was out of the special meeting, Richardson said that without a formal vote they could not force Green to ask their opinion.

"**YOU'RE LAYING** \$500,000 in the hands of one man to do what he wants to do with," Benson said.

As they voted to accept the federal aid, commissioners also unanimously rejected a proposed list of prospective county employees submitted by Benson and county Personnel Director Jodie Colvard.

Under the proposal, the county would have hired 30 employees for 11 different offices in the county at a cost for the first six months of the program of \$94,360.

Of that total, the county's

share would be \$10,948 in so-called "in-kind services."

BENSON explained this to mean that there would be no direct financial burden on the county, that administration by officials already being paid by the county can count as an in-kind service.

Commissioner Dick Andersen argued strongly against the Benson-Colvard proposal.

"For years we have needed long-range planning for the county," Andersen said. "For years, this old building (the courthouse) has needed remodeling. With this federal money, I would like to see us start a research department and hire carpenters and painters... that way we could see something happen."

"Wouldn't it be great to look back and point to something that we have done constructively?"

COMMISSIONER Jerry Mebus was also critical of the proposal which, among other things, called for hiring three employees for the district clerk's office, even though as recently as Monday the head of the office said he does not want any more employees.

"The thing that bothers me is that we're getting 30 people we don't need," said Mebus.

"This is totally unacceptable... I would be completely ashamed to turn this in to the federal government," Andersen added.

Commissioner Dick Lewis said that he has reservations about the program because "they (the federal government) are trying to tell me who I can hire."

HE WAS referring to stipulations made under the Emergency Employment Act of 1971 that called for persons to be hired in this order:

First priority would be given to a veteran of the Vietnam War, second to the unemployed, and third to the underprivileged.

"That's a bunch of bull telling me that I can't hire someone I want to," Lewis added.

Shortly before noon, commissioners were still meeting to discuss the employees they will suggest hiring before the aid is formally offered.

Commissioners also must decide within 30 days how much money cities within Tarrant County, not counting Fort Worth and Arlington, which have their own grants already made, will receive.

Commissioners to Okay Payment to Panelists

Commissioners Court this morning informally agreed to authorize payment of \$250 each to three men who were named to serve on two county condemnation panels recently.

Last Friday, commissioners balked at paying \$150 to each of the three men and ordered County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin not to pay the bill.

What apparently changed their minds was hearing of a state law that specified that judges from the district court who appoint the condemna-

tion commissioners have authority to set the salaries for the commission members.

Judge Harold Craik authorized payment of \$150 each to Del Barron, J. D. Thompson and Milton Wright.

Shortly before, Judge James Wright (no relation to Milton Wright) authorized payment of \$150 to each of the three men.

In both cases the men served as special commissioners in condemnation cases involving property in Mansfield.

Wednesday Evening, August 25, 1971



COOPERATIVE CHAT . . . Mayor Stovall, Judge Green, Councilwoman Rimmer

Council Tables Proposed Budgets to Await Study

City Council has tabled the proposed budget for the library and the park and recreation department to await the outcome of a study of possible city-county cooperation in those areas.

County commissioners met with the council at yesterday's study session on the proposed new city budget.

The joint meeting produced an informal agreement to consider the feasibility of inter-governmental efforts in street maintenance, public health and library operation.

Charles Campbell, Park and Recreation director, told the council that the county could save the city \$40,000 by maintaining the unimproved streets assigned to his department.

City Councilman John O'Neill said he'd like to see the county increase its contribution to the operation of the Fort Worth Library system.

He made that suggestion after Mrs. Mabel Fischer, library director, said that based upon the percentage of non-city residents using the libraries the county's contribution should be \$201,943, instead of the \$147,000 the commissioners paid.

O'Neill said "it didn't make sense" for the county's contribution to have gone up only \$3,000 since 1968-69.

COUNCILMAN Jess M. Johnston said the commissioners might be more recep-

tive if they had a representative on the library board.

Councilwoman Margaret Rimmer said action could be taken in the areas suggested without putting them before study committees.

Studies were suggested by Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson.

The commissioner said after the meeting that he hoped the city "is not trying to get something for nothing" from the county to help solve the city's financial problems.

County Judge Howard Green hailed the meeting as a peacemaker.

"**HISTORICALLY**, it has been true that cities and counties fight one another," Green said.

Mayor R. M. "Sharkey" Stovall said the city and the county should find ways to make "joint use of the taxpayer's dollar."

He said he is particularly interested in the county's

maintaining unimproved streets within the city limits, an activity that now costs the city about \$200,000 annually.

Stovall suggested street maintenance as one area in which the county could spend some of the \$500,000 grant it is to receive under the Emergency Employment Act.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER Dick Andersen, who along with Johnston has been an outspoken advocate of city-county cooperation for the past two years, said he is interested in Stovall's proposal.

County Spending To Be 'Frozen'

County Auditor Jack Benson today indicated there will be a freeze on unbudgeted county expenditures until December.

"We're going to be running a tight ship from now to December," Benson told a reporter during the regular meeting of Commissioners Court.

During the meeting, Benson refused to authorize a \$1,250 outlay for a check signature machine for County Treasurer Bill Gurley. Commissioners recently approved Gurley's acquisition of the machine, subject to available funds.

BENSON TODAY told commissioners that the expenditure was not budgeted and that there was no other money in the county's coffers for it.

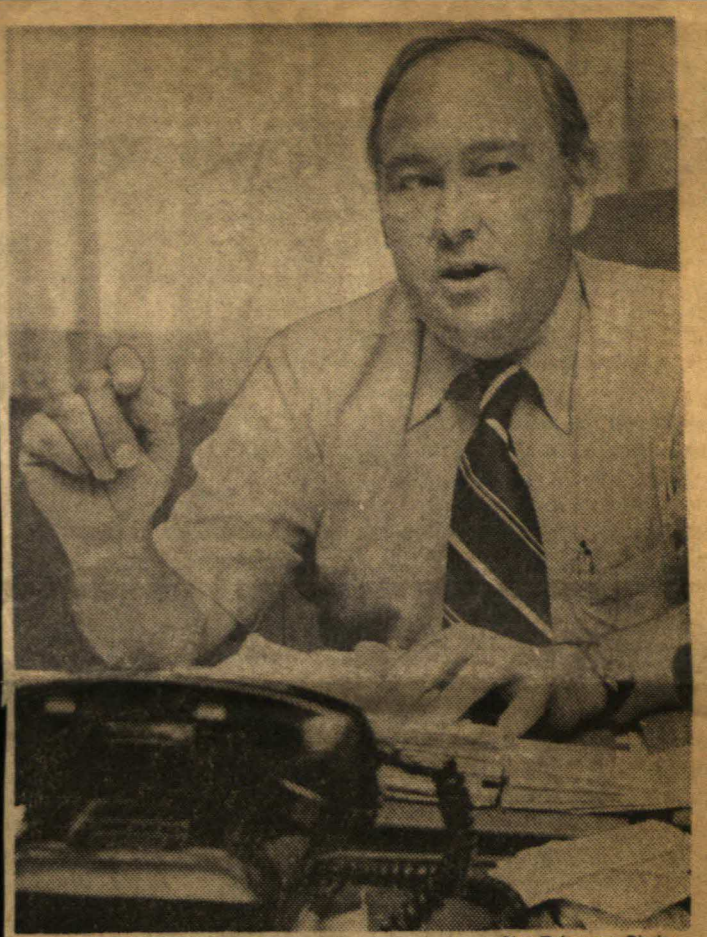
Benson would not say specifically to a reporter that there would be no exceptions to the freeze in unbudgeted expenditures.

In other action, commissioners:

—Confirmed County Judge Howard Green's appointment of Mrs. Ann Petroselli to the Child Welfare Board. Mrs. Petroselli replaces attorney Henry Kerry, who resigned for business reasons.

—AUTHORIZED two promotions which include salary increase, subject to the approval of County Legal Advisor Jim Morgan. "Let them see him," said one commissioner referring to any interest the federal government might have in Morgan's decision which would affect the wage-price freeze.

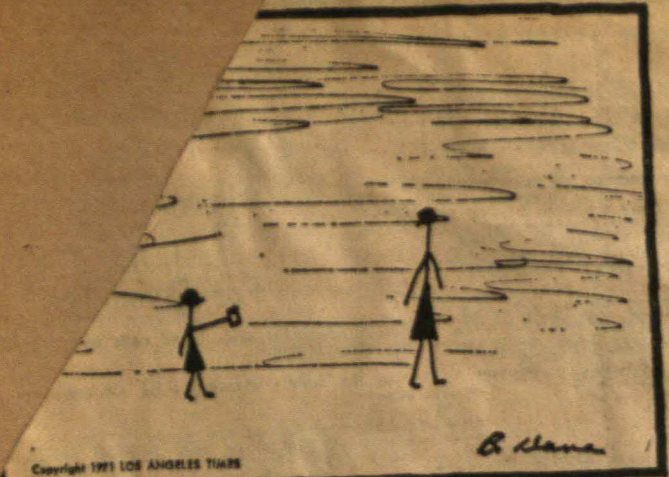
—Called a special election to fill the offices of mayor, councilman and marshal for the newly incorporated town of Briar, part of which is in extreme northwestern Tarrant County. Briar also laps over into Parker and Wise Counties.



COUNTY TAKEOVER — Commissioner Dick Andersen tells newsmen specifics of his proposals to have the county maintain Fort Worth streets for \$1.8 million a year.

Saturday Evening, August 21, 1971

by Bill Dana



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Mommy, could I have a piece of water?

11.5 Per Cent Tax Hike Still Looms

The prospect of an 11.5 cent per \$100 increase in the property tax rate still looms over the heads of Fort Worth taxpayers after a City Council budget study session today.

However, the councilmen were told that 3.5 cents can definitely be slashed from the original proposal of a 15-cent increase because of funds to come from a federal grant.

Mayor R. M. "Sharkey" Stovall had speculated earlier this week that the Emergency Employment Act money could be used to help the city weather its present budgetary crisis.

CITY MANAGER Roger Line today outlined to the council a plan to use the approximately \$500,700 to fill about 93 jobs already budgeted.

In connection with the grant, Line said the Tarrant County Hospital District has asked the city for \$70,000 of the money.

But Line said as far as he is concerned the hospital district is "competing with a short stick."

Most councilmen agreed with Line that the hospital district should receive money out of that portion of the grant that will be awarded to the county.

STOVALL SAID it was in connection with the federal grant that he discussed with County Commissioner Dick Andersen the possibility of the county taking over maintenance of some city streets.

The mayor said the commissioner wanted some advice on how the county might use the federal funds.

Stovall said his suggestion did not include the county maintaining improved c

streets. He said he was thinking in terms of dirt or gravel streets in the city.

Today's budget study session was devoted entirely to the revenue picture for the upcoming fiscal year.

NO NEW sources of revenue were suggested. Councilman Jess M. Johnston said further consideration should be given to an earnings tax, but his suggestion prompted no discussion.

When the council was told that 3.5 cents could definitely be cut from the proposed 15 cent increase, Johnston said: "That leaves us 11.5 cents to go."

However, Councilman Taylor Gandy pointed out that 7 cents of the proposed increase is to pay debt service on warrants issued for the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport land.

He said the city is legally obligated to pay off that indebtedness.

Both Andersen and Richardson recalled how attempts to combine county and city services have failed previously. "I don't know if it's us, or them," Richardson added.

"SOMEONE must take the first step," Andersen and councilman Pat Reece and Jess Johnston were contacting other council members Friday night, trying to enlist support for a joint move.

Johnston earlier had voiced enthusiasm for the mayor's action. "We could pull out of our budget what we spend and make a deal with the

county to do the work. We'd probably want to start easy with road maintenance" and let the county take over street construction later, he said.

Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Lewis pointed out difficulties in the suggested city-county venture, but agreed that the proposal had merit.

Andersen said he and Councilman Johnston had been working for the measure since last October.

Saturday Morning, August 21, 1971

City, County to Meet On Street Upkeep

County commissioners will visit City Hall Monday to discuss maintenance of city streets and other ventures involving city-county cooperation, Commissioner R. T. "Dick" Andersen announced Friday night.

Andersen said the county leaders will join councilmen about 11 a.m., after a meeting of Commissioners Court.

Earlier Friday, commissioners had supported Andersen's bid for a joint meeting with the city. "We asked him to set up a definite time," said George "Skeet" Richardson.

THE JOINT meeting was requested after Mayor R. M. "Sharkey" Stovall asked Andersen if the county would consider taking over street maintenance within the city limits.

"This wouldn't include building new streets," said Andersen, "but it would include maintenance of the ones already in."

This would be an ideal way to avoid duplication of services and equipment between the two governmental entities," the commissioner remarked.

"It would be great to get the council and commissioners together," Richardson said.

He suggested that the city and county begin cooperation in areas less complex than street maintenance.

"THE PROBLEMS involved in street maintenance are so great,"

Presently, county and city standards for road construction differ. Moreover, if the county began handling all road maintenance, it would need to obtain additional equipment and employes, possibly from the city.

Richardson said "maybe we could get together and work out something" if the city and county appointed a joint committee to study coordination of road maintenance, library services, health centers and the like. The committee, he said, could make a proposal.

Both Andersen and Richardson recalled how attempts to combine county and city services have failed previously. "I don't know if it's us, or them," Richardson added.

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Andersen said he and Councilman Johnston had been working for the measure since last October.

LEWIS indicated that he believed Andersen's proposals were politically motivated. Andersen faces a race for re-election next year.

Andersen said he was pleased with the receptive response in some public comments Friday to his plan. Three city councilmen took stances for the proposal, although they did not give outright approval of the specifics of it, while Fort Worth Mayor R. M. Stovall said it deserves serious consideration.

County commissioners were to hear personally the specifics of Andersen's plan Friday morning at their informal meeting, but Andersen did not appear. He made his comments by phone Friday evening from his home, saying he had been ill all day.

ANDERSEN said Friday that he estimated about a \$200,000 outlay for new equipment and new personnel for the county, in the event Fort Worth contracts with the county for maintenance.

The additional \$1.5 million of the \$1.8 million the city would pay the county would defray the county's current overhead for roads, he said.

"I want the county taxpayers to get a good deal on this thing," Andersen said. The number of miles of roads outside incorporated areas that the county maintains is dwindling, but Andersen said the \$1.8 million could go toward increased responsibilities of the county inside corporate limits.

He said that the contract would be subject to renegotiation after a year, if a study showed that the county's overhead was more or less than anticipated.

SUCH A contract would save the city \$1.5 million, Andersen predicted Thursday. A savings of \$1 million would be realized because the city will have about \$2.8 million budgeted for maintenance next year, he said.

The additional \$200,000

Thursday Evening, August 19, 1971

County Meeting Is Held Questionable

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan today agreed that yesterday's meeting of Commissioners Court might have been in violation of the state's open meeting law.

"A citizen might question it in court," Morgan said. "What a judge would rule, of course, I don't know."

Morgan said all four commissioners and County Judge Howard Green agreed that they would meet yesterday morning to discuss and to

vote on whether to apply for a \$472,000 federal grant made possible under the national Emergency Unemployment Act of 1971 signed earlier this month by President Nixon.

THE QUESTION of whether commissioners action was legal arose because commissioners adjourned Monday following their regular weekly meeting.

Normally, commissioners take action on issues formally only once a week.

Because they all agreed to meet, Morgan said, he does not feel that commissioners violated any state law pertaining to their meeting. However, Morgan said, it is possible that the open meeting law might have been broken.

THAT LAW requires that some notice be given before a public meeting is held.

Commissioners Monday afternoon agreed that they would meet yesterday, but there was no formal notice of the meeting.

During yesterday's meeting, commissioners court rejected an application that would have provided 30 new jobs for persons within the county courthouse at a cost of \$94,000 for six months.

Later yesterday they agreed to make formal application for funds that would provide jobs for 23 persons including a planning manager and two planners under the department of public works.

THE PROPOSAL which county officials stress is tentative, also calls for the hiring of three sheriff's deputies, three tax appraisers and three welfare department workers.

A formal application will be made for the federal grant soon and within two to three weeks a decision will be made on how to allocate money, through the county, to all the cities in Tarrant County except Arlington and Fort Worth which will handle their own programs.

Andersen said he was pleased with the receptive response in some public comments Friday to his plan. Three city councilmen took stances for the proposal, although they did not give outright approval of the specifics of it, while Fort Worth Mayor R. M. Stovall said it deserves serious consideration.

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ELEGRAM Thursday Morning, August 19, 1971 IT'S 50

County Allots Funds To Hire 3 Planners

Slowly and quietly, a planning section has begun to materialize within the county's public works department.

The section received a strong boost Wednesday as commissioners allocated federal money for its creation.

Commissioner George Richardson said commissioners allotted \$30,000 to hire three planners.

Richardson earlier had outlined a need for the men. "This county has received few federal funds. We're receiving nothing because we don't have the planners," he said.

THE COMMISSIONER feels that a planning section can coordinate activities and save money by eliminating duplicated services.

LeRoy Erwin, public works director, said the new section probably will jell after Sept. 1, when the first federal funds should arrive. It probably will include a manager and two planners, he said.

The section will develop a Tarrant County Thoroughfare Plan by which streets and roads will be coordinated.

Richardson said the county might hire engineers formerly in aircraft designing, and retain them for the planning jobs.

"The old ways have been stamped on us," Richardson said as he advocated creation of the planning section. "Now we have commissioners anxious to move forward."

COMMISSIONERS Wednesday

Worth officials generally was favorable to Andersen's proposal that it would cost \$1.8 million annually for the county to assume maintenance of all Fort Worth streets.

At the same time, those city officials polled said they wanted to wait and see what a study now being made by Jack Graham, director of public works for Fort Worth, and LeRoy Erwin, the county's public works director, will show.

Richardson, stressing that he is for close cooperation with Fort Worth and with other cities in the county, urged that "we go in to this with our

eyes wide open.

"We have to take a close look at this... we're just now touching the surface."

ANDERSEN, who first suggested that the county take over the city's street maintenance last Friday, yesterday said his plan would call for eliminating about 250 jobs in the city's street maintenance department.

"That's the hard part," Andersen said. "The only way there's going to be a saving involved is to eliminate duplication of people and equipment."

That part of his proposal

this morning drew an angry response from Garfield Thompson, president of the county employes labor union.

"There's not a union member in this city who would want to see 250 jobs eliminated," said Thompson.

"Commissioner Andersen is an efficiency expert with a sense of false economy."

Thompson noted that the county recently agreed to

Friday Evening, August 27, 1971

PRICETAG QUESTIONED Andersen Defends Maintenance Plan

County Commissioner Dick Andersen defended his bargaining price Friday for county maintenance of all Fort Worth streets against doubters of his plan.

"It is a preliminary figure, but I think my figure holds water," Andersen said. Thursday, Andersen told reporters the county could charge the city \$1.8 million annually for the maintenance.

Commissioner Dick Lewis and others questioned the order of the \$1.8 million price tag. "I don't see how he got it. I sure couldn't, unless I just pulled one out of the air," said Lewis.

ANDERSEN claims the county can take over maintenance of city streets almost immediately with minimal addition of equipment and about a one-fourth to one-third increase in road personnel.

Lewis also strongly questioned that claim, referring to equipment inventory at his precinct garage.

"How can I go in and take care of Fort Worth with my men, a couple of rollers, a mixer and a spreader box and seven trucks?" Lewis asked.

Under Andersen's proposal each commissioner would take care of the Fort Worth streets that now lie within his jurisdiction. Currently, the commissioners maintain the roads that lie in the unincorporated portions of the county, unless the officials of the incorporated areas ask them to assist in maintenance.

ANDERSEN said Friday that he estimated about a \$200,000 outlay for new equipment and new personnel for the county, in the event Fort Worth contracts with the county for maintenance.

The additional \$1.5 million of the \$1.8 million the city would pay the county would defray the county's current overhead for roads, he said.

"I want the county taxpayers to get a good deal on this thing," Andersen said. The number of miles of roads outside incorporated areas that the county maintains is dwindling, but Andersen said the \$1.8 million could go toward increased responsibilities of the county inside corporate limits.

He said that the contract would be subject to renegotiation after a year, if a study showed that the county's overhead was more or less than anticipated.

SUCH A contract would save the city \$1.5 million, Andersen predicted Thursday. A savings of \$1 million would be realized because the city will have about \$2.8 million budgeted for maintenance next year, he said.

The additional \$200,000

Andersen Projects Roadwork Saving

By JOHN LUMPKIN
County Commissioner Dick Andersen proposed a \$1.8 million annual price tag for the county to assume maintenance of all Fort Worth streets Thursday.

Andersen said the city could save \$1.5 million annually and the county would gain an additional \$1.8 million in revenue—about what it

spends now on maintaining county roads.

Andersen said the savings to the city represents one half of its projected deficit for next year. He quoted City Councilman Pat Reece as saying the street plan "is the only conceivable way to avoid a (city) tax increase."

A first-term commissioner who must run for re-election next year, Andersen admitted he did not have the approval of a majority of his court colleagues yet for his plan, which he said he will detail to them Friday.

HE SAID HE has the backing of "one or two" city councilmen and that three other council members have been receptive to his plan.

The plan would eliminate about 250 positions in the city's street maintenance department.

"That's the hard part," Andersen said. "The only way it's going to have a savings involved is to eliminate duplication in people and equipment."

Andersen sat inside his office at his precinct garage south of Wedgwood. Outside were numerous pieces of heavy road equipment the county has purchased through the years.

The city leases most of its street maintenance equipment. Turn to Andersen on Page 2

hood improvements, recreation, education, public safety, maintenance of streets, and other public facilities."

Figures kept by the city show that there are about 2,500 miles of streets maintained by Fort Worth.

Of that amount, about 200 miles are unimproved.

Erwin said the county now maintains fewer than 1,000 miles "and that is shrinking every year since additional areas in the county are being annexed almost daily."

Among city councilmen polled today, Taylor Gandy, Leonard Briscoe and Jess Johnston took the most positive stances toward Andersen's recommendation.

"Basically I'm in agreement not only with the theory, but I'm willing to look at it seriously," said Gandy.

Briscoe described it as "an excellent idea."

Johnston said local voters already "have given a mandate for it."

"SOMEWHERE, somehow, somebody has got to reduce personnel costs... if it turns out that the county is in a better position to handle street maintenance, I'm willing to look at it," Gandy said.

Although he is not prepared to vote on the proposal Monday, Gandy said he is "not shocked by it."

"Somebody had to take the first step (toward intergovernmental cooperation)... but the logical corollary is that the city tax office is in a better position to take over all tax assessing and collecting in the county."

"I would expect them (the county commissioners) to take the second step... If both are not willing to cut personnel, there will be a limited amount of savings," Gandy said.

BRISCOE SAID he is certain the proposal is feasible.

"I depends upon the will of the council and the commissioners to work out a satisfactory arrangement... I'm sure we can work out the small details," Briscoe said. He said he believes some contractual arrangement could be arrived at that protect the seniority and fringe benefits of city employes that might be transferred.

Johnston pointed out that recent amendments to the state constitution's providing for contractual arrangements between city and governments were overwhelmingly endorsed by Tarrant County voters.

MAYOR R. M. "Sharkey" Stovall, Councilwoman Margaret Rimmer and Councilman John O'Neal all said they feel the proposal merits serious consideration.

Stovall said he favors some kind of contractual arrangement with the county for at least some phase of street maintenance.

But the mayor said he wants to await the finding of the city and county public works directors before taking a stand.



An Color Photo by Wilburn Davis two floors and the base-remaining two stories

The Fort Worth Press, Thursday, August 26, 1971 5-A

Tarrant County bonanza

Half-million grant from government

Tarrant County has received a near \$500,000 bonanza from the federal government which could lead to the creation of 60 new jobs in the next year.

County Judge Howard Green and Personnel Director Jodie Colvard announced today the county had received a \$471,800 total grant from the government under the recently enacted Emergency Employment Act.

Immediately, 23 new county jobs are created.

They include three new appraisers in the tax assessor-collector's office, a practically whole new Dept. of Public Works and three new sheriff's deputies.

THE ADDITION of new appraisers means the county might soon begin reappraisal of older county property, the value of which has remained the same on county tax rolls for the last five years.

Colvard said a comprehensive tax re-evaluation could mean much needed revenue for the county.

Other immediate jobs to be filled include

three case workers in the Welfare Dept., six painters for repairmen, two road equipment operators and an investigator for the medical examiner's office.

Colvard said the county had been allotted an initial grant of \$84,000 in the next six months to pay the salaries of the 23 slots.

He said though the acquisition of the remaining \$471,800 would be a formality, and that the county simply needed to request the full grant within 30 days.

"THE ADDITIONAL JOBS will be funded by the full grant," Colvard said.

"I would say 60 new positions might be a good estimate, but that could be a little too high or too low."

In any event, the county will receive approximately \$14,000 per month through July 15, 1972, to pay salaries.

Colvard said the first 23 positions were filled after a survey of all county offices. He said he would make a more thorough canvass of county needs before deciding on further needs to be financed by the complete grant.

Andersen Projects Saving on Roadwork

Continued From Page 1

ment and contracts with private firms for most of its seal coating program, Andersen said.

If the city contracts with the county for street maintenance, Andersen said the county could do the seal coating work with the equipment it has now. The county would have to buy several sweepers, however, for cleaning streets, he said.

* * *

HE CLAIMED that the quality of maintenance would remain the same and that the county's overhead would increase "very little."

A week ago, Andersen and other commissioners said they wished to discuss street maintenance with the city. Then, Fort Worth Mayor R. M. Stovall indicated he favored county maintenance of only unimproved streets within the city.

The city's street maintenance division, headed by Ira C. Driver, has a budget of \$2.8 million. Andersen said another \$500,000 is spent on equipment leasing.

Driver was said to be on vacation and unavailable to comment on Andersen's proposals to do away with his department.

Andersen was asked if the quality of city streets under county maintenance would be similar to that of the Hulen Street extension, which Andersen conceded was in poor shape. Andersen's employes helped construct the extension.

"Unfortunately, I don't think it has been maintained properly . . . Instead of giving it to the city to maintain, I should have continued with it myself," he said.

He said the city does not have the equipment to maintain the type of thoroughfare that the extension is, while the county does.

* * *

ANDERSEN HAS about 30 road employes and the other three commissioners have about the same. He predicted an increase of one fourth to one third in county road personnel, if the city surrenders street maintenance.

He contended that the city's street payroll is overloaded with supervisory personnel. "They have a supervisor for every four workers," he said.

The county road program would continue to be run the way it is now if the responsibility of city street maintenance is added, Andersen said.

That means that the four commissioners would continue to supervise operations with the aid of their garage foremen and that the county would continue to have more

Wilson Says

City Councilmen, Commissioners 'Talk Money'

By JOHN LUMPKIN
In a plain room on City Hall's second floor that was almost too small for the gathering, county commissioners and Fort Worth City Council met together Tuesday.

The two groups chatted for about an hour in front of microphones and television film cameras and, in the end, agreed to meet again in two weeks.

Mayor R. M. "Sharkey" Stovall and others said the

joint meeting was the first of its kind here they could recall.

"Historically, it has been true that cities and counties fight one another. Now the hatchet is buried if there ever was one here," remarked County Judge Howard Green.

CITY-COUNTY cooperation has been advocated by numerous political figures here for years, but Green said the city and county have met at

this time because "necessity is the mother of invention."

"This is particularly true today with the budget problems that the city of Fort Worth faces," reflected Stovall.

Commissioners' appearance Tuesday preceded a study session at which city fathers were to try to cure a \$3 million deficit in next year's budget.

Commissioner George

"Skeet" Richardson said after the meeting that he hoped the city "is not trying to get something for nothing" from the county to solve its fiscal dilemma.

Stovall said the city and county need to find ways to make "joint use of the taxpayer's dollar."

The two groups informally agreed to seek the advice of department heads during the next two weeks in exploring

Turn to City on Page 2

Andersen quizzes Colvard on county hiring practice

By FRANK PATRICK
County personnel director Jodie Colvard is the man who screens qualifications of applicants who want to be put on the county payroll.

Today his own qualifications were questioned by County Commissioner Dick Andersen in a forceful verbal attack.

At one point Andersen said: "This man gets paid to be a personnel director... he's doing an injustice."

But Colvard, who has been criticized in the past for sim-

ply rubber-stamping requests from the commissioners who are his bosses, stood his ground.

THE EXCHANGE came when Andersen and Commissioner George (Skeet) Richardson questioned the qualifications of men Colvard hired last week under a \$90,000 initial federal grant.

Andersen was particularly critical of six building maintenance men OK'd by Colvard.

"I've checked them out, and

only two of them look like they have any experience whatsoever," Andersen told Colvard.

"You can't just take some old retired Army sergeant who says he's a carpenter and put him to work."

Colvard, himself a retired Army sergeant, retorted angrily that he took the best men available from the Texas Employment Commission and that he simply sent the applicants to maintenance supervisor Grady Bratcher, who actually hired them.

commissioners decided to go into an executive session later today to iron out the problems.

Also, under scrutiny at the meeting will be the county's action in respect to promotions and raises since the wage-price freeze was announced.

Tax collector-assessor Reed Stewart asked commissioners to approve merit raises for two employees, although technically they would be promoted to an other rank under the county's job classification system.

Commissioners approved the step tentatively pending research by County Legal Advisor Jim Morgan.

2-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM Wednesday Morning, August 25, 1971



COOPERATION TALK — City-county discussions on joint operations of certain functions began Tuesday with, front left, Mayor R. M. "Sharkey" Stovall, County Judge Howard Green and Councilwoman Margret Rimmer participating with others.

City-County Meeting 'Buries the Hatchet'

Continued From Page 1

possibilities of contracting with each other for library and public health services and street maintenance.

COUNCILWOMAN Margret Rimmer said action could be taken in those areas without first putting them before study committees. Forming a study committee was suggested by Richardson.

Other members of the two groups did not discard totally the idea of a panel to study city-county cooperation, and they agreed that such a panel should be small in size.

Stovall noted that Councilman Jess Johnston and Commissioner Dick Andersen last year suggested the city and county merge certain functions.

Johnston conceded that "we let it (the proposals) ride a few months ago," but added, "We have got a problem

Sandoval State Called Serious

EL PASO (AP) — Hilary Sandoval Jr., former administrator of the Small Business Administration, remained in serious condition Tuesday although a hospital spokesman said he is recovering from a brain operation.

Stovall, who said he is interested in the county maintaining unimproved streets in Fort Worth, including those of dirt. "I hate to call them dirt streets, but we have dirt streets," he said.

Officials noted that the city and county have acted jointly in street projects before and are doing so now.

The next joint meeting will

now." He referred to the city's budget.

Andersen said he believes "we are in a position to sit down and seriously talk about street maintenance."

He said he already is negotiating with two cities in his precinct, Forest Hill and Benbrook, to provide street maintenance for them with his precinct employes and equipment.

Andersen predicted the county's contracts with the two small suburbs will save taxpayers \$300,000.

AFTER THE meeting, he explained his savings estimate thusly. The two cities together now spend about \$300,000 annually on street maintenance. He would provide the service for \$150,000. This represents a savings of \$150,000 to the cities' taxpayers, but it represents another \$150,000 savings to county taxpayers, he said, because that much would go into the county budget. Andersen said his overhead would be the same under the plan as it is now.

Stovall said he is interested in the county maintaining unimproved streets in Fort Worth, including those of dirt. "I hate to call them dirt streets, but we have dirt streets," he said.

Officials noted that the city and county have acted jointly in street projects before and are doing so now.

The next joint meeting will

Dr. Tomme had listed in a letter to commissioners 11 of the county's 172 voting precincts that he thought could be consolidated with 11 others. Commissioners informally agreed not to review consolidation proposals until next year.

"To quote Sen. (Don) Kennard, a first grader with a crayon could have done a better job," said Richardson of Dr. Tomme's suggestions. Kennard made such a remark about legislative redistricting proposal in Austin.

COMMISSIONERS heard a report from Mrs. Margaret Carter of the Tarrant County Women's Club, which Richardson said he asked to investigate Dr. Tomme's proposed precinct mergers.

Mrs. Carter said two of the precincts were not adjacent to one another, several proposed mergers made the precincts too large and another merger would have left part of a precinct in one city and part in another.

Some of the proposed mergers would allow new voting precincts sliced by new congressional district lines, she said.

Dr. Tomme said he was trying to combine precincts that have no Democratic precinct chairmen now.

OF RICHARDSON'S "crayon" remark, Dr. Tomme replied, "If he's got the equipment and the background, he can go ahead and do it (consolidate precincts)" himself. Commissioners also accepted a report from Honeywell Information Systems, Inc., recommending that the county obtain a central computer to serve all offices.

The county currently contracts for computer services in the offices of the district

Commissioners Vote to Create 56 New Jobs

Tarrant County commissioners have voted to create 56 new jobs to aid hard core unemployables in the county.

The federal government, through the Emergency Employment Act, will supply about \$472,000 over the next two years for the program.

County Judge Howard Green said yesterday after the closed meeting creation of the new jobs for the hard core unemployables is not an updated WPA program but "a necessary thing to try to alleviate the problems of unemployment in the county."

Commissioners earlier had decided to create about 24 new jobs, but went into executive session after Commissioner Dick Andersen questioned the hiring practices under the federally funded program.

TWO WEEKS ago there was controversy over the creation of the new jobs because some commissioners felt it was contradictory for Green to propose doing away with several county offices and then support a federal program which would create other jobs.

Andersen brought up the issue again when he accused

Tuesday Morning, August 31, 1971

Tomme Not Upset at Criticism Of Proposed Precinct Merger

County Democratic Chairman Dr. J. D. Tomme Jr. said Monday he "did not have strong feelings" about a voting precinct merger proposal which County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson scored earlier.

"I thought that Skeet was a friend of mine," said Dr. Tomme after he learned of Richardson's criticism, which came at Monday's regular commissioners' meeting.

Dr. Tomme had listed in a letter to commissioners 11 of the county's 172 voting precincts that he thought could be consolidated with 11 others. Commissioners informally agreed not to review consolidation proposals until next year.

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The county currently contracts for computer services in the offices of the district

clerk, county clerk and tax assessor-collector.

Honeywell said in the report, done free of charge after Honeywell representatives met with two commissioners at a convention, that it can make the type equipment it recommends available to the county.

In other action, Commissioner Jerry Mebus told reporters after the meeting that he has "a compromise" plan almost completed in connection with proposals for county maintenance of Fort Worth streets.

Last week, Commissioner Dick Andersen proposed that the city pay the county \$1.5 million annually for county commissioners to assume the responsibility of maintaining all Fort Worth streets.

Mebus raised questions about such an agreement, as did other commissioners.

Fort Worth to Receive Employment Act Funds

Governmental units in Fort Worth and Tarrant County will receive \$548,100 and \$516,500 respectively in Emergency Employment Act funds. The Labor Department told Sen. John Tower Thursday.

Tower relayed the information to Mayor R. M. Stovall later in the day, but it was unclear just how much the city might expect from the program.

"It's a little help," the mayor said in reference to the new funds, "but it's certainly no panacea."

Stovall had been hopeful the program, which funds jobs in several community service areas, would ease somewhat the city's financial squeeze.

He is still hopeful the money will be available before the City Council had to adopt the 1971-72 budget, which council members will receive this weekend.

City Manager Rodger Line pointed out that officials have not been informed of the program's "ground rules" and are unsure whether or not the city would have to provide matching funds.

"We can't tell the effect the program will have on our budget problems until we can find out the ground rules," Line said. "If we can substitute federal money for our money it would be to our financial benefit."

Stovall said he learned that cities with populations greater than 75,000 will be able to apply for the funds direct.

He said that Personnel Director Frank L. Priore would confer with labor officials in Dallas next Tuesday.

President Nixon recently signed a \$1 billion appropriations bill to carry out the Emergency Employment Act and, of the \$1 billion, \$600 million must be apportioned among the states for meeting their unemployment problems.

Applicants Pouring In For New County Jobs

County officials averaged interviewing almost four persons for each new job opening created by federal grants to fight unemployment Monday and Tuesday.

"You can say there was an excess of applicants. We are in the 4 per cent bracket now and that's quite serious," said County Personnel Director Jodie Colvard.

Colvard, who began accepting applicants for the new positions Monday, was referring to the Labor Department announcement that Fort Worth joins 41 other major labor areas in having more than 4 per cent unemployment.

He said there were 25 applicants for 22 new positions and that he filled six positions by Tuesday afternoon. The county already has been granted \$92,000 to fund the new positions for six months.

AFTER THAT, the county can apply for more grants which, if approved, would put the total of federal money for new jobs to \$671,000 for a two-year period, Colvard said.

At least one county commissioner, Dick Lewis, has expressed opposition to the grants.

Lewis contends that the new positions are not needed, but that the county will have to fire the employees after two years or pay their salaries at county taxpayers' expense.

He said he particularly did not need any more employees at his precinct garage, because he would not be able to find duties for them.

Colvard admitted that the criticism was valid and said, "I am sure we might have to let some go if the program runs out."

HE SAID, HOWEVER, that the employment situation in general could become brighter and that the persons, once trained, could go to jobs in the private sector.

The county's employment needs could increase in two years' time so that the new employees could stay in their positions at the county's expense because the county would have to fill a new position anyway, he suggested.

Colvard said the county has many other employees who will be retiring in the next two years and the new employees could replace them, without the position created by the federal funds being filled afterwards.

He said he is accepting referrals only through the Texas Employment Commission office here. He said he is having trouble locating prospects for heavy equipment operators jobs.

Wednesday Morning, September 1, 1971

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Branch Manager
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Wednesday Evening, September 8, 1971

Commissioners Approve Walkway at Courthouse

A second overhead walkway connecting the old and new Criminal Courts Buildings was added to the courthouse remodeling plans by a unanimous vote of Commissioners Court Tuesday.

The additional passageway will join the third floor of the old building with the second floor of the new jail structure at a cost of about \$12,500.

One walkway was already in the plans for the building to connect the fourth floor of the old building with the third floor of the new one.

County legal adviser Jim Morgan said the overheads will save time for clerks who use both buildings and will provide more security for criminals being transferred from one structure to the other.

The first walkway is provided for in a \$1.9 million bond election which was approved by voters in March. The second, County Auditor Jack Benson said, "will add to our overrun and we'll just have to come up with the money for it in 1972."

County Judge Howard Green said it was necessary to approve the additional passageway now, because the price of construction would be three times as much at a later date.

Commissioners also voted to sell the county's computerized voter registration program to seven other counties in the state.

Joe Matthews, of Computer Services Corp., said Tarrant County would receive 2 cents per registered voter in the other counties the first year of operation, and 1 cent per registered voter the second year.

The county would receive about \$4,000 the first year, he said.

Counties which will receive the service are Harrison, McLennan, Bowie, Hardin, Garza, Jim Wells and Galveston.

He said that if some larger county such as Harris or Dallas wanted to purchase the actual program, "We would negotiate and sell it for the county, but the county, of course, would receive all of the money."

City, County Take New Steps in Joint Effort

By MIKE BUCHHOLZ

The City Council and county commissioners took what County Judge Howard Green called a "cautious" step Wednesday into the relatively unknown territory of city-county cooperation.

During the session in Tarrant County Convention Center, Commissioner George "Skeel" Richardson and Councilwoman Mrs. Margaret Rimmer presented proposals on the three agenda topics—public health, libraries and street maintenance.

When it was all over, council members and commissioners had decided to:

- Ask the state health department to study combination of the city and county health units.
- Request TCU look into the possibility of a county library system with funds its Division of Civic Affairs recently received from the federal government.
- Leave the street maintenance problem with the city and county public works directors, where it's been for the last two weeks, for further study.
- Concerning the library, Richardson said that "this has been sort of a touchy area between the city and county in getting together... for many, many years."

"The city has felt that the county has not participated as fully as it should and I'm sure the county has not wanted to participate to any great degree without representation on the library board," he continued. "They'd be doing a disservice to the people who live in the county and not in the city."

He recommended that the city name seven members and the county name its municipal library board that would set up a countywide library system.

The system eventually would be operated by a county municipal library board appointed by Commissioners Court and advised by a board probably including a member representing library boards from each municipality in the county.

Richardson said the system could be financed by creating a library district or by contracting with each city within the county on a per capita basis supplemented by a county contribution.

Mayor R. M. "Sharky" Stovall agreed with Richardson that the proposal deserved study, but that the city legal staff would have to give an opinion on the board's composition.

The city charter now requires the council to appoint all 13 members of the city library board.

"Now so far as the per capita where the county's concerned," Stovall continued, "that sounds good when the money's going out."

But, he added, all the county's municipalities have different tax bases "and so the money coming in is not proportional per capita."

"I would say the citizens of Fort Worth pay more per capita than some of the people who live outside the city," the mayor said. "We would have to work out some kind of a formula that would make it more equitable."

Richardson replied that "it's going to have to be a you-get-along-with-me-and-I'll-get-along-with-you-type of thing or it won't work at all, and it never will regardless of what we propose."

John Hall, director of TCU's Division of Public Affairs, said he thought he could have some recommendations on the matter by November, when the county begins work on its 1972 budget.

Richardson also suggested that the county take over the city's health operation and name Dr. W. V. Bradshaw, city health director, as its head.

He proposed that the city and the county sign a two-year contract providing for the county to assume present operations.

Mrs. Rimmer in a proposal submitted but not discussed at the meeting suggested forming a public health advisory committee composed of a doctor, dentist, pharmacist and two laymen, with the public health director of a combined health department serving as an ex officio member.

Bradshaw during the meeting contacted the state health department, which will send consultants to study the proposed combination Monday.

Mrs. Rimmer also proposed that the county take over preparing and maintaining city alleys, possibly eliminating a recommended alley improvement program that would cost the city about \$1.27 million.

The proposal included the county relieving the city's park and recreation department of mowing median strips along parkways and boulevards.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said he liked Mrs. Rimmer's suggestion and offered to be the "billygoat to test this thing" in his precinct.

Council members and commissioners left open the date for the next meeting, which should come sometime after the health department consultants complete their study.

U.S. FUNDS TO AID UNEMPLOYABLES

Commissioners Create 56 New Jobs

Tarrant County Commissioners, in a closed session Tuesday, voted to create about 56 additional county jobs although there is no real need for them.

Commissioners decided to make Peter Smith Hospital a sub-agent, giving the hospital board authority to hire trainees under the same federal guidelines.

The county would fund the hospital district \$70,000 over the next two years.

Commissioners earlier had decided to create about 24 jobs under the act, but went into executive session Tuesday after County Commissioner Dick Andersen questioned the hiring practices under the federally-funded program.

Most of the jobs would be for county maintenance and county park and recreational facilities.

EACH COMMISSIONER will hire 12 new employees in

maintenance capacities and County Judge Howard Green will hire an office clerk under the new program.

Commissioners decided to make Peter Smith Hospital a sub-agent, giving the hospital board authority to hire trainees under the same federal guidelines.

The county would fund the hospital district \$70,000 over the next two years.

Green admitted that the county could get along without the new employees, but added, "We've got the money that's been made available by the government and we might as well use it."

COMMISSIONER George "Skeel" Richardson said creation of the new jobs would be "an environmental program" because it would be directed toward beautifying the county.

"It (the program) can be

used to great advantage if it is administered right," Commissioner Dick Lewis said, noting that the federal program would help take some persons off the welfare rolls.

Two weeks ago, there was controversy over creation of the new jobs because some commissioners felt it was contradictory for Green to propose doing away with several county offices and then supporting a federal program which would create other jobs.

Andersen brought up the controversial issue again Monday when he accused County Purchasing Administrator Jodie Colvard of doing the county a "diservice" by hiring unqualified persons under the federally-funded program.

ANDERSEN said that five of the six persons hired as

building maintenance personnel had no experience as carpenters or painters but had been employed to remodel the courthouse.

Colvard said that he interviewed more than 300 persons and that the six men were the best he had found.

Two of the men are Vietnam veterans who had no experience in carpentry or painting, but Colvard said he felt they needed a chance.

"They've got to start somewhere," Colvard told Andersen during an open meeting of the commissioners court.

Richardson made a motion that the six stay on their jobs for 30 days and be dismissed if they couldn't "cut it."

Green said that creation of the new jobs for the hard-core unemployed was not an updated WPA program, but "a necessary thing to try to alleviate the problems of unemployment in the county."

Thursday Morning, September 16, 1971

Auditor Gets 2-Year Term, Same Salary

Tarrant County's nine district judges Wednesday reappointed County Auditor Jack Benson to a two-year term at his present salary of \$21,010 per annum.

Benson will begin his new term Oct. 1.

The judges also voted to raise the auditor's car allowance from \$100 to \$150 a month. The \$50 raise would not become effective, however, until after the present wage-price freeze.

The statutory limit for a car allowance is \$300, but Benson specifically asked that his allowance not be raised to the limit.

"I don't need more than that," Benson said when asked about the car allowance.

Tarrant County commissioners recently raised their car allowance from \$150 to \$300 a month.

Monday Evening, September 13, 1971

Commissioners Rescind Employment Decision

County Commissioners today rescinded a decision they made last week to hire 56 precinct employees using federal funds.

In doing so, commissioners agreed to allocate, on a population basis, money to 22 Tarrant County cities for them to hire additional employees.

Commissioners took the action after a delegation of mayors headed by Bob Hampton of Hurst pleaded that they be given some say in how the \$472,000 federal grant is spent.

AS AGREED to, city officials will have the option of receiving grants that might run as high as \$38,465 in Haltom City's case, or they can permit the money be put in a fund kept by each of the four commissioners.

Additional work then would be done in the cities that opt to receive the work from commissioners rather than the grant.

Mayor Wayne Wilson of Benbrook suggested that some cities—including his—would rather have commissioners help them.

"If we hired two policemen, then we would have to buy two new cars and we cannot afford that," he said.

HAMPTON ARGUED that 71 new jobs could be created if the cities are allocated \$401,800.

County Auditor Jack Benson, who submitted an alternate proposal which was accepted, by commissioners, said the county has \$201,371 from the grant with which to hire additional employees or to allocate to cities.

Under his proposal, unincorporated areas or cities with fewer than 2,500 persons will receive \$47,200.

Among the other cities Hurst is scheduled to get \$37,226, Euless will receive \$26,427 and North Richland Hills \$22,583.

Fort Worth and Arlington are not included in the proposal since both cities were given grants separate from the county.

IN URGING that cities be allowed to share in the federal grants, made through the Emergency Employment Act of 1971, Hampton said commissioners created "make-work" jobs last week in authorizing the 56 new posts.

At that time Commissioner Dick Andersen conceded that the jobs were unneeded.

Today, Andersen said that he feel the new plan "is equitable and will let us do more."

Benson's report and that filed by Hampton were virtually identical except for the amounts of money requested for the cities.

For example, Haltom City will receive \$10,200 less under Benson's recommendation.

IN THE proposal submitted by Hampton, Haltom City would hire nine persons, including two policemen, two firemen, two clerks, a street employee, a water department serviceman and an inspector.

Commissioner George Richardson made the motion, which was unanimously agreed to, that the cities be allowed to receive the grants, or get additional help from the commissioners.

Richardson said he felt all cities in his Precinct Four, will want additional services rather than the grants for employees.

Earlier, commissioners gave officials at Peter Smith Hospital \$70,000 for hiring additional employees.

Commissioners have also authorized the hiring of 23 persons to work in the courthouse as planners, maintenance workers and others.

constable ride together and "hold court on the spot after some poor motorist is singled out for a ticket."

"That's the most despicable practice I've ever heard of."

In cases like that, Duvall said, the motorist is told he can pay a fine on the spot or he can post at the scene a high cash bond.

IF HE doesn't do one or the other, he's jailed, Duvall said.

The court of inquiry would be similar to a grand jury.

It has authority to order that charges be filed, if criminal action is warranted.

Duvall said he has never heard of a county criminal court judge here convening a court of inquiry.

The last call for such a court was made several years ago during an investigation by Dist. Atty. Frank Coffey's office into the alleged takeover of taverns in Tarrant County by a Dallas-based vending machine company.

NONE WAS ever called, however, and the charges were never proven. No criminal cases were filed.

If Duvall calls the court of inquiry, "which I will do if I am presented with the statements," it will be the second time in three months that the dealings of a rural peace justice's office has been looked into.

The grand jury in June completed an investigation of a constable and a deputy constable who work with Peace Justice Agnes Kirk.

Allegedly, there were complaints at that time which were made by Benson, that monies received by the officers were not being turned over, as required by state law, to the county.

However, no criminal charges were returned by the grand jury in that case.

THE MOST recent allegations come as a citizen's committee looking into whether the officers of four rural peace justices and the constables that serve them can be eliminated is about to complete its study.

County Judge Howard Green said he expects the report to be issued shortly.

It was Green who, several months ago, urged the study be made.

He said he felt the move to eliminate the offices could save the county \$65,000 per year.

Benson agrees with Green that the offices are not needed.

The county currently has nine peace justices. All have constables and deputy constables who work with them.

CRITICS OF doing away with the jobs, mostly the JPs and constables themselves, feel that no savings can result.

Wednesday Evening, September 15, 1971

Probe of Tarrant Peace Justice Asked

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County Criminal Court Judge J. C. Duvall today said a county official has asked him to consider calling a court of inquiry to investigate alleged irregularities in connection with a rural peace justice.

Duvall refused to name the county official or the JP.

County Auditor Jack E. Benson answered "no comment" when asked if he had talked to Duvall about the unusual court of inquiry.

"HE (THE county official) talked to me about it yesterday and legally I can call for the court of inquiry if there are statements from two persons alleging wrongdoing," Duvall said.

"I understand there is one statement and that another is possibly forthcoming."

Duvall said one of the complaints is that the JP and the

County by a Dallas-based vending machine company.

NONE WAS ever called, however, and the charges were never proven. No criminal cases were filed.

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The county currently has nine peace justices. All have constables and deputy constables who work with them.

CRITICS OF doing away with the jobs, mostly the JPs and constables themselves, feel that no savings can result.

They say that additional deputies to serve warrants, citations and other legal documents will have to be hired.

They say also that in the rural areas they act as lawmen to supplement coverage of the sheriff's department.

On the other hand, some constables and their deputies have been accused of being overzealous in their arrests of people.

Dist. Atty. Coffey said his office has investigated complaints, which proved to be true, that people were unlawfully sentenced to short terms in city jails by JPs.

STATE LAW does not give authority to JPs to assess jail terms.

They can hand down fines of from \$1 to \$200 in punishment.

Coffey's office has also looked into, and found valid, complaints that persons have been fined in rural areas for nonexistent crimes.

The most flagrant, he said, was where a Grapevine man was fined \$25 for "backsliding," a charge that doesn't appear in any state criminal code.

No action was taken against the JP.

4-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Tuesday Evening, September 21, 1971

Federal Funds to Aid Area Jobless

Fort Worth and Tarrant County will receive \$374,000 in federal funds as part of the Nixon administration's attempt to put the damper on the nation's rising unemployment rate.

The government announced the funding program last night and said the money will go to help alleviate joblessness by hiring persons for newly created public service jobs across the nation.

Tarrant County will receive \$344,400 while the City of Fort Worth will get \$29,600, all of which must be used to upgrade employment opportunities in the Morningside area.

THE FUNDS, available under a recently passed emergency employment law, go mainly to cities and counties which have been suffering unemployment rates of 6 per cent or more for three consecutive months.

Fort Worth's unemployment rate since June has been in excess of 6 per cent.

A Labor Department spokesman told county com-

missioners that veterans, the unemployed and the underemployed would be given priorities for jobs in that order.

SECRETARY OF Labor James D. Hodgson said the administration has already provided money for some 27,000 public service jobs and that "more than 6,000 persons are on the job as of last week."

He added that he is holding another \$50 million in reserve to be used later.

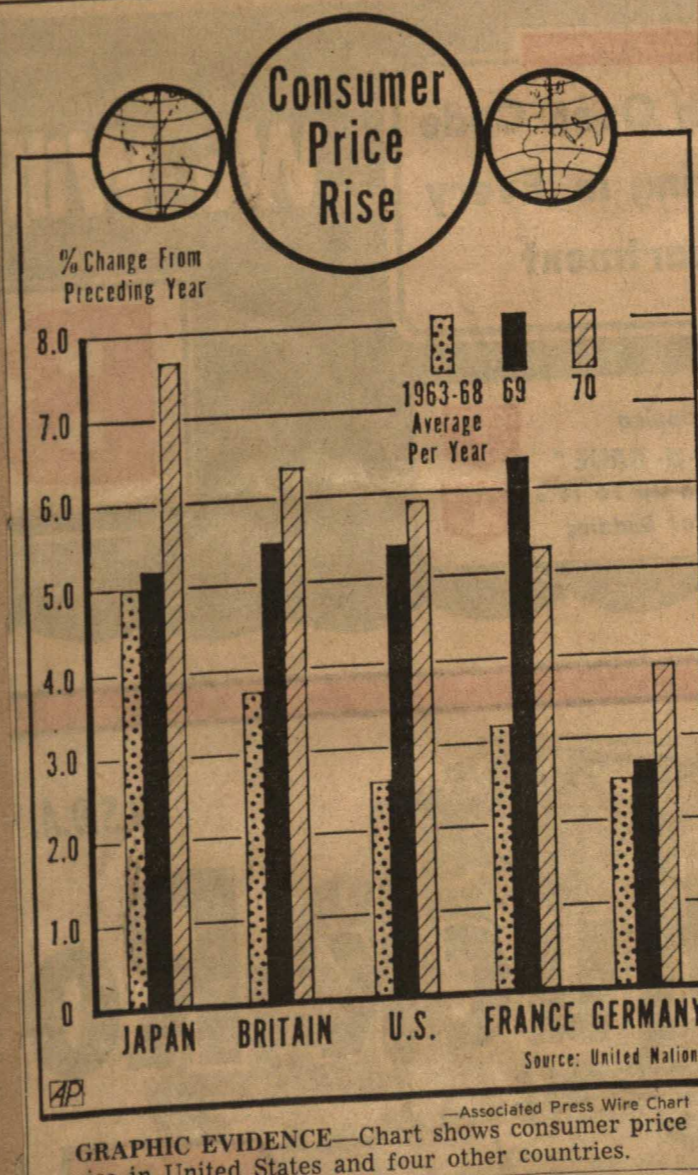
Only cities and counties hard hit by high unemployment will be eligible for the special allocations, he said.

OTHER cities receiving the special funds are Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Detroit and Seattle.

The funds will be in addition to the almost \$1 billion in aid that will be available here under another \$600 million apportionment to some 700 cities, counties and states. Announcement of that grant was made Aug. 13.

Texas' total would be \$3,536,300.

Monday Morning, September 20, 1971



Fort Worth

City Will Start Taking Program Applications

City officials will begin taking applications Monday for several jobs funded with money from the Emergency Employment Act.

City Personnel Director Frank Priore said he expects all 79 open positions to be listed with the Texas Employment Commission by Thursday.

Included among the jobs, which will be financed by \$500,700 from the federal government and \$55,633 from local sources, are positions for firemen, laborers, equipment operators and some administrative assistants.

Total program funding extends from the date of initial application, Aug. 20, through Aug. 19, 1972, Priore said.

The city already has received a small amount of the funds. An application for more may be examined at the city personnel office, 1018 Jennings, and comments submitted to the city or the Region 6 Manpower administrator in Dallas.

Priore said that comments must be submitted not later than Wednesday or, if notice of intent to file comments is made before then, comments may be submitted to the regional Manpower administrator not later than Oct. 4.

CAA Plans Food Stamps Bid, But Legal Hurdles Loom High

By BOB-RAY SANDERS
County officials expressed doubt Wednesday that the Community Action Agency could ever take over the food stamp program, but at the same time expressed sympathy with the recipients who sometimes have to stand in line for hours outside the food stamp offices downtown.

The CAA board Tuesday night appointed an eight-man committee to accompany Executive Director David Payton to commissioners court Monday in an attempt to have the county delegate CAA centers as distribution facilities for food stamps.

The meeting with commissioners probably will be a fruitless one for several reasons.

Payton has suggested that the county use Emergency Employment Act funds to set up the program with the CAA. There is a federal guideline, which, for all practical purposes, would not allow the county to use the federal funds for centers located in Fort Worth, County Auditor Jack Benson pointed out.

COUNTY EEA funds can not be used to hire anyone living in Fort Worth or Arlington, because those cities have their own EEA grants. CAA employees, basically, are all residents of Fort Worth.

Guidelines also provide that any place where food stamps are issued must meet certain security specifications, including having a vault to keep the stamps.

County Welfare Director Ralph Lewis said Wednesday that on some days \$100,000 in food stamps are issued.

"Food stamps are just like money," Benson added.

The county, which furnishes operating facilities for the food stamp program, has a vault in Fort Worth National Bank to keep the stamps.

Benson said presently the stamps are checked out to the state welfare department, "and I sure would hate to check those things out to 10 or 11 people."

HE ADDED, "If they had them (food stamps) in a place that wasn't too secure, you can rest assured that'd get

knocked over, because that's a very common occurrence. That's the reason we put them down in the sub-basement of Fort Worth National Bank, where nobody can get to them."

The county will open another facility at Berry and Miller Streets to handle some distribution of food stamps which would help cut down the lines in front of the Old Criminal Courts Building.

Lewis, calling the Poly site the "best possible location" for the new facility, said the office would take 40 to 45 per cent of recipients out of the

downtown lines. The new facility would serve, in addition to Poly, the Southeast and Stop Six areas.

THE NEW OFFICE is expected to be open by Nov. 1. Construction was held up by a recent plumbers strike.

"It'll take the lines away," Lewis said.

Payton had contended that CAA personnel could and, in fact have, certified persons for food stamps. "We know how to certify people for food stamps," he said. They've certified no one," Lewis said.

Thursday Morning, September 23, 1971

County Asked to Eye Center Hiring Policy

County commissioners Monday were asked to go over the head of Tarrant County Convention Center Manager Lou Owen and ensure that not all of the temporary help at the center comes from Manpower.

R. C. Faulkner, head of Peakload which also provides temporary help, told commissioners that Owen had stopped using employees from his corporation and was hiring only workers from Manpower, an agency run by City Councilman Jess Johnston.

"If he wasn't a city councilman, I don't think he would get all the business," Faulkner said.

FAULKNER SAID until May his company was called to provide temporary help at the center during special shows and clean-up men afterward.

Both companies were charging the center \$2.50 per hour, Faulkner stated, but in May Manpower dropped its price to \$2.55. Faulkner said he agreed to drop his price to \$2.55, but has not been called.

Reps kept by County Auditor Jack Benson show that in the beginning of the year, through Aug. 31, Manpower has been paid \$7,258 and Peakload received \$387.

Commissioners suggested that the matter was a problem for the convention center board, but decided to look into it and report to Faulkner in two weeks.

COMMISSIONERS, in other

action, voted to authorize a University of Texas at Arlington graduate student to make a preliminary study of county government.

The court approved giving \$200 to Ron Whitehawk of Arlington for the cost of the month-long preliminary study.

If this preliminary report is approved, and continuation of the project deemed appropriate, funding would be assumed to continue under similar arrangements.

More Hand Trouble Plagues Richardson

A year ago this month county commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson was in Glenview Hospital after losing part of his finger in a shooting accident.

Monday night Richardson was reported in good condition in the same room of the same hospital after he was bitten by a snake on the same hand.

Richardson, who was to

host a party Sunday night for the Political Association of Spanish Speaking Organizations (PASO), was bitten by a copperhead as he picked up a piece of tin in his back yard.

New Corporation Court Judge Harold Valdes, an old political foe who opposed the commissioner for his second term to the legislature, made a tourniquet for the commissioner's finger and Richardson's wife sucked the venom.

Last September the commissioner was shot in the finger when a shotgun accidentally discharged on dove hunting trip. Part of the finger, next to the snake-bitten one, was amputated.

12-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM COUNTY EMPLOYEES

Panel Asks No Auto Allowance

County officials and employees should not be paid car allowances, a committee named to look into the practice reported today.

In a report to Commissioners Court, the committee members also said that the controversial "little red gas pump" should not be used any more by county employees.

INSTEAD of paying car allowances and providing free — for employees — gasoline, persons using their own cars on county business should be reimbursed at the rate of 10 to 12 cents per mile.

Harry West, committee chairman, warned commissioners that if adopted the mileage turned in by county employees should be watched closely.

The committee was appointed several months ago after complaints were raised that the county was spending too much money on car allowances and gasoline.

CAR allowances paid employees and officials range from \$15 per month, for three custodians, to \$300 per month for county commissioners.

Nearly 400 of the county's 1,000 employees receive car allowances.

West said also that the county should consider buying or leasing some cars for use by persons who do considerable traveling, such as warrant servers and investigators in the district attorney's office.

Friday Evening, September 24, 1971

Mebus and Workes Pave Way to Picnic

County Commissioner Jerry Mebus and his Precinct 2 workers have paved their way to an old-fashioned picnic.

Residents of the city's Ederville community, a small area north of Handley, invited employees of Mebus' precinct to a picnic lunch Wednesday after the crew finished paving 20 blocks in the neighborhood Tuesday.

County commissioners and city councilmen agreed recently that there could be cooperation between the two in the area of street maintenance.

THE CITY accepted plans by the county to pave streets in older sections of Fort Worth although the county's paving — did not meet city specifications.

Commissioners had maintained that any kind of paving was better than gravel streets in some sections.

Residents of Ederville, who said they have been asking for surfaced streets for 21 years, met the paving project with enthusiasm.

AFTER MEBUS and his crew put the finishing touches on the project Wednesday, they will join the residents in Ederville Square (a vacant lot) for a picnic to celebrate.

Mebus, who just completed paving 1 1/2 miles of Mansfield's Broad Street, said "We're pleased and excited. Everybody is just appreciative of everybody else."

The commissioner explained that the county is now working "hand in hand" with the city.

"It's a joint venture," he said, adding that the city usually supply part of the paving material while the county supplies the labor equipment and other materials.

Saturday Morning, October 2, 1971

12 Applicants Interviewed For County Personnel Post

County commissioners interviewed about a dozen persons Friday for the soon-to-be-vacant county personnel director's job.

Jodie Colvard, who now has the post, is leaving Dec. 1 to return to the county's veterans' affairs office, which he will head.

Conrad Formica is retiring as head of the veterans' office.

COMMISSIONER Dick Lewis said late Friday that no decision will be made on hiring the personnel director until Oct. 15.

The post, created about two years ago, pays approximately \$10,000 a year.

To date, the county has had two personnel directors.

Job L. "Nick" Hammond

was the first hired and was given credit for putting into operation the job classification and wage plan that state commissioners and other county officials fought bitterly before its implementation.

Hammond resigned earlier this year and is now a labor union representative.

EARLIER FRIDAY, County Auditor Jack Benson received permission to hire an extra clerk to handle more than \$200,000 in federal grants received under the Emergency Employment Act.

Benson and Colvard have been handling the grants and hiring the additional personnel since the first money was received about three weeks ago.

County Still Seeks Stamp Office Site

County Commissioners were told Monday that a search is still on for the location for a new food stamp office on the North Side.

LeRoy Erwin, county public works director who was appointed by commissioners to coordinate the search for the site, said he had looked at several locations already, but expects to look at some more before recommending a site and securing a lease.

Erwin also would be in charge of supervising remodeling the facility to be used by the food stamp program. The new office is to open about Nov. 1.

In other action, commissioners approved the hiring of a training officer to certify firemen in the county who are paid for their services.

The new employee would be paid from a federal grant the county received recently.

Commissioners also received a letter from Convention Center Manager Lou Owen in which he denied showing favorable treatment to Manpower, Inc., an employment firm operated by City Councilman Jess Johnston.

R. C. Faulkner, operator of Peakload, Inc., a competing firm, had charged that the convention center had stopped using his employees and exclusively hired Manpower, Inc. personnel.

Monday Evening, September 27, 1971

Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM 9-C

County Commissioners Delay Decision on Outlets for Food Stamps

County commissioners today delayed until Friday requests that they do something to make it easier for persons to buy food stamps.

The requests were made by David Payton, executive director of the Community Action Agency, and Henry Pantoja, a spokesman for Mexican-Americans living on the North Side.

Both men asked that additional food stamp outlets be

made available because many who purchase the stamps lack transportation to the downtown area and because of long lines at the only downtown outlet.

IN ADDITION, Payton proposed that a committee be named to look into the problem and to offer recommendations in two weeks.

Commissioners and County Judge Howard Green disa-

greed with the need for a committee. Then, Green suggested that Payton and others meet again Friday to discuss grievances and possible solutions.

Payton told commissioners that 30,000 to 40,000 persons purchase food stamps each month.

He noted, as pointed out many times recently, that often — especially around the first of the month — long

lines form around the stamp office.

MANY HAVE to stand in line as long as half a day, he said.

Commissioner Dick Andersen told Payton that "the problem is not unknown to this court. Since the first of the year the number of food stamp recipients has almost tripled."

County Auditor Jack Ben-

son said the county allocated \$49,000 for its portion of the welfare costs last year and has also tripled that amount this year.

Most of the money to pay for the actual stamps comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

PANTOJA told commissioners that some persons living on the North Side have a disadvantage others do not —

many cannot speak or understand English well.

"I hope the court will reach out to help these people," he said.

Among other things, Pantoja suggested that bilingual clerks be put in an office to be located on the North Side.

Payton noted that completion of the Stop Six food stamp center will not help alleviate too much of the overcrowding at the downtown

food stamp office.

"There are only 3,000 to 4,000 people there who will be served," he said. "That is just a small percentage of the people who buy the food stamps."

"A LARGER percentage comes from the North and South sides."

Payton offered the CAA centers throughout the county as possible locations for addi-

tional food stamp offices.

Both county welfare director Ralph Lewis and J. W. Keith, director of the State Department of Public Welfare, were present at today's meeting which was attended by several directors of the CAA.

After the meeting, Lewis said he may request money for a North Side location in next year's budget to be approved early in January.

Site Sought For Center On N. Side

County and state officials began a search Friday for a building on the city's North Side to house a food stamp distribution center for that part of the county.

Earlier in the day, commissioners unanimously agreed to create the new center to cut down on long lines that surround the downtown food stamp office.

Opening of the North Side center, called necessary by J. W. Keith, regional director of the State Department of Public Welfare, is expected to be Nov. 1.

Also on that date, a Poly area food stamp center is to open at Miller and Berry.

Keith also urged commissioners to consider opening a food stamp issuing center in the southeast part of Fort Worth.

Commissioners did not take any action on that location.

Leaders of the Community Action Agency called for the additional food stamp centers earlier this week.

Keith and Ralph Lewis, county welfare director, also proposed that the food stamp office in Arlington be eventually phased out, because few people use it.

LeRoy Erwin, county public works director, was named by commissioners to see that a site is found for the North Side facility, which will serve about 6,000 persons.

20-A Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Thursday Morning, September 30, 1971



PICNIC FOR PAVEES—County Commissioner Jerry Mebus digs into a picnic lunch which was prepared by members of the Ederville community. The residents of Ederville planned the picnic for Mebus and

his precinct workers Wednesday in Ederville Square at Isham and Nottingham streets after the Precinct 2 workers finished paving more than 20 blocks of gravel streets in the community, north of Handley.

Picnic Says 'Thank You' To Commissioner and Crew

When a politician does something wrong, he can expect to hear from his constituents loud and clear. On the other hand, human nature being what it is, when he does something right he is apt to hear nothing at all.

This is one of the occupational hazards, and politicians learn to accept it. Virtue is its own reward, and all that.

But the fact remains that politicians are people, too. And it so happens that for many people an ounce of appreciation is a better fuel than a gallon of criticism.

Thus it seems to us that the folks out in Ederville, a little community north of Handley, did a mighty good thing Wednesday when they spread an old-fashioned picnic lunch for

County Commissioner Jerry Mebus and his Precinct 2 workers.

It was a thank-you get-together to express the community's appreciation for the paving of 20 blocks of streets in the neighborhood. The Ederville residents, who had been waiting for surfaced streets for 21 years, finally got them by virtue of the new city-county policy of cooperation in street building and maintenance.

After Commissioner Mebus and his crew put the finishing touches on the project Wednesday, they joined Ederville residents at the picnic to celebrate.

At a time when the relationship between politicians and the people seems to be deteriorating in many respects, this appreciation picnic was a kind and appropriate gesture.

County Employees' Union Issues Six-Point Plan

The county employees' labor union today sent Commissioners Court a six-point program that includes pay raises and additional holidays.

Garfield W. Thompson, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 125 said commissioners Monday will be asked to approve the union's requests.

Richardson and Dick Lewis have supported Civil Service previously, while County Judge Howard Green and Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Andersen have been cool toward the idea.

The legislature earlier this year passed a bill which permits commissioners to vote in

Civil Service for the employees.

If commissioners do not take that action, the bill provides that a special election can be held and voters throughout the county would be asked to ballot on whether the system should be instituted.

THE UNION is asking that—

- A 5.5 per cent cost of living raise be granted.
- Uniforms be provided for all precinct workers.
- Good Friday be made a county holiday.
- Employees get the day off their birthdays.
- Three weeks vacation after seven years' employment instead of 10.

COUNTY employees be placed under Civil Service.

The union represents about a third of the county's 1,050 employees.

Members of the union and other county employees have been pushing for several years to get Civil Service status at the county level.

As envisioned by Thompson and others who favor Civil Service, county employees would receive tenure and be less subject to losing their jobs if the county official in whose department they work were not re-elected.

COMMISSIONERS George

County Library Plan Aired

County Commissioner George Richardson today proposed creation of a county-wide library system.

Noting that the county contributed more than \$181,000 this year to libraries in Fort Worth and other suburban cities, Richardson said, "We shouldn't just have a Fort Worth library and an Arlington library and a White Settlement library.

"We should have a county-

wide library system."

RICHARDSON made the proposal after hearing informally from the president of the Fort Worth library board, Howard Wible, and head librarian, Mrs. Mabel Fischer, who asked for \$215,202 from commissioners.

That amount, they said, should be the county's contribution in 1972 to the library system.

It was derived, Wible said, by a complicated table which showed that approximately 20 per cent of the persons who use the library are not residents of Fort Worth.

Commissioner Dick Lewis argued that most of the people who use the library but who do not live in Fort Worth live in some other city and not just in Tarrant County.

cited by Wible are not proper and are not indicative of the actual use by county residents.

Richardson's proposals of the countywide library system apparently came as a surprise to Wible, Mrs. Fischer and several other library board members who came to talk to commissioners during their weekly, informal meeting.

Richardson said a report is

THUS, HE said, the figures Turn to Libraries on Page 2

vening, November 19, 1971

Libraries For County Proposed

From Page 1

to be made early next week that is expected to show the need for such a system.

The report, to be released jointly to city councilmen and commissioners, is being prepared by John Hall, director of TCU's civic affairs division.

RICHARDSON said the report will be released Monday or Tuesday.

Richardson, who has been urging increased cooperation between Commissioners Court and representatives of all cities in the county, said he believes other members of the court agree that it is not fair for the Fort Worth library to be given far more money than the other cities.

All other cities with municipal libraries — there are 17 — receive \$2,000 per year from the county.

He argued that the contributions should be based on the size of the cities. Under this, Arlington should receive approximately one-fourth as much as Fort Worth since there is about that much difference in the population of the two cities.

COMMISSIONER Jerry Mebus, who is from Arlington, agreed.

Commissioner Dick Andersen did not attend today's meeting.

In the past, Andersen has urged greater cooperation between commissioners and Fort Worth officials.

Mrs. Fischer argued that the Fort Worth library does not genuinely duplicate the services offered by many of the small municipal libraries.

"Many of these (suburban libraries) do not have self-sustaining collections," she noted.

"WE HAVE many people use the Fort Worth library who live in cities where they have libraries, but they (the libraries) just don't have the material needed."

She said one regular user of the Fort Worth library is a blood chemist who lives in the Mid-Cities area.

"He comes in about three times a week," she said, "because it is the only place he can find the reference material needed for his job."

Richardson, at this point, said "that's exactly what I've been saying."

"PEOPLE LIVING throughout the country are entitled to an equal (library) service."

No action was taken on the library board's request for funds for next year.

Wible invited commissioners to attend the next board meeting, Dec. 8.

Commissioners Court next month will begin preparing the annual budget.

CITY FEE BENEFITS DOUBTED

Group Asks County-Built Zoo

Tarrant County should build and operate a zoo, a spokesman for a group of "not less than 100 persons" told County Commissioners today.

"We have come to you not because we feel the city of Fort Worth is unwilling to solve this problem, but because the city of Fort Worth is incapable of solving this prob-

lem," Mrs. Sharon Bradford said.

Referring to the city's recently suggested proposal of charging a \$1 per person entry fee to the zoo, Mrs. Bradford said the amount could be reduced to \$0.50 per person.

She said the zoo's plan "does rape and destroy the people-using portion of the park."

ment came as the City Council delayed for three weeks any action on the controversial entrance fee.

Mrs. Bradford also was critical of the zoo's master plan.

She said the zoo's plan "does rape and destroy the people-using portion of the park."

"The zoo plan desecrates an irreplaceable park already weary from the abuse of freeways and tree-killing engineering projects and designates a great portion of the remaining area to be further eroded with giant parking lots and a four-lane highway."

Commissioners Court, in its

MRS. BRADFORD'S com-

Turn to Appeal on Page 2

Tuesday Evening, November 16, 1971

County Zoo Aid Held 'Probable'

From Page 1

zoo after their meeting yesterday, a meeting in which it was suggested that the county get into the zoo-operation business.

Mrs. Sharon Bradford, saying she represented a group of about 100 interested citizens, proposed that the county prepare a master plan which would include creation of a county-supported zoo.

Green called the suggestion "excellent."

Others were a little less receptive to the proposal, which commissioners said would be studied.

"It would be a lot easier for us (financially) to pay the city something than for us to build a new zoo," Mebus said.

"I'm sure a new zoo would be awfully expensive to build."

COMMISSIONER George Richardson said he would not be opposed to the county's contributing to the cost of the zoo operation, provided:

"We get some representation on the park and recreation board. I've said for several years that we should get a representative on the library board because we are giving the city nearly \$200,000 per year.

"I still say that we should get our representation. They're glad to get our money, but they won't let us have any say in how it is spent. That is not right.

"It is a form of taxation without representation."

Richardson added that the city "has been trying to get us to cooperate with them. But they don't want to come as far as we have to. They say we could merge the county and city health departments but then they want to run the whole thing—with us paying most of the cost of running it."

Commissioner Dick Andersen, who first urged the city-county cooperation, was absent from the meeting yesterday.

County zoo backers might have found a champion in Andersen.

IT WAS Andersen who two years ago proposed creation of a countywide park system.

He went a step further in the proposal, saying that the parks could be built on land used for sanitary landfills.

Currently, county officials are mulling over creating a county-wide solid waste disposal system.

The garbage system, suggested by a committee named in March by Commissioners Court, calls for centrally located sanitary landfills.

If adopted by commissioners, a dump would probably be located in at least one site in each of the four commissioner's precincts.

From these sites could eventually come the nucleus of the county park system.

Commissioners Court, around Dec. 1, is to begin preparing the annual budget for the cost of county government during the coming year.

Already city officials have asked that the county's contribution to the library be increased.

Appeal Is Made for New Zoo

From Page 1

regular meeting, took no action on the request.

COUNTY JUDGE Howard Green, calling the suggestion "excellent," said that if goals are set for the county, a countywide park system should be one of them.

Mrs. Bradford, who said she was representing a "body of citizens," said commissioners should prepare a master plan for parks and recreation.

Commissioners should do that, she said, because they have "an extended overall view rather than being geographically limited in sight."

In her lengthy plea, Mrs. Bradford said that part of the county's master plan should find "an appropriate site (for) a countywide zoological garden of excellent quality . . . to serve all the people of Tarrant County."

SHE NOTED that Fort Worth paid \$28,000 for the study for the zoo's master plan which among other things calls for the zoo to be nearly tripled in size.

In her statement, Mrs. Bradford said that "a new zoo has much appeal and indeed the people of Tarrant County deserve a quality zoo to enhance their educational and recreational needs and to improve the quality of urban living."

Gladden Is Named To Board of CAA

Attorney Don Gladden, a liberal former state legislator who has long been active in American Civil Liberties Union-supported causes, today was named to the board of the Community Action Agency here.

Gladden was named to the non-paying post by County Judge Howard Green who several weeks ago demanded that Mrs. Ann Marek resign.

Mrs. Marek, whom Green called "controversial" stepped down reluctantly.

The appointment was confirmed by Commissioners Court.

Told later of Gladden's appointment, Mrs. Marek said:

"I can't fault the appointment of Gladden by the controversial Judge Green. Gladden is a dedicated, intelligent and controversial man."

Gladden will meet with the board, which itself has been labeled controversial, at its regularly-scheduled meeting tomorrow night.

Mrs. Marek, ironically, has a place on tomorrow night's agenda:

Controversy will also be on the agenda since many of the 29 CAA employees who were either fired or laid off Friday are expected to air their grievances.

Monday Evening, November 1, 1971

\$1.3 Million Leap Takes County Finances Into Black

County finances jumped from the red to the black in an approximate \$1.3 million leap during 1970.

That was the gist of a "very favorable" report on the county's income and expenditures made in an 88-page audit released today by the certified public accounting firm of Dahlin and Fitch.

BILL FITCH, whose CPA firm was first hired three years ago to prepare the outside audit, said that the governmental unit had a surplus of \$772,000 as 1971 began.

One year earlier, he said, the county's treasury had a deficit of \$609,000.

One of the largest reasons for the increase, he explained, was the sale of Turnpike Stadium to Arlington.

Tarrant County realized \$733,000 from that sale.

In addition to the county's general fund, Fitch said that a \$262,000 deficit at the end of 1969 in the Tarrant County Convention Center's fund "was completely wiped out during 1970."

Commissioner Dick Andersen sailed the report.

"I THINK this is an appropriate time to point out the financial stability of Tarrant County's government," Andersen said.

"The federal government is \$23 billion in the red, the State of Texas is going to have to come up with \$500 million in new taxes, and the city (Fort Worth) is \$3 million in the red.

"We are operating in the black. I am proud to be in county government."

Other commissioners agreed with Andersen.

County Auditor Jack Ben-

son told commissioners the audit shows that they have been doing their work properly.

THE AUDIT was released about two weeks before commissioners are to begin working with Benson to prepare the budget for 1972.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said budget hearings will begin Nov. 15.

In an unusual move, Richardson asked Fitch to attend those budget hearings along with Benson.

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

Saturday Evening, November 20, 1971

New Federal Law May Close Zoo

Forest Park Zoo Director Elvie Turner told the city parks board and two Tarrant County commissioners yesterday that all or part of the city zoo could be closed because of a new federal law.

Appealing to commissioners Dick Lewis and George Richardson for moral support of the proposed \$1 charge on adults entering the zoo, Turner said some aspects of the zoo operation may not meet federal standards under the Animal Welfare Act of 1970.

The law requires zoos to be licensed through the U.S. Department of Agriculture by Christmas Eve, Turner said.

"THEY HAVE minimum requirements, and they have the power to close your facilities. Quite frankly, I'm worried about some of our things not passing," the zoo director said.

USDA inspectors will be concerned primarily with housing, feeding, shelter, water sanitation, veterinary care, and ventilation, Turner said.

Feeding, veterinary care and water should present no problem for the local facilities, Turner said, but "I want to get part of our house in shape."

Part of the zoo could continue operations, though other parts might be closed as substandard, Turner interpreted the new law.

"IF YOU feel you want to support the change, we welcome that support. As far as any other in-kind or cash contributions, after you've had a chance to look at the whole package, we can get back together," Parks Board President Charles Ringer said to the commissioners.

Lewis said he would support the charge after hearing Turner's presentation, but Richardson remained uncommitted. However, Richardson said, "Most of us have the general feeling we're going to have to get together. You serve the county, not just Fort Worth."

The conference was held in the James R. Record Aquarium at the zoo.

MEANWHILE, A group representing 15 black voting precincts in the city joined the list of those in opposition to the gate fee.

Civil Service Vote Is Delayed Two Weeks

Commissioners Court today delayed for two weeks a formal vote on the question of Civil Service for county employees after Commissioner Dick Andersen indicated that he will probably vote for the system.

The decision to delay the vote came after Andersen, who in the past has indicated he is opposed to Civil Service, urged that a full program be prepared before being approved.

Earlier, Commissioner George Richardson had moved that Civil Service be enacted for virtually all of the county's 1,050 employees.

RICHARDSON, who was joined by Commissioner Dick Lewis in the proposal, at first opposed the delay and then agreed to it after Andersen publicly said he is for Civil Service provided that a workable plan is agreed to by commissioners.

County Judge Howard Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus, as they did last week when Andersen was absent during the most recent meeting during which Civil Service has come up, opposed the plan, saying it is not needed.

Green got in a name-calling fight which continued after the meeting with Richardson and Lewis during the heated debate over Civil Service.

Green, in opposing the system that proponents say would give better job security to county workers, said he knows of no wholesale dismissals by elected officials as they take a new office.

RICHARDSON countered with "since you've been here

(since Jan. 1, 1967) you have had nine secretaries and at least some of them have left because they were told to," Richardson said.

Lewis added, "It (Civil Service) would be a savings to the taxpayers. You're always saying you are for progress, so why aren't you for this?"

Green answered, "This would be regression, not progression."

More words followed between the three men.

In other action, commissioners delayed for another week a request that county officials intervene in behalf of the U.S. Corps of Engineers who are being sued by a group of conservationists seeking to halt Wallisville and Trinity River projects.

EDITORIALS:

Tarrant Courthouse Needs Civil Service

The federal government has a civil service system. The state has one. So does the city of Fort Worth.

Why not Tarrant County?

Civil service is intended to benefit both the public and the employees of government. It does so by assuring that those who enter governmental jobs have a specified level of competence, and by establishing hiring and firing rules that protect the workers in their jobs and make for greater efficiency. The aim is to remove governmental jobholding as far as possible from politics, to make the getting and keeping of public jobs less dependent upon loyalty and subservience to elected bosses.

The County Courthouse is a highly political place. County employees get their jobs mostly on the basis of how much they have contributed in money and work to the campaigns of officials who head the county departments. This is a continuing process which makes the jobholders campaign workers for every official seeking reelection — and often forced contributors to the expenses of the campaign.

It is a system often decried but largely winked at — tolerated because there has not seemed much chance of doing anything about it. Now there is. Under a law passed by the Legislature in 1969, counties may

establish civil service systems, setting up rules for the entry of employees into county service on the basis of competitive examinations, and rules for tenure, seniority, promotion and dismissal, and for grievance procedures and disciplinary action.

Though Commissioners Court was unanimous in endorsing the civil service measure prior to its passage by the Legislature, its members are divided on putting it into effect. The "swing" vote appears to be Commissioner Dick Andersen, who strongly favored civil service when he was campaigning for election but who now seems to have cooled toward it, perhaps because he thinks he may face a hard campaign for re-election and needs all the help he can command.

Mr. Andersen, we think, would do well to return to his original commitment. Adoption of the system cannot be expected to eliminate all of the evils of politics in county employment, but almost anything would be an improvement over what we have now. The county payrollers deserve the protection the system, if well run, would provide. The dividend to the taxpayers would be a more stable and efficient working force in county government.

Race for Commissioner May Force Vote That Installs Civil Service in Courthouse

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Star-Telegram Writer

Commissioners Court still seems to be deadlocked over the issue of civil service for courthouse employees, but a race for commissioner of Precinct 1 might tip the balance.

The issue, which has cropped up periodically, like the changing of the seasons, surfaced again this week. By a 2-2 vote, the implementation of civil service was symled.

Commissioners George "Skeet" Richardson and Dick Lewis are for it and voted that way Monday when Garfield Thompson asked that it be approved. Thompson is a courthouse custodian, a Democratic precinct chairman and president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, Local 125, the courthouse union to which about a third of the county's 1,050 employees belong.

County Judge Howard Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus voted against it.

Commissioner Dick Andersen, who faces what promises to be a tough reelection campaign next year, wasn't present at the meeting Monday. He was out of town.

It may be Andersen, though, who will have to change his vote on the issue championed for years by former State Sen. Doyle Willis.

When he first campaigned for election, nearly four years ago, Andersen said he was for a system that would take politics out of the courthouse and replace patronage with good business practices.

His stand since has mellowed somewhat. Mellowed, in fact, to the point where he now says the county is better off without civil service.

Politics might force him to resume his earlier position. The names of at least three men are being tossed around now as persons most

likely to run against Andersen. There will probably be more before the Feb. 7 filing deadline for the Democratic primary.

Andersen's position on civil service is, like that of Mebus and Green, contradictory.

Mebus and Green say the department heads (nearly all of whom are elected) should be free to run their offices without threat of a three-member board questioning their acts in hiring or firing.

Andersen agrees. He goes a step further, saying, "There is too much deadwood around the courthouse. When some of it is cleaned up, then I could vote for civil service."

Like most other legislation that promises reform — or at least change — there is in the state law authorizing civil service for counties of more than 300,000 population a "grandfather clause." The clause exempts from competitive civil service examinations all present employees of the county.

So Andersen's "deadwood" couldn't be trimmed anyway.

Implementation — with fairness to all and bias towards none — of a civil service system could keep the "deadwood" from being hired in future months and years. This is the major point Thompson is trying to make in his appeals to commissioners.

He notes that competitive examinations would be given to persons applying for jobs, that promotions, seniority and tenure would be more easily reached, since employees often are fired when a different elected official takes office, and that the three-man civil service board would select and classify county employees.

Critics of civil service argue that appointment of the three board members would be left up to Commissioners Court

and would be political, so politics would remain at the base of what is the problem.

They argue also that the county's job classification and salary program would be hampered by civil service.

Thompson insists that it wouldn't. Now that it has been in effect nearly two years, employees and elected officials who first fought that system generally concede that it works.

Ironically, one thing that Thompson and others don't see is that members of minority groups are often hurt by civil service. The reason, as city officials, giving tests for prospective firemen and policemen, have found out, is that often they (the minority group applicants) cannot pass the competitive examinations.

Thus, they could not, under the civil service system, be hired, since the top scorer on the test would have to be given first chance at the job.

On the other hand, few members of minority groups are hired at the courthouse anyway, Thompson, who is black, is one of the exceptions.

There are fewer than 75 blacks and Mexican-Americans now working for the county government.

Thompson argues that higher salaries and better working conditions — which he says would come about with civil service — would attract better applicants for county job openings.

"It stands to reason that if a man is in danger of being fired because he won't contribute to his (elected) boss' campaign or because somebody else gets elected, he's going to think a long time before even trying to get a county job," Thompson says.

"That's all we're trying to do. We're trying to get job security, something we don't have now."

Probate Judge Resigns Post

Tarrant County Probate Court Judge William T. McGee, long a vocal critic of county court procedures, announced his resignation today.

In a letter to County Judge Howard Green and Commissioners Court, McGee said he plans to resign as of Jan. 1, his 29th birthday.



WILLIAM T. MCGEE

He said he plans to re-enter full-time law practice with the firm of Wilson and Craig McGee, a Democrat, completing the first year of his second four-year term as probate judge.

"MY DECISION is 90 percent economic," McGee told the Star-Telegram. "It is based on the fact that 15 years experience as a judge and lawyer enables me to take on a case load which would help me out financially."

Pointing to the fact that he has college-age children, McGee said the probate judgeship is too restrictive financially.

McGee admitted that at least 10 percent of the reason for his resignation was due to his unhappiness with the county court system. For some time, McGee has criticized the fact that the post of county judge can be held by a non-lawyer.

"THE SYSTEM shows a

Turn to Probate on Page 2

County Judge Announces Resignation

From Page 1

definite need for reform," he said. "I will work for changes but I can do so as well as a lawyer as I can on the bench."

McGee was quick to point out that his criticisms are directed at the system rather than any one individual.

The judge said he has been considering resigning since early in the summer and that he originally had thought his resignation would come in late 1972.

"However, things broke right and I made the decision now," he said.

BY LAW, Commissioners Court will appoint a successor. However, the successor will only serve until next fall's general election. Voters will then decide who will fill the unexpired term.

In his letter, McGee said he also has notified the Tarrant County Bar Association of his decision so that a preferential poll among its members can be conducted if the bar so desires.

Today Judge Green said he would support such a poll.

McGee's name had come up as a possible contender for a district judgeship in the past.

Today he said, "I feel I have made the decision to leave politics and not to return. The position with this law firm is such . . . that it is certainly not temporary."

County Union To Renew Bid For Civil Service

Proposed civil service for county employees will be brought up again next month when County Commissioners begin work on the 1972 budget.

Garfield Thompson, president of Local 125, County Employees Union, told The News-Tribune today that five other proposals allied with civil service are all budget items.

As a result, he said, the budget hearings will be an appropriate time to renew the request.

COUNTY JUDGE Howard Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus voted against civil service last week, while Commissioners Skeet Richardson and Dick Lewis voted for it. Commissioner Dick Andersen, with the tie-breaking vote, was out of town.

Richardson may press for civil service even before the budget hearings.

The local also proposes uniforms for all precinct workers, making Good Friday and employees' birthdays holidays, giving three weeks vacation after seven years of service and increasing pay 6 percent.

November 18, 1971 NEWS-TRIBUNE

Commissioners Delay Vote On Canal Suit One Week

County commissioners today delayed for a week voting on joining defendants in a lawsuit filed in Houston seeking to block construction of the Trinity River canal.

The suit, filed by conserva-

tion groups, is primarily aimed at halting the Wallisville Reservoir construction, but also asks for delay in the entire project.

County Judge Howard Green asked that no action be taken today on the request be-

cause of the absence of Commissioner Dick Andersen.

HAD THE issue been voted on, a 2-2 tie would have resulted with Green and Commissioner Jerry Mebus for joining and Commissioners Dick Lewis and George Richardson against.

Last week, when Green received a request from the president of the Trinity River Authority, the county official predicted it would pass.

Richardson noted that the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society and other conservation groups, and oyster fishermen, filed the lawsuit.

"THE association (TRA) is asking us to get involved in something we have no control over," Richardson said.

"I'm not so sure that we need a boat freeway to Houston."

Mebus, on the other hand said he believes the canalization would aid in the growth of the area.

Conservationists say the project would upset the ecological balance around the river, and the Wallisville portion in particular would destroy oyster-breeding areas.

In other action, commissioners split on the same 2-2 basis on whether a Civil Service system should be instituted for county employees.

Garfield Thompson, president of the county employees' union, requested that Civil Service be approved.

No action was taken on five other points including a 5.5 per cent pay raise and additional holidays, that Thompson proposed last week in a letter to commissioners.

United Front Spokesman Gives Demands to Commissioners

A United Front spokesman today presented the group's demands to Commissioners Court.

Commissioners heard the demands listed by James Gaskin, who also goes by El-Asa, but took no action.

Gaskin, in getting on the agenda for today's regular meeting, told the court secretary he wanted to speak for the United Front.

IN THE past, the 45-year-old black activist has said he is chairman of the Committee on Police Brutality and Harassment.

Many of the demands made by Gaskin today are the same that he and two others made in a press conference Nov. 5. Gaskin said that commissioners, as the highest ranking elected officials in Tarrant County, should work for solving:

"Feeding and clothing, fair and equal representation at all levels of government, that blacks are fairly treated in the courts, that juries be equally distributed between

blacks, browns and whites . . ."

IN ONE topic different from the Nov. 5 demands, Gaskin added the Mexican-American to the list of oppressed persons.

Before, only blacks were mentioned.

Gaskin also demanded that Dist. Atty. Doug Crouch file a lawsuit for getting single-member districts at city, county and state levels.

(There are currently sever-

al suits of this type pending in Austin.)

GASKIN ALSO demanded that commissioners get two black students who were dismissed from the South Campus of Tarrant County Junior College Friday reinstated.

A school spokesman would not comment on the dismissals but unofficial sources indicated the two were dismissed for taking part in a disturbance at the school Oct. 18.



FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS . . . North Side location Should relieve long lines downtown. —Star-Telegram Photo

New Food Stamp Center Approved

Commissioners Court today voted unanimously to create another food stamp distribution center on Fort Worth's North Side.

Commissioners, acting on a request made Monday by leaders of the Community Action Agency, ordered County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin to find a suitable location for the center.

Commissioner George Richardson, making the motion that the center be located there, said it should be in operation by Nov. 1.

Also on that date another food stamp office in the Poly area is to be opened.

Additional food stamp offices are needed, CAA officials said, because of long lines at the central downtown office.

As commissioners met with CAA members this morning, there was a long line of persons waiting to buy the food stamps which stretch their grocery-buying dollars.

J. W. Keith, regional director of the State Welfare Department, told commissioners that between 5,000 and 6,000 persons will be served by the North Side location.

In all, Keith said there are 38,404 persons in the food stamp program in Tarrant County.

They come from 9,971 families.

COUNTY Auditor Jack Benson said money is available in the budget to rent the new facility and to hire about a dozen people to staff it.

Keith also suggested that another food stamp office be located somewhere in the Southeast section of Fort Worth. Commissioners did not act on that suggestion.

With that location and the North Side site, Keith said about half the food stamp participants would not have to go downtown for their stamps.

Currently, the county has \$140,000 budgeted for its share of the stamp sale. The county and state welfare departments jointly handle the stamps' distribution.

COUNTY Judge Howard Green praised Ollie Reed, head of the CAA's board, and David Payton, executive director of the federally-funded agency, for their efforts in helping get additional food stamp locations.

Referring to a continuing controversy between commissioners court in Dallas and the CAA there, Green added "I'm glad we don't have that kind of a problem here."

Commissioners were critical of construction delays which have plagued the opening of the East Side location at Miller and Berry streets.

Sheriff Urges Retention of County Car Allowances

Sheriff Lon Evans today said he will urge county commissioners to continue the present car allowances for members of his department.

"When you figure that the starting salary for some of my people — trained peace officers — is just \$488 per month, it (the \$50 to \$100 per month allowance) is more than a fringe benefit," Evans said.

"It's got to be a part of his salary. And remember, there are people who regularly use their cars on the job, not just to get to the courthouse and back."

A CITIZENS' committee last month recommended that the county do away with giving employees car allowances and free gasoline.

Instead, county employees who use their cars would be reimbursed for each mile driven. A motor pool, with county-owned or leased vehicles, was also suggested.

Commissioners have not yet acted on the committee's recommendation.

There are indications they will not act until December when discussions begin on preparing the annual budget

that will go into effect in January.

EVANS SAID there are 51 persons in his department who are drawing car allowances.

They are investigators, criminal warrants servers, civil papers servers and members of the identification section.

"I agree that some of the people (in other departments) who are getting car allowances don't need them," Evans said.

"But, I think it is wrong to punish my men when they are really using their cars for their work."

Going to a mileage system or a motor pool is not practical for the sheriff's department, Evans added.

"A LOT OF these papers have to be served at 5 or 5:30 in the morning or late at night when we have the best chance of finding the people at home," he explained. "This isn't an 8 to 5 business."

"It would be foolish for the men to have to drive to the courthouse, park his car, get one from the county's motor pool and then serve the paper, return to the courthouse,

get his car and go back home.

"And, if he drove his own car, where would the mileage start or be figured from? The courthouse or the man's home?"

Evans also said that someone would have to closely watch the expense vouchers turned in for mileage payments.

"IT COULD reach the point," he said, "where someone will have to check each of their speedometers."

Car allowances and the controversial "little red pump," from which the employees draw their free gasoline, have been criticized for years.

The most recent outbreak of criticism — which prompted naming of the committee — came after commissioners doubled their monthly car allowance to \$300.

CASES HAVE been reported where employees would fill their car's tanks from the pump in the morning (usually on Fridays) then return later in the day with a camper and fill it, too.

Records show more gasoline is dispensed on Fridays than any other day even though most courthouse employees don't work during the weekend.

More than a third of all the county employees get a car allowance and free gasoline.

Lena Pope Officials Ask For More Child Care Funds

Officials from the Lena Pope Home today asked commissioners court to increase from \$1.66 per child per day to \$10.54 the amount paid by the county for the home's care of dependent and neglected children.

Rice Tilley, president of the home's board, told commissioners that if the amount was not increased, the home might have to stop caring for the dependent children.

Tilley, citing figures prepared by the home as well as the American Welfare League, said that the \$10.54 cost per child per day is the actual cost incurred by the home.

TODAY, SAID Lee Hacker, executive director of the home, there are 33 children who were placed there by the Tarrant County Child Welfare Unit.

The figure varies from week to week, Hacker noted. Using the 33-child figure, Tilley said it would cost the county \$10,428 per month to keep sending children there.

Currently at the \$1.66 figure, the county spends about \$19,800 annually.

In citing the need for additional funds, Tilley said operation of the Lena Pope Home is funded almost entirely by the United Fund.

HE SAID THAT from meetings with United Fund officials he and other home officials got the impression that the Fund might not contribute as much if the county does not begin paying more towards its share.

Commissioners, while praising the home for its care in handling of the dependent children, took no immediate action on the request.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus suggested that "we ought to take a good long look at all our child care facilities."

Currently, the Child Welfare Unit sends dependent and neglected children to two other private institutions, Christ Haven and St. Theresa.

THE COUNTY operates three facilities, two of which are more for the delinquent than the dependent child.

Hacker noted that the proposed cost of \$316 per month per child "is a bargain. It is far cheaper than the cost of operating the detention center or the youth center at Eagle Mountain Lake."

Commissioners Dick Anderson and Dick Lewis told Til-

ley serious consideration could not be given the request until the new county budget is prepared in December.

Tilley said that the increase would actually be a savings in the long run "since the if these children are not properly cared for when they're young, they may become juvenile delinquents and later criminals."

"THEN THE city, county and state will have to pay more than they would if the children were given a proper environment."

In addition to the county-owned and private institutions, dependent children are sent to, some are also placed through the Child Welfare Unit in foster homes.

Foster parents generally are paid \$45 per month for each child.

County Handling Of Waste Is Eyed

Commissioners Court today took under advisement a suggestion that it issue revenue bonds to purchase land for taking over disposal of all solid waste generated in Fort Worth and the 34 other Tarrant County municipalities.

Jack Graham, director of public works for Fort Worth and head of a committee appointed by commissioners early this year to study the problem of waste disposal, formally made the recommendation this morning.

Several weeks ago commissioners were first given copies of the proposal unanimously agreed to by the study committee.

AMONG OTHER recommendations were that the county operate sanitary landfills in different areas and that, transfer stations, as needed, be created.

The committee suggested also that a permanent solid waste disposal board be created to set policy for the countywide operation and to license and inspect privately owned garbage dumps.

Commissioners and County Judge Howard Green generally seemed to favor the committee's recommendations, although they took no action pending further study.

Green asked Graham how long he thought it would take to implement the plan if approved.

GRAHAM ESTIMATED that it could be done in six months to a year.

Commissioner Dick Anderson noted that county officials would have to get commitments from cities in Tarrant County before revenue bonds Turn to Countywide page 2

COUNTY TO STUDY PLEA

Pope Home Asks for Aid Hike

County commissioners Monday were asked to increase their annual spending for children at the home who are from \$19,800 to about \$105,000. The additional funding would take care of the children at the Lena Pope Home sent there by the county child welfare department.

If the amount is not increased, the home might have to stop caring for the dependent children placed there by the county, said Rice Tilley, president of the home's board.

"Because of reduction of our personnel, we have not had to turn away children," Tilley said, but without additional funding the home would have no alternative.

THE COUNTY now pays to the home \$1.66 per child per day. The amount would be increased to \$10.54, the amount presently spent on each child per day.

The home's executive director, Lee Hacker, said 33 children recently have been placed in the home by the child welfare unit.

Tilley told commissioners

that he and other home officials had the impression that United Fund, which has provided most of the funds for the home, might not contribute as much money as it has in the past.

Commissioners, vowing to "take a good long look" at the situation, said nothing could be done until the new county budget is prepared in December.

Tilley said the proposed cost of \$316 per month per child was a bargain, and he argued that the county would save money in the long run because "if these children are not cared for when they're young, they may become juvenile delinquents and later, criminals."

IN OTHER ACTION the commissioners heard a request from Mrs. Bertha Collins, coordinator of the Mayor's Council on Youth Opportunity, who requested additional funding to operate a year-round "Call a Teen Program."

"We urge the county to please staff this program with unused funds from the Emergency Employment Act," Mrs. Collins said.

She also asked that the \$474.85 balance for the summer program be used for a telephone "so we can continue this joint city and county effort to offer our youth a meaningful program for some relief in the critical unemployment situation."

Mrs. Collins said she would like the county to provide enough funds to hire three young people, but if commis-

sioners refused, she said she would like to see the \$474.85 used to hire a young person on a part-time basis.

Commissioners Anticipate Hiring of Personnel Chief

Tarrant County commissioners, who refused to adjourn commissioners court Monday, are expected to hire a new personnel director when they continue their meeting Friday morning.

The former personnel director, Jodie Colvard, resigned the post to take the top job in the Veterans Service Office.

He technically started the job Sept. 15, but has been working in both offices as no one has been hired to replace him in the personnel department.

Colvard said 47 persons already have applied for his old job. Seven of the applicants will be interviewed by com-

missioners before they vote Friday.

"All I'm doing is waiting for someone to replace me so I can get down there (in Veterans Service) and go to work," Colvard said.

Commissioners had planned to hire the new director during next Monday's regular meeting, but two members of the court will be out of town Monday.

Technically, because commissioners recessed rather than adjourning Monday, Monday's court meeting will be in session until it is formally adjourned some time Friday.

Saturday Morning, October 16, 1971



STANLEY ZINN

Personnel Director Hired by County

The third personnel director in Tarrant County's history was hired Friday by commissioners court.

Stanley Zinn, 30, of 3309 Medina was named to the post after a closed-door meeting.

Zinn, a graduate of North Texas State University, will officially start work Monday. The 1967 business administration graduate will succeed Jodie Colvard.

Zinn until recently was employed as an industrial relations representative at General Dynamics.

He worked there more than four years.

Zinn, who is married and has a 5-year-old daughter, is a native of Mineral Wells.

For three years Zinn served in the Marines.

Since his graduation more than four years ago, Zinn has lived in Fort Worth.

Colvard was the second personnel manager to be hired by officials from Tarrant County.

The first, who is credited with implementing the county's job classification and salary plan, was Job L. "Nick" Hammond.

Hammond resigned to take a post with the local municipal employees union.

Colvard was an assistant veteran's affairs officer prior to his appointment as personnel director and he will return to that office as his head to replace Conrad J. Formica.

Commissioners court interviewed dozens of prospective applicants for the approximately \$10,000 per year post.

From Page 1

Countywide Operation of Trash Disposal Muled

AT THE SAME time, he noted that 24 of the 35 cities in Tarrant County use one of the three landfills now operated by Fort Worth officials.

"Speaking just as the public works director, you can have it if you want to take it over tomorrow," Graham quipped. Commissioners gave no indication on when they would act on the recommendation.

RESIGNATION WEIGHED

Probate Judge Urges Court Changes

By BOB-RAY SANDERS Five years ago William McGee, who made \$37,000 a year as an attorney, spent about \$20,000 to be elected to the \$14,000-a-year probate judgeship.

Since he has been in office, he has seen his salary raised to \$20,000 and he has seen some changes in judicial practices.

But, his salary has not been raised enough, and there haven't been enough changes, he feels.

Unless Tarrant County commissioners adjust McGee's salary, making it comparable with some of the other probate judges in the state, the county may lose his services.

Thursday, McGee said he still has three years left to serve in his second term, but there is a possibility he will quit and enter private practice late next year.

The judge's decision depends partly on his being turned down for a district judgeship, partly on the lack of judicial reform and partly on the salary he is making.

"I've been anxious to be on a district bench for a long time," McGee said, noting that he was not picked to succeed retired District Judge Harold Craik. "I fought a fair fight and lost."

McGee said he did not see any immediate opening for a district judgeship which he might "sit here and wait for."

He said he was not interested in a criminal district judgeship because most of his background is in civil law.

Part of the judicial reform that he hopes for will be to



JUDGE WILLIAM MCGEE

Shortly after commissioners asked other county departments to "tighten their belts," the members of the court raised their car allowances to \$300 each.

"I felt I should give him back his cases since he was making \$3,000 to \$5,000 more a year than I was," McGee said.

The judge said in many instances persons who come to Green's court are inconvenienced because the parttime attorney who is hired by the county to advise Green is out, and Green is unable to act without the attorney's advice.

McGee said the answer to his complaint would be the judicial reform. "I'm not making a complaint about Howard Green as much as I am about the judicial setup," he said.

"It (probate court) is a pretty complex operation to put a layman in charge of," McGee said.

The judge said that in Galveston, Beaumont and San Antonio probate judges make about \$5,000 more a year than he does.

In Dallas, the salary for probate judges is \$28,000 and in Houston the judges receive \$33,000.

"I'm not disenchanted with the work," McGee said. "I love it."

He said he feels that he owes it to his family to provide them with the best living possible, which probably would entail going into private practice.

McGee said after about five years when another district

judgeship was available, he would be willing to return to the bench, again at a reduction in salary.

And although he may enter private practice next year, he said he will still fight for judicial reform which would take at least another three years to be implemented.

Personnel Head Named for County

Stanley Zinn of 3309 Medina was hired today as county personnel director.

Zinn, the last four years an employe in the personnel department at General Dynamics, will begin work Monday.

He succeeds Jodie Colvard who will become the county's veterans affairs officer.

"Of all the people we interviewed, he was the most qualified," said Colvard. "And we interviewed many who had outstanding qualifications."

Colvard said that Zinn was

graduated from North Texas State University and has a wife and 5-year-old daughter.

Commissioners Court voted on the personnel matter during a meeting this morning after discussing behind closed doors, the appointment for about 30 minutes.

Courthouse Names In the News

Another \$1,000-per-month position has been created by Commissioners Court under the Emergency Employment Act designed to ease the plight of the jobless here.

At the request of County Fire Marshal Mason Lankford and the Tarrant County Fire Fighters Assn., commissioners voted to hire a fire training officer. He will train paid firemen in the county for certification.

ALSO WITH Emergency Employment Act funds, Veterans Service Officer Jodie Colvard will hire an additional clerk-typist at \$379 per month.

Commissioners Court still hasn't appointed a county personnel officer to replace Colvard, a job he stepped down from to return to the veterans' affairs office. Some courthouse observers say there isn't much for a county personnel officer to do until county employees go under civil service or until a county manager plan is adopted in Tarrant.

The county manager would have the same functions as a city manager, working under Commissioners Court in the same manner that Fort Worth's city manager works under City Council.

Among those interested in becoming Tarrant's first county manager is Howard Green. The appointment would be made by Commissioners Court — if, as and when.

NAMED ASSISTANT supervisor in Precinct 1 was Lawrence Murphy Kleuser. He'll receive \$623 a month with Emergency Employment Act funds. . . . Public Works Dept. has hired Ray Don Edwards as draftsman at \$636 a month. He replaces Henry Busch. . . . In Precinct 2, D. C. Harris has been promoted a grade as equipment operator.

COMMISSIONERS HAVE OK'd Constable Jim Owens' request for an office remodeling. . . . Wanda Chapman has been named court reporter in Criminal District Court No. 1 at \$1,500 a year. . . . New intern youth counselors at the Youth Center, at \$200 per month, are James Perry and Hal Carter. . . . New Tax Dept. clerk at the Arlington sub-county house is Kaye F. Farrar, at \$400 per month.

Mebus Describes Work on Streets

County Commissioner Jerry Mebus Friday estimated that in the last month his Precinct 2 employees have surfaced more than 14 miles of streets within Fort Worth's city limits.

Much of that surfacing, Mebus said, has been south of U.S. 80 in the Handley section of the city.

WITHIN THE last few days, he said, county crews have resurfaced Duff Court, Grande, Hiatt and Dallas Avenue.

"Not counting what we have done this week, we have completed 129 blocks in the Handley area," Mebus said.

"We figure that is more than seven miles of streets." Paving for that section took about 10 days' work, the Precinct 2 commissioner said.

"We have done almost that much this week on those streets that I just named," he said.

Earlier, Mebus said his employees have resurfaced streets in the Ederville area and in the John T. White community.

Mebus said that in some areas persons have mistaken his employees for those hired by Fort Worth.

EARLIER this year, Mebus' employees have resurfaced

roads in Mansfield and in rural areas around Arlington.

Shortly after several other commissioners said they wanted to surface areas in Fort Worth, Mebus ordered his street crews into the east side of the city.

On several recent occasions his crews have been honored with impromptu picnics by residents of the neighborhoods in which streets were surfaced.

Green Wants County Offices Opened on Saturday Morning

County Judge Howard Green today pushed for opening major county offices on Saturday mornings.

"After all," Green said, "the only purpose of government is to serve the people."

So, he advocated opening major offices — such as the tax assessor collector's and county clerk's offices — until noon Saturdays.

Green said he has contacted

both Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart and County Clerk W. C. Cowen and "received favorable comment from both."

He added that, although he has not contacted all county commissioners, he feels they will go along with the idea.

However, he said County Auditor Jack Benson seemed "reluctant" about the opening. "However, as guardian

of the purse strings, I can understand his feelings," Green said.

"I think this can be worked out at a minimal cost," he added, "and I feel it would be much to the advantage of the working man."

He added he felt too many people were hampered in their attempts to deal with the county by the strictly weekday hours.

Commissioners Order Food Stamp Study

Commissioners Court today ordered a study made of whether the county could more cheaply administer the distribution of food stamps in Tarrant County.

Commissioners George Richardson and Dick Lewis confirmed that discussions were begun last week with County Auditor Jack Benson about

whether the contract with the State Department of Public Welfare should be cancelled.

CURRENTLY, THE county has budgeted \$225,000 for this year for payment to the department.

Commissioners will be asked next month to increase that share because of added expenses of opening two new food stamp distribution centers — one on Miller Street in the Six Six area and the other at Main and Long on the North Side.

County Legal Advisor Jim Morgan and Ralph Lewis, director of the county welfare department, were told to begin studying possible ways that the stamp distribution can be handled.

As it is now, the county pays for the operation of all food stamp distribution under the contract with the state.

Even if the county begins hiring the food stamp employees — which the state does now although they are paid by the county — state workers will still certify persons as eligible to participate in the food stamp program.

COMMISSIONER Lewis said he feels the study is needed and will show that the county might be able to handle its own program cheaper.

Benson has proposed that his office be responsible for sale of the food stamps, which add to the buying power of persons having low incomes. Lewis and Richardson argued that Benson's office

has too many other things to do, that it should not be burdened with the welfare program.

Both commissioners said they feel the county's welfare department would be the logical one to take over the distribution and sale of the stamps.

COMMISSIONERS Dick Anderson and Jerry Mebus were attending a county judges and commissioners convention in San Antonio last week and did not attend the meeting.

Turn to Food on Page 2

Food Stamp Study Plan Is Ordered

From Page 1

not discuss the proposed change with Benson. Benson was not present during the weekly meeting of commissioners.

The Miller Street food stamp office is to open next Monday while the other new location will open three weeks later.

Morning, October 12, 1971

Over-Budget Report Wanted by Andersen

County Commissioner Dick Andersen has asked County Auditor Jack Benson to report to Commissioners Court and explain why three county departments are \$28,000 over budget.

The departments, which are "way over budgets," are purchasing, central garage and public works, all of which are supported by the commissioners' road and bridge fund.

Andersen became upset with the \$28,000 figure because at the end of the year the commissioners' road and bridge funds would make up the deficit in those departments on a "share-all" basis.

"That would mean \$7,000 to come from each of our funds," Andersen said. The commissioner suggested that the department heads would have to be confronted and told to stay within their budgets, because the road and bridge funds are not as big as they were when most of the commissioners had huge surpluses.

ANDERSEN SAID, "The only person with a surplus in his road and bridge fund is (Jerry) Mebus."

The commissioner also questioned other items under the road and bridge funds listed in the monthly budget report.

He pointed to a \$13,225 figure spent for postage and asked, "We don't use that much postage."

After looking at a tax assessor-collector bond item, Andersen asked, "What's this doing on the road and bridge fund?"

Andersen's biggest complaint was a \$13,883 item over the budget which was categorized as "other."

"What's all this other?" Andersen asked. "I think they're just lumping in a lot of stuff and taking it out of our funds."

Benson was not alarmed about the departments over budget now, because he said the figures would average out at the end of the year, when most departments operate under budget.

He explained that the purchasing department is "slightly over" budget be-

cause of two illnesses in the department and the county had to pay replacements.

THE MONTHLY budget report showed the central garage had an over-the-budget figure because the county was a month late in sending out the gas charge.

At the end of the year that \$28,000 figure will have dwindled to about \$2,000. The road and bridge funds would only be paying about \$500 each because the cost would be divided among the four commissioners.

The "other" category, which was \$13,883 over in September, was under budget the month before, Benson said. "It'll balance out," the auditor said. "We have our peaks and valleys."

Richardson Raps Federal Aid Program Guidelines

County Commissioner George Richardson charged today that a \$856,000 federal aid program is not reaching the people it's aimed at — the unemployed and poor.

Richardson, during the regular meeting of Commissioners Court, said also that guidelines set by the federal government prohibit the county from hiring any members of minority groups who live in Fort Worth.

"Ninety-eight per cent of the minority groups live in Fort Worth, yet we can't do anything about it," Richardson said.

COUNTY Auditor Jack Benson agreed with Richardson and added, "We are trying to put pressure on them (officials of the U.S. Department of Labor)."

Benson, who has been coordinating the federal program with county officials, said he has discussed the residence guidelines several times with the federal officials.

Earlier this year, the county received \$472,000 under the Emergency Employment Act. A short time later, in September, the county received another \$384,000 as a federal grant.

IN THE first grant the county gave about \$70,000 to Peter Smith Hospital.

Thirty-seven new jobs were created at the county level and the remainder of the funds were transferred to cities in the county.

Arlington and Fort Worth were the only two cities which received their own grants, and that is the reason, Benson said, that Fort Worth residents cannot be hired.

To date, 31 persons have been hired under the first grant, said county personnel director Stanley Zinn.

Four of those hired are members of a minority group, he added.

The residence requirement, Richardson said, "is one of the real problems of the program."

He suggested that some of the money from the second grant might be transferred to Fort Worth officials so that the unemployed could be hired.

Benson, who said he is not "happy with the situation as it is," said the transfer of funds could not be made.

NO ONE has been hired under the second grant yet.

Yesterday, President Nixon urged state and local officials to "move with speed and vigor" to fill the 70,000 jobs authorized under the federal program.

Less than a third of the jobs have been filled, he said in a letter to 14,000 state, county and local officials.

(County officials here have not yet received a copy of letter.)

Richardson asked Benson

about the President's letter. "I'd say we're in better shape (on the first program) than any other county and we're about, on the same point as they on the second phase," Benson said.

IN OTHER action, commissioners today asked that officials from the 35 cities in Tarrant County let them know by Nov. 22 whether they want to participate in a countywide garbage disposal system.

A committee headed by Jack Graham, director of public works for Fort Worth, recommended Oct. 11 that the

county assume control of all garbage disposal in the county.

Commissioners also authorized a re-drawing of some voting precinct boundaries in the county to comply with the new districts created by a re-districting board in Austin last month.

The new lines should be drawn by Nov. 26, said county legal adviser Jim Morgan.

Mrs. Jerri Reynolds, who heads the voter registration section, said she does not know how many precincts will be affected by the changes.

Fort Worth STAR-TELEGRAM

Friday Evening, November 12, 1971

Commissioners Will Be Asked to Join Trinity Case

Commissioners Court Monday will be asked to agree to become a defendant in the federal lawsuit filed in Houston Sept. 13 which seeks to halt design or construction of the Trinity River Project.

John M. Scott, president of the Trinity River Authority,

said in a letter to County Judge Howard Green he is "most anxious for the commissioners court of Tarrant County to recognize that this lawsuit poses a very serious threat to the entire Trinity River master plan."

"If this lawsuit is not vigorously resisted and defeated, these groups will keep on until they have stopped every aspect of Trinity River improvements."

The suit, naming the U.S. Corp. of Engineers as defendant, was filed jointly by the Sierra Club, the Environmental Protection Fund, the

Houston Sportsman's Club, the Houston Audubon Society, the Shrimp Association and Charles L. Pitting and Eugene A. Duffin of Baytown.

The plaintiffs (those who filed the suit) ask that the engineers be permanently enjoined from constructing the Trinity River navigation project or, in the alternative, that they be prohibited from completing the Willisville project on the lower Trinity which is about half-finished.

Green said he feels all governmental units in this area should support the river project.

10 The Fort Worth Press, Wednesday, November 10, 1971



The Fort Worth Press

A SCRIPPS-HOWARD NEWSPAPER

Delbert Willis, Editor

Leslie E. Yates, Business Manager

GIVE LIGHT AND THE PEOPLE WILL FIND THEIR OWN WAY

Fiasco in minority hiring

The mix-up in minority group hiring here under the emergency employment program is federal bureaucracy at its worst.

The U.S. Dept. of Labor directed that Tarrant County would not spend its pump-priming employment money for anyone living in Fort Worth or Arlington.

Furthermore, the department ordered that no county funds allotted to any of the county suburbs could be spent to hire some unemployed man who happened to live within the city limits of Fort Worth.

The reason for these restrictions, it is argued, is that the cities of Fort Worth and Arlington have their own Emergency Employment Act program and therefore should not benefit from any federal monies allocated to Tarrant County or any municipality, other than Fort Worth or Arlington.

If the urban crisis has taught us anything, it is that cities breed ghettos and cancerous growths of poverty and unemployment.

The Dept. of Labor says to the Fort Worth and Arlington unemployed: If you want a job from us, move out in the country or to Eulass or to Hurst.

At the same time the D of L puts a wall around the cities and the counties, in a peculiar bit of economic and sociological reasoning, and says the unemployment situation in Fort Worth could not possibly affect the economic conditions in Saginaw.

If no minority unemployed can be found in Crowley, why shouldn't a minority unemployed man in Fort Worth be hired. Why does the U.S. say no?

A job in Fort Worth helps Kennedale, even Weatherford and Cleburne. And vice versa. Textbooks on government used to refer to federal guidelines to local government as guarantees of good government.

The present fiasco in job allocations for people out of work indicates the good government arrow should go the other way — from local government to the federal government.

Some little man in a Washington office had to invent the absurd rule that pitted city against county, medium-size city against suburb, rural living against them all.

Which is another reason why you can't fight local unemployment by making minute decisions in Washington. Somebody ought to pass a law. Maybe Congress will.

Tarrant Comes in Last In Extra Fine Receipts

Star-Telegram Austin Bureau
AUSTIN — Tarrant County collected the least amount of money from a new law levying additional fines on misdemeanor and felony convictions, said a report Tuesday from Comptroller Robert S. Calvert, covering the state's 10 largest cities and counties.

The City of Fort Worth submitted no report to the comptroller; Tarrant County reported collecting \$14.25.

These figures contrast with Harris County, reporting \$10,362, and Houston, collecting \$50,886. The City of Dallas reported \$19,551 and Dallas County \$4,011.

The comptroller's report to Gov. Preston Smith said the report covered the period from Aug. 30 through Sept. 30. An attorney general's opinion issued recently said the fines could be levied only on convictions after Aug. 30.

The new law (S.B. 841) says \$2.50 shall be added as court costs on conviction in each misdemeanor case where original jurisdiction is in a court limited to a maximum fine of \$200.

Andersen May Get City Library Seat

County Commissioner Dick Andersen may get a chance to speak for the county as a member of the city library board.

Andersen's name has been suggested as a possible replacement for Robert E. Starr, who reigned from the board to take a job as city director of equal employment opportunity.

SOME COUNTY commissioners have voiced a desire to have a representative on the library board, because of the county's annual contributions to the library's operating fund.

Andersen is the only commissioner who resides in Fort Worth and the only commissioner eligible for a place on the city board.

Though the county has contributed to the library for several years, library officials have complained that the contribution is never enough to compensate for the number of county residents who use the facility.

Mrs. Mabel Fischer, library director, and Dr. Howard Wible, board president, suggested last week that the county offering for the coming year be set at \$215,202, based on a table which showed that about 20 per cent of the people who use the library are not Fort Worth residents.

COMMISSIONERS counted that some of the non-resident users lived in other incorporated areas within the county.

Commissioner George Richardson has said several times in the past that the commissioners should be represented on the board and has proposed setting up a county-wide library system.

Richardson has not said whether the county representative should be a member of the Commissioners Court or an appointee.

Tarrant's Senior County Commissioner Ending 11 Years in Fast-Changing Job

By MACK WILLIAMS
Back in 1961, when R. F. (Dick) Lewis was first seated as county commissioner, he spent four hours a week at the Courthouse. The rest of the time he was out in Precinct 3 building roads and bridges.

Today road building is secondary for Lewis, whose 11 years of service make him dean of Commissioners Court. Tasks arising from an \$18 million budget and 700,000 county residents take the most time now.



R. F. (Dick) Lewis

"THIS JOB has changed just as Tarrant County has changed," says Lewis, a soft-spoken man highly popular in his precinct.

"In the old days we commissioners met about two hours twice a week. We mostly okayed claims and handled routine matters with time left over to visit.

"Now I could stay busy the whole day at the Courthouse. If we're not building a convention center or a juvenile detention center or a criminal courts building we're involved in some other project on the same scale."

WITH SO MUCH taxpayers' money at stake, commissioners and County Judge Howard Green sometimes differ, leading to reports of "clashes" and "splits."

Court now, Lewis says, are major problems that will inevitably produce debate.

"For example, we need a county master plan for roads and thoroughfares, with uniform specifications for all the cities. Right now we have all kinds. It's not going to be easy to unify them, but it should be done.

"Waste disposal is another problem. We may have only five or ten years left for the present system. The county and the city governments are going to have to solve this together."

Ten years ago, says Lewis, civic rivalry and hurt feelings often marked relations between government bodies.

"Today most people realize the need for working together. Boundary lines don't mean as much as they used to."

Lewis believes this is not necessarily harmful.

"I think all the members of the court are dedicated men," he told the News-Tribune yesterday. "We may see things differently but we all want to achieve the same results."

"A conflict in viewpoints isn't so bad. That's one way to air a problem and get at all sides of the question. If everybody had the same opinion it would be easy for one or two men to run the county."

"All our court members want to do a good job and they don't hold grudges. I think the county is in good shape. It took dedicated work by many men over a period of years to put it there."

LEWIS, WHO WAS born in Smithfield and still lives a quarter mile away, tries to meet as many of Precinct 3's 178,000 residents as possible.

If he has a political formula, it's summed up this way: "I try to help everyone I can whenever possible."

Lewis adds: "There are some things the law won't let us do. When people out of work ask us for jobs, I wish I could hire every one of them. But there's only so much money. Most people understand our limitations and they have been gracious and co-operative with me."

SMITHFIELD WAS a thriving Continued on Page 2

Lewis, Veteran Commissioner, Ready for New Campaign

Continued from Page One
town with four grocery stores, a bank, cotton gin and its own school district when Lewis and his wife, Mattie Belle, attended Smithfield High School.

Today the school sweethearts who were wed 46 years ago have a son, Richard, Jr., of Meridian, Miss., and three daughters, Mrs. Latrelle Berry, Mrs. Laverne Williams and Mrs. Janice Ann Edwards.

All the daughters live near the Lewis home in North Richland Hills and there are seven grandchildren.

LEWIS WORKED on Smithfield farms as a boy and from 1928 to 1931 for the Coca Cola Bottling Co. here. On Jan. 1, 1947 he went to work for Sheriff Sully Montgomery as a bailiff in Judge Frank Culver's 17th District Court. Lewis resigned in 1969 to wage his first successful campaign.

His biggest thrill in office? "Paving all the muddy school roads and mail routes that were part of the county road system. We still have some new additions with gravel streets but these are in the hands of the developers. Most of my precinct now lies within someone's city limits."

What about the future? "I like people and enjoy trying to render a service," says Lewis. "I'll be a candidate for re-election in 1972."

TURNPIKE FEASIBILITY County Refuses To Okay Study

By Z. JOE THORNTON
County Commissioners today refused to endorse a feasibility study requested by directors of the Texas Turnpike Authority.

After more than 90 minutes of discussion, most of which was on a plea that the study be authorized, which could eventually lead to construction of the Trinity tollway connecting Fort Worth and Dallas, all four commissioners voted against the study.

County Judge Howard Green, who favored the study, did not vote.

DEE J. KELLY, chairman of the Turnpike Authority, urged that commissioners court go along with the study, as the Dallas County Commissioners Court has done.

After the vote, Kelly said: "We will have to evaluate this. It (the new turnpike) has received a great deal of support."

"I am not going to say at this time that this will defeat the study."

Mayor Bob Hampton of Hurst, one of two men who spoke against the study, said, "I am very pleased with the vote."

Kelly urged that the study be made because, he said, state or federal money to construct a free road could not be made available for years.

THE FORT Worth attorney said that there is currently a master plan which shows that Dallas will eventually get a free road running to the Regional Airport.

"Fort Worth is not included in that plan, though," Kelly said.

"The question is, do we want Fort Worth to be left out of the mushrooming growth of this area?"

Kelly emphasized that the \$131 million turnpike would not be built unless the study showed a definite need.

Hampton, who made a three-point argument against the proposed study, said the TA should wait until a now-under way study by the North Central Texas Council of Governments is completed before taking any action on still another study.

HE ALSO ASKED that commissioners request that the turnpike authority make free use of the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike at the "earliest possible date."

The suburban mayor, noting that his city council is unanimously opposed to the study also asked commissioners to direct the state highway department to provide money for the freeway between Fort Worth and Dallas.

Labor leader J. W. Sifford also argued against the proposed study, saying he felt that authority to conduct the study would be construed by board members as approved construction of the road.

Under this timetable, Kelly said that if the study is authorized now the turnpike could be opened by Jan. 1, 1976. Present revenue bonds on the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike are scheduled to be paid off in 1977. At that time, the facility will be turned over to the highway department and its use will be free.

But if the new turnpike is built, Kelly said, "the present turnpike would have to continue charging the continued tolls until Trinity has become self-sufficient and able to pay off the remaining revenue bonds."

County Budget Trimming Viewed

Tarrant County commissioners were told today that requests from department heads for next year's budget will have to be trimmed by \$1.4 million.

County Auditor Jack Benson, in a budget hearing with Commissioners Court, said that \$13,200,225 was requested by the different county departments.

This, he said, is \$1,003,707 more than he estimates income from taxes, license fees and other sources will be.

IN ADDITION, Benson said more than \$300,000 will be needed to be trimmed if the county's 1,000 employees are to get a cost-of-living raise. Benson and commissioners believe they should get the raises.

Commissioners next month will formally approve the county's operating budget for 1972.

Benson said that some of the "fat" can be trimmed from the amounts requested by the department heads.

Benson said he feels a second priority should be that some money is set aside for beginning a county computer operation.

COMMISSIONER Jerry Mebus noted that the amount requested by members of the Fort Worth's library board, \$215,000, is included in the budget.

No provision is made for a county contribution to the financially plagued Fort Worth Zoo, though.

Commissioner George Richardson told Benson to "take the frills out of the requests."

Also not included in the tentative budget is money requested by Fort Worth officials for construction of a new health center.

CITY OFFICIALS recently asked the county to pay \$33,895 as its share in the cost of building the new center.

Benson told commissioners that the county will end the year with about a \$300,000 surplus, compared to a surplus of \$11,892 for 1970.

As he has done before, Richardson criticized Benson's estimated receipts as being "too conservative."

"I like to be in the black, but that's not what we are in business for," he said.

Benson, noting that the county "has accomplished many things," said that he felt "we have the best set of officials in any county in the state."

County to Appoint Panel on Waste

Tarrant County commissioners decided Monday to proceed with recommendations of a task force committee which called for appointing a solid waste disposal system manager and advisory board.

Commissioners made their decision after City Public Works Director Jack Graham gave a report which indicated that cities representing the majority of Tarrant County residents were in favor of the countywide disposal system.

Graham, who is chairman of a task force appointed by County Judge Howard Green, said response from 17 cities in the county show that the system has "overwhelming approval."

OF THE 17 cities responding to a commissioners court query, only Crowley opposed the plan. That city's population, however, makes up only .4 per cent of the incorporated area in the county. Those cities favoring the plan represent 79.5 per cent of the population.

Graham, when asked what the commissioners should do, said he felt the court should move rapidly in appointing an advisory board to study the proposed system.

He also said that a manager would be needed to oversee operation of the system.

COMMISSIONER George "Sheet" Richardson said he felt the manager should be hired before the program is implemented in order that land sites could be studied, and the manager could be associated with the system from its inception.

Richardson said commissioners probably will be required to issue more than \$1 million in revenue bonds, but the program will need operating capital before it goes into effect probably early next year.

Graham will meet with commissioners during their budget hearings in December, and will confer with County Auditor Jack Benson concerning a possible salary for the new manager.

Commissioners also Monday voted to intervene in a suit against the Corps of Engineers which seeks to halt construction of the Trinity River project.

THE COURT passed the issue after Commissioners Dick Lewis and Richardson changed their minds and voted to have the county named as a co-defendant in the case.

Two weeks ago Lewis and Richardson had voted against the resolution, but changed their minds after touring the project areas.

The suit was filed in U.S. District Court in Houston by several conservationist groups.

Monday Evening, December 6, 1971

COUNTY HEARINGS URGED Civil Service Setup Is Postponed

Commissioners Court today delayed for another month the implementation of a civil service system for the county's 1,600 employees.

Commissioner Dick Andersen urged the delay after Commissioner George Richardson called for public hearings on what the program should provide for.

Commissioners Court in a 3-2 vote two weeks ago approved the civil service concept for all county employees except those who are elected and all lawyers in the district attorney's office.

AT THAT time, Richardson and Commissioner Dick Lewis said they hoped the system could be in effect by Jan. 1.

Andersen, whose vote two weeks ago broke the tie, said he feels that the county's 1972 operating budget, which this year will be nearly \$20 million, should be formally adopted before the civil service plan is again considered.

Backers of civil service argue that county employees will be given job security under the plan and that it will be possible to take politics out of hiring and firing.

Former state Sen. Doyle Willis, who first introduced civil service in the Legislature as a bill in 1947, made a brief appeal today for the system.

AFTER THE vote on implementing the system was delayed, Richardson said the issue will be placed on the agenda this week following adoption of the budget.

That, he said, might be the third Monday in January.

In other action this morning at their regular meeting, commissioners authorized a rally by a group of black activists for Dec. 18 on the courthouse steps.

James Gaskin, who also uses the name El-Asa, chairman of the Committee on Police Brutality and Harassment, asked last week that his and other groups be allowed to hold the rally.

Commissioners also named 11 persons to the Tarrant County Advisory Board for Solid Waste Disposal.

NAMED TO the group, which will oversee creation and operation of a countywide garbage dump system, were: Curtis Thomas, Robert C. Harrison, Tommy Watson, mayor of Mansfield; Kurt Schnellenbach, director of public works in Arlington; Jack Graham, Fort Worth public works director.

Also, J. R. "Buck" Hubbard, city councilman from North Richland Hills; Foy Eazell, city manager in Grapevine; Mrs. Polly Nelson, councilwoman from Colleyville; Bruce Willis, Hurst city councilman; Bill Williams, and J. D. Farmer.

In other action, commissioners agreed to consider a preferential bar poll before naming a successor to County Probate Judge William T. McGee, who has resigned effective Jan. 1.

Commissioners Asked to Oppose Proposed Turnpike

Commissioners Court today was asked to go on record opposing to the proposed Trinity Turnpike.

CONSTRUCTION of the road was first suggested about a month ago.

Paul Curtis, regional manager of the Fort Worth office of the American Automobile Association, urged the action during a meeting of the court.

Commissioners and County Judge Howard Green took no action on the request today but promised to do so Monday after hearing from Dee Kelly, head of the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike Authority. The proposed toll road would roughly follow the Trinity River from Fort Worth to Dallas.

GREEN CALLED Kelly this morning after hearing Curtis' proposal during the informal court meeting.

Curtis said also that he would return Monday to hear Kelly's recommendation that Commissioners approve a resolution endorsing the road.

Curtis made three recommendations to commissioners during his proposal. They were:

—That the turnpike authority live up to "commitment and free the present toll road."

—That no action should be taken by authority members pending "results of the joint public transportation study of the area . . ."

—THAT IF THE Texas Highway Department shows a road is needed "and the state is not able to meet the need, an independent toll road might then be considered."

City Council Monday also is expected to take action on either endorsing or opposing construction of the new toll road.

Curtis in his arguments this morning said he feels that a need for the road does not now exist.

He noted that backers of the road used a survey taken from 1964 through 1967 and that they should use a more updated survey.

If the road is built, the toll collected on the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike would have to be carried longer than planned. Some other groups have expressed the road.

TTA Will Delay Plea for Study

Star-Telegram Mid-Cities Bureau ARLINGTON — The Texas Turnpike Authority today decided not to ask at this time the Texas Highway Commission for permission to conduct a feasibility study about the proposed Trinity Tollway.

During today's meeting, board Chairman Dee Kelly of Fort Worth read a list of agencies which have endorsed the proposed route, as well as those who have opposed it.

And he said the next logical

step would be to ask Commission permission.

KELLY SAID the city councils of Fort Worth, Dallas, Irving and Grand Prairie and chambers of commerce in Dallas, Arlington, Fort Worth, Hurst-Eules-Bedford and Irving have taken official action endorsing the roadway.

The Department of Public Safety also has indicated it favors the more definitive feasibility study, Kelly said.

Opposing it have been the Arlington and Hurst city councils and the Tarrant County Commissioners Court.

T. B. Jackson, representing the South Dallas Planning Committee, requested the board have its engineers consider extending the tollway into South Dallas if ever it is constructed.

He claimed the road would serve an additional 100,000 residents of the area.

The board also approved final budgets for the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike and the Dallas North Tollway.

The turnpike budget is \$3.3 million, including the reserve maintenance fund, and the overall tollway budget is \$941,670.

ADDITIONAL access to the turnpike at Hampton Road in Dallas was approved to allow entrance into the proposed new post office for Dallas.

If the proposed access is proved feasible, it would be a toll access, and no turnpike funds would be involved in constructing exits and entrances, Howard Rely, engineer-manager for the authority, pointed out.

Kelly, a Fort Worth attorney, was re-elected authority chairman for the coming year, and John Thompson and Jim Allen were elected vice chairman and secretary, respectively.

COUNTY LIBRARY PLAN

Report Suggests Funding Change

Tarrant County Commissioners Court should begin disbursement of funds to cities on a per capita basis in preparation for a countywide library system, a report on the plan indicates.

The proposals, contained in a report prepared by TCU's Division of Civic Affairs, include creation of a 15-member library board to administer a centralized operation that would include all existing and future public libraries in the county.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS were that the county develop a uniform, countywide reporting system on user data and uniform requirements in length of loan periods, overdue fines and material renewals before the county operation is implemented.

Target date set was Jan. 1, 1973.

The authors of the report found that presently "there seem to be no criteria for the amount to be appropriated by the county and no rational formula for the disbursement of the funds . . ."

During 1971, the county contributed \$177,150 to various library systems in the county, with Fort Worth getting \$147,150 and other municipalities a flat \$2,000 each.

The lack of criteria, the report said, "has led to . . . a counter-productive support of small, relatively limited libraries and a low level of support of the major libraries . . ."

THE REPORT also suggested "some kind of index of

ability-to-pay and equalized local support formula."

The TCU division, headed by John Hall, prepared the report at the request of the Fort Worth City Council and Commissioners Court.

Under the proposal, a county resident would hold a standardized library card and could check out a book from any public library in the county. Return could be to any public library in the county.

The county board would be composed of six members from the Fort Worth library board, two from the Arlington board, five from other library boards in the county and two citizens-at-large.

THE REPORT makes no suggestion about how the system would be created, leaving its development to the board. The county would assume responsibility for financing the operation.

Copies of the report are circulating among commissioners and city councilmen, but when the report will come up for discussion is not known.

Library service was one of three areas that the two bodies have considered as good possibilities for city-county cooperation.

All municipal library boards would be abolished if the system was accepted.

The report said:

"The . . . court has an opportunity to assume a leadership role in this most important area and to effectively use that role as few other county governments have— for the elimination of a disjointed, fragmented patchwork of library service and the creation of Texas' first urban library system."

Rural Land Valuation Criticized

From Page 1

"Skeet" Richardson said he didn't think that would be out of line.

"I was in Nebraska not long ago, in a county about the size of Tarrant County, and was told that their tax office had 40 appraisers," he said.

OTHER COMMISSIONERS indicated they would go along with Stewart's request for the additional employees.

They took no action, however, as additional department heads were to be heard from.

The budget will be formally approved sometime in January.

One of the reasons Stewart needs additional appraisers, he said, is that "when we go on the computer, as it looks like we're going to, every piece of property will have to be put on at 100 per cent of its value.

"That will take an awful lot of appraising."

COUNTY AUDITOR Jack Benson has urged that the county begin purchasing electronic data processing equipment and, among other things, put the tax rolls on it.

Both Anderson and Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson have, in the past, urged reforms in the valuation of rural property.

The two commissioners have said even some rural property, used for the same purposes, is not fairly valued.

Stewart has said that rural property has been and is in the process of being re-valued.

THE CRIES for revaluation first were raised when land was being acquired — condemned in some cases — for the regional airport.

It was found then that some of the property was being carried on the tax rolls for as little as \$20 and \$25 per acre.

Owners were demanding, and getting, many times that amount when they sold it.

Similar situations came up south of Arlington when land was being bought for Interstate 20. Property there was also being carried at less than \$200 per acre, but owners were getting as much as \$15,000 per acre when they sold.

Valuation of Rural Property Criticized by Commissioner

By Z. JOE THORNTON

County Commissioner Dick Anderson has again decried the valuations placed on property in rural Tarrant County.

"It's a bad situation," Anderson said yesterday afternoon during the first of many meetings on preparing the county's budget for 1972.

"There are complaints raised that a valuation of \$100

per acre is too high and one man appeared before us last year to complain about that.

"THEN, JUST a couple of months ago we had to take the same man to court because he wanted \$54,000 per acre for some land we needed for right-of-way."

At the same time, Anderson also charged, "people who live in Fort Worth have their

property valued right at the market level."

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, at whom the blasts were aimed, agreed that further valuation must be done.

He noted, however, that within the last two years more than \$160 million in new tax valuations have been added to the county's rolls.

"WE'VE GOT people (appraisers) out all the time," Stewart said. "We just can't get it all done at once."

Stewart, as several other department heads did, requested that he be permitted to hire additional employees during the coming year.

Five of these, he said, would be appraisers. They would bring to 14 the number of appraisers the office would have.

Commissioner George Turn to Rural on Page 2

Libel Suit Against Richardson Dismissed

District Judge Charles J. Murray has dismissed for lack of prosecution the \$100,000 libel suit filed against County Commissioner George Richardson by his 1970 Democratic primary opponent, Steve Murrin.

Murrin filed the suit after he and Richardson were to be in a June 6, 1970, runoff.

In dismissing the suit, Murray said that Murrin had not sought to try the case in court.

In that suit, Murrin alleged that Richardson was responsible for publishing and distributing libelous information about him.

Among the printed leaflets mailed many voters in commissioners' Precinct 4 was one that accused Murrin of being a slum landlord, a charge he denied.

On May 19, Murrin filed his suit seeking the \$100,000 in damages.

The next day, Richardson filed an answer which said the suit was political in nature, that it was frivolous, and he filed a cross action in which he sought \$1 in damages from Murrin.

In the cross action, Richardson referred to a Murrin

speech of a week earlier in which Richardson was said to be "sick, diseased, warped," and accused the West Side real estate man of libeling him.



DICK ANDERSEN

in "Casablanca" when Humphrey Bogart said, "Play it again," referring to the tune, "As Time Goes By."

FORMER SUPERVISOR Linda Hands has been named an account executive at World Service Securities, a subsidiary of World Service Life Insurance Co. in the Commerce Building . . . 15-year-old Leann Holman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Lewis, is due home tomorrow from a Colorado ski outing.

CENTRAL TICKET OFFICE at the Sheraton-Fort Worth already has the \$4 through \$6 tickets for the Feb. 1 appearance of "Chicago," a rock group at the TCCC Arena . . . Look for County Commissioner Dick Andersen to ployes if commissioners adopt a set of rules he is preparing and a plan that would call for five instead of three CS

Green Appoints 2 From Area To Solid Waste Disposal Panel

County Judge Howard Green today named two area persons as his appointees to a proposed task force committee which will set up a solid waste disposal system.

Named were Mrs. Polly Nelson, a city councilwoman from Colleyville, and Bruce Willis, a councilman from Hurst.

Green's action came one

day after City Public Works Director Jack Graham presented a report to county commissioners urging them to "move rapidly" in setting up an advisory board for the waste disposal system.

Graham, who is chairman of a task force appointed by Green, quoted a report which indicated that cities representing the majority of Tarrant County residents were in favor of a county-wide disposal system.

Graham said responses to a commissioners court inquiry on the disposal system, showed that 79.5 per cent of the county population favored it.

Today, Green said an 11-member advisory board will administer the waste disposal system.

They will appoint a system manager and operate in a manner similar to the Tarrant County Convention Center board, he said.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson said yesterday commissioners probably will be required to issue more than \$1 million in revenue bonds, but in the meantime, the waste disposal program will need operating capital before it goes into effect sometime next year.

Tarrant Bar to Be Polled On Replacement for McGee

Members of the Tarrant County bar will be polled next week for their preference for a replacement for County Probate Court Judge William McGee, who will resign Jan. 1.

Homa Hill, chairman of the Fort Worth and Tarrant County Bar Association committee conducting the poll, said a ballot with the names of eight persons seeking the appointment will be mailed to the 685 persons on the associations' mailing list Monday.

Those seeking the appointment are Roy C. Bashman, Robert M. Burnett, Jake C. Cook, Joe Drago, Richard E. Johnson, George T. Morris, Pete Perez and Andrew Vogel. All except Drago, a municipal court judge here, are attorneys.

Hill said the ballots must be returned by 3 p.m. Friday. Tabulation will begin at 10

a.m. Saturday and the results will be submitted to the Commissioners Court Dec. 28.

County Judge Howard Green has noted the court is not bound by the poll results.

Green said he has received word from another candidate seeking the judgeship on an interim basis, Miss Tarline Delores Miles, a May graduate of Texas Southern Law School, notified Green by wire

that she would like the job on an interim basis, until a permanent judge is named in the general elections next November.

Judge McGee has indicated he will return to private practice.

Clearing Air on Turnpike

County Commissioner Dick Andersen makes sense with his proposal that city and county officials explore with the Texas Highway Commission the likelihood of gaining a toll-free expressway along the northern route from Fort Worth to Dallas.

Mr. Andersen said if there is no chance for the freeway, then he will favor the Trinity Turnpike, recently rejected unanimously by the commissioners. And County Judge Howard

Green says that a new highway is imperative, if not a freeway, then a toll road.

Thus it appears that an early meeting with the Highway Commission could clear the air, and perhaps clear the decks for action. Principle, cited by some commissioners when they voted against a new toll road which might delay the promised free status of the existing Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike, should be viewed in the context of immediate need.

A superhighway, free or toll, is and will be needed along the "air-port" route. If there is any uncertainty about the prospects for a freeway soon, then the commissioners and other tollway foes should reconsider their stand.

Andersen Proposes Meeting For D-FW Freeway Study

County Commissioner Dick Andersen, saying commissioners must provide the leadership, proposed today that members of the court and Fort Worth officials meet with members of the Texas Highway Department to see if a new Fort Worth-Dallas freeway can be built.

Andersen proposed that the meeting take place shortly after Jan. 1.

"We now have an opportunity to provide leadership in this," he said.

"WE SHOULD talk to the highway department and to the governor."

Other commissioners agreed the meeting should take place.

Andersen brought up the matter a week after commissioners unanimously refused to go along with a proposed

study by the Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike Authority.

The study would have been conducted to determine whether it is feasible to build a new turnpike linking the two cities.

COMMISSIONER George Richardson said "Someone has dropped the ball some place when every area in the state has a freeway system except this one."

Richardson, angry because a Star-Telegram editorial singled him out as opposing the turnpike proposal, said he feels "the chamber (Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce) is going to have to work, too."

He added, "I don't know that they have done anything about a new road."

RICHARDSON said also he feels that leaders from Fort

Worth and Dallas "can probably get something done about a new freeway."

Richardson said he has never heard anyone from the highway department say no freeway is being planned to link the two cities.

Andersen said if he is told that money will not be available anytime soon for the freeway construction, "then I would be willing to change my vote (on the turnpike's proposal)."

Commissioner Jerry Mebus said also that "I don't want to close the door on this. We must explore everything."

Hospital Tax Rate May Drop, Commissioners Told

Taxes may be reduced "substantially" for the Tarrant County Hospital District within a few years, county commissioners were told today.

C. Jack Bean, chairman of the district's finance committee, said the tax could be dropped from its 75-cent per \$100 valuation if Peter Smith Hospital continues its present money-saving operations.

He made the prediction after Sterling W. Steves told commissioners the hospital had a net income of \$654,895 over what had been budgeted for 1971.

Steves is chairman of the hospital board which this year is overseeing a \$10,348,170 budget.

Strict accounting procedures and more efficient operations are responsible for the savings, Bean said.

He pledged also that hospital administrators are working to cut costs further.

The hospital district now is at the limit for its tax rate.

Twice in two years, commissioners have raised the rates.

Bean said also that the hospital's image has improved greatly in recent months.

"You wouldn't be ashamed to go there yourselves or have your wife or son or daughters go there," he told members of the court.

"The construction (now under way) has also made it a beautiful place," he added.

Commissioners earlier this year authorized the sale of \$1 million in revenue bonds to help finance construction and remodeling of the county-supported hospital.

Commissioners next year may also be asked to authorize the sale of an additional \$7 million in revenue bonds to complete the expansion project.

In a non-related matter, commissioners were also told that the projected loss of the Tarrant County Convention Center will be only \$65,000 for 1972.

Herman Smith, chairman of the center's advisory board, said that the predicted income during the year will be \$600,100.

Expenses for operating the county-owned facility during Turn to Hospital on Page 2



ROBERT BURNETT

COMMISSIONERS' CHOICE

Arlington Attorney to Fill County Probate Court Post

Arlington attorney Robert M. Burnett today was named county probate judge.

Burnett, picked unanimously by members of Commissioners' Court, will succeed William T. McGee who announced Dec. 1 that he will give up the post Dec. 31.

Burnett's appointment is effective Jan. 1.

BURNETT WAS one of eight lawyers who ran in a countywide preferential bar poll.

Commissioners this morning placed a close second in the preferential, but not binding, election conducted by the Fort Worth-Tarrant County Bar Association.

Municipal Court Judge Joe Drago III received the most

first place votes in the poll, Homa Hill said.

Hill, chairman of the bar's judicial qualifications committee, said Drago received 134 first place votes of the 494 cast.

Burnett received 125.

COMMISSIONERS and County Judge Howard Green met behind closed doors before the meeting in which Burnett was appointed.

Then, after completion of their agenda, commissioners again met briefly before Commissioner Jerry Mebus made the motion to appoint Burnett.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson seconded it, and the vote was unanimous.

Burnett, ironically, was the only candidate for the \$20,800-per-year post who was not present when the appointment was announced.

HE HAD BEEN in the first part of the meeting but had to be in court at the same time commissioners named him.

He was called back to the commissioners' courtroom and said he appreciated the confidence and pledged "to live up to it and do the best job I can."

COMMISSIONER'S SURVEY

Fewer in Harris Given Allowance

By Z. JOE THORNTON

Harris County, which is about three times as large as Tarrant County, has a third fewer persons receiving car allowances from the county.

Records compiled by Commissioner Dick Andersen show that in Houston there are 150 officials and employees who draw car allowances of up to \$150 monthly.

Here, there are 221 officials and employees who get both a car allowance and county-paid-for gasoline.

ANDERSEN PUT together the statistics after a committee several months ago recommended Tarrant County do away with its long-criticized car allowance and gasoline system.

The Precinct 1 commissioner first mentioned his figures last week when commissioners agreed they would retain the present system for the coming year.

This morning, he gave reporters a detailed copy of his findings.

Of the major counties in Texas, only Dallas has more persons drawing car allowances than Tarrant. In Dallas, there are 274 persons receiving the allowances at an average annual cost to the county, Andersen said, of \$1,438 per person.

THE AVERAGE annual cost here is \$1,234 per person, Andersen said.

Two other Texas counties

were also surveyed. In San Antonio (Bexar County), Andersen said, he was told 154 persons receive car allowances and in El Paso there are only 30.

Tarrant County, of those surveyed by Andersen and his assistant, Murphy Kleuser, is the only one which in addition to a car allowance provides free — to the employee — gasoline.

Commissioners Court here has another distinction that no other county has. Members get a monthly car allowance of \$300, double that of Houston and Dallas and \$100 per month higher than that paid their counterparts in Bexar County.

ANDERSEN SAID Tarrant County spends \$272,744 per year on its car allowance and gasoline system.

The yearly costs for gasoline for privately owned vehicles from the county's widely-publicized Little Red Pump, he said, is \$45,614.

The rest (of the more than \$270,000) is spent for the car allowances that range from \$10 monthly (for three maintenance men) to the \$300 paid commissioners and County Judge Howard Green.

Andersen said 51 employees and officials draw more than \$125 per month as a car allowance. From \$100 to \$125 monthly, he said, is paid 39 employees and 23 draw between \$75 and \$100 each month. One hundred and three employees get less than \$75 per month.

One of the alternatives Andersen sees is that the county could purchase about 150 automobiles and keep them in a central motor pool.

BY DOING that, he said, all car and gasoline allowances would be stopped.

It would cost \$518,000 to purchase the cars, Andersen estimated. Within five years, the operation would have paid for itself.

That cost does not include expansion of the central garage and the cost of hiring an additional mechanic, he said.

Creation of the central motor pool was suggested as one alternative by members of the committee that studied the county's car allowance system.

Stamps to Be Handled By Welfare

Commissioners Court today agreed that the county's public welfare department should take over the distribution of food stamps next spring.

Now, under a contract with the State Department of Public Welfare, that agency handles the distribution although the county pays the salaries of employee handling the stamps.

Ralph Lewis, director of the county's welfare department, said \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually can be saved after the change is made, around March 1.

The savings will come about because the operation will be more centralized, Lewis said.

"I doubt that any of the persons getting the food stamps will know the difference," Lewis said.

"The people handling them will be the same."

Hospital Tax Rate Drop Is Foreseen

From Page 1

that figure by the year's end," he said.

When it was first opened, there were fears that the center would lose as much as \$250,000 yearly.

Smith said he expects the center to be self-sustaining within a few years.

County to Keep Auto Allowance

Commissioners Court today informally agreed to retain the system of car allowances and free gasoline and oil for nearly half of the county's 1,000 employees.

At the same time commissioners formally and unanimously voted to give all county employees, including themselves, 5 per cent cost-of-living raises.

Commissioners and County Judge Howard Green took the action during another in a series of their meetings on compiling the county's general fund budget for 1972.

COMMISSIONER Dick Andersen Turn to Country on Page 2

County to Keep Auto Allowance

From Page 1

SEVERAL months ago commissioners doubled their car allowances from \$150 to \$300 per month, after the Legislature refused their bid for a pay raise.

Commissioners took no formal action on Andersen's proposal, but all agreed to keep in the car allowances and gasoline figures in the budget they are drawing up.

Cost of the little red gas pump and the car allowances is nearly \$500,000 per year.

Commissioners agreed to the cost-of-living raise publicly after first threatening to go behind closed doors to do it.

REPORTERS objected to the proposal made by Commissioner George Richardson that the discussion be done in secret.

After some discussion and after Andersen and Commissioner Dick Lewis said they thought it should be discussed openly, the vote was taken on Richardson's motion.

The raise will cost an additional \$357,430 next year, Benson said.

After agreeing to the raise, the county officials got down to the business of trying to trim more than \$1 million from the amounts requested by department heads to run their offices next year.

AS THE meeting began, Benson noted there would have to be cuts of \$958,602 in order to come up with a balanced budget of \$12,216,548 — which is the amount of income estimated for the year.

That \$958,602 figure did not include the cost of living raise.

Richardson warned that some of the "give away programs of the county" might have to be curtailed.

Among these are the county's contribution to the Fort Worth Public Library, the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, and the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce.

BENSON HAD already told commissioners he had cut from \$45,000 to \$25,000 its payment to the Chamber for promoting the Tarrant County Convention Center.

The museum's gift will be left at \$30,000 although officials had asked that it be raised by \$9,000, Benson said.

He said also that the library's donation will be kept at the same amount given this year, \$147,150, instead of the requested \$215,202.

Wednesday Evening, December 29, 1971

ITS CREATION CAN MAKE VOTES

County Fire Post Has Political Background

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Star-Telegram Staff Writer

Patronage, fanned by the already blowing winds of next year's Democratic primary election, blazed again at the courthouse with the creation of a full-time county fire marshal's job, a post said in the past to be unnecessary.

Those with the most to gain stand to be two county commissioners who face opposition in 1972, Dick Andersen and Dick Lewis.

At stake were the votes, and more importantly the campaign support, of the paid and volunteer firemen who man the 33 departments outside Fort Worth's city limits.

Hundreds of men and, consequently, thousands of votes are involved.

It is generally acknowledged that one

county employe can deliver from 10 to 25 votes for the man he works for.

Politics has been involved in the fire marshal's job before. That has been obvious on both city (various cities) and county level.

Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson, re-elected last year, received the support in that race of many of the volunteer fire departments in his precinct.

Months before, in December 1969, he had made a motion that the fire marshal's job be made full time at a salary of \$17,500 annually. He was unsuccessful, but his efforts were remembered.

About the same time, Jerry Mebus was running for the Democratic nomination as commissioner of Precinct 2.

Firemen there, at least some, remembered that recent vote, too, since Mebus' predecessor led the opposition to the full-time job.

His support was a little less enthusiastic.

Mason Lankford, who has served voluntarily in the post for the last 18 years, sought in 1969—as he had on two other occasions—to have the job made into a paying one.

He suggested that the job should pay \$17,500 per year.

Recently, commissioners agreed to

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Values from \$28 to \$40

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Like It Is

By HOWARD GREEN

Since 1957 jury service here has been worth five dollars per day. The statute provides for as much as ten.

Commissioner Dick Lewis put the figure in a perspective we all can understand when he moved to double it and said: "How can we expect people to go in the hole in order to serve on juries? The present amount they're paid won't take care of their parking and lunch."



Green

This long overdue move means a cost increase in county government of nearly \$200,000 . . . another example of rising prices invading every facet of our lives.

* * *

AT BUDGET TIME County Auditor Jack Benson will have department heads kneeling at his desk. Upon the auditor's recommendation the county lords voted to leave the tax rate alone despite spiraling costs affecting every area. There's an urgent need to hike the amount paid foster parents. Inflated material prices are evident to those with no more than an elementary knowledge. Under such conditions the power and influence of the auditor's office will scale unprecedented heights.

* * *

COMMISSIONER RICHARDSON doesn't have the votes to put across his unit road plan. Sooner or later and we believe much sooner than later the Richardson idea will be adopted. Public need will demand it. The ancient system of four different road commissioners with their own little empires is antiquated. I doubt that an aware public with vast enthusiasm for responsibility will tolerate indifference to the real social concerns. They can scarcely reconcile the maintenance of an antiquated road system, both costly and in comparison inefficient, with prudent judgment in a metropolitan setting which has expensive new problems in unlimited visibility almost daily.

Some commissioners get great satisfaction from going out into the precinct and personally overseeing a chughole repair. That practice should have died 20 years ago.

A unit system would put routine, time-honored precinct responsibilities under a central public works department. The amount saved taxpayers on duplicated equipment alone would be considerable. No longer can the taxpayer afford to be buried by the patronage politics of the past.

* * *

AGITATION FOR THE UNIT system is not new. Authorized by an act of the Legislature in 1947, it has worked in many counties for over 20 years. A one-fourth saving on the road and bridge costs has been effected where the unit plan has been used. In Tarrant County the lords of commissioners court voted in 1972 to go to the plan but later rescinded the order. The public should have been outraged. It didn't even notice.

The law permits commissioners to employ a licensed engineer or administrator as chief of the road department with commissioners acting in a policy-making role. Road building is removed from politics.

Fifteen years ago then County Judge R. H. Weaver of Big Spring told a Fort Worth newsman that the Tarrant County method of road building and maintenance is out of the "dark ages."

Judge Fred Glass of Falls County in 1958 put the problem in proper perspective when he told a reporter: "Don't blame your commissioners court. Blame the people. They should get involved and see to it that the commissioners change their old system."

The public encounters little difficulty in enlightening its elected representatives. Self-starters are rare in public life.

Commissioners Blocked From Setting Utility Rates, Home Builder Bonds

A Commissioners Court has no authority to regulate utility rates, establish minimum building and housing codes, license door-to-door salesmen or require home builders to be registered and bonded.

It does have limited powers to regulate mobile home tie-downs, however, Attorney General John Hill said this week.

Hill issued the interpretation at the request of District Attorney Ogden Bass of Brazoria. He told Bass "the courts have constructed

the powers of the Commissioners Court narrowly and their powers are thus limited to those specifically conferred upon them."

* * *

CONCERNING MOBILE HOME tie-downs, Hill said the Mobile Home Standards Act passed by the Legislature states that "counties and municipalities may adopt more stringent standards for tie-downs when necessary for the public health and safety.

Hill said that although a Commissioners Court has no general power to set minimum building and housing codes, the law gives counties of 350,000 population the power to establish building set-back lines from major roads.

The law also gives counties the right, he said, to require new subdivisions to provide for the construction and maintenance of their roads.

Gourmet Room Opens at Hilton

Fountain Square opened this week in the new Fort Worth Hilton Inn, described by general manager Neal Hoppers as "a specialty restaurant designed for gracious dining."

Featuring a gourmet menu, Fountain Square will serve lunch on weekdays from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and dinner from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday. On Friday and Saturday dinner will be served until midnight.

Also in the new hotel at Lancaster and Commerce are the Waterworks, a continental-style pub featuring entertainment, and The Greenery, an informal restaurant built around a garden court.

Equitable Gallery Features Mrs. Howell

Oil and acrylic paintings by Donna Howell are on display in the Window Gallery at Equitable Savings, 811 Lamar.

Mrs. Howell's compositions are bold and contemporary, a style she has developed in her four years as a serious painter. She is an owner and exhibitor at The Studio, 4723 Camp Bowie, a gallery of contemporary art. Her work is also on display at the Olla Pod Gallery in Dallas and the Castleberry Gallery in Arlington.

The Window Gallery, located in Equitable Savings Association's downtown office, was established in 1971 to showcase the works of outstanding Fort Worth area artists.

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