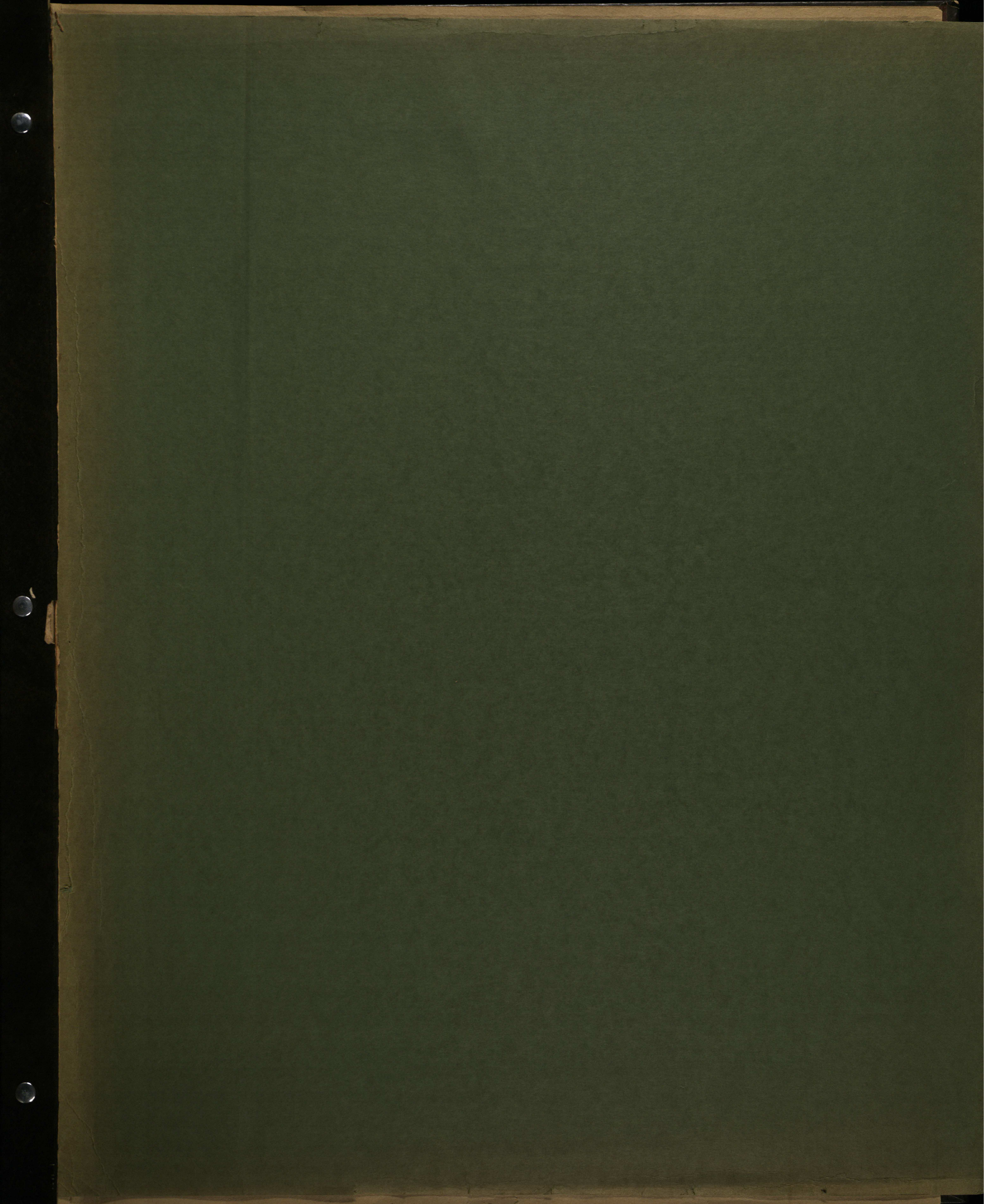


AMERICAN · MAYFLOWER
MOVING AND STORAGE SERVICES
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Doug Crouch Dick Lewis Dick Andersen Weldon Bradley Lon Evans Don Burdette

Crucial questions in '72

Tarrant County may jump into metro

By FRANK PATRICK

The crucial question facing county government in 1972 will be whether to try to branch out—to take over and coordinate functions that have been performed by cities in the past.

All indications are that Tarrant County will step into metropolitan government next year.

Already, the county has made available its street paving resources to Fort Worth and several smaller towns in the county.

A county-wide garbage disposal system—drawn up by the county, and to be administered by it—has gained support from most area towns.

And the City of Fort Worth and county commissioners are discussing the possibility of consolidating health departments. Also, the county has finally authorized a fire marshal's office, to co-ordinate volunteer fire-fighting efforts.

THOSE STEPS MAY be for openers, as the county continues to have a surplus of tax money, while most city governments are struggling to stay in the black.

But, if the county does take further strides toward going metro, it may be with a new cast of faces.

Like in many another facet of national life, politics will grab the headlines in Tarrant County next year.

Two county commissioners will be up for re-election. They are Dick Andersen, Pct. 1, and Dick Lewis, Pct. 3. Neither one is overconfident.

Sheriff Lon Evans is also set to run again.

ANDERSEN, A conservative Democrat, has so far drawn no announced opposition in the Democratic Party primary. But Bill Fink, a Republican, will contest him in the general election.

Andersen was a prime advocate of the county bond election last March, which flopped on three of four issues.

He also garnered much publicity by urging greater county-city co-operation at every level.

LEWIS IS THE last of the old group of county commissioners, who reigned during the mid-60s.

Evans, a highly popular sheriff and excellent politician, has told friends he may not run this time. But the odds are, he will.

Peace Justice Bob Ashmore, an ex-employee of Evans', may run against him.

APPOINTMENTS MADE the big political news in the county in 1971.

Commissioners appointed two judges, both of whose names started with "Bs"—Don Burdette and Bob Burnett.

The next appointment may be to replace a "B"—Judge Weldon Bradley. Bradley, who does little work now as a county criminal misdemeanor judge, has denied publicly he wants to retire. But the betting is he will do just that during the next year.

The biggest appointment of the last year was the naming of Doug Crouch as district attorney. Crouch, if he wants to, will also run for election next year.

He has made little personal impact so far, though the office he largely staffed during prior terms has functioned smoothly.

Aside from politics, there will be several issues meeting county government head-on. One of them is civil service. Commissioners will probably adopt civil service in January, despite the strong objections of County Judge Howard Green.

Commissioners have also indicated they will keep the controversial car allowance system, which gives country's 1000 employees extra monthly money to drive their cars even though they get free gasoline and oil.

EDITORIALS:

'Red Pump' Decision Needs Some Refining

Tarrant County commissioners are not yet out of the woods on this automobile business. Their action to keep their own \$300-a-month car allowances, relabeled as salary adjustments, may not sit too well with some. And in rejiggering the system, commissioners undoubtedly have created inequities for some personnel, or switched old inequities for new.

Nevertheless, the commissioners are on the right track. They moved in the proper direction when, at long last, they did away with the iniquitous "little red pump," from which courthouse officials and employees have been filling up their personal cars for a scandalous number of years. Commissioners Court moved further in the right direction when, following the recommendations of a study committee, it abolished monthly car allowances, as such, and agreed to pay officials and employees 12 cents for each mile they drive their own vehicles on county business.

The commissioners, in short, have taken long-needed steps toward regularizing and bringing under better control a pay-and-benefits setup fraught with opportunities for windfalls and free-loading. County finances ought to be in better shape for these recent actions.

But now that a new system has been hacked out in rough form, a great deal of finishing work remains to be done. By this is meant a careful study aimed at adjustment of compensation for those who have not been treated fairly in the big shake-up.

And that there are some such people we have no doubt.

We have in mind some of the approximately 200 county employees who lost their car allowances without salary adjustments. Many of these (sheriff's department bailiffs and investigators, for example) make relatively low salaries but are obliged to use their own cars — and good serviceable ones, at that — in their daily duties. In many cases, these duties involve no long cross-country journeys but only a daily shuttle routine producing a paltry mileage return at the 12-cent rate.

County commissioners have only begun their job. What remains to be done is the important business of seeing that the change to a system better in principle does not cause sudden and undeserved financial hardship to those who played the game fairly for many years under the old rules.

Monday Evening, January 3, 1972

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1972

Auto Action Amended

BY Z. JOE THORNTON

Commissioners Court, admitting there were inequities in the system today took additional action on the controversial car allowances they voted to do away with yesterday.

Briefly, their action means pay raises for most of the county's officials and employees — including themselves and pay cuts for a few.

Here's what they did in the meeting:

— Drew up a list of 25 persons, mostly elected officials, and said they could keep the car allowances they were

drawing except that it will now be called a part of their salaries.

(THIS MEANS Court members will continue to draw the \$300 monthly they voted themselves last summer when they doubled their car allowances then.)

Dropped all car allowances for the other nearly 200 county officials and employees who were drawing them.

— Agreed that any person, including the 25 on the selected list, will be able to draw 12 cents per mile, payable

monthly, after submission of a voucher that must be approved by the department head and processed through the county auditor's office.

—Let stand the 5 per cent pay increase they voted for all county officials and employees except that the 25 on the list will not get the cost-of-living raise.

After Commissioners Court unanimously took its action over some protests that the system is being unfair to some employees, Commissioner Jerry Mebus said, "It is not our intention to put a hardship on anyone. Our purpose is to eliminate the cash car allowances . . . if you drive you car (on county business), you will be compensated if, you don't, you won't be."

COMMISSIONER Mebus had made the motion that the car allowance be formally dropped and that the county employees and some officials no longer get the gasoline from the "little red pump," which may have had one of its busiest days yesterday.

"You should have seen the line of cars (at the pump) yesterday afternoon immediately after commissioners voted to shut it down," said one county employee today.

"The line was steady all afternoon and stretched for about a block."

Shortly before noon, commissioners decided not to shut down the pump immediately. It will be closed to employees Jan. 15.

Commissioners also agreed to pay the car allowances to all employees now drawing them for the first half of January.

Commissioner Dick Lewis, though he voted for the plan

proposed by Mebus, voiced strongest objections to it.

"IT'S NOT FAIR to the man who was drawing \$50 per month in car allowance," Lewis said.

"They are the ones who are going to be hurt most by this."

Commissioner Dick Andersen protested the court's action which deleted commissioners, County Judge Howard Green and the 20 others on the list from the 5 per cent cost-of-living raise.

"The cost of living goes up at the Andersen house just like it does at everyone else's," Andersen argued.

"I can remember when the officials got raises and the employees didn't," said Lewis, who has been on the court longer than any of its other members.

In other action regarding the county's \$12,285,082 budget for the general fund, commissioners approved the lengthy document on its first reading.

They will hold another session on it Friday.

IN ADDITION to the four commissioners and Green, here are the others who are on the list who will, in effect, keep their car allowances and draw the mileage pay:

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, Sheriff Lon Evans, Auditor Jack Benson, Turn to County on Page 2

COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ACT

Car Allowances Abolished

Commissioners Court today, in an abrupt turnaround, voted unanimously to do away with all car allowances and with providing free gasoline and oil to most of the persons drawing the allowances.

The action, urged by the chairman of a citizens' study committee on travel allowance, for all practical purposes ends the alleged abuses of the controversial "little red gas pump."

Harry K. Werst, a former president of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and chairman of the five-member committee, proposed that some salaries be revised because of the dropped car allowances.

COMMISSIONERS will meet at 9:30 a.m. tomorrow with County Auditor Jack Benson to revise the county's operating budget for 1972.

The proposed and tentatively approved budget had included continuing the long-criticized car allowance and free gasoline system.

Last week commissioners, who receive car allowances of \$300 monthly each, had agreed to continue the system after Commissioner Dick Andersen said it would be too expensive to purchase cars for a county motor pool.

As provided in the new arrangement, county employees and officials will be paid 12 cents per mile if they use their cars on county business.

THE RECOMMENDATION, as proposed and accepted, specifies that mileage to and from work does not qualify for the mileage payment.

Critics of the so-called little red pump (actually, now there are two pumps) have said many employees draw county gasoline only to drive to and from work.

Records for years have shown that the busiest times for the pumps have been on Mondays and Friday.

There have also been cases observed when persons who do not normally leave the courthouse during duty hours

have filled regular and reserve tanks on pickup campers.

WERST, WHOSE committee began studying the car allowance system nearly six months ago, made a similar report to commissioners late in November.

At that time, commissioners were told of the committee's recommendations but took no action. This morning, after commissioners approved the recommendations without discussion and on the motion of Commissioner George Richardson, Werst said:

"I feel this will be much more equitable. There may not be much of a cash savings, but now the subterfuge of a car allowance which was actually an excuse for a pay raise can be dropped."

Asked what salaries might need changing, Werst said some "are obvious."

"SOME OF THE car allowances (which varied from \$15

monthly for three janitors to the \$300 of Commissioners Court) have not been enough.

"Others have been too much if you use the literal term of gasoline allowance."

One of the county officials expected to object most strenuously to the change is Sheriff Lon Evans.

Evans was critical of the recommendations when they were first made. He charged that it would hamper serving of many legal documents since often deputies would drop them off while going to or from their homes and that many of them were served at unusual hours, either early in the morning or late at night.

UNDER INTERNAL Revenue Service rules, mileage that is reimbursable, must be from the place of employment to the point where additional business is to be transacted and back.

Thus, Evans argued, employees of his office might be drawing far more in a car al-

lowance than they receive now. He said also that some county employees, not necessarily in his office, might turn in "padded" mileage figures each month.

Andersen, in a report he released last week, said that nearly \$300,000 per year is spent on car allowances and the little red pump that from now on will give gas only to county-owned cars.

County Car Allowance Abolished

From Page 1

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County Auto Allowance Amended

From Page 1

Peace Justices W. W. Matthews, Bob Ashmore, John Forbes and Floyd Gray.

Also, Dist. Atty. Doug Crouch, Chief Asst. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan, County Treasurer Bill Gurley, Constable Jim Owens, Chief Juvenile Officer Lynn Ross.

And County Clerk W. C. Cowen, District Clerk Jim Boorman, Sheriff's Capt. George Adams, County Welfare Director Ralph Lewis, County School Supt. O. H. Stowe, Chief Sheriff's Deputy Earl Brown and two precinct supervisors.

Nearly all of those except Stowe and the peace justices draw \$150 monthly for car allowances.

Peace Justice Matthews, told of the commissioners' action, said "I'll take it to court."

Matthews was obviously angered that his request and the requests of several other peace justices and county criminal courts judges for pay raises of 20 per cent each were not granted by commissioners.

He and two other Tarrant County peace justices now draw salaries of \$14,500 and car allowances of \$100 monthly.

Commissioners May Be Violating Pay Rule

(Related Story on Page 3E) By Z. JOE THORNTON

Commissioners Court may have violated federally imposed wage and price guidelines yesterday when they authorized themselves pay raises of about 19 per cent each.

"On the surface based on my understanding of the facts, it would appear to be a violation of the guidelines," said John Chupp, acting supervisor of the IRS here.

Chupp was asked by a reporter if salaries paid by county governments fall under the 5.5 per cent (and in some, few, cases, 7 per cent) ceiling set for salary increases.

IF THE INCREASE is in violation, action taken yesterday by the commissioners in which they gave increases to about 25 persons, including themselves, might have to be voided.

During a meeting yesterday morning, commissioners dropped all car allowances paid county employees.

At the same time, they said 25 persons—several have since asked that they be dropped from the select group—would continue receiving the car allowance, but that it would become a part of their salaries.

"Any increases, no matter what you call it, is subject to the guidelines," Chupp said.

"THE INCREASES would require approval of the Wage-Price Board before they could lawfully be implemented."

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan, told of Chupp's informal opinion, said he was surprised.

"I have talked to them (officials in the IRS) at length, and I felt that what we were doing was legal," Morgan said.

County commissioners could not immediately be reached for comment on the opinion.

Chupp said that county officials should ask for a formal ruling prior to implementing the changes which are effective Jan. 15.

"THERE IS a possibility this (if implemented) will be investigated," he said.

"I can't say now that there would be an investigation."

Commissioners now receive \$19,820 annually in salary. In July, they voted themselves car allowances of \$300 per month and also awarded car allowances of \$150 monthly.

Turn to Pay on Page 2

Wednesday Evening, January 5, 1972

Pay Hikes May Be in Violation

From Page 1

ly to several other county officials.

Shortly before noon, Morgan told reporters he had talked to Chupp and felt that the county is not in violation.

THEY (THE guidelines) do not apply to individuals," Morgan said.

"We still have time to check this out," Morgan said.

AMENDING THEIR action yesterday, several of the 25 persons on the list were dropped from it and given the 5 per cent salary hike instead of keeping the car allowance.

Among these was Chief Juvenile Probation Officer Lynn Ross.

Ross said he asked to be dropped from the list since he was receiving a car allowance of only \$50 per month.

He said the 5 per cent pay hike, awarded all county employees except those who remained on the list, would mean more money to him.

"You have to look at all the employees involved."

Morgan said the average raises given all employees must be above the maximum (5.5 per cent) before there is a violation.

Other rulings from the price commission, however, have said the figure applies to individuals as well as the entire company, firm or whatever.

"We still have time to check this out," Morgan said.

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Lawsuit Possible After Raises Voted By Commissioners

By BOB-RAY SANDERS

There may be at least one lawsuit filed over the action taken by Tarrant County commissioners Tuesday in awarding themselves and 20 other county officials pay raises.

Peace Justice W. W. Matthews said if the commissioners transfer their \$300-a-month car allowance to their salary, he probably will be forced to test the action in court.

Commissioners, in abolishing all car allowances gave themselves a \$3,600 annual raise by making the car fees part of their salaries.

Matthews had requested a 20 per cent pay raise for himself and an additional clerk for his court, but was refused because the county budget had to be trimmed. He will have his \$100 car allowance added to his salary, however.

Persons who lose the car allowance as a result of the court's action, will be placed under a mileage system. They will be awarded 12 cents a mile for the use of their cars on official county business.

HOWEVER, THE 25 persons who had salaries adjusted to compensate for the loss of car-use fees, will receive the 12-cent-a-mile fee for all out-of-county business and for "extensive" in-county business. "Extensive" has not yet been defined.

On a motion by Commissioner Jerry Mebus, the court decided not to accept a 5 per cent raise which they approved for all county employees in December. The 5 per cent raise would have amounted to about \$1,000.

Neither will other officials who've had salary adjustments receive the 5 per cent cost-of-living increase.

The action to delete the commissioners' 5 per cent cost-of-living raise met with opposition from Commissioner Dick Andersen.

"THE COST OF living goes up at the Andersen house just like it does at everyone else's," Andersen said.

The 200 county employees who lost car allowances without salary adjustments were upset at the commissioners' action.

Some sheriff's employees (bailliffs and investigators) argued they are required to have cars at the courthouse when they work and 12 cents a mile is insufficient.

"We can't just have any car, either," one employee said. "We are required to have five-passenger cars."

Commissioner Dick Lewis said he felt the commissioners' latest action was not fair to those persons who were drawing \$50-a-month car allowances. "They're the ones who are going to be hurt most by this," he said.

Officials other than Matthews, commissioners and County Judge Howard Green, who will receive the "salary adjustments" are:

COUNTY TAX ASSESSOR- Collector Reed Stewart, Sheriff Lon Evans, Auditor Jack Benson, Peace Justices Bob Ashmore, John Forbes and Floyd Gray.

Also, Dist. Atty. Doug Crouch, Chief Asst. Dist. Atty. Jim Morgan, County Treasurer Bill Gurley, Constable Jim Owens and Chief Juvenile Officer Lynn Ross.

And, County Clerk W. C. Cowen, District Clerk Jim Boorman, sheriff's Capt. George Adams, County Welfare Director Ralph Lewis, County School Supt. O. H. Stowe, Chief Sheriff's Deputy Earl Brown and two precinct supervisors.

One official who got the salary adjustment was a bit upset because with the car allowance included in his salary, the money is taxable. Before, the car allowance itself was not taxable.

'Commissioners wrong' -- Mebus

The Fort Worth Press, Thursday, January 6, 1972 3-A

By FRANK PATRICK

County Commissioner Jerry Mebus said today he thought Commissioners Court had done wrong in voting to keep the \$300 car allowance its members have been getting monthly since last summer.

The vote to do so was on the Arlington commissioner's own motion, but he said: "I had to take what I could get from them (the other commissioners)."

Mebus had originally planned to ask that the commissioners and about 20 other elected officials take only the 5 per cent raises going to the rest of the county employees, and forgo the allowances once and for all, he said.

"I felt them out, and saw I couldn't get the votes," he said.

"I would have been perfectly happy to take only the cost of living increase that goes to all our 1000 employees. I campaigned on the promise that I was not out to raise my pay once I got elected, and I still feel the same way."

BY VOTING TO KEEP the \$300 monthly—and calling it a salary hike—commissioners got a nifty 19 per cent increase instead of 5 per cent.

They are being upped \$3600 yearly instead of \$956.

At the vote Monday, Mebus did encounter opposition from Commissioners George (Skeet) Richardson and Dick Andersen, both of whom indicated they wanted both the \$3600 yearly which had been a car allowance and the \$956, five per cent raise.

Neither pressed the point though.

Mebus relented on one point. He did not want commissioners and the other elected officials getting large car allowances to be eligible for the 12 cents per mile other employees will now get in lieu of monthly car allowances.

He was again opposed by Richardson, and agreed to compromise. Commissioner Dick Lewis joined with Mebus, and said he didn't think it was fair.

However, Mebus says he "feels pretty good, overall, about our action Monday."

"DESPITE SOME things you can quibble at—the legality of it in connection with federal guidelines, and so forth—we at least finally took a definitive step to get rid of the sham of car allowances.

"It was a great day for us, and the public, in that respect."

"I know some of the other commissioners are a little put out with me—I have to work with them—but I'm going to say what I think is right."

Richardson said: "We're damned if we do, and damned if we don't. I agree car allowances have been abused, and we tried to rectify that."

"At the same time, most department heads and many employees at the courthouse deserve good raises. They're not being paid comparably with other counties or with the City of Fort Worth."

Disgruntled courthouse employees figure they stand to lose money with the new set-up.

COMMISSIONERS have authorized Personnel Director Stanley Zinn to make a full-scale study of the job classification system to determine what employees might deserve raises in the light of the recent action.

Zinn said yesterday a survey would be taken of all major counties.

"DA investigators, tax appraisers—people like that who use their cars frequently—they are the obvious ones to be upped if anyone is," Zinn said.

The report is expected to be completed in about a month.

An Internal Revenue Service official here said yesterday he felt that commissioners had, on the surface, violated the federal wage and price guidelines which now prohibit raises over 5.5 per cent.

He said an investigation might be held.

County Legal Advisor Jim Morgan and Auditor Jack Benson say the action was legal if the overall county average raise was less than that.

By BOB-RAY SANDERS

Tarrant County commissioners expressed the opinion Wednesday that regardless of what action they take on any issue, they seem to be wrong.

Commissioners are upset that the public, the press and many of the county employees reacted adversely to the commissioners court action giving themselves substantial pay raises while doing away with car allowances.

On a motion by Commissioner Jerry Mebus Tuesday, commissioners rejected a 5 per cent pay increase (about \$1,000 annually) passed in December, and instead have their \$300-a-month car allowance added to their salaries.

About 15 other employees (mostly appointed and elected officials) had salary adjustments when the car allowance and gasoline privileges were abolished by the court.

"WE REALLY believed what we did is right," Commissioner George Richardson said.

He added, "We ended up getting county employees mad at us and being blasted in the newspapers because we did what everybody said we should."

In the past commissioners had been criticized for not coming up with an equitable system to avoid misuse of gasoline privileges and car allowances.

One of the commissioners said, "No matter what we do, it's wrong."

A committee recommended changing from a car allowance system to a 12-cent-a-mile system, and commissioners eagerly accepted the recommendations Monday.

"What we tried to do for once was to accept the recommendation of a committee," Richardson said.

Richardson maintained that of the major counties in the state, Tarrant County officials were paid less than others.

HE ALSO argued that county officials made substantially less than their counterparts in city government here.

He pointed out that the city attorney makes \$29,000 annually while Dist. Atty. Doug Crouch makes about \$23,000; the city public works director makes \$28,236 and the county public works director is paid \$17,500 after receiving a raise last year.

Harris County May Try Poll On Presidency

Harris County (Houston) may follow in the footsteps of Tarrant County Thursday and attempt to have a presidential preferential poll on the May primary ballot.

Bill Elliott, Harris County judge, called County Judge Howard Green Wednesday and said he would ask the Harris County commissioners to pass a resolution Thursday urging the Democratic executive committee to place a preferential poll on the ballot.

Elliott learned of the Tarrant County action from a story which appeared in the New York Times.

"The interest among the public is extremely favorable," Green said.

Green said it was his hope that the next Texas legislature would approve a law providing for a statewide presidential primary.

The judge said he felt Texans were entitled to meet presidential hopefuls before the campaigns for general elections.

"It (the preferential poll) will help us know the candidates better," Green said, adding that with a statewide primary poll, the presidential candidates would come to Texas to campaign.

"At least we've made some progress toward a statewide primary," he said.

The commissioners said county commissioners are paid less than department heads in the city.

The committee which studied the car allowance situation discovered that car allowances in many cases were granted as salary increases to begin with, and recommended that some salaries be adjusted if the allowance was discontinued.

An Internal Revenue Service official said Wednesday that commissioners may have violated of the guidelines, wage and price guidelines when they authorized the \$3,600 pay raise for themselves.

"ON THE surface, based on my understanding of the facts, it would appear to be a violation of the guidelines," said John Chupp, acting supervisor of the IRS here.

County Legal Advisor Jim Morgan, however, said he had talked with IRS officials at length "and I felt that what we were doing was legal."

The commissioners' raise amounted to about 19 per cent.

Morgan said the guidelines do not apply to individuals, but the average raises given all employees must be above the maximum 5.5 per cent allowed by the Pay Board before there is a violation.

All employees, except the few granted salary adjustments this week, will receive a 5 per cent pay hike.

Richardson said he felt the county officials were entitled to raises just as other employees are.

"It's getting to the point where you'll have assistants making more than officials," he said.

Commissioner Dick Andersen had argued that commissioners were still entitled to the 5 per cent cost of living increase even though they have the \$3,600 increase and the 12-cent-a-mile privilege.

He said the cost of living rises for him just like it does for everybody else.

COG to Select Firm To Plot Waste Plan

Star-Telegram Mid-Cities Bureau

ARLINGTON—A unified solid-waste plan for counties and cities in this region is two years off, but work on the project will begin Wednesday with selection of a consulting firm for the \$500,000 study and plan.

North Central Texas Council of Governments will select a firm from among 13 which originally submitted proposals for the design phase of the Regional Solid Waste Systems Analysis Study and Plan.

The COG board also will name a committee from the 11-county area to review progress of the project.

The design phase of the solid-waste program will precede a contract in March for the second phase, which is a cooperative effort between federal, county and local governments.

An Environmental Protection Agency grant—the only one in the Southwest and one of the nation's largest—will provide three-fourths of the funds needed for the project. The remainder will be paid for by local governments.

Outcome of the study should be provisions for joint use of sanitary landfills (dump grounds), establishment of equitable disposal costs in all cities and development of a standardized approach to solid-waste disposal practices.

The technical study will rely heavily on computer techniques to chart variables such as time, distance and costs involved in selecting future landfill sites.

Consultants also will look for methods of recycling abandoned cars and ways to use old landfills when they have been filled.

Judges Pressure Tarrant Auditor?

By CARL FREUND

FORT WORTH—When the Legislature created the office of county auditor here to provide for a "financial watchdog" at the courthouse, the lawmakers pondered who should appoint the auditor.

Obviously, if county commissioners selected the auditor and set his salary, he would be reluctant to challenge their questionable activities.

The Legislature finally decided that district judges would appoint the auditor and decide his pay.

This was based on the premise that the judges were "above courthouse politics."

This premise, however, no longer holds true.

This was clearly demonstrated as commissioners voted on the budget which will govern courthouse spending during 1972.

County Auditor Jack Benson found himself under pressure—implied, at least—from the four criminal district judges and, for all practical purposes, became a lobbyist for the jurists.

The judges, who have not hesitated to involve themselves in courthouse politics, wanted more adult probation officers.

Benson pleaded with commissioners to approve five additional adult probation officers.

Commissioners, who have

disagreed with the jurists on other matters, cut the number to one.

Benson boasted the number back to five when he submitted a revised budget to commissioners.

Commissioner George Richardson noted that this was the only cut which Benson restored.

"Our auditor obviously knows who butters his bread," Richardson commented. "He's doing exactly what Byron Matthews and those other criminal district judges are telling him to do. You know he's going to try to keep them happy since they have a big voice in deciding whether he stays or goes."

Benson insisted that he made his plea only because he was convinced of the need for the additional probation officers. A compromise finally resulted in the approval by commissioners of three additional officers.

Benson denied that he was under pressure from the jurists again during the torrid debate over courthouse car allowances.

The criminal district judges protested when commissioners canceled the car allowances of their bailiffs. The jurists claimed that the policy which commissioners adopted—and later rescinded—would work an unfair hardship on their bailiffs.

Benson first told commissioners they had funds available to finance the policy. Then, three days later, he reversed himself and said a de-

tailed study showed the policy would require an expenditure of an additional \$85,000 from the county general fund, which didn't have the money.

Richardson suggested that Benson revised his estimates in an attempt to appease the judges.

"After all, they're your bosses," Richardson said.

"I haven't been pressured by anyone and I'm not trying to appease anyone," Benson said. "I'm simply trying to

give you the facts as I see them."

Civil district judges expressed concern privately about the "lobbying activities" of the criminal jurists—primarily Judge Matthews. They said these activities could lead to pressure for changes in the procedure for selecting the auditor.

Commissioners made numerous decisions during their budget sessions which were obviously motivated by politics.

County Employees' Mileage Vouchers Will Be Closely Watched for Padding

Wednesday Evening, January 5, 1972

County officials today said they will closely screen mileage vouchers turned in by county employees under the new car allowance system authorized by commissioners this week.

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan said persons found guilty of "padding" their mileage reports could be given up to five years in prison if found guilty of false swearing.

Under the new system, any-

one using his car on county business may receive 12 cents a mile for it. Car allowances were eliminated.

THE OLD system, which will go out Jan. 15, provided the payment of a regular monthly car allowance regardless of the number of miles driven.

In addition, most of the employees and some county officials drawing the allowances

were able to get free gasoline and oil from the so-called "little red gas pump."

Commissioners Court yesterday formally agreed that the new system will eliminate some of the inequities created by the old system.

They also instructed Personnel Director Stanley Zinn to study classifications under the job and wage plan and determine whether any of those who will lose their regular car allowance should be up-

graded into a higher paying category.

EMPLOYEES WILL submit records of their mileage to their department heads once a month.

These will then be passed on to the county auditor's office and checks for the mileage will be issued.

Commissioner George Richardson at one point in yesterday's meeting suggested that department heads once or twice a month check the num-

ber of miles on their employees' cars' odometers.

"This would give a check of the mileage driven," he said.

That wouldn't work, countered Benson, since most of the employees would also use their cars on personal business.

BENSON THEN suggested that a form be printed which would have lines for daily reporting of the mileage.

"This doesn't have to be

that complicated," he said.

In voting to do away with the car allowances, under a motion made by Commissioner Jerry Mebus, a list of 25 persons—including members of Commissioners Court—was drawn up.

Each of those on the list was in effect permitted to keep their car allowances, but they will no longer be called that.

The payments will become a part of their salary, subject

to taxation. Car allowances are not.

NEARLY ALL the persons on that list, however, will not be eligible for the five per cent cost of living raise authorized by commissioners.

But all will be able to draw the 12 cents per mile car allowance.

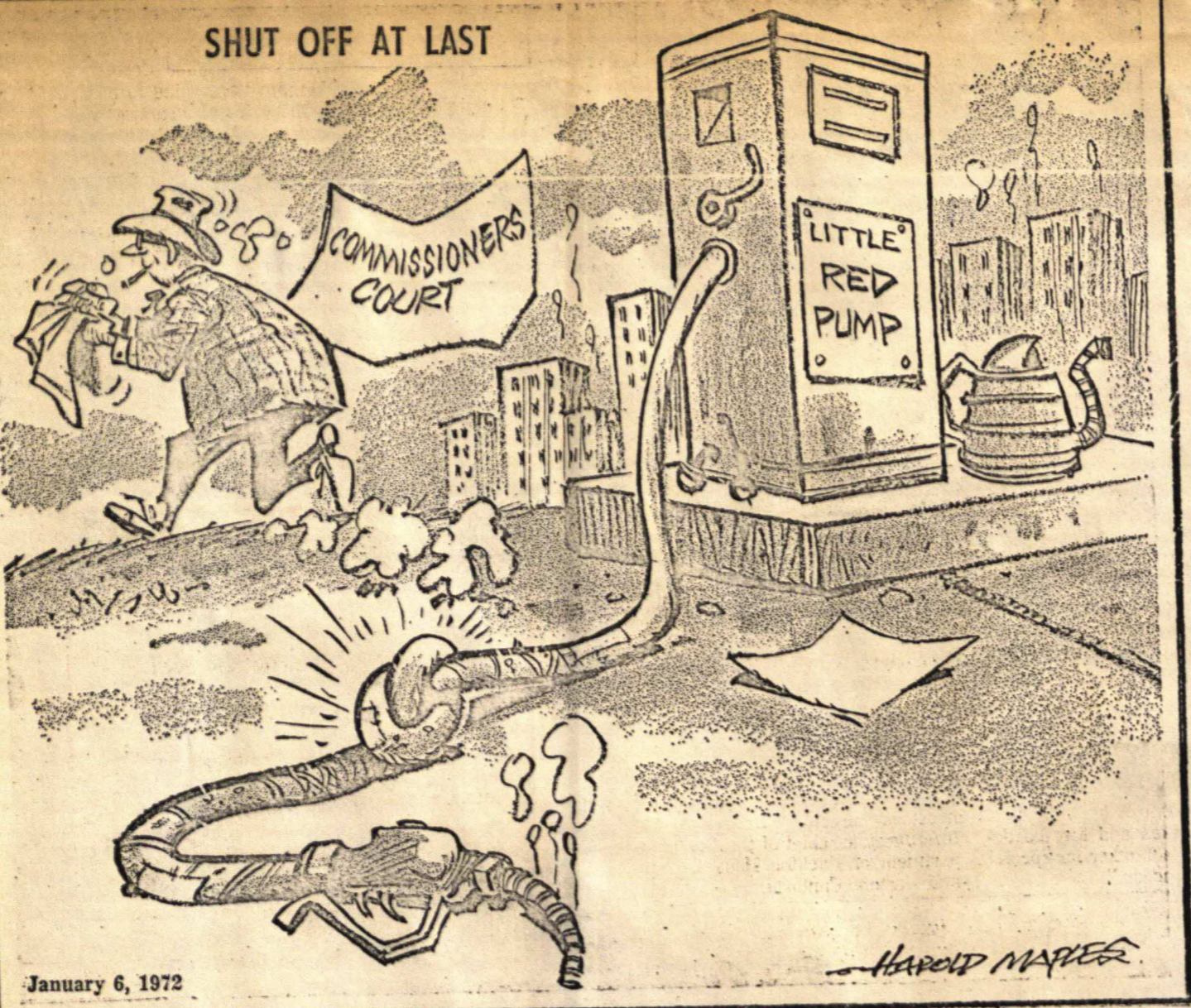
Mebus noted that he drives his car 15,000 miles per year on county business. Mileages for other commissioners

would probably be about the same.

Commissioners were criticized for last year doubling their car allowances to \$300 a month and for adding several courthouse officials to the list of persons authorized to draw car allowances.

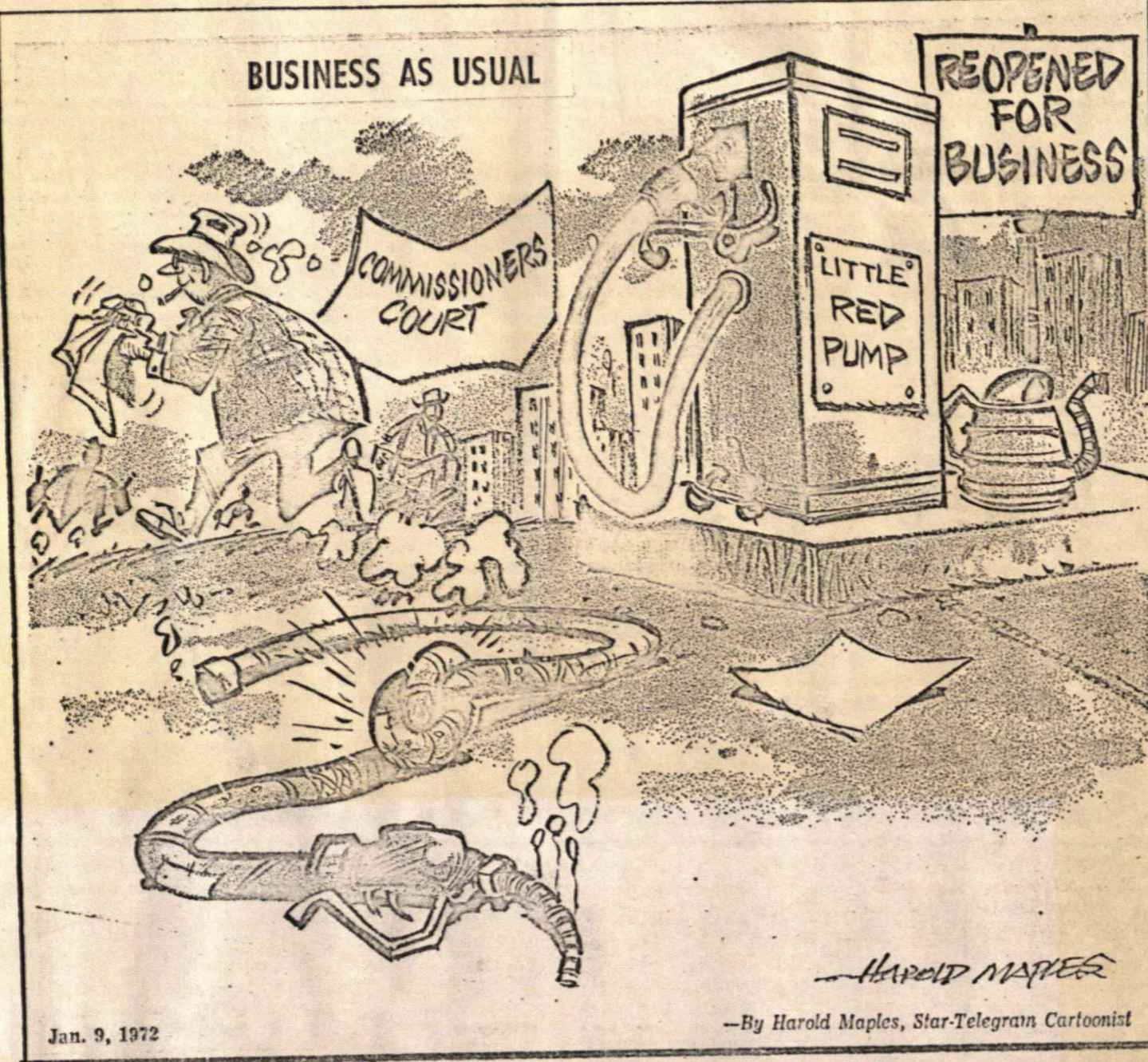
Some of the county employees who are smarting over the loss of their car allowances blame that action—and the public furor it caused—as being behind their decision to drop the allowance

SHUT OFF AT LAST



January 6, 1972

BUSINESS AS USUAL



Jan. 9, 1972

—By Harold Maples, Star-Telegram Cartoonist

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1972

County Car Allowance Not On Agenda for Monday

County Commissioner Dick Andersen indicated today that yesterday's decision to keep county car allowances and the "little red gas pump" probably will not come up at Monday's Commissioner Court meeting.

He indicated, however, that cutting abuses of the gas pump might be discussed.

"The auditor (Jack Benson) made it quite specific that he's not going to authorize the program that we voted a week ago," Andersen said.

"He said changing this system would cost \$100,000.

"I wish someone would put it where it belongs."
"We had already made the decision to change. For the time being, it (the old system) is the only thing we can do."

"I'm going to strive to take the inequities out of this system and make it work."

"Privately, the commissioners have agreed that we're going to put a police watch on that gas pump and cut out abuse."

The chairman of the committee which recommended changing the county car allowance system said yesterday the proposal backfired because commissioners were slow to rectify salaries other than their own.

"There were quite a few people involved in this thing, not just them," said Harry Werst.

"I WAS VERY surprised — surprised that there was no evidence that that item (rectifying salaries of others) was being worked on."

Commissioners yesterday voted 3-1 to return to the car allowance and free gasoline system they had voted Monday to abandon.

Commissioners had voted to do away with the car allowance system as the committee recommended, then voted to give themselves a \$3,600 pay raise, equal to their \$300-a-month car allowance. Fif-

teen other adjustments also were made.

ALL COUNTY employees, including commissioners, will be given a 5 per cent pay raise already voted.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus, who was the only member of the court to vote against commissioners raising their car allowances from \$150 to \$300 in July, voted against the rescinding action after making a motion that car allowances be cut back to \$150 a month.

Turn to Car on Page 2

Car Allowances Not on Agenda

From Page 1

The motion died for lack of a second.

Werst said commissioners should not wait a year before finally abolishing the system.

"They should not wait more than six months," he said.

"We're disappointed that they feel it necessary to put it off for a year. If they delay it, other things will happen and they won't do it at all. Conditions change."

Andersen said "a very small percentage" of county personnel was abusing the gas pump, and all have been privately warned to stop.

"They're going to have to check their mileage... this form will have to be submitted..."

"THEY'RE GOING to have to justify... every time they get gas."

Benson had proposed that the county abandon the gas pump and pay 3½ cents a mile for use of cars on county business plus the car allowance.

"An alternative plan was presented to them that they did not consider," Benson said today of that plan.

He said the plan would not have been a solution, just an "intermediate system."

"I THINK it would have been a step in the right direction. That alternate system would still cost us some money."

He said the present system "for the time being... is the least costly, but it's not remedying the ill of the thing."

"You must remember this, in government sometime it costs more money to make sure" there is no abuse, he said.

"It is a ticklish question. It's a very complex question. You could relate this to many governmental programs."

"For example, certification of welfare. Enormous amounts of money are spent to see that the money is spent right."

LITTLE RED PUMP, TOO

Car Allowance Is Restored

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Commissioners Court, reversing itself for the second time in as many weeks, today rescinded its action Tuesday which dropped car allowances for the county's 221 officials and employees.

After nearly an hour's discussion, Commissioner George Richardson moved to restore the car allowances of all county employees and officials — including the \$300 monthly for themselves — and reopened the not yet closed "little red gas pump" to most of the employees.

Richardson and Commissioners Dick Andersen and Dick Lewis voted for the motion, Commissioner Jerry Mebus voted against it, and County Judge Howard Green did not vote.

GREEN NORMALLY does not vote except in cases of a tie.

Besides restoring all allowances and gasoline privileges, commissioners also reaffirmed their action which gave all county employees, except some officials, pay raises of 5 per cent as a cost-of-living hike.

They went one step further and added the 5 per cent boosts to all county officials and employees, including themselves.

Tuesday court voted to drop car allowances, ranging from \$15 to \$150 monthly, of all county employees and officials.

FOR ABOUT 25 persons, mostly elected officials, the amount of the car allowance was added to the salaries.

Also, commissioners had agreed that employees who drove their cars on county business should get reimbursed at 12 cents a mile.

This morning, Mebus suggested in a motion that died for lack of a second that commissioners cut in half their \$300 monthly allowance.

He said also that several county officials, who do not use their cars much on county business, be dropped from the \$150 monthly allowances they were voted in July.

AT THAT TIME, commissioners doubled their allowances to the present level.

Richardson's motion was

Turn to Allowance on Page 2

January 6, 1972

ALTERNATIVES VIEWED

Judges Question Car Allowances

By Z. JOE THORNTON
Criminal court judges, who make up a strong lobby in courthouse affairs, are asking commissioners to reconsider their action Monday which resulted in car allowances for more than 200 county employees being dropped.

Several of the judges have been telephoning the commissioners.

They also held a brief closed-door meeting today in Judge Byron Matthews' office to discuss possible alternatives to recommend to commissioners.

"THE PRESENT commissioners are victims of actions taken by former commissioners who gave the car allowances unrealistically," Matthews said.

"Then, car allowances were a fringe benefit used to keep pressure off commissioners when they wanted to give out raises."

"It is unheard of to cut a salary this day and time."

Matthews said he has talked to Commissioners George Richardson and Dick Lewis.

"It seems they want to do something that will help the employees," Matthews said.

As he sees it, Matthews said there are two alternatives in the hassle over the salaries, a dispute created partly by the fact that about 20 county officials and employees were permitted to keep their allowances as a part of their salary.

ONE WOULD be that the classifications of the 200 employees affected by the allowance drop be upgraded so there would be no money loss.

"This could be done since money appropriated in the budget so far includes what would have been paid out anyway," Matthews said.

County Personnel Director Stanley Zinn currently is studying each of the jobs affected by the cuts to determine whether classifications should be upgraded to permit higher salaries.

Under the job classification system there are 23 different job categories and in each category there are steps that provide for merit increases.

FOR SOME of the employees, the increases could be merely by steps within the category. For others, they would have to be advanced to higher categories.

A second alternative, Matthews said, would be for commissioners to rescind their action and return to the car allowances as they have been in years past.

"If there is some question about the legality of giving the car allowances as salaries under the wage freeze rule, then that is the only fair way to do it," Matthews said.

An IRS supervisor yesterday said that the Commissioners Court decision may have violated the wage-price guidelines since commissioners gave themselves pay raises totaling about 19 per cent.

Allowance For Cars Restored

From Page 1

made after he charged that reporters for the two Fort Worth newspapers had unfairly criticized the actions of commissioners during this week.

"I... run all these bad stories on Page 1 and then run a little tiny editorial on the editorial page that says we are on the right track," he said of the Star-Telegram.

After making his motion, Richardson said, "Let's put it right back like it was and let them (the newspapers) yell."

ALL COMMISSIONERS and County Auditor Jack Benson acknowledged, as they have done before, that there are abuses in the county's giving free gasoline to employees.

As part of a solution, Benson suggested closing the pump, but they did not agree to that.

Earlier, Benson had said that if the mileage were reimbursed to employees under Tuesday's action, it would cost about \$92,000 more per year than the old system.

He said he could not certify that much of an increase in the county's budget that is being drawn up.

AS PART OF Tuesday's agreement, commissioners and some other employees were not going to receive the cost-of-living hike.

Now they will also get that.

Both Richardson and Andersen said they hoped that some way can be developed that will cut down on some of the abuses of the gasoline pump which gives out 22,000 gallons of high-test gasoline per month, much of which goes into cars that are driven by employees only to the courthouse and back to their homes.

ing so drastically the amounts for property to the condemnation board.

Another of his objections to the interchange is that it is only seven-eighths of a mile from the existing Loop 820 interchange with the I-20 freeway.

The property in question is at a proposed interchange on Interstate 20 near where Farm Road 2871 would be if it was extended.

"It (the property in question) is in my precinct and I'm not going to do it," Richardson said.

Richardson Vows To Fight Extension

Commissioner George Richardson today pledged to fight the paying of \$55,130 for 5.5 acres for "a road that doesn't go anywhere."

He was joined in the apparent fight-to-be by Commissioner Dick Andersen.

"THIS SOUNDS like Louisiana politics to me," Richardson said.

Another Commissioner's Court about 10 years ago approved extending the road, which is near Westland on the county's far west side. But it has never been extended as planned.

The extension came up recently after County Engineer LeRoy Erwin questioned the spending already of \$30,000 for property in the area for the road.

Erwin brought up the question at the end of a regular Commissioner's Court meeting and both commissioners said they will vote to rescind the earlier action.

RICHARDSON SAID that last week three men sitting on a condemnation board raised from \$36,325 to \$55,130 the amount that should be paid for the property.

On the condemnation panel were R. E. Palm, Albert White, and W. C. Wade Jr. Palm is county Republican chairman. He is also in the real estate business.

Richardson said, "I have heard rumors that some 'real estate' brokers are sitting as judges in these condemnation proceedings."

"I HAVEN'T checked any of these rumors out," he said. Richardson said he would seek a new law which would do away with the practice of giving the authority of revis-



CANDIDATES ANNOUNCE—Five Tarrant County district judges and one criminal district judge announced Saturday they will seek re-election. In back

are, left to right, Judges Charles Murray, Clyde Ashworth, Ardell Young and J. E. "Dutch" Winters. In front are Judges Joe Spurlock, left, and Walter Jordan.

FILING THIS MONTH

Jurists' Hats Back in Ring For Six District Judgeships

Five Tarrant County district judges and one criminal district judge, all Democrats, announced Saturday they will seek re-election this year.

The jurists, Clyde Ashworth, 67th District Court; Walter Jordan, 48th District Court; Charles Murray, 17th District Court; Joe Spurlock, 96th District Court; Ardell Young, 153rd District Court, and J. E. "Dutch" Winters, Criminal District Court No. 2, said they will file officially later this month.

Judge Murray, the senior judge of the group, is a graduate of Southern Methodist University School of Law. He was appointed in January 1963 by Gov. Price Daniel to fill the unexpired term of Judge Jack Langdon, who became associate justice of the Second Court of Civil Appeals.

Judge Jordan, a graduate of the University of Texas Law School, was appointed in September 1963 by Gov. John Connally to succeed Robert B.

Young Jr., who retired. Judge Winters was appointed to Criminal District Court No. 2 in January 1964 by Gov. Connally to fill the unexpired term of Judge Dave McGee, who retired.

Judge Spurlock was elected in November 1968 and took office in January 1969 to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Fisher Denny. Spurlock practiced law in Fort Worth after graduation from University of Texas Law School in 1933.

Judge Ashworth was appointed on Nov. 1, 1969, by Gov. Smith to succeed Judge

Harris Brewster, who advanced to the Court of Civil Appeals. In the following general election he was elected to complete the unexpired term of Brewster.

Ashworth has practiced law in Tarrant County since graduating from SMU Law School in 1950.

Judge Young was appointed this past summer by Smith to fill the unexpired term of Judge Harold Craik, who retired. Young, a Montague County native, has resided in Fort Worth since his graduation from the University of Oklahoma in 1936.

'Fast' Liner To Be Used By County

A 30 m.p.h. motor vehicle doesn't sound very fast, unless you're talking about a pavement striping machine. Then, it's the fastest thing going.

Tarrant County has become the first governmental body to contract for the services of the 3M Lane Liner, which is able to put down skip-line stripes at up to 30 m.p.h. and solid lines at 20 m.p.h.

Top speed of conventional units is about 10 m.p.h.

The 3M Lane Liner — three years in the making — was demonstrated Thursday at Commissioner Precinct 1 Garage.

The machine here is the only one of its kind here.

Tarrant County has contracted to have 200 miles of roads striped in Precinct 1 and 4 at a cost of three cents a lineal foot. Normal cost for striping jobs is about eight cents a foot.

Officials of the 3M company said the machine would be a tremendous aid to traffic safety because of its speed, and because the instant-drying liquid striping compound eliminates putting up cones and following a car.

It takes only one person to operate the machine. Conventional machines have a crew of three.

At 30 m.p.h., the Lane Liner can lay down two lines simultaneously at the center, if desired.

SECOND HEART ATTACK IN MONTH

County Clerk 'Red' Cowen Dies

County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen, 53, prominent in Tarrant County politics for more than 20 years, died Saturday night after an apparent heart attack, his second in less than a month.

The legless World War II veteran, who had been in the county post since Jan. 1, 1963, was stricken at a restaurant about 9:30 p.m. Saturday. He died in a hospital less than an hour later.

Firemen applied external heart massage and rescue breathing equipment and accompanied him to the hospital.



W. C. "RED" COWEN

COWEN, WHO HAD an apparent heart attack Dec. 13, had been in the courthouse working Friday. County Commissioners will appoint a successor to fill the unexpired portion of his term until the

general election in November.

He also had suffered an apparent heart attack about three months ago.

Cowen of 5003 Inverness was in his third term as

clerk. Before that, he served five terms in the Texas House of Representatives from Tarrant County.

Cowen was wounded in the battle for New Britain in the Southwest Pacific when his rifle squad was attacked by a Japanese dive bomber. He was a staff sergeant with the 158th Regimental Combat Team at the time.

He also was wounded in the leg by rifle fire earlier in the New Britain battle.

His legs were amputated as a result of the wounds.

COWEN was involved in a number of courthouse issues during his tenure as county clerk.

Among these were voting machines versus paper ballots, a disagreement with former County Probate Judge

A. L. Crouch over the judge's handling of mental cases and the clerk's office's handling of real estate records.

Cowen became the subject of widespread publicity when his late wife, Mrs. Mary Belle Cowen, shot him outside the courthouse in December, 1968. They were divorced in 1969.

Later, she fired some shots into his apartment, 2917 McCart Ave.

She was convicted after pleading guilty and sentenced to a five year probated sentence.

MRS. COWEN was found shot to death in her car Aug. 26 near Decatur. The death was ruled a suicide.

Cowen, a native of Garfield County, Okla., had worked as a personnel manager, adver-

Turn to 'Red' on Page 2

'Red' Cowen, County Clerk, Dies at 53

Continued From Page 1

tising agent and salesman before entering the Army and politics.

He was a graduate of Port (Oklahoma) High School, Midwestern University in Wichita Falls and Cozzens School of Accounting and Tax in Fort Worth.

He was a member of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Elks Lodge and the Texas Legion. He was a member of Broadway Baptist Church.

Cowen is survived by a daughter, Miss Mary Kay Cowen.

Owens-Brumley will announce funeral arrangements.

Friday Evening, January 14, 1972

Commissioners Ponder Why DA Office Desks Cost More

Tarrant County commissioners spent 30 minutes with County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith today trying to figure out why the district attorney's office should be furnished with desks that cost \$400 more than theirs.

Smith had come before commissioners to point out the discrepancy in the furnishing cost including one request from the DA's office for a \$50 trash can.

Smith said part of the difficulty centered around the fact that the furnishings requested by the district attorney's office would only be available through one furniture outlet. This would prevent the commissioners from buying the furniture on an open low-bid basis.

ALL OF THE commissioners were opposed to the situation and asked Smith to get together with the DA's representatives and arrange to buy furniture comparable to that

in the rest of the courthouse. They also asked that the purchase, for which \$55,000 has been appropriated, be done on a low-bid basis.

In other action, commissioners heard another request from Fort Worth Library Board president, Dr. Howard Wible, for additional appropriations to the city library system.

The commissioners have appropriated \$147,150 for 1972, the same as the 1971 appropriation, and the library board wants \$215,000.

The library board in the past has warned commissioners that if they don't provide the additional money, library service to outlying communities will be cut off.

COMMISSIONER Jerry Mebus told Wible, "We are operating very closely this year. We only have a \$6,000 unincumbered balance in the 1972 general budget."

The commissioners heard a request from El-Asa, who has been working with Commissioner George Richardson to form a county human relations committee, to meet Monday with about 17 persons, to discuss countywide problems.

The requested meeting was set for 2:30 p.m. Monday.

Also at El Asa's request, County Judge Howard Green made a brief statement honoring the birthday of Martin Luther King.

Commissioners May Be Asked For More Library Cooperation

City Council will be asked Monday to authorize the mayor and city commissioner to meet with county commissioners to further library cooperation.

The library board last Monday voted to continue looking into a county library system

as proposed in a report prepared by TCU's division of civic affairs.

The board suggested that a letter from the council and commissioners invite all library board presidents in the county to meet and determine

whether to proceed with a feasibility study.

It also supported a task force to study the idea.

The council, at its meeting at 9:30 a.m., will be asked to authorize the mayor and city commissioner to meet with commissioners "relative to holding the meeting requested by the Library Board and approve the task force as recommended."

The force would comprise six members from the Fort Worth board, two from the Arlington board, five from other Tarrant County boards and two citizens-at-large.

The council will also be asked to endorse the "North Central Texas Council of Governments Statements of Goals and Objectives for the Overall Program Design 1971-73."

Among the criteria for the city getting Housing and Urban Development funds is one which relates to the operations of regional planning agencies.

VETERANS

Dedication Of Marker Is Slated

The Veterans Memorial authorized by county commissioners nearly two years ago will be formally dedicated Feb. 22 at the Tarrant County Convention Center.

The 11-foot Texas marble memorial honors those who served in World Wars I and II and the Korean and Vietnamese conflicts, said Jodie Colvard, who is acting as chairman of the memorial committee.

The ceremony is scheduled for 2 p.m. and will be held at the south end of the downtown Fort Worth center.

Colvard said Gen. (ret.) Hamilton Howze will speak.

Music will be provided by the Ft. Wolters Army Band.

Colvard said the public is invited to attend the ceremony.

Steps Taken On Joint Road Project

Star-Telegram Mid-Cities Bureau

WATAUGA — City councilmen last night took steps toward completing a joint project with Precinct 4 County Commissioner George Richardson in widening and paving a section of Watauga-Smithfield Road.

Under the plan, the county will do the paving work needed in converting the narrow road into a four-lane thoroughfare from U.S. 377 to the east city limits of Watauga at Rufe Snow Drive.

WATAUGA PROPERTY owners will pay for curbs and gutters. Last night councilmen held an assessment hearing and agreed to a contract with John Young for curb and gutter installation at \$1.85 per front foot.

Mayor Mack Burke said the city would seek a \$30,000 loan which would be paid off through assessments of property owners along the improved stretch of road.

RICHARDSON said the Watauga road paving is a part of a plan he has for improving that thoroughfare from N. Main St. in Saginaw eastward to the end of his precinct on Rufe Snow Dr.

Richardson estimated that the road work inside Watauga would cost the county about \$30,000.

CHAMBER TOPIC

Extension of I-30 to Be Discussed

Directors of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce today were to discuss strategy for obtaining an extension of Interstate 30 from Dallas through Fort Worth.

Chamber President Tom Law said yesterday that an extension of I-30 would help carry the traffic load to the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, if Congress and the Texas Highway Commission can be convinced that the route is necessary.

County commissioners are expected to consider the idea, first presented by former highway commission chairman Garrett Morris of Fort Worth, at their regular meeting Monday.

Law said the state would have to make the proposal to Congress and that the assistance of area congressmen would be needed to help push through the necessary amendments to federal law.

"We very much need a road which would go to the airport and also relieve some of the pressure on the existing toll road," the chamber president said.

"By all means we ought to do it without a toll road if possible. If that can't be done, I would then look very closely at a toll road possibility," he said.

Chief Aide Named to Succeed Cowen

Ed Loftin, chief assistant to the late County Clerk W. C. "Red" Cowen, Sunday afternoon was unofficially named to succeed Cowen, who died Saturday night of a heart attack.

Loftin, who has held nearly every position in the clerk's office during the nine years he worked for Cowen, was selected over five other candidates for the office.

He will be voted on formally by Commissioners Court during its regular meeting Monday morning, but his appointment was agreed to during the called meeting in Green's office.

GREEN, on notifying Loftin of his selection, said he felt the appointment "would meet with Mr. Cowen's approval."

"He (Cowen) named Mr.

Loftin to carry on for him in his (Cowen's) absence. . . . It was his design that Loftin be his chief assistant."

Green noted the quick action was taken because the county legal adviser had said the law pertaining to succession is vague.

"This will permit a smooth, orderly transition," Green added.

Cowen suffered a heart attack, his second in as many months, while eating at a West Side restaurant. He died shortly afterward at a hospital.

Funeral services for Cowen will be at 4 p.m. Tuesday in Broadway Baptist Church with burial in Greenwood Memorial Park.

LOFTON, WHO, with his wife,



—Star-Telegram Photo
ED LOFTIN
... formal vote today

lives at 4924 Meadowbrook Drive, was the only man to appear before Commissioners Court during the afternoon meeting.

Others who expressed an interest in the appointment, or who had friends speak in their behalf, were Attorney H. Joe Loe, Ray Gant, Cecil Knox, former City Councilman Harris Hoover and Norman Auerbach.

Like Loftin, Knox and Auerbach are county employees, although neither works in the county clerk's office. Knox is an adult probation officer in County Criminal Court Judge J. C. Duvall's court, Auerbach is first assistant to County Welfare Director Ralph Lewis.

PRIOR TO selecting Loftin, Green and the commissioners released a brief resolution praising Cowen. It read:

"We are deeply saddened

by the death of Red Cowen. He was one of the most courageous men that we have known and he ran an efficient, disciplined office which was a credit to Tarrant County.

"We shall miss his cheery disposition and strong personality. He had our respect because he earned it."

Loftin's appointment will run until the general election in November.

If he wants to run for the office, he must file for a spot on the Democratic party's primary before the Feb. 7 deadline.

He indicated he will do so.

If elected, he will then serve the remainder of Cowen's term, which runs through December 1973.

Commissioner Lewis Files For Re-election to Precinct 3



DICK LEWIS

R. F. "Dick" Lewis, saying he hopes to continue the progress Tarrant County government has enjoyed during the 12 years he has been county commissioner of Precinct 3, today formally filed for re-election.

"I am not controlled by any special interest groups or organizations," Lewis said.

"MY EARNEST and utmost desire is to continue the growth and progress of this county and to fulfill my obligations to all the people in Precinct 3."

Lewis, 60, was first elected commissioner in 1960.

Prior to that, he was a bailiff in the central jury room, a job he took in 1947.

He has one announced opponent in the Democratic primary, H. L. "Herb" Arnold of Richland Hills.

LEWIS, a lifelong resident of Precinct 3, was graduated from Smithfield High School. He lives with his wife of 41

years at 6312 Lewis Lane. The Lewises have four children and seven grandchildren.

Lewis was one of the principal backers of the Tarrant County Convention Center, the county's juvenile detention center and he worked for the county's job classification and retirement system.

Tuesday Evening, January 18, 1972

Car Fee Axed, But May Return In County Pay

By BOB-RAY SANDERS

One Friday morning in July, Tarrant County commissioners voted themselves a \$300-a-month car allowance in an open—but unpublished—Commissioners Court meeting.

Commissioners voted to accept a special committee's plan Monday to do away with all car allowances, including their own highly controversial car-use fee.

But, Monday afternoon — as other county employees chafed at the thought of loss-

Interpretive

ing their monthly car fees — commissioners were planning a way to add the \$300 to their salary, a reliable source said.

The court did not adjourn its regular meeting Monday morning, but recessed until 9:30 a.m. Tuesday to study the car allowance situation.

Tuesday commissioners and County Judge Howard Green probably will vote themselves an \$18,000 yearly salary hike in exchange for losing their \$300 car allowance.

The \$1,800 raise will give commissioners \$22,700 a year. Also, last month the court gave all county employees — including court members — a 5 per cent cost of living increase.

THE "ADJUSTMENT in salary" for persons who are losing car allowances probably will be just for a select few. There was some indication the salary adjustments would go only to commissioners and some department heads — about 10 persons in all.

Salary adjustments were suggested by the committee studying car allowances, but the committee did not state whose salary should be adjusted or if the adjustment should be made upward or downward.

Harry Werst, chairman of the committee, made the report to commissioners during their regular session Monday.

The committee's recommendations, which were unanimously approved by commissioners, were:

—Discontinue all car allowances "as such" immediately.

—Stop furnishing gasoline, oil or maintenance to Tarrant County employees or officials for use in vehicles not owned by Tarrant County.

—Furnish gasoline, oil and maintenance only to vehicles owned by Tarrant County.

—A mileage allowance of 12 cents per mile be allowed employees and officials when their own vehicles are used on official county business.

"This should not include driving from their homes to work or from work to their homes," Werst said.

The employees should be reimbursed at a rate of 12

Fee Vetoed, May Return In Salaries

Continued From Page 1

practice to give car allowances to county personnel which, in effect, amounted to pay raises.

There are some officials who never use their cars, but who get monthly allowance.

The "little red gas pump," which recently was changed to a little white gas pump, will only be used for county equipment, Werst said.

"This is just one of the things that we had to face up to and correct," Werst said, adding that some salaries had to be "rectified."

Other car allowance receivers who use their cars daily said they could not function on 12 cents a mile. Some individuals had invested in cars to use on county business with the idea that they would be receiving between \$100 and \$150 car allowance.

They also argue that insurance rates are higher.

County Auditor Jack Benson said most of the persons now receiving allowances will benefit from the mileage system, actually making more per month.

There is also an argument that the mileage system will cause extra paperwork for the employees and also will cause them to "fudge" on their mileage statements, again causing inequities in the system.

As the news of the commissioners' action Monday circulated around the courthouse, it stirred up a whirlwind of controversy by the persons presently receiving car allowances.

That whirlwind will turn into a tornado Tuesday should commissioners give themselves another raise and omit raises for other county employees.

Bookmobile Service May End in 4 Suburban Cities

Bedford, Blue Mound, North Richland Hills and Saginaw may lose bookmobile service after May.

Bob Joyce, assistant city library director, said these county municipalities would be affected by library board plans to drop bookmobile service to county municipalities that have their own libraries.

The city library board yesterday informed county commissioners of the proposed cut in service because of commissioners' refusal to increase their annual contribution to the city's library system.

BOARD members asked the county to contribute \$215,202 for library service this year, but commissioners appropriated \$147,150, the same as last year.

Dr. Howard Wible, board president, indicated the service cut by letter and noted, "The cost of providing public services continues to rise . . ."

Wible said 10 of the 13

members of the board contacted by telephone Wednesday opted to reduce bookmobile service rather than decrease the number of books the library could purchase.

Joyce said all other areas in the county currently getting bookmobile service will continue to get it.

COMMISSIONER George Richardson, during an informal session, said of the letter: "We shouldn't be paying \$147,000 for something we're not getting."

Commissioners Jerry Mebus, Dick Lewis and Dick Andersen said, however, there is little danger of the county withdrawing support altogether.

"I think we got a little disturbed at first," said Mebus. "But I think cooler minds will prevail in the end."

Commissioners instructed Jim Morgan, county legal adviser, to meet with board members and library officials to clarify the letter.

Mebus and Andersen said

the county also has faced rising costs.

"WE'RE NOT going to raise taxes to bail the library out," said Andersen. "We've been faced with some horrible increases in cost, too, and we've cut everybody else's budget to stay in the black."

Dr. Wible and library director Mrs. Mable Fischer said the letter was not an attempt to pressure commissioners into raising the appropriation.

Mrs. Fischer said the May deadline was listed to give the county some advance warning and because it would be difficult to have most of the books returned by county users before then.

Wible and Mrs. Fischer said they hope the board's move will not have a negative effect on setting up a county-wide library system as recommended by a group of TCU consultants.

City council will discuss that proposal Monday.

Dual D-FW Road Proposal Okayed

County commissioners today did what they said they would do — approved the dual proposal for a new Dallas-Fort Worth highway.

The approval came on a motion by Commissioner George Richardson who said that all the parties involved should present a united front when they went to Austin to get a new highway from the Texas Highway Commission.

The vote today is a reversal of a vote taken last Monday. Today's plan calls for going to the highway commission and requesting an extension of Interstate 30 from East Dallas to Fort Worth.

TODAY'S PLAN also requests a go-ahead from the commission for engineering and right-of-way studies for a new toll road along the same route north of the Trinity River.

Last week, commissioners, on the request of Arlington Mayor Tom J. Vandergriff,

had asked for the free highway only.

The turn-around was first noted Friday when Richardson said he would make today's motion, and Commissioner Dick Andersen and County Judge Howard Green both said they would back him.

THE THREE so acted today, and Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Lewis both continued their opposition to any toll highway.

In voting for the proposal, Richardson and Andersen both emphasized the need for a cooperative effort by Dallas and Fort Worth leaders. Richardson said, "If we don't go together, we are going to come back with no road at all."

Lewis in opposition said, "I think you (Andersen, Richardson and Green) are copping out. You are saying

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Commissioners Approve Dual Dallas-Fort Worth Highway

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you're not for a toll road, but you are voting for one."

Mebus pointed out that a million dollar mass transit study is currently under way and said he felt commissioners should wait until the study is completed before taking any action.

Green interrupted Mebus to say, "I'm glad you brought that out. The study committee has voted 10-2 in support of this dual plan."

He also interrupted Paul Curtis, a representative of the American Automobile Association, when he came before commissioners and asked them for the free road only proposal.

GREEN SAID, "The issue isn't toll road or not. You are trying to divert the purpose of cooperation of this court."

"We are not interested in a toll road until all efforts for a free road have been exhausted. We are after a free road."

Before being interrupted, Curtis had pointed out to commissioners that in November that the public had expressed a desire for a free road.

He said it was the bondholders who wanted the toll road.

MEBUS SAID he felt that the cooperative effort was not what it seemed.

"I don't think the Mid-Cities could go along with this," he said.

FUND RUNNING LOW

Road-Widening Project Meets Block—No Money

Fort Worth city councilmen who want Tarrant County commissioners to pay for

right-of-way to widen Hemphill Street are going to face a typical roadblock—good-will but no money.

Commissioner Dick Lewis was not available for comment.

Commissioners questioned today said essentially that they would like to help with the project by providing money from their right-of-way fund, but the fund is running short, and there are other priorities.

COMMISSIONER George Richardson said that the county is "busy buying right-of-way for the new airport."

"In reality, our right-of-way fund is just about to an end. We had better hold on to our money," Richardson said.

Commissioner Dick Andersen concurred saying that one of the priorities would have to be the Fort Worth-Dallas freeway project that is currently being considered.

HE ALSO noted the ever-increasing cost of land acquisition around the new airport.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus said, "If we can provide help, I think we should, but I'm not sure we have the money."

County Judge Howard Green said he was not familiar enough with the project to make any comment. County



H. L. ARNOLD

Contractor To Oppose Dick Lewis

H. L. "Herb" Arnold, a retired Richland Hills developer and contractor, today formally announced that he will oppose County Commissioner Dick Lewis in the May 6 Democratic primary.

"The people in Precinct 3 have simply not had the representation they deserve," Arnold said in a news conference at the Fort Worth Press Club.

"I do not think that Mr. Lewis has handled himself in a businesslike manner."

ARNOLD, 64, said he has been urged by "many, many citizens of the northeast part of Tarrant County to make this race."

Among his backers is Mayor Paul Daniels of Richland Hills.

Daniels, in brief remarks to reporters before introducing Arnold, said "We have been repeatedly ignored in requests for assistance from Commissioner Lewis, requests that we felt were legitimate."

"The only times we see Mr. Lewis are at election time. That's every four years."

Lewis, commissioner since 1962, has not yet announced

for re-election but he is expected to soon.

Arnold said he is "concerned and alarmed to see what is coming and the fact that nothing is being done about it."

THE COUNTY'S growth, especially in the northeast section that makes up Precinct 3, "is faced with one of the most phenomenal growth periods in the history of any region," Arnold said.

He added that "little has been done to prepare for this growth by the county officials."

Arnold has served on the Tarrant County Convention Center advisory board since its creation in 1965.

Arnold said he will resign that post soon.

Arnold is a member of the North Richland Hills Baptist Church.

Commission Naming Is Delayed

County Commissioners today delayed the appointment of a human relations commission, saying that they wanted to "get to know" the 15 suggested members.

Randolph Clark, Fort Worth architect, went before commissioners with the list of names, evidently thinking that the commission would be formed today.

Clark and a number of other minority group representatives met with commissioners last week and won approval for establishing the commission, which will seek federal funds for a Human Relations office within county government.

Commissioners said they will meet with the 15 candidates at 9:30 a.m. Saturday for interviews.



DICK ANDERSEN

Andersen Will Seek Re-election to Post

Dick Andersen, Precinct 1 commissioner, produced the predictable last night and announced formally for re-election to the post he has held for 3 1/2 years.

In a three-page news release, Andersen indicated his intention to run on the Democratic ticket on a platform based on his record and the

promise of continued efforts toward more effective cooperative urban government and "to modernize and improve the quality and effectiveness of our county government."

ANDERSEN recalled a 1970 plan that he and City Councilman Jess Johnston proposed to eliminate much of the duplication in urban government, and noted progress in the regional airport, county-wide solid waste disposal and a cooperative health service.

Andersen also recalled his part in the creation of county's job classification system and Juvenile Detention Center.

To this list he added extensive street paving work in his own precinct and his recent appointment to the executive committee of the County Judges and Commissioners Association of Texas.

IN REFERENCE to a charge of lack of action on the "little-red-gas-pump" affair and civil service made yesterday by opponent Ed Parker, Andersen said:

"In a county government as old as ours, there are many deeply entrenched procedures and political factors which no longer serve any worthwhile purpose but which are extremely difficult to renovate according to our present needs."

"In candor it must be recognized that our efforts in this direction (modernizing county government) are not always meeting with success. I can assure the voters, however, that the present Commissioners Court is making a serious attempt to correct these situations, often in the face of very difficult opposition, and will continue to do so."

Responsibility Evaded

It is unfortunate that Precinct 1 Commissioner Dick Andersen's unwillingness to take a forthright stand on the issue has led to the placing of

civil service for county employes on the November general election ballot.

Commissioners George (Skeet) Richardson and R. F. (Dick) Lewis renewed their effort Monday to put a county civil service plan into immediate operation. But Commissioner Andersen, who has held the swing vote throughout the lengthy controversy, managed to get the question transferred from Commissioners Court to the public. He did so by voting against Mr. Richardson's motion to institute civil service, but for the alternative of putting the matter on the November ballot.

And that is too bad, for it really amounts to a ducking of responsibility. The commissioners were elected to make decisions such as this.

Commissioner Andersen strongly favored civil service when he was campaigning for election. But now, as holder of the deciding vote on the court, he has backed away with what appears to be a case of the election-year trembles.

As we have said before, it would be a good thing if Mr. Andersen would return to his original commitment.

Andersen on Spot as County To Argue Civil Service Issue

Commissioner Dick Andersen will find himself back in the middle Monday when county commissioners take up the ever-controversial and long-delayed issue of civil service for county employes.

In a meeting Nov. 15, commissioners split 2-2 on the issue when Andersen was absent. Commissioners George Richardson and Dick Lewis favor civil service while Commissioner Jerry Mebus and County Judge Howard Green oppose it.

Andersen, who has leaned both ways on the issue, two months ago refused to vote on civil service until the county budget was adopted.

The civil service proposal has been talked about for years, but was brought up again in November when the county employes' union included it in a five-point program which also called for a 5.1 per cent cost-of-living increase. A 5 per cent pay raise was granted last month.

Persons in favor of civil service argue that the county's 1,010 employes would have better job security because politics would be taken out of hiring and firing.

Richardson has maintained that employes now fear for their jobs every time a new elected official takes office.

Andersen is expected to show up for Monday's meeting, but still has not indicated how he will vote.

He maintains there are advantages and disadvantages to such a program.

Opponents contend that with such a commission, department heads would have no control over their employes.

In the past, some employes, have been dismissed from their jobs if they supported a candidate who ran against their department head. Green maintains that such action is rare.

Andersen, who with Lewis is up for re-election this year, does not want the civil service commission to become a political issue. Employes believe he will vote on the issue in a manner which he feels will help him politically.

As it appears, it is already a political issue. County employes want it. Most of the officials of the county don't.

Lewis calls civil service "progress."

Green refers to it as "regression."

Employes merely call it "job security."

"On the surface civil service looks good — sugar-coated — but underneath that sugar coating is a bitter pill as big as a basketball," Green said.

Early in 1971 the legislature passed a bill which permits commissioners to vote in civil service for employes. Andersen, however, calls that legislation "vague."

By law, civil service would go into effect 60 days after it is passed by the court, which means Tarrant County may have civil service by March 24.

If commissioners do not institute civil service, the bill provides that a special election can be held throughout the county on the system.

A special election, which would be the easy way out for commissioners, may be suggested in Monday's meeting. Thus, it does not become a political issue, and no matter what happens, the blame can be placed on the voters — not the commissioners.

But, whatever is done Monday on the issue will be up to Andersen. His vote on civil service — for or against — is the one which will be remembered.



HOWARD HALE

Howard Hale Will Run for Precinct 1

Howard Hale, a foreman and superintendent under Bryan Henderson when he was commissioner of Precinct 1, today formally announced as a candidate for Henderson's old post.

"The precinct needs a full time commissioner," Hale said. "I have always had the ambition to serve. I think now is a good time to offer my services."

BOB STRICKLAND, a Fort Worth plumbing contractor, has said he is considering running for the nearly \$24,000 per year job.

Commissioner Dick Andersen, who defeated Henderson in 1968, has not announced whether he will seek re-election. However, he is expected to.

Hale worked for Tarrant County 16 years before leaving in January 1969.

CURRENTLY HE is a superintendent with Penco Oil Co.

Hale, 63, is a member of Central Christian Church, a past potentate of the Order of the Eastern Star, Lodge 681, and the Moslah Temple.

He resides in Rendon.

"Because of my experience, I am qualified to handle any job that needs to be done," he said.

Ed Parker to Run For Precinct 1 Post

Ed Parker, vice president and projects manager for Sayers Electric Co., announced today that he would seek the post of county commissioner in Precinct 1.

In announcing his candidacy, Parker, 36, claimed that incumbent Commissioner Dick Andersen "has missed more meetings than any other commissioner in the history of the Commissioner's Court."

"I feel the people of Tarrant County deserve representation at every meeting," said Parker, who unsuccessfully ran for the state legislature four years ago.

ANDERSEN has scheduled a meeting tonight to announce his intentions. He has told friends he is unsure whether or not he will seek re-election.

Parker added, "I feel he (Andersen) has not kept his promises about civil service employment for county workers. I don't feel that any employe should have to worry about his job security if he doesn't want to work in a political campaign or contribute financial support for political purposes."

Parker, who will run in the May 6 primary, also said Andersen has continued to lobby and vote for continued increases in commissioner's salaries.

"HE ALSO voted for the \$300 car allowance, but would not cut out the use of the 'little red pump' which means the taxpayers are paying double for county car expenses," Parker said.

Citing a county budget of more than \$35 million, Parker said, "If elected, I will try to



ED PARKER

stop the increased excessive use of county funds and will offer the people representation at every meeting. I will represent the people in their needs and will try to vote for the good of the county regardless of my personal or business interests."

Parker, 2435 Winton Terrace West, is married and the father of three sons and a daughter.

T. P. Bryan to Run For Precinct 1 Post

T. P. Bryan, 51, of 5909 Meredith Lane, this morning announced he will run for Precinct 1 county commissioner.

Bryan, general foreman of the final assembly line at Bell Helicopter, has been a Tarrant County resident for 26 years.

"This is my first time to seek an elected office," Bryan said. "I pledge to use my initiative, education, management experience and continuing efforts to make Tarrant County a better, cleaner and safer area for all our citizens."

"I AM A FRIEND of the working people and I want to give assistance to the senior citizens in our county who are in need of help.

"I will make unbiased decisions for the best interest of all Tarrant County residents. Please remember, there is no substitute for experienced management."

"I feel like Dick Andersen (the incumbent) completely avoided his decision-making responsibility when he made a motion and voted (that) the county civil service employment question be put before the voters in November. It appears he has trouble in making definite decisions; (it) could be inexperience, a lack of confidence, or outside pressures influencing him."

HE LISTED goals of reducing the county tax rate, minimizing waste and graft, eliminating overlapping duties and upgrading training and per-

sonnel, instituting cost savings and improving and closely supervising maintenance work on county roads.

Bryan is a Baptist and a World War II veteran. He received an associate degree in applied science from Tarrant County Junior College and attended TCU, majoring in business management and personnel relations.

Others in the race include Andersen, Ed Parker and Howard Hale.



T. P. BRYAN

PCT. 1 CANDIDATE

Strickland to Seek Commissioner Post

Bob Strickland, announced Saturday as a Democratic candidate for county commissioner, Pct. 1.

Strickland said he had worked as a private citizen against urban renewal, to establish the regional airport and for passage of the constitutional amendment to raise the state welfare ceiling for the elderly and the handicapped.

But, he said, "I consider my best qualification is that I am the operator of a small business (contract plumbing, real estate and insurance sales) and a family man that knows what it is to stretch the dollar to make ends meet."

Strickland was in a runoff against state Rep. Joe Spurlock II in 1970, and in 1967 ran unsuccessfully for a city council seat.

He said he was running for the county post because Pct. 1 voters had supported him in 1970.

Strickland criticized incumbent commissioner Dick Andersen, also a candidate in the May 6 primary, on several issues.

"Under no circumstances," he said, "would I ride the county road and bridge fund to sunny Hawaii... advocate the dismissal of 250 city street workers... vote myself a \$1,800 yearly pay raise... abandon \$85,000 worth of the taxpayers' machinery on a public street... over-purchase county materials... support bond issues that contribute nothing other than higher taxes as Andersen did."

Strickland said he is administrative director of the Tar-



BOB STRICKLAND

rant County Taxpayers Association. He and his family live at 2700 Mission.



TOM McCANN JR.

Tom McCann Jr. to Seek Precinct 1 Post

Tom McCann Jr., saying "new blood and new ideas" are needed in county government, today announced as a Republican candidate for county commissioner, Precinct 1.

"I don't think the present commissioner (Dick Andersen) has devoted the proper amount of time for the job," McCann said.

"He has not accomplished enough for the people of Precinct 1."

McCANN, 31, said he will devote full time to the post. He is the son of a former Fort Worth mayor.

"I didn't get into this race just to make a showing," McCann said. "I am in it to win."

"I think the people are tired of the things that are going on at the courthouse. There are too many people who see the county government as nearly a joke.

"It's a \$40 million per year business, yet you still have such things as the little red gas pump. I promise this: That will come to a halt."

He was referring to the controversial pump from which more than 200 county employes draw free gasoline while also being paid car allowances.

Referring to the commissioners' voting themselves a \$300 per month car allowance last summer, McCann said, "You can sure drive a long way on \$300 per month."

McCANN IS vice president of McCann Construction Co., one of the largest firms of its kind in the city.

"Among my supporters," he said, "are businessmen and union members."

McCann, flanked by his wife, Vivian, told reporters and about 25 friends he is "a conservative, especially in spending the taxpayers' money. As commissioner, I will demand a full dollar's value for every dollar spent by the county."

In the news conference at the Press Club of Fort Worth, McCann said he doesn't feel the question should be whether the candidate is a Democrat or a Republican.

"It's a question of who can do the best job," he said. "And I think that I can do a better job than the incumbent."

Commissioners Agree to Put Civil Service Issue on November Ballot

County commissioners, after three motions and a lot of confusion, voted Monday to put the civil service issue on the ballot in the November general election.

Civil service for county employes has been put off since November, and commissioners had agreed to vote for or against the issue Monday.

The complicated procedure went like this:

—Commissioner George Richardson moved that the county establish a civil service commission as outlined in a plan researched by Murphy Kleuser, Commissioner Dick Andersen's assistant. Dick Lewis, who with Richardson has always been in favor of civil service, seconded the motion.

—Andersen then made a substitute motion calling for the county to draw up its own civil service program "tailored to the needs of Tarrant County," and submit it to voters on the November ballot.

(Guidelines for establishing civil service are set by state statute.)

—Andersen's motion died for lack of a second.

—Richardson's motion was then voted on, but failed 3 to 2.

Step to Form County HRC Postponed

Tarrant County commissioners heard a long discussion Monday on setting up a human relations commission, but decided to take no action on the matter until commissioners meet with proposed members at 9:30 a.m. Saturday.

Architect Randolph Clark, who has acted as chairman of a steering committee, made the proposal before the court with the idea that the commission would be set up Monday.

Commissioner George Richardson was in favor of the proposal, but other members of the court asked for the delay.

Clark submitted a list of 15 names to form the tri-ethnic committee "composed mainly of young persons from varied backgrounds."

He said the commission would serve as a means of communications between Commissioners Court and ethnic groups, and the commission would "try to implement certain policies regarding equality, education, opportunity and justice on a more professional level."

Friday Evening, February 4, 1972

County Eyeing Road Work Plan

Tarrant County commissioners today began considering a plan to take road and bridge work away from precinct control.

The plan was proposed by County Judge Howard Green and Commissioner George Richardson and received endorsement from Commissioner Dick Andersen.

Called a unitary system, the proposal would combine all road and bridge funds under the public works department.

"We ought to be here (at the courthouse) taking care of this \$40 million business and not going out when some guy calls and wants us to look at a \$10 chughole," Richardson said.

UNDER THE current system, each commissioner has a road and bridge budget of approximately \$350,000 and is charged with doing all the work within his precinct.

Richardson and Green brought the proposal up today after hearing of a similar plan in Dallas County. The two and Commissioner Jerry Mebus visited Dallas commissioners yesterday in connection with the proposed Dallas-Fort Worth highway.

Mebus, who arrived at the meeting late today, said, "I am opposed. I think I know more about what's going on in my precinct than public works will ever know."

Andersen, agreeing with Green and Richardson, said "The unitary system was one of the major planks in my platform the last time I ran." Green said that commissioners are finally proving to the public they can take petty politics out of county government.

RICHARDSON added that the unitary system would bring precinct employes directly under county control.

In other action, Richardson, Andersen and Green agreed to have County Auditor Jack Benson begin studying the possibility of taking county employes and retirees over age 65 off county health insurance.

Richardson told other commissioners that all people over age 65 are eligible for federal medicare and medic-aid.

He said the federal coverage is so complete that the employes and retirees are receiving no benefits from the premiums paid on county insurance.

—Richardson then moved to have civil service on the general election ballot. The motion passed 3 to 1, with Jerry Mebus voting against. County Judge Howard Green votes only in cases of ties.

RICHARDSON, Lewis, and courthouse employes, had felt that Commissioners Court should decide the issue because the court is closer to the 1,650 county employes who would be affected.

Andersen has always held the deciding vote on the matter and has always insisted on the postponement of instituting civil service.

"I'm for civil service, but the civil service program as drawn up here is not acceptable to me," Andersen said, in making the first motion to submit the question to the voters.

Richardson retorted, "We would be wasting a lot of time and the taxpayers' money by calling an election."

By including civil service in the general election, the issue will not be a part of the Democratic primary campaigns. The primary is May 6.

Andersen and Lewis are up for re-election this year. It was the consensus of courthouse officials that the issue would carry, as the general public would not be affected directly by the passage of civil service and basically the general public is in favor of such a commission.

Andersen's main objection to the proposal was that it called for a three-man commission and he felt it could not easily be dissolved if it proved a failure and the court found it necessary to do away with it.

MEBUS SAID he understands the employes' side of the question, but added, "I'm still in opposition."

Although Andersen feels the guidelines should be drawn up by Commissioners Court, the court is limited by law as to what it can include in setting up a commission.

The proposed resolution, which was rejected by Green, Mebus and Andersen, called for the civil service commission to aid commissioners in preparing all necessary rules and regulations consistent with the resolution, and to see

that all Tarrant County officials to which the rules apply comply with the conditions necessary for carrying out the rules, regulations and modifications.

The resolution also called for the commission to act as a review board to hear any cases concerning employment which may be brought before it or referred to it.

"Any person who is an employe of Tarrant County on the effective date of this resolution shall not be required to take any competitive examination or perform any other

act to maintain his present employment," the resolution stated.

State law provides that civil service go into effect 60 days after it is adopted.

With the election, regardless of the outcome, the politicians will be able to say, "It was out of our hands. The voters decided. There is nothing we can do about it."

Commissioners Court OKs County Operating Budget of \$15.6 Million

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3, is appropriated \$648,1116. Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson will draw \$740,547 for Precinct 4.

DIFFERENCES IN the budgeted amounts are due to the varying sizes of the four precincts.

Marvin Stutler, a member of the hospital board, which oversees operation of Peter Smith Hospital and Elmwood Hospital, told commissioners the board has approved an operating budget of \$14,173,445.

More than half that amount, \$8,025,835, will come from ad valorem taxes.

The hospital district's current tax rate is 75 cents per \$100 valuation.

Hospital Administrator Bill Taylor said he does not expect to have to ask for a tax increase for several years.

Answering a question from County Judge Howard Green, Taylor said the Peter Smith expansion program should be completed sometime in 1975, a year ahead of schedule.

BY THEN, Taylor added, the hospital's tax rate might be lowered.

Nearly \$1 million of the hospital district's budget will go to payments on the principal and interest of bonds sold to finance the hospital's expansion program.

Stutler said the budget is higher this year because the district has taken over operation of the local Mental Health and Mental Retardation Center.

More than \$1 million is allocated for the center's operation.

Included in the center will be an alcoholic detoxification center.

Commissioners took no action on the hospital budget since, they said, they did not receive copies of the 28-page document until Friday.

MEBUS URGED that it be studied a week before formal action is taken.

Both the county's and hospital's budgets include pay raises of 5.5 per cent for all employes.

Today's action marks the first time any county money has been appropriated for a county computer system.

Currently, several county offices are using the services of a Fort Worth-based, privately owned computer firm, Commercial Computer Services.

Waste Plan Bond Sale Is Possible

A \$1 million revenue bond sale may be ordered later this year to finance a countywide solid waste disposal system.

This seemed imminent since commissioners voted today to include \$40,000 in the county's annual budget for "start-up" work on the garbage system.

Late last year, a committee recommended that the county take over operation of the waste facilities needed to handle the growing amounts of trash collected.

Commissioners, in letters to mayors of the 35 municipalities in Tarrant County, were asked whether they would go along with the county plan.

A majority, including Fort Worth, answered that they would.

An exact amount for the bond sale, which voters would not have to approve, has not been decided.

Some of the \$40,000 allocated will go toward paying for a study to determine how many sites will have to be purchased.

At least one sanitary land fill is expected to be put in each of the four commissioners' precincts.

The \$40,000 will come from the road and bridge fund, a fund that this year reached an all-time high with \$3,343,725 appropriated.

Tarrant, Dallas to Back Road

By JIM DAVIS

DALLAS — Tarrant and Dallas County commissioners decided today to present a unified case for the proposed Dallas-Fort Worth highway.

County Judge Howard Green and Commissioners George Richardson and Jerry Mebus met with Dallas County commissioners today in Dallas and decided that the two groups would go to the March 1 Texas Highway Commission hearing in Austin to present their case together.

THE GROUP will be asking for funding for a free highway to connect Dallas and Fort Worth and the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport.

They also will be asking for permission to conduct engineering and right-of-way study for a turnpike along the same route.

Richardson and Green emphasized that they are seeking the free road; however, the Dallas commissioners' emphasis seem to be on the turnpike.

Green and Dallas Commissioner Jim Tyson said there is a need for some kind of road, free or otherwise.

In the informal meeting here, the two groups of commissioners also discussed the need for joint lobbying in forthcoming legislative sessions to present more effectively the views of metropolitan counties.

THE LOBBYING discussion arose in connection with comments on membership in the Texas Association of Counties.

Dallas County commissioners have refused to join the association because they say it is rural dominated. Tarrant County recently dropped its membership for the same reason, but commissioners now are reconsidering.

After being introduced in Dallas commissioners' open meeting, Green said, "Happily, the days when leadership on both sides were always at each other's throat are finally gone."

JIM DAVIS, reporter—Imitation being the sincerest form of flattery, Tarrant County was sincerely flattered this week.

Purveyor of the flattery was Bill Baland, a consultant to the Potter County (Amarillo) Commissioners Court.

Baland appeared in Tarrant County Judge Howard Green's office Monday to discuss a personnel classification and pay system that Baland is recommending for Potter County.

The system is Tarrant County's.

Green called county Personnel Director Stanley Zinn into the meeting and told him that Baland was adapting the Tarrant County system.

Baland corrected Green, "We are putting it (the classification system) in exactly as it is here."

Baland said he had looked at systems from different counties and the Tarrant County system was "the best we saw."

He added that the Tarrant County system was the only one that really worked the way it was supposed to. "It is clean-cut and all put together," Baland said. He said that many other systems are too vague in job descriptions and grading.

The system, which has been in service since 1969, sets 23 levels of jobs and seven pay grades in each level with approximately a 5 per cent difference between each pay grade, Zinn said.

The system also offers a job description number for each type of county employe and the job description is then fitted into the pay scale, he said.



JIM DAVIS

Thursday Evening, February 3, 1972

Commissioners OK Budget

Commissioners Court today formally adopted a county operating budget of \$15.6 million.

At the same time, commissioners took under advisement a proposed operating budget of \$14.1 million for the

Tarrant County Hospital District.

Neither budget, although the highest ever for Tarrant County, will require a tax increase this year, said County Auditor Jack Benson.

In their action on the general and road and bridge funds, commissioners ended about two months of squabbling and discussion.

AS APPROVED, the general fund will operate on a budget of \$12,295,082. The road and bridge fund for 1972 totals \$3,343,725.

Included in the budget are contributions of \$39,000 to the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, \$147,150 to the Fort Worth Public Library and a \$10,000 allocation for starting a county computer system.

The budget also has allocations of \$2,000 each to 17 municipal libraries in cities throughout the county.

The money allocated to

each precinct under the \$3,343,725 road and bridge fund varied.

Commissioner Dick Andersen is allotted \$656,844 for his Precinct 1. Precinct 2 Commissioner Jerry Mebus has budgeted \$782,671. Dick Lewis, commissioner of Precinct

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Alleged Embezzlement Is Subject of Secret Meeting

Tarrant County commissioners today went behind closed doors with county legal

adviser Jim Morgan to try to find out about the alleged embezzlement in the county aud-

itor's office.

Commissioners were evidently unhappy that they were not told about the situation by County Auditor Jack Benson.

"The first I heard of it was what I read in the paper this morning," Commissioner Dick Andersen said.

AFTER THE meeting, which lasted about 45 minutes, Commissioner George Richardson said he plans to propose a new outside auditing system for the county.

He said that until now an outside auditing firm has conducted an audit annually but did not have complete access to the county's books.

"All they had was what the auditor wanted them to see," Richardson said.

Richardson said that outside auditors should be like bank examiners, having access to all records on demand.

Andersen said he proposed a year ago that outside auditors make monthly reports, but "I don't know why, but it just didn't work out."

THE COMMISSIONERS meeting and Richardson's proposal came after disclosure yesterday of the investigation in the auditor's office.

Benson said today that the fund shortage in his office apparently was managed through the county insurance system.

Benson said that someone collected insurance premiums from retired county employes and then pocketed the cash.

Apparently the county would then go ahead and pay the premiums by check.

Benson would not say how long the alleged thefts have been going on but said the premiums ranged from \$2 to \$17. He had said yesterday that the total theft was apparently in excess of \$2,000.

HE AGREED THAT with the small premiums and the amount alleged to have been taken, the thefts must have been going on for quite some time.

The alleged embezzlement was revealed yesterday after Benson had met with the county's district judges. The judges hire Benson and set his salary.

Immediately after the meeting, presiding Judge Walter Jordan referred to the alleged incident as a "wrong-doing."

"It is a shocking thing. It is like something you read about in story books," he said.

Benson, after meeting briefly with Asst. Dist. Atty. Wayne Roberts, told reporters the details of the alleged embezzlement.

HE SAID that he had discovered the shortage late last week and had been investigating it.

He said that a county employe under investigation has been suspended without pay.

He said the district attorney's office will now take over the investigation with the full cooperation of his office and probably the investigation will not be complete for two weeks.

Commissioners Do Right In Endorsing Road Plan

Tarrant County Commissioners Court is to be commended for taking another look at—and on second go-around endorsing by 3-2 vote—what is being called the "dual plan" for getting a new Fort Worth-Dallas expressway.

On Jan. 24, after hearing a plea by Arlington Mayor Tom Vandergriff, the court voted unanimously to endorse only the freeway portion of the plan. But one week later Commissioners George Richardson and Dick Andersen, along with County Judge Howard Green, voted in favor of the double-barreled approach.

The commissioners who changed their votes, thus enabling Tarrant County government to join the growing list of supporters of the dual plan, are to be commended especially because their switchover represented political courage in the face of what appears to us to be an excess of emotionalism.

The dual plan would establish a unified effort to get an extension of Interstate 30 from Dallas to Fort

Worth as a toll-free high-speed limited-access thoroughfare serving the new airport and the Mid-Cities area.

But at the same time, engineering and right of way studies would be initiated for a Trinity-route tollway in case the freeway is rejected or long deferred.

Unfortunately, efforts have been made to portray proponents of this plan as anti-freeway schemers whose real goal is to insure the building of a toll road. At the same time, critics of the dual plan have sought to wrap themselves in the mantle of "free roads for all," as is sometimes done with motherhood and apple pie.

Backers of the dual plan are by now so numerous and diverse that good faith is assured. They are going after the free road, which is everyone's first choice. But they are carrying a spare tire along in case something goes flat. That's prudence, and we applaud it.

And we thank the Commissioners Court for getting on the sensible and useful side of the question.

Two Vie Against Former Boss for Constable Post

By Z. JOE THORNTON

There seems to be more interest in constable races than any other places that are up for grabs.

And the wildest one is liable to be the Precinct 3 constable's contest which pits the incumbent, Lloyd Tillery, against two of his former deputies, William Brown and Leroy Teehee.



Z. JOE THORNTON

All three have filed for the job which involves the northeast part of the county.

Both Brown and Teehee have quit working for Tillery and are campaigning actively, as is Tillery.

THAT POST PAYS \$10,080 per year, \$5,000 less than that paid Constables Jim Owens of Fort Worth and J. B. Bell of Arlington.

Both Owens and Bell, who have also filed for re-election, got substantial raises, courtesy of the state Legislature, a couple of years ago.

After voting for the raises, some Tarrant County legislators conceded they goofed a little.

They wanted Owens to have the raise; they didn't intend for Bell to get it. Bell is being opposed by Harold "Sarge" White.

But the law's the law.

Joe Johnson, constable of Precinct 8, has drawn an opponent in Earl Andrews, who is now a deputy constable with Bell.

PRECINCT 8, in the Mansfield area, has the lowest pay-

ing constable's job in the county, \$5,040 per year.

Precinct 4, where the incumbent is Bruce Lee, has the next lowest paying constable's job, \$6,240 annually.

The others, except for the Fort Worth and Arlington posts, pay about \$10,100 yearly.

Another incumbent constable, Herman Daniels of the White Settlement area, has also filed for re-election.

Dr. J. D. Tomme, County Democratic chairman, said he can't recall many times when interest in constable races has been so high. Or when interest in other races has been so low.

IF PRIMARY time comes can Theodore Wischkaemper be far behind?

Apparently not. The perennial candidate—for something—has picked up four sets of forms to be filled in by prospective candidates from Dr. Tomme's office.

"He didn't say what he was going to run for," the party chief said. "Your guess is as good as mine."

Wischkaemper, whose name may go down in history as one of the men who changed the state's filing fee law, couldn't immediately be reached.

CREDIT WHERE DUE —

County commissioners learned once again that criminal court judges can be powerful.

The lesson that crops up periodically came when commissioners did away with car allowances and free gasoline privileges for their bailiffs.

Pressure was judiciously applied, though weakly denied, and commissioners court rescinded the act and restored the pay and gas.

The term's been used before—applied to a slightly different group of people—but it's still a good example of "power politics."

Road Fund Proposal to Be Studied

Tarrant County commissioners today voted unanimously to study the proposed unit road and bridge system. The proposal, which came up last week, would put all of the commissioners' road and bridge fund and precinct garages under the public works director.

The resolution for a study was introduced by Commissioner George Richardson.

HE SAID THAT studying the proposal (thus delaying any decision) didn't make much difference because the system couldn't be implemented until next year's budget.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus, who had expressed opposition to the plan, said he wanted the study because he is "the newest member of the court and needs to be briefed so he can cast an informed vote."

In other action, commissioners voted over the opposition of Richardson to spend \$18,000 to fund their portion of the North Texas Council of Governments' regional study on solid waste.

Mansfield Mayor Tom Watson, who is also vice chairman of the Tarrant County Solid Waste Advisory Board, brought the proposal for funding to the commissioners.

HE SAID, "We can spend \$18,000 to have all the information we (the board) need to carry out the duties assigned to us."

Richardson opposed the expenditure because he felt it was unfair for the county to be paying half of the amount assessed a 11 governmental bodies in the county.

Commissioners also sorted out the controversy over two pieces of heavy equipment for Mebus' precinct.

Richardson had criticized County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith for drawing up specifications that limited competitive bids to one company.

BIDS ON THE equipment were opened this morning before commissioners, and the company a p any Richardson had named was the winner.

However, another company was allowed by Smith to introduce an alternative bid for a piece of equipment that was 24,000 pounds and 14 horsepower below specifications.

The alternate bid was \$670 less than the low bid on specifications.

In a meeting with Smith after the commissioners' meeting, Mebus decided to take the lowest bid that met specifications and refused the alternate bid which County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan said Mebus was allowed to do.

Commissioners named Mrs. Stanley Underwood today to replace Charlie Ritchie on the Child Welfare Board.

Equipment Transaction Criticized

County Commissioner George Richardson today criticized the county purchasing agent over some heavy equipment that Commissioner Jerry Mebus wants to buy for his Arlington precinct.

Richardson claims Smith drew up bidding specifications for the two pieces of equipment—a motor grader and a wheel loader valued at approximately \$50,000—in such a way that only one company can bid.

Commissioners at their informal meeting today, also talked about a renewed appeal from Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart for Tarrant County rejoining the Texas Association of Counties, a lobbying group.

Commissioners dropped their membership in the association, claiming it was rural dominated.

Stewart said today the association's leadership has changed and that the county would be well off to get back in.

Commissioners took no action on the request.

Precinct Road System Should Be Discarded

A Stanley Steamer puffing down Main St. would be no more anachronistic and inefficient than Tarrant County's old-fashioned precinct road system, under which each of the four commissioners gets his own road and bridge fund and is concerned only with roads within his own precinct.

It is encouraging, therefore, that three members of our Commissioners Court have come out in favor of a consolidated, or county unit, road system. County Judge Howard Green and Commissioners Dick Andersen and George Richardson have endorsed this proposal to combine all of the county's road and bridge funds under the county's public works department.

This setup would put an end to the illogical and wasteful arrangement by which some commissioners' road and bridge funds accumulate large surpluses — which are carried over from year to year — while worthwhile projects in other precincts go begging.

The precinct system of county road administration, with its arbitrary division of funds and autonomous fiefdom operations under each county commissioner — and with little regard for differences in precinct area, population and traffic volume — is no longer suitable to the growing needs of a metropolitan street and road system.

The county unit system, by simplifying administrative structure and concentrating responsibility, would promote orderly and coordinated planning for the future growth of Tarrant County's facilities and services. It would have the effect of minimizing petty politics while putting available funds into those projects most urgently needed, regardless of precinct lines.

A changeover, in short, would be a sensible step toward saving the taxpayers' money and restoring their confidence in county government.

NO WOMEN ON PANEL

Human Relations Agency Accused of Discrimination

The Tarrant County Human Relations Commission was almost tripped up today — by its own inadvertent discrimination.

Mrs. Dorothy G. DuBose appeared before county commissioners this morning to point out that the 11-member commission has no women on it.

The commission was created recently to help iron out minority discrimination problems within the county.

MRS. DuBOSE, who is president of the local American Civil Liberties Union, said the commission was a good thing but that women faced the same problems that men do.

She called for a "truly representative group of women both white and minority."

County Judge Howard Green suggested that Mrs. DuBose contact Randolph Clark, who was one of the originators of the commission.

Clark apparently had heard of Mrs. DuBose's intentions. He appeared before commissioners at the end of the 35-minute meeting and asked that four additional persons be named to the commission and that the four be women. His request was approved.

HE SAID HE would make recommendations later.

In other action, commissioners agreed to allow County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith to "open and tabulate" private bids on furniture for the district attorney's office.

The DA's office was criticized recently by commissioners because it had asked for some desks that cost \$400 more than the commissioners' desks.

Smith said that the bids were too complicated and lengthy for tabulation in the open meeting. He will return the figures privately to individual commissioners.

County Will Aid in Straightening of Creek

Star-Telegram Mid-Cities Bureau EVERMAN — The county will help eliminate some of the bends in Chambers Creek here for temporary flood relief until the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can come up with a permanent solution, a public planning session was held Tuesday night.

Commissioner Dick Andersen and County Engineer Leroy S. Irwin made the offer after a Corps of Engineers official said it would be four to five years at best before the Corps could put in permanent flood control measures.

John C. Ball, chief of the planning branch for the Corps, and Lynn Lovell, who has conducted a study of Everman for the Corps, conducted the planning session designed to learn from citizens where problems exist.

About 60 citizens turned out for the meeting in J. W. Bishop Elementary School for the discussion.

Ball emphasized that the Corps does not now have answers to questions raised by the citizens but is merely seeking input for further studies into flooding problems.

He said there would be at least two more such planning sessions.

Growth Told For Tarrant: Phenomenal

To Reed Stewart, Tarrant County tax assessor-collector, the growth of the county has been little less than phenomenal.

"The county's assessed valuation has risen by more than \$156 million in the last two years," Stewart says.

"That's never been done before. Most people thought it could never be done."

Stewart's comments came as he announced that the worth of land and property on the county's rolls came to \$1,104,392,727, as of Dec. 31, 1971.

That was an increase of \$76,453,941 over the figure for 1970.

The year before the increase had been \$80 million and it marked the first time that the valuation topped the \$1 billion mark.

Stewart said most of the increase came from new construction, particularly in the Arlington and Hurst-Euless-Bedford areas.

Land around the regional airport also accounted for part of the increase, he said.

About 20 per cent of the hike is attributed to a re-evaluation program in which the assessed value of rural property is being raised to where it is closer to its market value.

Stewart, in past years, has been criticized for permitting some land in rural areas to be on the tax rolls with valuations as low as \$25 per acre.

Nearly all those inequities have been cleared up now and the county commissioners, who have led the demands for higher valuations, praised Stewart for the increases.

The total tax assessed by the county office, including the 32 cent per \$100 valuation state ad valorem tax, will be \$80,811,624 for 1972.

Approximately 96 per cent of that amount will be collected.

Stewart has often said that Tarrant County has the best collection rate of any major county in the state.

Zoo Paving Proposal Held Good Reason for Combined Fund

Two members of Tarrant County's hierarchy said Tuesday Commissioner Dick Andersen's proposal to pave portions of the Forest Park Zoo is a good example of why the county should have a combined road and bridge fund.

The two, County Judge Howard Green and Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson, evidently made the comments because they had not known of Andersen's proposal until it was announced Monday.

Richardson said this is another case of the "left hand not knowing what the right hand is doing."

He added that with the unit system, "I would hope that we would have known about this sort of major proposal."

Green said, "Traditionally, each commissioner had had his own empire in the precincts. The unit system would end that."

Green said that with the unit system, both commissioners and the public will know when one commissioner wants to spend money.

Andersen's proposal became public Monday when zoo foe David Knapp announced that the commissioner had offered to do paving in the zoo's parking lot and approaching road.

The total paving is valued by the Park and Recreation Board of Fort Worth at \$140,000.

Little Red Gas Pump To Fuel More Flaps

By RANDY NORDHEM The "little red gas pump," which was killed and resurrected last month, will come before county commissioners again Monday morning.

County Auditor Jack Benson said Wednesday three commissioners have requested that he present a letter to the Monday meeting suggesting:

—Replacing free gas from the pump for county employees with a 3-cent-per-mile car allowance.

—Replacing the commissioners' \$300-per-month car allowance with a \$150-per-month allowance.

ALL THE commissioners except George Richardson say they favor both suggestions.

However, the conflict arises as to what is to be done with the \$150 cut from the commissioners' allowance.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said he expects to present a motion containing Benson's suggestions and asking that the \$150 cut be added to the commissioners' salaries.

"I think it would be both fair and equitable," he said.

BOTH COMMISSIONERS Jerry Mebus and Dick Lewis disagree with Andersen, saying they would like to see the \$150 completely eliminated from their income.

Lewis said if Andersen introduced a motion including the \$150 increase, he would introduce a counter-motion.

"I'm against putting it on the salary. Let's make it fair to all the people in Tarrant County. Let's cut the \$150 off completely," said Lewis.

Richardson, on the other hand, said he will oppose both the letter's suggestions, regardless of what it asks to be done with the \$150.

"I think it is politically inspired. All of it is coming up right now before the elections. Any little deal that he (Andersen) and Mr. Benson has made is going to be subject to clarification by the attorney general's office," he said.

Richardson pointed out that about 290 elected and appointed county officials receive between \$50 and \$150 a month allowances.

He said that the \$150 a month salary increase, along with the 5 per cent raise given county employees earlier this year, would raise some employees total pay increase to more than 20 per cent, which is against state law.

"If Mr. Andersen is going to get beat, he's going to get beat, and if he's going to win, he's going to win. I will not go along with it (the suggestions). I think the budget's been set for the year," Richardson said.

Benson, who said he has not yet drafted the letter, declined to comment on whether his suggestions would include the \$150 salary increase.

REGARDING the 3-cent-per-mile replacement of free gas for county employees, Benson said his suggestion would "allow no county employee in a private car to use gas from the county pumps. Only vehicles owned by the county will use these pumps."

He said employees will be required to have their mileage okayed by their department heads and the mileage reports would then be audited again by his department.

He predicted that if his 3-cent-per-mile suggestion is adopted less gas will be used by employees "because under the present way it is humanly impossible not to use free gas for some private purposes, such as coming to and from work."

County's little red pump to be shut off?

Commissioners Court is expected to vote Monday to close down the now infamous "little red gas pump" once and for all.

It will also close down the pump as a campaign issue, at least two commissioners up for re-election, hope.

Commissioner Dick Andersen—one of them—revealed today he felt he had enough votes to shut down the pump and instead give all county employees 3 cents for every mile they drive on county business.

"The employees will keep their current car allowances," Andersen said. "But this should put us out of the free gas business and the sham that has gone with it."

He said another thorny issue will also be resolved.

That would be the \$150 per month car allowance increase before County Commissioners secretly voted themselves and County Judge Howard Green last summer.

Andersen, who is encountering stiff opposition for his Pct. 1 post this year, said commissioners would vote Monday to drop their personal allowances from \$300 monthly to the \$150 monthly it was before the secret meeting last summer.

Commissioners Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus have already endorsed the move, Andersen said. Lewis, like Andersen, is running for re-election. Mebus has been the only commissioner in the past to advocate closing down the pump and cutting his own car allowance.

Auditor Jack Benson confirmed he is drafting a letter to commissioners giving them full information on the free gasoline from the pump he cut off.

Two other commissioners, Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus, have expressed their concurrence but with reservations.

AT THE suggestion of County Auditor Jack Benson the free gasoline will be replaced by a 3-cent-a-mile car allowance for county employees.

Benson also suggested that the commissioners' \$300 car allowance be cut back to \$150. Andersen said he will propose Benson's suggestions but that he wants the \$150 dropped from the car allowance to be added to the commissioners' salaries.

On this point, Lewis and Mebus disagree. They want the \$150 cut out completely. Lewis said that if Andersen introduced the salary proposal he would introduce a counter proposal.

Richardson said that Andersen's proposal is politically motivated.

Andersen said yesterday he is going to propose in the court's Monday meeting that

"Nobody said it was politically motivated several years ago when we gave \$50,000 to the city for Forest Park or when I paved 320 blocks inside the city a few months ago."

Green said that the four commissioners' precincts were "empires unto themselves."

He said a business like the roads system should be instituted under the Dept. of Public Works with a professional county road engineer.

"Only he (Andersen) knows if he is sincere or if he advocated his paving the lot just for political gain," Green said.

Andersen said today he hadn't heard of any new developments from Fort Worth City Council, Park and Recreation Board members or those opposing zoo fees.

"I made my proposal in good faith," he said.

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Timing on Free Gas Proposal Held Bad

County Commissioner George Richardson said today he had an "off the cuff opinion" from the county legal adviser that the county can't change the 1972 budget to accommodate the elimination of the "little red gas pump."

He said that he really had no objections to eliminating the gasoline pump but that the "timing on this thing is just very bad."

"IF THEY want to come up with a proposal to change it on next year's budget, that's fine, but not this year," Richardson said.

Advised of Richardson's statement, Commissioner Dick Andersen, who proposed an end to free gasoline, said that commissioners could make changes within the budget.

"WE JUST can't do anything that would spend more money than the budget calls for," he said.

County Auditor Jack Benson advised Andersen that the proposal would mean no increase over the existing budget.

Andersen said yesterday he is going to propose in the court's Monday meeting that

the free gasoline from the pump be cut off.

Two other commissioners, Dick Lewis and Jerry Mebus, have expressed their concurrence but with reservations.

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Lewis said that if Andersen introduced the salary proposal he would introduce a counter proposal.

Richardson said that Andersen's proposal is politically motivated.

Andersen and Lewis are both up for re-election and the "little red gas pump" which

was abolished and reinstated within a week last month has already been mentioned as a prominent campaign issue.

Ed Parker, one of four men opposing Andersen in the Democratic primary, charged

today that Andersen's proposal is "a lot of political double talk made by a man who is running scared."

"He is insinuating that the people in Precinct 1 are a little bit ignorant."

Commission Elects New Officers for '72

Officers for the Tarrant County Human Relations Commission were elected last night.

Elected chairman was Randolph Clark, an architect who ramrodded the creation of the commission. Elected vice chairman was Joe Gonzales.

Members of the commission also decided to develop committees to look into minority economic development, education, employment and justice.

Green Changes Mind, Will Vote for Civil Service Plan

Civil service for Tarrant County employees evidently will become a reality Monday.

County Judge Howard Green announced today he is changing his vote on civil service. County Commissioners Dick Lewis and George Richardson had already committed themselves to civil service.

Green's switch should result in a 4-1 vote of approval with Commissioner Jerry Mebus probably following his previous convictions and voting against the plan.

Commissioner Dick Andersen, at whose urging the civil service plan was to be put before the voters in the November general election, said that he will back the plan but still has reservations.

Before today, Green had opposed civil service.

However, he said, he felt that the court had "passed the buck to the public" in putting civil service off until the election.

He said that in his opinion a "vast majority of the people could care less about county civil service."

Richardson said this morning that he was "elated" by Green's announcement.

"I think Howard's reasoning was correct. I think that he (Green) looked at civil service and the vote and realized that the county would just be out a lot of money."

He said that he had already

put civil service on Monday's agenda.

ANDERSEN said he had never been against civil service.

"I only objected to the three-man board," Andersen said. "Two men on that board could swing an awful lot of weight."

"We can vote civil service in and still change it," he said. "I am going to fight like the devil to get it changed to a five-man board."

The civil service system, if it were adopted, would be drawn up and regulated by a three-man board according to a statute which allows Tarrant County to have a system.

GREEN SAID that he thought the vote might even

Commissioners OK Civil Service

County commissioners today unanimously approved a motion by Commissioner George Richardson that made civil service effective for county employees.

Richardson's recommendation also named three men to become Tarrant County's Civil Service Commission.

They are Frank Barron of the Central Labor Council, Rex McEntire, an attorney, and Joe Bruce Cunningham.

be the commission's chairman.

Also named as advisers were County Personnel Director Stanley Zinn and his assistant, Jim McCreight.

The only objection to the proposal came from Commissioner Dick Andersen.

Andersen, as in the past, insisted that the commission should be five-man rather than three.

He also objected to the statutory provision that civil service could only be abolished by a vote of the people.

RICHARDSON TOLD Andersen that both of his objections could not be overcome without going to the state legislature.

Despite his objections, Andersen voted for the system.

Richardson's resolution called for the commission to draw up the rules and regulations for the civil service system within 30 days.

Civil service has been a long point of contention among commissioners with Richardson and Commissioner Dick Lewis for it and Commissioner Jerry Mebus and County Judge Howard Green against it.

The last time it came before the court, Andersen, who is considered the swing vote, pushed through a proposal to put civil service to a vote of the people in the November general election.

TODAY'S APPROVAL of the system became possible late last week when Green announced that he was changing his vote.

In other non-action, "the little red gas pump which raised a heated argument Friday, was scratched from today's agenda by Andersen.

EDITORIALS:

All-County Health Plan Promises Advantages

The countywide health service suggested in a study done by the TCU division of civil affairs has much to recommend it.

Of primary interest to the taxpayers of the county's two major cities, Fort Worth and Arlington— who must bear the brunt of the cost of whatever type health program is operated—is the fact that the switch to a countywide service offers the possibility of eliminating double taxation.

The county might have to raise the Tarrant County Hospital District tax rate by as much as 3 cents per \$100 valuation to offset the cost of the countywide service. But both cities now operate elaborate health services of their own at considerable expense—about \$1.3 million a year for Fort Worth. Shifting this burden to the hospital district should bring relief in city taxes comparable to the 3-cent boost in the hospital district's rate.

By reducing duplication of services and administrative operations, it's possible that a saving might be effected in overall costs which could be applied to further improvement of services.

Apparently, the change would not necessitate drastic disruption of the

excellent administrative structures existing under the present arrangement. The hospital's board and administrative staff have proven records of competence. Statutorily, there would be no obstacle to the transfer of Dr. W. V. Bradshaw, city health department director whose qualifications rank second to none, to the directorship of the countywide system.

One of the most important results of consolidation—one of perhaps even greater concern than the expected administrative simplification—would be the establishment of uniformly high health standards in all 33 cities of the county.

In short, the countywide system would promise to provide a major upgrading of services with no increase—and perhaps a reduction—in cost to those who pay the bulk of the bill for health service.

As City Manager Rodger Line said, the idea just "makes a lot of sense." And, at a time when so many things don't, that in itself is enough to commend the countywide health service plan for endorsement by the people of Tarrant County.

County's Library Pact to Be Viewed

County Commissioner George "Skeet" Richardson says he will bring the county's contract with the Fort Worth library up for approval in commissioners' Monday meeting.

He said he had met with head librarian Mrs. Mabel Fischer and the head of the library's bookmobile service and they had come to an agreement on service to outlying towns.

Richardson said the only

SOME CONTROVERSY arose recently over the library contract when commissioners refused to raise their appropriation to the library by approximately \$80,000.

Library Board President Dr. Howard Wible had requested the increase and when it was refused he sent a letter to commissioners cutting off some bookmobile service.

Richardson said the only

about in a meeting this week was the service to Blue Mound-Saginaw.

He said that the library board was only cutting off service to those areas which already had adequate service.

"I FELT that the Blue Mound-Saginaw was too new to be considered adequate," Richardson said.

He said Mrs. Fischer told him that they (the library) were willing to renew ser-

VICES to that area.

"This would leave practically no one without service except those who don't want it," Richardson said.

He said Mrs. Fischer had told him that the library board would be agreeable to this since they (the board) had given her considerable leeway in making arrangements with the county.

Health Service for Area Is Approved

Tarrant County commissioners today gave general approval to a combined city-county health service.

The details of the temporary plan will be worked out later, and a contract drawn up for city and county approval.

The commissioners' action came at the request of Fort Worth Councilwoman Mrs. Margaret Rimmer who spoke to the court.

Commissioners also voted permission to Commissioner Jerry Mebus of Precinct 2 in Arlington to purchase land for the relocation of his precinct garage.

Mebus said the relocation was necessary because "Interstate 20 was practically running through his front door."

ESSENTIALLY SAME

County Approves Library Contract

County commissioners and the Fort Worth Library Board have sorted out their difficulties for this year, but bigger things for the two are in the wind.

County commissioners today approved a 1972 contract between the county and the library board.

ANDERSEN said that under this plan, the city and the county would lower tax rates in accordance with what they are spending on library services, and a library district would tax separately.

Andersen said that like combined health services, a single library system would eliminate duplication in taxing for the service.

COMMISSIONER George Richardson said the contract was essentially the same as last year's.

After the commissioners' meeting, Commissioner Dick Andersen said that the city-county liaison committee was discussing doing the same thing with library services as they are currently doing with city and county health services.

Andersen said the committee, made up of Andersen, Rich-

SHE DELIVERED a resolution from a city-county liaison committee calling for a combination of city and county services on a temporary basis with the understanding that at the end of the year, the combined services will come under the control of the Tarrant County Hospital District.

As envisioned at this time, area health services will be headed by City Health Director Dr. W. V. Bradshaw.

Mrs. Rimmer and City Councilman Jess Johnston appeared before the commissioners and delivered the committee's report.

Afterwards, Mrs. Rimmer asked commissioners if they had intended to take any action today.

SHE WAS told that the details of the system had not yet been worked out.

Commissioners then decided to put their stamp of approval on the general proposal.

Commissioner George Richardson said the new combined system would mean no shifting of money from the county to the city.

Mrs. Rimmer said she would not expect Dr. Bradshaw to assume any additional duties without additional remuneration.

Commissioners explained that under the new system, the county's health director and assistant health director would probably no longer be required.

A PORTION of the salaries of those two men (\$5,000) could be paid to Dr. Bradshaw to cover his additional administrative duties.

In other action, commissioners voted to re-enter the Texas Association of Counties, a lobbying group for county government.

The commissioners had dropped their membership during budgeting hearings in January because, as County Judge Howard Green said, they felt the association was "regressive and rural oriented."

GREEN READ letters from county officials in Dallas and Bexar Counties to the court today noting that those two major counties were re-entering the organization.

Commissioners Hot Over Gasoline Issue

By JIM DAVIS

The "little red gas pump" controversy erupted anew this morning in Tarrant County Commissioners Court.

During a heated verbal exchange, Commissioner George Richardson accused Commissioner Dick Andersen of a purely political motive in suggesting an end to the county's free gasoline at this time.

Richardson said, "This is the worst political move that we have come up with yet."

"We should look at the facts. We should see who needs it (the county's car allowance) and who doesn't and base our response on something other than an election three months down the road."

ANDERSEN retorted, "That's the standard old gaff. Everytime someone tries to do something around here somebody else says it's political."

Andersen had proposed earlier this week that commissioners do away with free gasoline from the "little red pump." (Now white) and start paying those eligible for the gasoline 3 cents a mile.

His proposal, which was being drawn up by County Auditor Jack Benson, would also have rescinded a commissioners court order of July 1971 which doubled commissioners' car allowances (to \$300) and increased or provided car allowances for a number of other elected and appointed county officials.

The proposal would also have retained car allowances for other eligible county employees.

Richardson is opposed to any change in the system until a study, authorized earlier this year, is completed by Benson and County Personnel Director Stanley Zinn.

"THERE ARE A lot of other officials in this county who don't use their cars and you can't justify it (the car allowance) for them either."

Richardson said that if the court was going to do something, members should wait until they had all of the information and do the whole thing at once.

He is also opposed to making any changes in the budget this year. He said the change in the allowance and gasoline system might mean an illegal increase in the budget.

Benson told commissioners there was no way to accurately determine the cost of Andersen's proposal.

Andersen said, "I'm willing to wait if someone will move on this." However, he said he still wants to rescind the July, 1971 order.

He said, "The only way we can make a mileage study work is to pay the 3 cents a mile and make them (the employees) turn in mileage reports."

He said that the study was producing no results.

City-County Health Contract Readied

County commissioners today prepared to contract with Fort Worth to have City Health Director Dr. W. V.

Bradshaw take control of both city and county health services. However, commissioners

stressed they are not turning over complete control of countywide health services to Fort Worth.

The contract, which is expected to be ready for commissioners' March 6 meeting, would put Dr. Bradshaw in command until Jan. 1, 1973.

County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan said the interim appointment would allow Dr. Bradshaw to study the county system "without being an interloper" in preparation for a county hospital district-controlled health department.

MORGAN SAID that at the end of the year, Dr. Bradshaw, with the assistance of others who are studying the combined system, will probably make some sort of recommendation on how the combined system should be set up.

Commissioners Dick Lewis questioned the proposal on the basis that it would present no savings to the county.

Commissioner George Rich-

ardson told Lewis that the county would be eliminating two salaries, the county health director's and a part-time "jail doctor's."

He said the city would take over both responsibilities.

MORGAN SAID that his negotiations with the city indicated that the cost to the county would be approximately \$5,000.

Dr. Bradshaw would have the power to fire for the county, but the power to hire would be left with the county personnel department, Morgan said.

In relation to the power to fire personnel, several commissioners pointed to the fact that county employees have just gone under a civil service system.

In other action, commissioners formally approved an initial \$7,000 study which is considered the first step toward an already approved comprehensive plan for the entire county.

Arlington Officials Deny Opposition

Arlington officials today denied County Commissioner George Richardson's contention yesterday that Arlington would be the major opposition to a proposed consolidation of Fort Worth, Arlington and Tarrant County health departments.

Asst. City Manager Ross Calhoun said, "Our problem is that we don't know anything about it (the proposed consolidation)."

Calhoun said he had double checked with other Arlington officials and found that no concrete information on the

consolidation proposal has been received.

OFFICIALS in Arlington are concerned what might happen to that city's health department and its employees, which are supported by a \$200,000-a-year budget, Calhoun said.

Richardson referred to Arlington as the "brickbat" in efforts to consolidate health services after he reviewed a report stating that the consolidation would offer a tax advantage for the cities of Fort Worth and Arlington.

John Hall, director of the TCU division of civil affairs, said the report—delivered to Fort Worth and county officials yesterday (but not to Arlington)—offers two alternatives for consolidated services.

Both would eliminate double taxation in Arlington and Fort Worth for health services, Hall said.

One of Hall's alternatives would place the consolidated service under Fort Worth and the other would place it under the Tarrant County Hospital District.

CURRENTLY Arlington, Fort Worth and Tarrant County have separate health services with separate tax structures, so Arlington and Fort Worth citizens pay to both the city and to the county, Hall said.

"If the health service were transferred to the Tarrant County Hospital District, residents would only be taxed once," Hall said. "Everyone would be taxed on the same basis."

The hospital district is already equipped by law to tax for the combined services, Hall said, and Dr. W. V. Bradshaw, the director of Fort Worth health services, could be transferred to direct the countywide service.

Richardson, the only commissioner to receive the report late yesterday, said that if the hospital district took over the function it could have to raise its tax rate 3 cents per \$100 valuation.

However, he said he had information that if the hospital district raised its tax rate to support the expanded function the city of Fort Worth could (and probably would) lower its tax rate by the same amount.

CITY MANAGER Roger Line said, "There would definitely be a reduction..." if the hospital raised its rates and took over the health services.

He said he couldn't say how much the reduction would be.

Arlington officials said they did not have enough information to comment on the tax matter.

Calhoun said officials in the suburb "would be quite receptive to sitting down and talking about the proposal."

Information on the plan has been sought from various sources, said Calhoun, but the only information Arlington has obtained is through newspaper stories.

The Fort Worth Press, Thursday, May 6, 1971

Overtime 'just doing

ELECT



Jake Cardenas, a courthouse custodian whose salary has caused a small furor around

building said today he's

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 visors, 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 employes 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.

BOB STRICKLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONER PRECT. 1

STRICKLAND believes that
County Government Should be
NO SECRET

STRICKLAND is always civily
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- Personally Fought a SALES TAX on Groceries in Austin.
- Spearheaded The Campaign to Raise our state Welfare ceiling in behalf of our Pensioners And Handicapped.
- Personally Appeared Before Our City Council 2 Years Ago To Oppose An Admission fee to Our Zoo.

STRICKLAND Will Vote against
All Phoney-Baloney bond Proposals That
Contribute Only To Higher Taxes. (Example
\$500,000 Sub-County Court House)

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IS FOR
SECRET GOVERNMENT
ANDERSEN

Secretly Worked
For Pay Raises that
Would have Raised
his Salary to

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TARRANT TODAY

How Do Whale?

By JIM W. JONES

Petting a killer whale wasn't bad at all. Newtka, the name of the Seven Seas killer whale, felt much like a rubber inner-tube as she gracefully slithered by it a tank of artificially produced salt water at the Arlington Park.



**JIM W.
JONES**

There was a sign close by, which I hadn't seen, saying "Please Don't Pet."

It was all right to pet the whale, though, since permission had been given by officials allowing us to tour the facility prior to its March 18 opening.

Carl Chandler, one of the animal trainers, said Newtka (eskimo word for Little Anna) loves to be petted, especially scratched, but he said you have to be careful about it.

* * *

GIRLS TOO: Jim Garrison reports that girls age 7 to 18 can sign up for softball teams when boys in that age range sign up for baseball from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. tomorrow and

Use Star-Telegram Classifieds — Dial 332-7722

SHOP ALL STORES TONIGHT 'TIL 9



EDITORIALS:

City-County Library A Sensible Solution

Last December a TCU research team recommended that Tarrant County establish a countywide library system — the first in Texas — by 1973.

Last week it was reported by County Commissioner Dick Andersen that the city-county liaison committee, on which he serves, is discussing merging county and city library services.

Mr. Andersen said that he and the other members of the committee — Commissioner George Richardson and Fort Worth City Council members Margret Rimmer and Jess Johnston — are talking about going to the Legislature and asking that a special district be created for county library services.

There are some good reasons why county library unification is being discussed.

Fort Worth city taxes, though long insufficient to provide the kind of library needed in a community of this size, have contributed heavily to the support of county library services — services which have tended to be a patchwork of inequities.

"There is ample evidence," said the TCU report last December, "that in Tarrant County some cities are presently enjoying benefits without providing anything approaching a reasonable local effort to contribute what they could without undue taxpayer strain."

The remedy for this, some be-

lieve, would be a centralized operation that would include all existing and future public libraries in the county. A standardized library card would enable users to check out books from any facility in the county, and return them to any.

The idea is not new. In the early 1960s, when the Fort Worth Public Library came under expert evaluation in connection with inauguration of the branch system, experienced professionals said probably the most equitable way to finance this area's library program would be to establish a Tarrant County tax district for public library service.

To be sure, this is still looking into the future. The immediate concern is passage of the bond issue for a new main library. This new facility is badly needed, no matter what comes of the countywide library proposal.

If we were to guess, however, we would guess that city-county library merger makes so much sense that we will have it eventually, perhaps sooner than we think. And that having a suitable headquarters becomes that much more important.

A new central library, phased into unified county operation, may be the ultimate solution to providing quality library service at equitable cost to all Tarrant County citizens.

In other words: More books for your bucks.

10¢ per copy
Vol. 17, No. 36 Thursday, March 16, 1972 Pho. 237-1184



ROADMEN--Taking part in spade work for the new road connecting FM 730 with Kimbrough Rd. in Azle are, left to right, Wendal Hoover, superintendent of Azle schools, Archie Payne, supervisor for Precinct 4, George "Skeet" Richardson, County Commissioner for Precinct 4, and Reagan Fowler, assistant supervisor for Precinct 4. Commissioner Richardson's men are building the new road which will connect Walnut Creek Elementary and Azle High School with Kimbrough. It is hoped to have the road ready for use by summer.

photo by James-Charles Studio

Wednesday Evening, March 22, 1972

Anderson Offers Aid But No Solution for Zoo Fee Problem

County Commissioner Dick Andersen today formally offered to aid the city park and recreation department "in any way I can," but he admitted that he has found no solution to the zoo gate fee controversy.

"I was disappointed, I thought there would be federal funds for zoo rehabilitation, but I found out they were not available," Andersen said.

Park and Recreation Board Chairman Charles Ringler told Andersen that the board was already using all the federal funds that the commissioner had investigated during his recent trip to a conference of county officials in California.

Andersen also backed down from the estimate of the value he put on an offer to pave a zoo parking lot.

IN A LETTER to the Zoo Action Group, Andersen placed the value on the paving at \$147,000.

He said he does not really know at present what the value of the paving would be.

Charles Campbell, park and recreation director, told Andersen that the department will have \$500,000 available

for paving park drives and parking lots when bond funds from the 1970 bond election are freed from litigation.

He said the city could also get federal matching funds to go along with that.

Campbell also said that the proposed parking lot paving calls for curbs and gutters which the county is prohibited by state law from installing.

HOWEVER, Campbell gave Andersen three alternative parking lot designs to study to determine how much of the work the county could do.

Andersen said it would take 30 to 90 days for him to determine what work he could do and to place a dollar value on it.

The commissioner also called on the board to give serious consideration to a countywide park system as a long-range solution to park problems.

Several park board members agreed with Andersen that a countywide park district concept deserves serious study.

AFTER THE meeting, Harry Tension, president of the Fort Worth Zoological Association, told Andersen that he also agrees with the idea.

Tension said it would be a good tool for implementing the proposed zoo master plan.

However, Tension said he doubts the zoo master plan will ever be realized because of the opposition from some citizens and delays by City Council.

Ad Ridiculous

Since I have a relative working in the County Courthouse I was alarmed by an advertisement in the Sunday (March 12) Star-Telegram. Therefore, I telephoned every candidate for county clerk except the present incumbent who was temporarily appointed by the Commissioners Court and in whose behalf the ad appeared. All the candidates I reached assured me that they had no intentions whatsoever of firing present efficient employees and that, therefore, the ad was ridiculous.

I could care less who the county clerk is, but I do like honesty in advertising and I do not like the fact that on a recent visit to the county clerk's office all it seemed to be was an election campaign headquarters for the present incumbent. I do not want my tax dollar spent for the election campaign of an appointee of "the little red gasoline pump" gang, and therefore I shall not vote for the present appointed incumbent.

NAME WITHHELD

District Told Loan Could Save \$2 Million

Members of the Tarrant County Hospital District were told last night that approval by county commissioners of a \$5 million federal loan would save taxpayers up to \$2 million dollars over a period of 20 years.

William Taylor, Peter Smith Hospital administrator, said the federal Hill-Burton loan would mean about a 3 per cent reduction in interest for the hospital board.

Commissioners do not need to approve the loan itself, but must reaffirm their approval

of the entire \$10.175 million bond program which the loan covers. The bonds would finance additional expansion of the county-owned hospital.

Monday, commissioners balked at the approval, saying they did not have enough information about the proposal.

Hospital board members, after their briefing last night, decided to speak individually with commissioners. Board members are appointed by the commissioners.

In other business, board members decided to complete about \$400,000 in construction to alter the Catalina Apartments for office space, construction of an Alcoholic Reception Unit and expansion of the School of Nursing.

EDITORIALS:

Curb Needed on Sale Of Voter Signup Lists

County commissioners have voted to make computerized voter registration lists available to commercial firms and political candidates, as required by state law, for a price that "shall not be greater than an amount deemed sufficient to reasonably reimburse the registrar for his actual expense in furnishing the copy."

Making voter lists available is not, in itself, a new practice. The lists are public record. Before adoption of the new law — primarily a reflection of the advent of computer handling — commissioners customarily approved sale of the lists from year to year.

But the computerization of voter registration introduces some new factors that cast the entire issue in a different light.

Under the old system, there were mechanical hindrances to the wholesale distribution of the lists. Duplication by transcription was a laborious and relatively costly process.

But computer tapes can be turned out on a mass-production basis — and they probably will be. There's a huge demand for the lists from companies that conduct door-to-door and telephone sales or sell by direct mail. And the computer process has reduced the price to an alluring \$500 per list.

Noting the probability of mass distribution of the lists, the vice pres-

ident of the computer firm handling them has warned of a "flood of junk mail to Tarrant County citizens." The executive, Joe Matthews, termed this an invasion of privacy of persons registering to vote.

Mr. Matthews was concerned, in particular, about the inclusion of full voter list information on the lists sold — such facts as occupation, age, sex, Social Security number and in some cases telephone numbers, in addition to name and address.

This, we agree, should not be permitted. Since the state law does not specify what information must be given, the county can and should eliminate all information except names and addresses.

But we think, in view of the mass-distribution possibilities created by the computer system, that further steps are needed to protect voter registrants. The state law should be changed to restrict sale of the lists to non-commercial "customers."

The prospect of being inundated by unsolicited mail and telephone calls could be enough to discourage some citizens from registering. Thus it would be a definite obstruction to the democratic process.

Short of that, it would still be an unwarranted invasion of privacy which should not be tolerated, much less legally encouraged.

Thursday, March 30, 1972

Commissioners Court Names New Azle Road Stribling Drive

County Commissioner, precinct 4, George "Skeet" Richardson, announced Monday that an order had been issued by Commissioners Court to name the recently begun road connecting FM 730 with Kimbrough Rd. in Azle, Stribling Drive.

Richardson said the road would be named after Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Stribling of 108 S. Stewart, Azle. Mr. Byra Stribling is the precinct Democratic Chairman and Election Judge in local elections.

Commissioner Richardson's men are building the new road which will connect Walnut Creek Elementary and Azle High School

County Support of Legal Aid Asked

Bob Bodoin of the Junior Bar Association asked county commissioners this morning for assistance in the maintenance of the forthcoming Office of Economic Opportunity funded legal aid system.

Bodoin told commissioners that he has learned that the \$103,000, 15-month program must be maintained by the county, the bar association and the public in order to be renewed after expiration.

Maintenance, said Bodoin, will consist of \$12,000 in contributions and a 20 per cent in-kind contribution.

He said he wanted the county to contribute by allowing the new legal aid program to take over offices currently occupied by the county legal aid clinic.

Bodoin said he intends to move the legal aid program's main office into an office at the corner of Houston and Weatherford.

He wants to use the legal

clinic's office for a "family law center" to handle domestic relations matters.

He also said that the program will probably be expanded into satellite offices around the city.

Employment Fund Will End in Fall

County Auditor Jack Benson told county commissioners this morning that the county's federal Emergency Employment Act funds will be coming to an end this fall.

He advised the commissioners to take some action to insure EEA employees of jobs in case the federal government does not renew the funds.

His advise, given in the commissioners' informal meeting was that county department heads move EEA employees into permanent positions as employee attribution allows.

Benson said he doesn't really expect the federal government will refuse to renew the funding.

However, he said the program currently involves from 150 to 160 county employees and precautions should be taken.

He said that if the federal government does end the program the county would stand to lose \$700,000-\$800,000.

Commissioners Delay Hospital Fund Plan

County commissioners today delayed the Tarrant County Hospital District's plan to get a \$5 million Hill Burton loan.

Commissioners said no to hospital board representatives because, as Commissioner Dick Lewis put it, "if I am going to pass on a \$11 million bond issue, I'd like to have more than five minutes to consider."

Atty. Sterling Steves came before the court this morning asking for a re-authorization of a \$10.175 million revenue bond issue.

THE \$5 million federal three per cent loan would be a part of that bond issue.

Hospital representatives said they needed Commissioners Court reaffirmation in order to get the federal funds.

The funds are designated for the completion of Phases IV and IVA and IVB at Peter Smith Hospital.

Commissioner George Richardson said he would like to be notified sooner of what the hospital board is doing.

Commissioner Dick Andersen agreed with Lewis and Richardson and added that a number of the hospital board members don't even know about the proposal.

BOTH LEWIS and Andersen said their appointees to

the board didn't know what the proposal represented.

The commissioners recessed their formal meeting this morning so that they may be able to vote on the hospital board's request Friday.

Hospital board representatives are to meet with federal government representatives to negotiate for the loan next Monday.

STEVES SAID it was necessary to have court approval by then.

Lewis said that since the proposal was never put on this week's agenda it may not be voted on Friday and would be held over for next Monday's meeting.

Andersen Won't Vow Not to Seek Pay Raise

By RANDY NORDHEM
Candidates for county commissioners Precinct 1 answered questions from the news media Tuesday night, with all but incumbent Dick Andersen pledging not to seek salary increases for themselves during the upcoming term.
Candidates include Republicans Tom McCann Jr. and Bill Fink and Democrats Andersen, Bob Strickland, Ed Parker, Howard Hale and T. P. Bryan.
Andersen refused to make the no-increase commitment, but added that he would never ask for a pay raise that would "burden the taxpayers" or raise taxes.
Fink said he would stop the "open pocketbook policy of commissioners court."
He said he would "trim the fat" off county programs, such as stopping the abuse of the "little red gas pump," from which county employees draw gas.
McCANN SAID he also supports more efficient operation of county funds. He said the county could save money by consolidating the road and bridge fund and consolidating all precinct garages.
When questioned about whether the county should attempt to build a free highway or toll road to the regional airport, Fink said he supports a toll road "so the people using the road would be the ones paying for it."
Fink was the only candidate who favors a toll road.
McCann said he supports the coordination of county and city services if it will avoid duplication of services and save the taxpayers money.
Fink said the county should contribute money for these services, but should not take them over.
THE FOUR Democratic candidates opposing Andersen criticized Andersen for his handling of the gas pump controversy.
Bryan said only county vehicles should use gasoline from the pump with other employees having a car allowance of \$150 to \$200.
Strickland said he supports eliminating the pump, with county employees substituting a 6-cents-per-mile allowance.
Hale said he wants county employees to use gas from the pump only for county business and lease cars for work but not for employees' private uses.
Parker said by leasing automobiles over two- or three-year periods the commissioners could drive and maintain cars for half the car allowance they now receive. He said leasing cars for commissioners would save the county \$10,000 yearly.

WHEN QUESTIONED about combining city-county services such as the library, health and computer systems, Andersen said if a given service provides a countywide service, then he feels the county should quit subsidizing and take over the service.
He said the subsidizing system often results in double taxation with the urban dweller footing much of the bill for county government programs.
Strickland said although he believes in cooperation with the city, he feels the city should move "slowly on consolidation."
Parker said just because the county is bigger, it does not mean it should take over various services.
He said often the smaller municipalities in the county can provide their own services and that the county "shouldn't take over services without being asked."
Both Bryan and Hale said they favor the county's taking over of some services if it can be done fairly to all citizens. Bryan added that he opposes the county's taking over of the library system.
Andersen supported his record as commissioner by saying there had been "more constructive change in the county the last three years than in the past 100 years. We've stepped out of the archaic system of the past and moved ahead . . . toward consolidation of city-county services in the areas of health and waste disposal, and have progressed by expanding Peter Smith Hospital and building the county's juvenile detention center."

Precinct 1 Hopeful Decries Andersen's Zoo Proposal

Republican Bill Fink, a candidate for county commissioner Precinct 1, has charged that incumbent Commissioner Dick Andersen should have had the backing of the other commissioners when he proposed giving \$140,000 in in-kind services to Forest Park Zoo.
"I would like to ask Mr. Andersen where this money is coming from," Fink said in a statement released Saturday. Fink said the zoo is open to persons of all precincts and all commissioners should be involved with providing the in-kind services.
He said, "I have found no evidence that the other commissioners have volunteered to share in this project, as well they should."
"Precinct 1 taxpayers will give the \$140,000 if the other commissioners will maintain our roads until they equal the amount he (Andersen) is about to spend."

The Fort Worth Press, Tuesday, April 18, 1972

Politics barred for some on county rolls

Tarrant County's Personnel Dept. has issued a memorandum directing all employees hired under a recent federal grant to refrain from political activity on the job.
The memo didn't mention regular county employees.
"It's strictly to protect employees who fall under the jurisdiction of the Hatch Act," James McCreight, administrative assistant in the Personnel Dept., said.
THE COUNTY currently has 80 workers hired under the federal Emergency Employment Act, passed by the Nixon administration to relieve hard-core unemployment.
The Hatch Act prohibits local employees paid wholly or in part by federal funds from participating in overt political work.
The subject became an issue when Her-

The Fort Worth Press, Wednesday, April 19, 1972

Cash or paving? Issue still hot

By NANCY KEMPLIN
City estimates show that only if Commissioner Dick Andersen paves a 900-car lot at Forest Park will his in-kind gift put the Zoo Action Group (ZAG) over its \$100,000 fund drive goal.
The 900-car lot, which is recommended in the unapproved Zoo Master Plan, would cover an existing lighted softball field that is planned for use this summer.
Park and Recreation Director Charles Campbell said today that, if Andersen does indeed pave a parking lot at the zoo, "it would make more sense" to construct a 370-car lot that wouldn't disturb the softball field.
The 900-car lot, without curbs and gutters, would cost \$103,000, according to Public Works Dept. estimates. The 370-car lot would cost \$51,000. A 300-car lot would cost \$36,000.
THE ZOO ACTION GROUP has claimed that Andersen's in-kind offer should be counted toward its \$100,000 goal. City Council told ZAG leader David Knapp in December that if the goal was reached, no admission charge to the zoo would begin this year.
Some council members now say, however, that the \$100,000 must be cash. Knapp will argue at council's Monday meeting that the paving offer should count.
Council must make a final decision on the fee Monday, the last council meeting before the proposed May 1 implementation date for the gate charge.
The Public Works Dept. estimates differ greatly from those released earlier by the park and recreation board.
The board estimated the parking lot would cost \$140,000, and ZAG used that estimate in adding Andersen's offer to the near \$14,000 in cash raised.
NEITHER ESTIMATES for the 370 or 300-car lots would total \$100,000 when added to the cash amount. Cost of the 370-car lot, which Campbell favors, plus ZAG's cash, would total less than \$70,000.
Also submitted to Campbell were alternate estimates for a thinner asphalt paving. The first estimates were based on a four-inch coat of asphalt on a six-inch lime stabilized subgrade.
Three inches of hot mix on the same base would cost \$95,000 for the 900-car lot, \$33,000 for the 300-car lot or \$50,000 for the 370-car lot, city estimates show.
All estimates exclude curb and gutter, which Andersen could not install.
However, with curb and gutter, the four-inch asphalt lot would cost \$114,000 for 900 cars, \$39,000 for 300 cars and \$59,000 for 370 cars.

Pct. 1's hopefuls debate

By TERRY KELLY
Passing the microphone from hand to hand, seven candidates for county commissioner Precinct 1 answered newsmen's questions at the Press Club Forum.
Candidates for the post are Democrats Dick Andersen, T. P. Bryan, Howard Hale, Ed Parker and Bob Strickland. The two Republican candidates are Tom McCann Jr. and Bill Fink.
Acting like members of a mutual admiration society, the seven agreed with each other more times than not with usually only one person dissenting.
Fink, who favors stopping the "open pocketbook attitude" of commissioners court, was the only candidate to favor a toll road between Fort Worth and Dallas via the new regional airport.
"I FAVOR toll roads, in this instance," he said, adding that he thinks the people using the road should pay for it.
Incumbent Andersen, on the other hand, was the only candidate who said he would accept a pay raise if re-elected.
Hale said he would be "happy to sign a contract" for the same salary during the four-year term.
Parker went a step further. "The pay is very well for county commissioner; I would not seek a raise," he said. "I would take a cut in car allowances and a pay cut."
OTHER CANDIDATES favored a re-adjustment of car allowances for county workers. Strickland favors getting rid of the "little red pump" and handing out 6-cent-a-mile gas allowances.
On consolidation of city and county services, most candidates felt that the county should take over some services.
Parker said, "I don't believe they should (take over) without being asked."
Fink favored subsidizing the library and other services rather than consolidation.
However, Andersen said, "When it involves the whole county, we should quit subsidizing it and take it over."

Thursday Evening, April 27, 1972

REPORT CONTROVERSY

County Takes Panel Approach to Library

County commissioners today took the committee approach to the countywide library question.
At the suggestion of Commissioner George Richardson, the creation of a committee was approved consisting of one representative from each city in the county with a municipal library. It will study possible approaches to solving the county's library problems.
Richardson recalled a meeting last week in which the committee approach was suggested by representatives from across the county.
The controversy arose over a Texas Christian University report which suggested that a countywide system be created.
Some suburban representatives felt the report was a move by Fort Worth to take over a county-wide library system.
Commissioners approved a \$3,000 federal grant application to finance assistance in county civil service. County Personnel Director Stanley Zinn said the money would be used to hire a short-term employe to help prepare testing programs for the county.

Right Type 4-24-72

This is in answer to the accusations by candidate H. L. Arnold toward County Commissioner Dick Lewis, appearing April 11 in the Star-Telegram.
I would like to inform Mr. Arnold that Highway 121-A is completed. It merges with Highway 183 east of Euless and is now a super road (four lanes) all the way to the new airport and Dallas.
For the benefit of the people in Precinct 3 who do not know either of these men too well, I would suggest they talk with some friends who do. I don't think there will be a doubt as to who they would want to represent them.
We cry about honest and sincere government being our goal. We now have this type of man in Precinct 3 — Dick Lewis — so let's keep him.
ERIC HILL
Smithfield

Richardson Undertaking Tax Study

County Commissioner George Richardson said today he is undertaking a study of tax assessments in preparation for Board of Equalization hearings this summer.
Richardson said there is no question inequities in tax assessments exist in the county and he wants to try to prove them and find a solution.
"It's well known that the middle and lower economic groups pay more in property taxes and the upper classes pay less," he said.
He said he already knows several specific examples of inequities, but wants to study areas in various economic groupings to see just what the difference is.

Fund Lack Shelves Plan for County Computer System

Tarrant County officials pitted their proposed countywide computer system against federal bureaucracy today. The results: No computer for this year at least.
Pete Gleck, a representative of the Texas Criminal Justice Council, talked with several county officials, Fort Worth and Arlington officials and representatives from Dallas this morning concerning a grant application for an extensive computerized criminal justice information center for Tarrant County.
GLECK TOLD the men that the justice council could not fulfill the grant because the council was already over-committed on this year's funds.
He told them that they should have submitted their grant application through the North Texas Council of Governments a year ago.
Assist. Dist. Atty. Rufus Adcock, who has ramrodded the computer proposal, and County Commissioner George Richardson told Gleck they had coordinated and still are coordinating the computer plan with COG but to no avail.
Richardson said, "COG doesn't speak for Tarrant County or any other county in Texas."
He said, "We went to them (COG) for approval, but they said go make your own plan."
Gleck told the men that they would have to go through COG so that the justice council could be sure that Tarrant County's computer system fit into regional operations.
Gleck suggested that since the council couldn't fund Tarrant County this year the county try to get its program going on Dallas facilities.
DALLAS COUNTY auditor George Smith said he would make available any facilities Tarrant County needed.
Smith, however, agreed with Adcock that Tarrant County was going to have to have their own computer hardware eventually.
Adcock told reporters that getting help from Dallas really wouldn't do much good.
He said the computers Smith controls are concerned only with the courts.

Tarrant in Midst of Controversy Over Bid for Computer System Grant

By CECIL JOHNSON
The small tempest that has spun off a movement by Tarrant County officials to obtain a federal grant for a computer system is no teapot affair.
The controversy is related to a large-scale nationwide trend.
Since 1968 the U.S. Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Administration has handed out more than \$46 million to help police jurisdictions across the nation develop electronic data retrieval systems.
In Texas the receiving arm of that federal computer funding is the Texas Criminal Justice Council.
THIS YEAR'S Criminal Justice Plan for Texas calls for the dispensing of \$3.2 million to state agencies, cities, counties and combinations of units of local government that "can assure compatibility with the statewide plan."
The Justice Council and the LEAA directly have been giving the largest chunks of criminal justice information system money to Dallas, Houston and San Antonio and the counties in which those cities are located.
Tarrant County officials now believe they should be cut in on a slice of that action.
Commissioners Court on March 23 approved submit-
ting an application to LEAA for a \$1,050,141 grant to cover 75 per cent of the cost of establishing a county criminal justice computer system.
THE MONEY would be used to institute a law enforcement center for the use of all law enforcement agencies in the county.
And some commissioners look upon the law enforcement information center as the beginning of a complete computer system that will handle other county needs, including taxation, voter registration and perhaps hospital district records.
The first hint of a storm over the computer proposal came when it was unveiled to the City Council.
Councilwoman Margaret Rimmer said the system would be a duplication of services that could be provided by the city.
Councilwoman Margaret Rimmer said the system must be given the growth that is going to take place in Tarrant County within the next 10 years.
Providing the services required for that future population, Adcock believes, justifies the county's getting its share of criminal justice computer money now.
"There is a tremendous amount of LEAA money designated for Texas, and Tarrant County is not getting enough," Adcock said.

Wednesday Evening, April 26, 1972
Adcock said they appear to be receptive to the Dallas bid, since Dallas is supposed to be the regional criminal justice information center.
Adcock is to meet with the justice council, Dallas and city officials tomorrow for further discussions of the grant application.
HE CONTENTS that Dallas can't provide Tarrant County with all of the kinds of information retrieval needed.
Envisioned in the Tarrant County computer system, Adcock said, are such things as supplemental wanted persons files, known offender and dangerous person files, supplemental booking systems and systems for inventorying the jail and scheduling cases in court.
"I don't think Dallas would want to summon all our juries for us," said Adcock.
He said Dallas wants the grant to get an additional computer at three-fourths cost.
"If we contract with Dallas, they will buy a computer and charge us ad infinitum," said Adcock.
SHOULD THE county refuse to contract with Dallas after the grant ran out in three years, Dallas could take its new computer and use it for some other purpose, Adcock said.
"Anyway, can one county legally perform services for another? Dallas County can't tax Tarrant County for future financing," Adcock said.
He also said that the Dallas Sheriff's Office and the Dallas Police Department are now feuding among themselves over control of the \$20 million LEAA grant that has been awarded to the city.
He said the Tarrant County system would supplement, not duplicate, the regional services to be provided out of Dallas.
Adcock said consideration

Commissioners OK County Computer Setup Before '73

County Commissioners today voted in favor of setting up a county computer system before the beginning of 1973.

Commissioners created a planning group consisting of Auditor Jack Benson, Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin and a representative of the district attorney's office to begin work toward the computer center.

The group is to use \$10,000 in the current county budget to hire a programmer and staff to work out the county's computer needs.

THEY ARE ALSO to seek out available federal funding, primarily Law Enforcement Assistants Act funds.

Commissioner George Richardson, who is the primary mover behind the computer system, said the North Texas Council of Governments has already approved a \$250,000 grant for Tarrant County.

He said the next step is to go to the state or federal level and get LEAA approval of the COG recommendation.

Richardson, in pressing for approval of the court order over objections from Commissioner Dick Andersen, pointed out that Tarrant County is "the only or perhaps among very few" counties in the country that does not have its own computer system.

ANDERSEN OBJECTED to taking the strong stand today because he feared that some county officials, particularly County Clerk Ed Loftin and Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart, might not have an opportunity to make their needs known.

Andersen did, however, vote for Richardson's proposal.

Richardson said that his proposal puts the court 100 per cent on record in favor of a computer center "whether the federal government pays for it or the county pays for it."

He said the initial use for the computer system will be law enforcement, but he expects that it will be expanded within two or three years to cover taxing, county clerks' records and even the hospital district.

THE COMMISSIONERS Court move today, Richardson said, will also put an end to the current efforts by the Tarrant County Hospital District to buy a computer of its own.

Richardson in particular has been unhappy over the last two weeks about a hospital district move to acquire a computer system of its own without coordinating its efforts with Commissioners Court.

Mixture of Voting Devices Advised

Tarrant County's "committee on voting machines" recommended today that the county use a mixed bag of punch card and lever voting machines for the November general election.

After two weeks of study and a trip by two members of the committee to view a primary election in Spokane, Wash., the four-member study group recommended that the county acquire 700 punch card and lever voting machines on a one-year lease-purchase arrangement.

They recommended that the county also retain its 650 large, booth-type lever type voting machines.

COUNTY PUBLIC Works Director LeRoy Erwin told commissioners that the committee expected to "spread the card punch machines around the county to test public reaction."

Erwin wants card punch machines in precincts of varying education and economic standards to get a "cross section of voters."

The final decision on which precincts will use card punch and which will use lever machines is to be left with County Clerk Ed Loftin.

The committee also recommended that it be authorized to "prepare specifications for invitations to bid by the several companies who sell punch card voting machines."

THE COMMITTEE also wants a "bidding evaluation" on all the companies in the punch card business.

One source indicated that the lease arrangement could cost the county \$30,000 to \$40,000.

The committee was made up of Erwin, Loftin, County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith and County Auditor Jack Benson.

New Voting Machines Get OK

County commissioners today voted unanimously to have 700 punch card voting machines used in the November general election.

The commissioners formally accepted the recommendation of a county study committee asking for the 700 card punch machines to be used in addition to the existing 650 lever voting machines.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus said, "This will give the people an opportunity to take a look at card punch voting... It's a great step forward."

The county will acquire the 700 card punch machines on a lease-purchase arrangement with the possibility in the future of trading in the lever machines for more card punch devices.

Monday Evening, June 5, 1972

Erwin Asks Start On Plans Program

County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin asked county commissioners today to approve the first phase of the Tarrant County Comprehensive Planning Program.

Phase one is actually an effort to get the county's 37 municipalities together on starting the master plan.

ERWIN SUGGESTED that the county employ Jon Hall of Texas Christian University's department of community affairs to contact leaders in the 37 cities "to see what their stance is on the comprehensive plan."

Commissioner Jerry Mebus immediately pointed out that employing Hall to do the first phase study might be a mistake.

He said that because of a recent study on county-wide library proposals, Hall is not well liked in some of the area's larger suburbs.

Mebus and commissioner Dick Lewis added that the commissioners have already gotten in some trouble because of Hall's report on the library proposals.

COUNTY AUDITOR Jack Benson suggested that Erwin contact the Institute of Urban Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington, a suggestion to which Erwin agreed.

A suggestion to have the City of Fort Worth make the study was also nixed by commissioners for the same reason that Hall may not get the job.

Erwin told commissioners that phase one is a six-month project for which the county will not have to pay anything.

Hospital Computer Controversy Seen

Some fuses may blow at a meeting between county commissioners and the Tarrant County Hospital District Board Friday over a proposed computer system.

County Commissioner George Richardson, in a letter to board members, has complained of a lack of communications.

"In the last few months the Hospital Board and the hospital management have brought under its wing the Tarrant County Mental Health and Mental Retardation, incorporated a private telephone system in the hospital, heard reports of a countywide ambulance service possibility under the Hospital District and now are considering a computer for the hospital. All these items came up without any prior knowledge of the Commissioner's Court as far as I know," Richardson said in his letter.

STERLING STEVES, board chairman, said that "there is an obvious need for better communications, better liaison. It would help if the commissioners attended more of the meetings."

He added that Commissioner Jerry Mebus and County Judge Howard Green attend regularly, with Commissioner Dick Andersen coming sporadically.

"But," he added, "I have always understood it to be a tacit understanding that the commissioner's appointee to the board kept him informed on board business. In the past, evidently, Mr. Richardson's appointees have not done so."

The proposal of a computer system for the hospital, rather than contracting with a computer service firm, comes after more than a year's research, Steves said.

"The information was available to commissioners at any time they wanted it," Steves said.

AFTER "EXHAUSTIVE" research into the question, he said the board early this year hired Herman Smith and Associates of Newport Beach, Calif., as computer consultants.

Monday Evening, June 7, 1972

TCJC Budget Up By \$1 Million

Tarrant County Junior College expects to operate in the coming year with only a slight increase in budget that will require no new taxes locally.

Board members last night accepted a \$13,646,000 budget which reflected an increase of \$1,046,000 over last year.

The increase is the smallest in TCJC history, said Vice Chancellor C. A. Roberson.

The tax rate will remain at 40 cents per \$100 valuation 20 cents for operating budget and 20 cents for debt retirement.

TAXES HAVE not risen since the college system opened in 1965. Roberson last night told the board he does not expect any immediate increases even after construction of a third campus begins.

Roberson said the biggest portion of the budget increase, \$744,628, will go for salary increases and additional personnel. The board approved salary increases at their last meeting.

Chancellor Joe Rushing said the junior college would be adding about 30 new personnel this fall.

Estimated income for the year will include a \$5,790,000 appropriation from the state, a \$660,000 increase over last year because of the anticipated increase in enrollment.

THE AMOUNT the college will get from the state should be determined in the special session of the legislature, Roberson said. He is predicting that TCJC will get \$640 per student, an increase of \$15 over the amount received last year.

Other income will include \$2,180,000 in local taxes, \$1,740,000 in tuition and fees, \$276,000 in federal aid and \$550,000 in other income and reserves.

Also approved last night was a low bid of \$1,713,408 from the Leskar Construction Co. for the construction of three buildings on the South Campus.

THE BID was about \$200,000 lower than architect estimates for a learning resource center, faculty offices and a multi-purpose classroom building.

Construction is expected to begin next week with a fall 1973 completion date projected.

The board also selected Fort Worth National Bank as the treasury for TCJC because of a bid submitted for an effective interest rate of 5.15 per cent interest on deposits.

Friday Evening, June 16, 1972

County to Study Civil Service Rules

The first set of civil service rules ever for Tarrant County employees has been delivered to county commissioners for study.

The rules are tentative, according to a brief letter signed by Civil Service Commission Chairman Joe Bruce Cunningham.

ATTORNEYS Cunningham and Rex McIntire and labor leader Frank Barron served as the three-member commission which authored the rules.

Central to the rules are provisions concerning hiring, firing and demotions and one article which specifically states that "no person shall be removed, suspended, demoted or otherwise prejudiced" for refusing to pay or render political service to anyone.

On hiring, the rules set out specific procedures for testing and qualifying applicants for jobs. County Personnel Director Stan Zinn recently began work on the testing program.

It also set out procedures for avoiding favoritism in hiring and promotions.

ON FIRING OR otherwise changing an employee's job status, the rules set out specific reasons and methods under which such actions can legitimately be taken.

Under these provisions an employee can be suspended, demoted or removed for any one of 13 causes, including incompetence, conviction of a felony in connection with a civil disorder, inefficiency, insubordination, dishonesty, intemperance and immorality.

AN EMPLOYEE is allowed under the rules to appeal any action to the civil service commission.

The provisions also set out the technical requirements for leaves of absence and sick leave and provide that 65 will be mandatory retirement age for all county employees.

However, employees already over 65 can stay with the county until January 1978.

Thursday Evening, June 8, 1972

Hospital District to 'Use' Computer

County commissioners today made it official—the Tarrant County Hospital District will be "a user" not a "partner" in the county's computer system.

The commissioners made the subordination of the hospital district official by unanimous resolution.

The county expects to have the computer system in limited operation by early 1973.

Financing for the early work will come from a \$10,000-budget allocation and an approximate \$20,000 in uncommitted budget funds.

THE FINANCING for actual purchase of equipment and extended programming will come from a variety of sources, including the hospital district budget, Commissioner George Richardson said today.

Richardson said that the county will also use the \$170,000 currently being paid to a local computer company.

Commissioners also made official today the issuance of up to \$160,000 in time warrants for improvements in the Tarrant County jail and old Criminal Courts Building.

County Auditor Jack Benson explained that the costs of the project has run about \$70,000 over the \$1.9 million bond issue.

He said the overrun was expected and for the most part written into the contracts for the project.

"We asked for \$160,000 although I don't think it will all be used," Benson said.

IN OTHER action, commissioners asked Gov. Preston Smith to open the current special session to amendments in the laws concerning taxes, trailer brakes and the jury system.

Commissioners did not make clear in the resolutions what changes they wanted to see implemented.

Commissioners were to reconvene later today for tax equalization hearings.

Monday Evening, June 19, 1972

Hospital Spending To Be Checked

County commissioners today took action to keep close tab on Tarrant County Hospital District expenditures.

The commissioners, on a motion by George Richardson, appointed County Auditor Jack Benson to replace at-large board member Grover Swift.

Richardson told the court that the move had nothing to do with Swift personally, although he noted that the hospital accrediting agency had said the hospital board was over-weighted with legal minds. Swift is an attorney.

Richardson said that Benson was being appointed so commissioners could keep track of hospital board expenditures.

"I don't think there were any commissioners... who even knew when the bids were let" on the hospital district's latest multi-million dollar expansion, Richardson said.

Richardson said that change was prompted by recent attempt by the hospital board to fund the purchase a computer system while county was also considering buying a central computer.

"It seems like the only way we ever find out what they (the hospital board) are doing is when someone whispers it in our ear," Richardson said.

He noted that the hospital district's budget is almost as large as the country's.

6-19-72 ST/

No New Taxes Seen for County

County Auditor Jack Benson today said he foresees no new county taxes this year.

"I don't see a need for a tax increase for the county," he said in an interview.

"I am not sure what the water district is going to do, but all the other taxes collected by the county will stay the same."

Officials of the Tarrant County Water Control and Improvement District No. 1 were not immediately available for comment.

The water board sets its own tax rate, but the county tax office collects it. The water tax now is 32 cents per \$100 valuation.

Commissioners Court next month will formally set the tax rate for the coming year.

Currently the county's tax is 88 cents per \$100 valuation.

The commissioners will also set the rate for the Tarrant County Hospital District, but it is at its constitutional limit of 75 cents per \$100 valuation.

Also to stay the same is the county's special right of way and road and bridge taxes, which combined are 29 cents per \$100 valuation.

The county tax office also collects taxes for the Tarrant County Junior College District.

The college rate, 40 cents per \$100 valuation, will remain the same, trustees voted last night.

In all, the taxes collected by the county total \$2.64 per \$100 valuation.

Commissioners last year raised by six cents the county tax rate.

In a related tax matter, commissioners at 11 a.m. Monday are to begin sitting as a tax equalization board.

The purpose of the board, required by state law, is to hear and adjust—if necessary—changes in tax valuations made by the tax office.

Fort Worth officials have warned that an increase in the city's tax rate of 10 cents might be necessary this year.

Benson said he believes the growth in Tarrant County, sparked by the regional airport, will be enough to cover increasing demands for revenue to pay for county services and employees.

Friday Evening, June 16, 1972

Equalization Is Tied To County Tax Cut

County Commissioner George Richardson today said "if we could equalize (property evaluations) we could reduce taxes by 25 per cent."

He made his comments during the opening session of the county tax equalization hearings.

Commissioners Dick Andersen and Jerry Mebus voiced agreement.

Richardson drew on a study made recently by Andersen's administrative assistant which pointed out discrepancies between the county's evaluation—estimated worth for taxing purposes—on residential property and downtown commercial property.

THE STUDY, made over the last two months, compared the county's evaluation of property to that made by Fort Worth.

The report indicated that the two sets of evaluations are fairly equal on residential property.

However, Richardson said, downtown commercial property, with one exception, is valued much higher by the city than it is by the county.

Richardson also said there are discrepancies in the value of the county's rural property.

THERE IS no way for the county to compare tax rates on rural property, Richardson said. The difference between tax evaluation and actual value shows up in condemnation proceedings.

Property owners have been known to complain when the county assesses their rural holdings at a few hundred dollars an acre, but when the county condemns the property and uses the evaluation as a fair market value, the same property owners take the condemnation to court and collect thousands of dollars an acre, Richardson said.

Monday Evening, June 19, 1972

ANN CARL KENNEDY, ST/

6-19-72 ST/

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He noted that the hospital district's budget is almost as large as the country's.

INCORRECT REPORT CHARGED

Andersen Name Removal Sought

Bob Strickland, unsuccessful candidate for the Democratic nomination for county commissioner, today said he will ask a district court judge to order the name of the Democratic primary winner removed from the November general ballot.

ANDERSEN IS in Washington, D.C. this week for a Na-

Andersen Denies Charge He Didn't Report All Ad Expenses

County Commissioner Dick Andersen denied last night charges made by his defeated opponent, Bob Strickland, that the commissioner didn't report all his campaign advertising expenses.

Andersen's expense forms filed with the county clerk for the runoff indicate that \$1,438.18 was spent on "newspaper and other advertising publicity."

Same Hospital Tax Rate Asked

The Tarrant County Hospital District Board will ask county commissioners to leave their tax rate at 75 cents per \$100 valuation at the July 10 tax hearing.

County Asked to OK Teen Pageant Pact

Lou Owen and Herman Smith of the Tarrant County Convention Center told Commissioners Court today that they have made arrangements to keep the Miss Teen-Age America Pageant in Fort Worth for at least one more year.

Richardson Due State Labor Post

Tarrant County Commissioner George Richardson, a former state legislator, is expected to be appointed commissioner of the Texas Bureau of Labor Statistics.

"I UNDERSTAND there is a rumor I may be appointed, and I will consider it when I am offered the job," said Richardson.

Appeal Delivered On Civil Service

Several county officials today delivered an 11th-hour appeal on the forthcoming county civil service system.

THE OFFICIALS were told by Commissioner George Richardson that civil service was not only beyond their control but beyond Commissioner Court's control.

Civil Service Rules Opposed by Officials

Several Tarrant County officeholders met with the three-member County Civil Service Board Monday afternoon to voice their discontent with the proposed rules of the county's new civil service program.

Commissioner member Frank Barron said, "We didn't draw the rules up for elected officials, we drew them up for the employees. If we had drawn them up for the officials we probably wouldn't have any rules today."

3rd County Tax Decrease Due Vote by Commissioners

County commissioners Monday could become the third governmental board to lower taxes here this year.

Commissioners Knock 2 Cents Off County Tax Rate

Tarrant County commissioners today made it official — the county tax rate will be reduced by 2 cents.

Board OKs Two Computer Plans

Two out of three isn't bad, and that was Peter Smith Hospital Administrator Bill Taylor's batting average yesterday on further planning for a county hospital-county shared computer system.

THE FIRST was approved unanimously by the board, which voted to hire part-time EDS personnel as needed for technical assistance in re-writing the existing programs.

But Taylor ran into opposition on his second proposal to contract with IBM for some of their people to write several new programs dealing with such areas as patient billing.

"MR. BENSON," King said, "you're very new to the board and you simply don't know as much as you should about the hospital's problems."

Board members voted to have Gus Schumann, head of the data processing department, to report to them instead.

for the additional programs, nor, he said, did he disapprove of IBM to provide the services.

BUT HE ARGUED for a delay in a decision by the board until county commissioners decide which computer hardware, or machinery, they will buy after taking bids.

TAYLOR DISAGREED, and said two months had already passed since EDS was given notice of termination and he was "extremely leery" of any further delays.

"You will save money by waiting," he argued. "You don't need those new programs now, anyway. They could even be written after the takeover."

Board members took a vote to that effect yesterday during their monthly board meeting.

Plans Revealed for County Park Project

County Commissioner Dick Andersen said today the county's public works department is preparing federal grant applications for a recreation area that he wants to build south of Fort Worth along Deer Creek.

County Officials Mull Purchase of Pugg Mills

County officials are considering the purchase of several pieces of asphalt mixing equipment to upgrade the quality of county roads.

COUNTY TO SELL SPORTING ARMS, BUT NOT OLD CLOTHES

The Tarrant County sheriff's sale is a step closer to reality now that county officials know what can be sold — and what can't.

Microfilm Suggested For Records Storage

County Clerk Ed Loftin asked Commissioners Court today for more storage space and was told he might consider using some "caves in Oklahoma."

Richardson Hasn't Been Offered Post

County Commissioner George Richardson said today that he has not received any notification from Austin that he may be appointed state commissioner of labor statistics.

Youth Services' Plea For Funds Rejected

Representatives of the federally funded Youth Services Bureau today failed to get an additional \$14,000 in county money.

HE SAID THAT the bureau is funded by the Criminal Justice Council and that the council is now asking for an increase in local funding.

The bureau had requested an increase from the City of Fort Worth recently and were turned down.

COUNTY SERVICES

Richardson To Propose Combination

County Commissioner George Richardson said today that he will ask other commissioners to transfer the county's central garage, complete with the "little red gas pump," from Precinct 4 control to the county public works department's control.

RICHARDSON SAID his suggestion is a follow-up to the recent combining of the commissioners' road and bridge funds and the county general fund.

Taking the central garage and the county's parking facilities away from Precinct 4 and placing it under Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin will save the county "a little" money, Richardson said.

The Precinct 4 commissioner said that most of the savings would probably come from personnel.

Currently, some of the employees working in the central garage are political appointees.

RICHARDSON SAID that by putting Erwin in as a "buffer" between the commissioners and the employees, the county might be able to better regulate the quality of personnel it hires and fires — or in some instances, doesn't fire.

In connection with the transfer, Richardson said he has asked Erwin to conduct a feasibility study on building a county parking garage on the existing parking lot behind the county's two criminal courts buildings.

The county has a severe parking problem which Richardson explains as, "We've got 1,100 employees and 150 parking spaces."

Commissioners have talked in recent weeks about several solutions, including one suggested by Richardson, i.e., putting gates on the lots to limit access and or charging employees for parking to finance new parking lots.

Need for Port Link Held Not Immediate

County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin has told county commissioners there is no immediate need for a new highway to service the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport, but "...any efforts to obtain right-of-way in the near future would be desirable..."

Erwin, in a memo to County Judge Howard Green and commissioners, cited a number of traffic volume studies that he claims show existing roads with already planned expansions will be adequate until 1985 or 1990.

Erwin's statistics appear to back up a recent report by the North Texas Council of Governments.

The figures controvert estimates of traffic volume put forth by Dee Kelley of the Texas Turnpike Authority.

Erwin said that the existing Dallas-Fort Worth Turnpike is operating at approximately 50 per cent capacity during the tourist season and at "considerably below" the 50 per cent figure in the off season.

He said that considering projected improvements on Texas 121, Texas 183 and Spur 350 "which parallels the toll road, that adequate airport egress and ingress will be provided during the next 10 to 15 years."

On the basis of land projections in the Mid-Cities area, Erwin recommended that an additional traffic artery will be needed by 1990.

Computer Contract to Be Re-Awarded

County commissioners will let contracts for a computer and programming package in the near future, as a result of a hospital board meeting yesterday attended by majority of the commissioners.

The Tarrant County Hospital District Board suspended a contract with IBM for computer systems analysis and agreed to wait 45 days for open bidding before reawarding the contract for new programs they need.

A CONTRACT already signed with IBM will be broken by the re-bidding, and county legal adviser Jim Morgan said IBM could sue for some part of \$14,000, if it wished.

However, board member Jack Benson said he felt that so long as IBM was competing in open bidding, it would accommodate the district.

The IBM contract was

brought before the board again by Benson, who with board member Hugh Parmer voted against the contract at the last meeting.

Benson suggested that two local companies, Commercial Computers Service and Integer Co., be permitted to bid on the hospital systems work.

HOSPITAL administrator William Taylor suggested that bidding be thrown open, if the board wished to open bidding.

Commissioners, with the exception of George Richardson, who was not present, expressed desire for open bidding and agreed with Parmer that a hardware and software (computer and programs) package would save money.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said the commissioners were ready now to open bidding for the computers to be used by the county and Peter

Smith Hospital, and could have bids back "in a short time."

Board members voted to delay 45 days, until the date for their August board meeting.

IN OTHER business, Parmer, who had expressed dissatisfaction after the last board meeting at information re-

ceived before voting on the computer issue, announced to the board his intent to amend the bylaws at the next meeting. He said he wants to require items costing more than \$5,000 to be on the agenda for two meetings before board members vote.

He said he would be amenable to compromise on his motion.

Further Cut Proposed in County Tax

Reduction Of 2 Cents Considered

Further Cut Proposed in County Tax

From Page 1

By JIM DAVIS

The proposed reduction in county taxes went from 1 cent to 2 cents today.

County commissioners meeting informally this morning agreed to merge tax funds for the county which, they think, will produce enough surplus cash to reduce county taxes from 88 cents to 86 cents on \$100 property valuation.

Even County Auditor Jack Benson, who earlier this week said that a 1 cent reduction would mean a cut in county services, now thinks a tax reduction is feasible.

THE COMMISSIONERS Monday will apparently approve a recommendation from Benson to combine the county's general fund and road and bridge funds.

The general fund tax rate is at its legal maximum — 80 cents per \$100 valuation.

The road and bridge, which is divided among the four commissioners for precinct work, is now at 8 cents per \$100. It has a legal maximum of 15 cents per \$100.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said some money will be gained in the general fund because surpluses in each of the four road and bridge funds will no longer be retained by each commissioner.

The surpluses will now automatically become part of the general fund.

THE COMMISSIONERS also said they expect to create an equipment pool for specialized equipment which is now held individually by the commissioners.

There is also a possibility of centralized purchasing for such equipment.

Andersen said that the pool arrangement is something commissioners already do informally.

If the proposal is approved, Monday, the commissioners will...

tioners, will become like all other county departments.

Each commissioner will have to draft an itemized budget starting in 1973 for each year's operations.

THE COMMISSIONERS currently work on an informal sort of budget arrangement for the spending of their share of the road and bridge fund.

Each commissioner will also be allowed a \$50,000 "emergency contingency fund."

Three commissioners, Andersen, Jerry Mebus, and Dick Lewis, and County Judge Howard Green were present today and were in agreement on the proposal.

Commissioner George Richardson evidently will be in agreement since he is the one who suggested a 1 cent tax decrease earlier this week based on the growth of Tarrant County's taxable property.

Today's maneuver, in part, solves another problem for Mebus.

EARLY THIS year, Richardson and Green proposed a total unit system for Tarrant County.

That proposal would not only have brought the road and bridge fund into the general fund, but would also have combined precinct operations under a central public works department.

Mebus was opposed to that possibility and suggested a "modified unit system" which is very similar to the proposal agreed upon today.

Mebus said today that he considers a total unit system "very far in the future, as far as I'm concerned."

ANDERSEN also is evidently opposed to the complete unit system, saying, "We have too many roads to work on now to go to a unit operation."

In other action, Benson told commissioners that there will probably be enough money in the 1973 county budget to support a "4 or maybe 5 per cent" pay increase for county employees.

The brief discussion on raises almost immediately evolved into talks of increases for elected officials.

Benson gave commissioners the almost traditional argument for such raises:

"Elected officials' expenses go up too.

"Compared to other counties we are way behind."

Plans Revealed for County Park Project

County Commissioner Dick Andersen said today the county's public works department is preparing federal grant applications for a recreation area that he wants to build south of Fort Worth along Deer Creek.

Andersen revealed plans for the four-phase project which he says will cost about \$1 million.

Included in the project are baseball diamonds, tennis

courts, picnic areas, bridge and bicycle paths and a nine-hole golf course.

Andersen said that the public works planners "may have gotten a little carried away" because Phase IV includes swimming pool facilities.

The recreational facility is to be located along Deer Creek between Interstate 35W and Crowley Road.

Andersen said the park will cover 157 acres.

He said that he has already talked to one property owner in the area who was willing to let the county have some land at very low cost.

The land on which the park will be located is flood plain land and probably will not be useful for much more than parks, Andersen said.

The commissioner will go before officials from the cities of Crowley and Everman soon to get their approval.

Committee May Study City-County Health Service

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The committee, to be chaired by Dr. W. V. Bradshaw, who is director of city-county health services under a temporary arrangement, would recommend a permanent means of organizing and financing health services.

One suggestion has been that the Tarrant County Hospital District take over such

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The county, the city and the medical society each would have three members on the proposed committee.

Friday Evening, July 21, 1972

County Officials Mull Purchase of Pugg Mills

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The devices are called pugg mills.

For approximately \$100,000, the county can get two pugg mills and associated equipment, said Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin.

Commissioners informally authorized Erwin today to be-

gin preparing specifications for the purchase.

The pieces of equipment, Erwin said, produce asphalt from such material as gravel and sand.

The asphalt will be used as a base for county roads instead of gravel, Erwin said.

The county is now using a gravel base for their roads, but Erwin said that gravel is now in short supply.

Monday Evening, July 24, 1972

Works Department to Run County Garage

After centralizing control of the county's central garage today, commissioners started talking of going a step further.

Commissioners voted unanimously to move control of the central garage from Precinct 4 to the county public works department.

The vote came on a resolution by Precinct 4 Commissioner George Richardson.

After the brief formal meeting, Richardson suggested that the commissioners also give Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin control of county maintenance men janitorial employees.

THE TRANSFER of control of the garage involved eight county employees. The sug-

gested transfer of maintenance services involves almost 64 employees.

The maintenance and janitorial services are currently under the control of Precinct 2 Commissioner Jerry Mebus.

The employees are supervised by County Building Engineer Grady Bratcher, who, Richardson said, is in a position of having to come to commissioners court to get anything done.

Commissioner Dick Lewis voiced his agreement with Richardson's suggestion.

MEBUS SAID that the had rather not make the transfer right now, because he has been using the employees to "make improvements in the physical condition of the courthouse."

"I had rather go as far as we can with them before turning it (control of the employees) over to public works."

He said it would be six months to a year before he would be ready to make the transfer.

However, Mebus said, if another commissioner brought up the proposal, he would not oppose it.

FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

MORNING

TUESDAY, JULY 25, 1972

NINETY-SECOND YEAR, NO. 176

38 Pages in 3 Sections
PRICE TEN CENTS

Loftin to Be Investigated By Tarrant Commissioners

Inquiry to Study Irregularity Report

By BOB-RAY SANDERS

Tarrant County commissioners have agreed to investigate reports that County Clerk Ed Loftin is accepting kickbacks from his employees, keeping an illegal "flower fund" and conducting a lottery in his office.

The decision of the four commissioners came after the court members learned of an investigation which was conducted by the Star-Telegram concerning the allegations.

At least two commissioners had received reports of the alleged wrongdoings within the office, and two employees told the Star-Telegram of the irregularities.

"I think this court of inquiry by the commissioners is the only way," Commissioner Dick Andersen said.

HE SAID the employee in Loftin's office "would be more willing to talk to us behind closed doors..."

The Star-Telegram learned that the commissioners discussed the matter during a meeting last week with the county legal adviser.

Andersen said he was willing to take the step toward "cleaning up the courthouse."

"I think it's essential that the commissioners court holds a court of inquiry, and that's for quotes," Andersen said.

"And I can guarantee you something, that the commissioners court simply won't tolerate that type of activity."

Andersen said he had received reports of alleged wrongdoing in the county clerk's office and two other county offices.

ONE CASE now pending before the county's new Civil Service Commission alleges that a former sheriff's employee was dismissed because he did not contribute to the political campaign of his employer.

Loftin denied all charges, saying, "I never ask any of my employees for anything."

He admitted there was a "flower fund, and when asked about a lottery, he said the department "started something to build up a little fund for our Christmas party, but that's all."

One employee told the Star-Telegram that in February— one week after the Democratic Primary filing deadline—Loftin asked all employees to give 6 per cent of one month's salary to his campaign.

"This was not voluntary," the employee said.

Loftin said no one has to donate to the flower fund, and

he, himself, donates money to the fund.

"Baloney, there wasn't anything used in my campaign from the flower fund," Loftin told the Star-Telegram. "There's not that much money in it."

He said, "It (the flower fund) is a free-will contribution."

EMPLOYEES say they are told that the lottery is to be used for Loftin's campaign. Chances are sold at \$1 each, one employee said.

A desk bank was offered in the first lottery, and 45

Turn to Court on Page 2

Chest Pains Put Johnson In Hospital

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Former President Lyndon B. Johnson, who suffered the second heart attack of his life in April, was hospitalized here Monday night after suffering chest pains and nausea, a hospital spokesman said.

The Army's Brooke General Hospital reported that the former chief executive was "comfortable, in excellent spirits, and his general condition is quite satisfactory."

"There have been no irregularities in heart rhythm or blood pressure," said a spokesman.

The former president suffered a heart attack on April 7, and recuperated at Brooke for several days before he was released.

He has returned to Brooke occasionally for routine follow-up examinations, and the hospital said he had been scheduled for a routine check-up on Tuesday.

"However, on the evening of the 24th (Monday), he developed some chest pain and nausea," a hospital spokesman said.

"He was flown to San Antonio by a private plane based at his ranch. He was admitted at 9:15 p.m. CDT to Brooke General Hospital for observation."

The hospital said it may be "several days before any definite conclusions may be drawn about the nature of his present illness."

Monday Evening, July 24, 1972

City-County Health Study Panel OK'd

City council and Commissioners Court today approved creation of a committee to study city-county health services.

Commissioners also named three men to the committee—Commissioner Jerry Mebus, Keller builder Bob Watson and Fort Worth businessman Gene Cordell.

Both groups approved creation of the committee unanimously.

Commissioners, in a resolution said the committee would be "to study health needs and recommend to the city council and commissioners court the most effective means of organizing and financing a joint city-county health department."

Council is to appoint three members to the committee, and another three are to be named by the Tarrant County Medical Society.

County Civil Service Imminent

Tarrant County is apparently going to enact its civil service regulations soon despite vehement objections from a number of county officials.

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However, the three-member commission and county commissioners met behind closed doors in County Commissioner Dick Andersen's office after the session.

ANDERSEN said today that the group decided to adopt the civil service rules and regulations as written.

A reliable source said that the objecting officials were actually seeking to have civil

service postponed until after the November elections.

The source said, "They want to keep control of their employees until then."

Andersen said that other commissioners were apparently very pleased with the rules and regulations as they were written by the commission, consisting of labor leader Frank Barron and attorneys Rex McEntire and Joe Bruce Cunningham.

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The group's prime concern

seemed to be over allowing the county's personnel department to do most of the county's hiring.

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FIRED EMPLOYEE 7/14/72 Complaints About Orphanage Given

John Burton, a recently discharged employee of Lena Pope Home, expanded his case against the home's administrators today in telling county commissioners of wastes of money and supplies at the center.

Burton asked commissioners to investigate conditions at the home. He complained of waste and racist treatment of employees and children.

Commissioners, after hearing Burton's accusations, referred the investigation to the

county's Human Relations Commission and child welfare officials for consideration.

COMMISSIONER George Richardson said that the county's only tie to the home is through the money paid for services.

Burton cited cases at the home of property being destroyed by the children and nothing being done.

Burton told commissioners of racism on the part of the home's officials, a story he also told to United Fund representatives yesterday in an effort to get them to investigate the home.

He said that the black children at the home do not get the same care as the whites.

J. LELAND HACKER, home executive director, earlier had said he had not been informed of any charges by Burton and maintained there was no controversy at the home.

"He (Burton) was dismissed because he wasn't able to do the job, and his accusations are completely groundless," Hacker said. Burton said he was told he was fired because he stole something. The accusations weren't proved, he said.

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The society also asked that commissioners and the Fort Worth City Council follow through on a recommendation from Health Service Director Dr. W. V. Bradshaw.

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MRS. RIMMER is now working on a resolution that will be submitted to commissioners and councilmen for consideration.

Richardson had no comment on the medical society's determination to exclude the hospital district from county health services except to say that the doctors are "more expert in this than I am."

He said the original intention of commissioners was to incorporate city-county health services into the operations of Peter Smith Hospital.

Richardson also projected his long-range hopes for the combined health service, saying that all health operations should be included, such as health licensing and sanitary control.

Court Will Study Loftin 'Irregularities'

Continued From Page 1

chances were sold, one source said. In the second lottery, in which a clock was offered, 50 to 55 chances were sold.

Friday, the employees bought chances on a candle, sources say.

"This has nothing to do with a campaign," Loftin said. "I'm not in a campaign."

Other reports allege that during the last two weeks of Loftin's campaign, none of the employees had lunch hours because they were all assigned streets to work in the downtown area.

One employe said they had deadlines on the contributions to be made to the campaign. The employe said a non-compulsory request included buying post cards by the thousand to be used in the campaign.

"And every Wednesday, we made signs," the employe said. "You were supposed to show up, too."

Another employe said a slip of paper was given each employe which showed the percentage amount he was asked to give.

The employees were told, the Star-Telegram learned, that if they did not have the money, they could borrow it from the county's credit union and Loftin would assure them their loan would be approved. (The county clerk, Loftin, and the bookkeeper authorize loans, an employe said.)

Prior to the May primary, employees were asked to donate \$25 to Loftin's campaign to be used to buy radio advertisements, and each employe was asked to take out a newspaper ad saying, "I support Ed Loftin," an employe said.

A FLOWER fund has been traditional around the courthouse. In the past, commissioners pointed out, office holders used the flower fund to fund their campaigns.

More than one employe said

Youth Held In Incident At Prison

Continued From Page 1

prison to try and force its reinstatement.

He said the youth eventually telephoned his mother, Mrs. Betty Craig, who entered the office and persuaded her son to release the other hostages.

"Why are you holding all these women?" he quoted her as saying. FBI agents said the boy questioned the other man present, Chief Correctional Supervisor Sherman Davis, about his children and insurance before allowing him to leave.

MOBLEY SAID the youth finally placed the weapon on a desk and surrendered to FBI agents waiting outside the office.

At the arraignment later, Asst. U.S. Atty. Conard Florence said, "It is my understanding that he has had some kind of (psychiatric) care and took some treatment at Galveston. I don't know which hospital it was in."

Craig, who remained in custody of the U.S. Marshal Monday night, said he had been unemployed three to five months. "I quit to go back to school, but I never did," he said.

Tour Planned By Youth Choir

The Texas Youth Choir

Loftin asks each employe to give \$2 a month to the "flower fund" to be used to help finance his campaign two years from now.

A check in the county's personnel office shows that there are 51 employes in the office now and, sometimes there are more. The figure would mean more than \$100 a month goes into the lower fund. Salaries of county clerk employes range from \$450 to \$900 a month.

An employe said the flower fund was depleted during the last campaign, and recently when the office wanted to send flowers to an individual, money had to be collected individually.

Commissioner George Richardson, who led the fight for county civil service, said he also had heard of irregularities in county offices.

"It's got to stop," he said, adding that a court of inquiry was the only way.

* * *

COMMISSIONER Dick Lewis said of the inquiry, "If that's what it takes to stop it, I certainly am in favor of it."

Precinct 2 Commissioner Jerry Mebus said he wanted to see the matter come before the commissioners rather than a grand jury.

It is not a common practice for the commissioners to conduct courts in inquiry, but "the commissioners court is entitled to look into about anything it wants," County Legal Adviser Jim Morgan said.

He said in a regular court of inquiry a district judge investigates matters with the help of the district attorney's office.

"During the campaign people came to me and said, 'Can we buy radio spots or paper spots?'" Loftin said.

"I said, 'I guess you can. They've got them down there to sell.' They said, 'Well, we want to advertise for you.'"

Loftin said he didn't ask his employes to do "one cotton-picking thing in that respect."

* * *

HE SAID he didn't put any pressure on anybody. "I don't believe in it."

Loftin said, "Today (Monday) is the first day I've heard about it. Like I say, I have never asked anyone to contribute anything to my campaign whatsoever."

A commissioners' court of inquiry would mean that persons would be called to answer questions of the commissioners and County Judge Howard Green.

No district judge would be involved.

Costs of Car I Likely to Be R

Continued From Page 1

per cent for full coverage comprehensive.

The statewide rate percentage change indicated by the insurance board staff called for a 10.3 per cent reduction for bodily injury and property damage liability coverage, a 17.1 per cent decrease in the cost of collision coverage and a 9.3 per cent reduction in comprehensive coverage.

David B. Irons, spokesman for the Texas Automobile Insurance Service Office, an advisory organization with 324 member companies writing 98 per cent of all auto insurance policies in the state, said their recommendations will mean a drop in private passenger premiums of more than \$67 million.

The industry's recommendations include a proposed reduction of 9.7 per cent for bodily injury and property damage liability coverages, a decrease of 16.6 per cent in the cost of collision coverage

Civil Service Board To Adopt New Rules

The county civil service commissioner will adopt its new rules before this week is over, commission member Joe Bruce Cunningham said in a crowded commissioners courtroom Wednesday afternoon.

Cunningham made the statement during a meeting of the commission which was called to hear last-minute suggestions for changing the proposed rules.

Several county officials reiterated their position opposing some of the rules which prohibited them from directly hiring new employees.

Under the rules, three persons will be sent to department heads from the county's personnel office. The department heads will have an opportunity to choose one or reject all. If all are rejected, specific reasons must be given for not hiring one of the prospective employees.

The three commission members will definitely change the rule dealing with pregnant employees of the county. The proposed rule stated that women must leave work in their sixth month of pregnancy.

Cunningham stated that a federal law had been called to their attention which would prohibit requiring women to leave work at any given time because of pregnancy.

Suzann Denton-Pratt, a representative of the National Organization of Women addressed the commission on the pregnancy subject Wednesday.

She said the proposed civil service code "is in violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as a result of the legislation signed by President Nixon in March, 1972."

"If this section of the code is passed, the National Organization of Women will immediately file complaints with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance. Pregnancy and all disabilities related to it are to be treated the same as any temporary disability."

The commission agreed that pregnancy should be treated as other temporary illnesses and decided to retain the 90-day accumulative sick leave policy of the county.

County employees now have 21 days of sick leave a year.

Another proposed change would call for extending the probationary period for sheriff's deputies and deputy constables from six months to one year. There is also the possibility that district attorney criminal investigators would be in the same class as deputies.

County First to Implement Civil Service Plan

At 2:15 p.m. yesterday Tarrant County employees became the first and only county employees in Texas to be working under a full-blown civil service system.

And within minutes of enacting the rules for county civil service, the civil service commission took its first official action on employee complaints—no action.

In the months between the passage of a commissioners court order adopting civil service in the county and the adoption of the rules for the job protection program yesterday, five complaints of wrongful firings have been filed with the civil service commission.

Two of the complaints were from County Clerk Ed Loftin's office—firings which came in the midst of allegations of political misconduct on Loftin's part.

THE NEW CIVIL service rules outlaw firing for political reasons.

However, the members of the three-man-commission refused to hold hearings on the cases because they said that the rules were not in effect at the time of the firings.

Commission member Joe Bruce Cunningham said that because the rules didn't exist the employers had no guidelines to go by for terminations.

The commission apparently refused action on the cases because an appeal of any action they might take in the cases would not stand the test in court, because any action would be one of enforcing ex post facto rules.

Commission member Frank Barron, a local labor leader, said he thought the commission was on good ground in its no action decision, "since there are two lawyers on the commission"—Cunningham and Rex McEntire.

The civil service rules provide that potential county employees be tested for ability before being hired.

An employer will receive the names of the three top scorers on the qualification tests when he wants to fill a vacant position. He can select from the three or if he turns down all three he can get three more names.

Firing essentially is supposed to be held to inability to perform.

Commissioners OK Money for Shelter

Over the objections of County Commissioner Jerry Mebus, Commissioners Court today approved \$6,000 in assistance to a "emergency residential shelter for troubled persons."

The \$6,000 is local government support for a Criminal Justice grant for the facility run by the Bridge Association, Inc.

The association is to get \$18,000 from the federal government and needed \$6,000 in matching local funds.

MEBUS OBJECTED to the county funding because he said it didn't fit into the traditional services of the county.

He said that county services should more normally be providing roads and other such things.

He also said that the county is already spending about \$1 million on welfare a year.

County Eyes Discount Sign Output

County officials are planning another contribution to reducing the cost of living of the county's communities — this time discount prices on highway signs.

In two or three months the county's sign shop, adjacent to the county central garage, will be opened and producing the new international road signs for county roads.

County Purchasing Agent Ed Smith is considering making the sign shop serve more than just the county. He wants to make the county-produced signs available to local communities about 25 per cent below retail prices.

THE SHELTER is designed to provide emergency residence for such persons as runaways, stranded travelers and persons facing domestic and personal problems.

It has been in operation for some time, financed by local contributions.

Bob Sims, residential manager of the association, told commissioners today that the federal grant will allow the shelter to expand its services.

Money for Jail Work Approved

Tarrant County commissioners today voted unanimously to provide money for alterations in the county jail in compliance with standards set down by U.S. District Judge Sarah T. Hughes.

The modifications will be to three cells on the 11th floor of the jail, adding commodes and drinking fountains.

Sheriff Lon Evans has estimated the cost of the project at \$4,600.

However, County Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin told commissioners that the work probably can be done for less.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION Rules Dispute Settled by Group

The county Civil Service Commission has taken care of a pair of problems that developed in its proposed rules, and was to meet this afternoon to adopt the rules.

The commission met yesterday, but didn't adopt rules for operation because it was determined two proposals weren't consistent with federal or state requirements.

Those two problems were settled in a meeting later yesterday.

THE CONFLICTING rules dealt with sick leave policy for pregnant women and the probationary period for law officers.

The proposed rules contained a clause that stated that women must leave work in their sixth month of pregnancy.

Commission head Joe Bruce Cunningham said the pregnancy clause was not in compliance with federal equal opportunity regulations.

The revised civil service rules will not contain any pregnancy clause, Cunningham said today.

"PREGNANCIES will be treated like any other illness," the attorney said.

The proposed regulations had also called for a six month probationary period for all county employees (a period in which new employees could be fired without cause).

State statutes require that a law officer be on the job for 12 months before being certified.

To be consistent with the state requirement the commission has changed the probationary period for law officers to 12 months, Cunningham said.

Several county officials had objected to the six-month probationary period for law officers because they felt that they might be stuck with uncertified officers.

CUNNINGHAM'S action was taken on a suggestion to increase the amount of accumulated sick leave county employees are eligible for.

The proposed rules provided for an employee to get 21 days of sick leave a year and to accumulate up to 90 days.

J. D. Givens told the commission he felt the accumulated time should be 120 or 150 days.

Givens, who also represents Tarrant County employees union, said experience has proven that the greater the allowed accumulative sick leave the less employees abuse sick leave privileges.

Attorneys Studying Action in Firings of 2 Loftin Workers

Two attorneys representing Mrs. Judy Draddy and Mrs. Alice Brown, who were fired recently by County Clerk Ed Loftin, said today they are considering several courses of action to force an investigation of Loftin's political activities.

Wayne Kreis said that he has talked with Dist. Atty. Doug Crouch in an effort to have him initiate proceedings in District Court to investigate Loftin.

KREIS SAID that Crouch has refused to take any action.

The proceeding is a trial proceeding called for by the Texas Election Code in cases of alleged violations of the campaign practices rules.

Kreis said that since Crouch refused to take action, he is considering asking a district court to issue a writ forcing the district attorney to act.

He said he and his partner, John Chambers, may also ask the state attorney general's office to take some action in Loftin's case.

"SOMEONE HAS to handle this and get it cleared up," Kreis said.

In the case of Mrs. Draddy and Mrs. Brown, who were fired about two weeks ago in the midst of a controversy about Loftin's campaign practices, the attorneys said they may seek a writ to force the county's civil service commission to have a hearing on the terminations.

Last week, immediately after adopting rules for county civil service, the three-man commission took a "no action" stand on the terminations, saying that to act now would be to enforce ex post facto rules.

AUSTIN — A task force on judicial reform recommended that state law make a clear distinction between the administrative and judicial functions of county officials.

The task force, headed by State Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert W. Calvert, suggested yesterday that the name of the county governing body be changed from "county commissioners court" to "the county commission" and that its presiding officer no longer be called "judge" but "president."

CALVERT SAID the changes would make it clear that the county "commission" is an administrative, not a judicial body.

The proposal for county officials was incorporated into the task force's earlier recommendations for streamlining the Texas court system from top to bottom.

The amended report also provides that judges of county commissioners courts who are licensed to practice law may, on written notice to the governor, elect to become judges of county courts at law rather than presiding over the county commission.

The overall proposal provides that the judicial system would be composed of a supreme court, courts of appeals, district courts, county courts at law "and no others."

JURISDICTION of all courts and the number of courts within any political subdivision would be left to the discretion of the state legislature.

The revisions in the judicial system would be put to the voters in the form of a constitutional amendment, if approved by the next legislature, in 1973 or 1974.

The proposal also provides that all present judicial personnel, including judges, clerks, prosecutors and others, would be absorbed into the new system.

Calvert said a number of regional citizens conferences for review of the recommendations will be scheduled for this fall. The hearing for the Fort Worth-Dallas area has been set for Oct. 6.

Civil Service Changes Application Procedures

Civil service for Tarrant County has presented a whole new situation for county employees and for county officials—and it now even presents a new situation for applicants for county jobs.

County personnel director Stanley Zinn said that all those persons who have applied for county jobs in the past and who are still interested in the jobs will have to re-apply.

The applicants will file an address card in Zinn's office which will be held until the type of position they are seeking becomes open.

When a position does become open the prospective employee will be contacted and asked to return to the Courthouse to fill out a full application and to take a civil service test for the job.

Zinn said that the reason old applicants are being asked to re-apply is civil service and the new procedures.

He said that filed applications are going to be destroyed in the next few weeks.

County Functions Clarification Urged

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Courthouse Flower Funds A Tradition That Should Go

There are at least three "flower funds" in the Tarrant County Courthouse, with at least 200 employees donating between 50 cents and \$2 a month.

When one considers the amount of money going into these flower funds, it might seem a good idea for commissioners to consider purchasing a floral shop. However, this is by no means a suggestion to the five members of Commissioners Court.

There is no question that in the past some courthouse flower funds, which are supposed to be used for flowers and other condolences, have been used as re-election kitties.

"Flower funds have been here since the courthouse has," said one county official.

Another explained, "It's hard to get the average citizen interested enough in most county races to contribute money, so the (county) official has to come up with the money himself."

The three officials who now admit to having flower funds in their offices say the money is not misused. They also contend that the donations are strictly voluntary — that there is no coercion on the part of the elected official.

As long as flower funds exist, however, there will be claims that the money is forced out of the employees and is used as contributions to political campaigns.

Certainly, there is no need for a county floral shop, but there is definitely a need for abolishing the old tradition of courthouse flower funds.

The mere existence of the flower funds continues to breed the rumors and allegations which no county administrator should have to put up with if he is honestly, conscientiously and efficiently doing his job.

The suggestion to county commissioners and other county officials is to do away with flower funds and other money-raising schemes in courthouse offices, and, thereby, to do away with the unwanted and sometimes unneeded charges which accompany them.

70-ACRE TRACT

Hospital District Puts in Land Bid

The Tarrant County Hospital District has put in its bid for an old Air Force transmitter station in the northwest part of the county for possible use as a satellite clinic or perhaps a small, suburban hospital.

Cutoff and Boat Club Road. The land will be given away by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

Also applying for the land, reportedly, are county commissioners, who wish to convert it to a park, and an area school district.

over to the hospital district, use will depend on results of a feasibility study to be made by an outside firm, probably starting Dec. 10.

William Taylor, Peter Smith Hospital administrator, said the Tarrant County general hospital coordinating committee is coordinating efforts for a study on future

medical needs for a seven-county area, including Tarrant County.

The study would be made by Hamilton and Associates of Minneapolis.

The final plans for the study will be presented to the Tarrant County Health Planning Council on Oct. 10, and the coordinating committee will meet on Oct. 23.

REX McCRAE, administrator of Arlington Memorial Hospital and member of both committees, said the survey company is already doing a similar study for Dallas and can do the same study for Tarrant County at a reduced price.

The land application matter came up at a meeting of the hospital district board yesterday, where new board member Jack Benson accused his fellow board members of applying for something they had not approved.

Board president Sterling Steves said after the board meeting that the land application was discussed at a closed meeting on real estate matters Aug. 22, and the board agreed then to apply.

"We didn't hold a formal vote, but we all agreed. Benson attended that meeting, and I don't know why he doesn't remember it," Steves said.

Deadline for applying was Monday, the day before this month's board meeting.

BENSON, who is county auditor, expressed concern that the hospital district was competing with the county for the acquisition, as did Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Lewis, who attended the meeting.

In other action, board members approved an amendment to the bylaws requiring a two-week notification prior to board meetings before voting on items costing more than \$5,000 not included in the budget. Hugh Parmer, who originally brought up the amendment, had asked for a month's delay.

Larry Hickey was named to the board in place of George Crane, who resigned over a conflict in interests after joining the architectural firm of Komatsu and Associates, who are architects for Phase IV construction at the hospital.

IF THE LAND is decided

EDITORIALS:

Inquiry Now Necessary In Pope Home Hassle

An investigation of the Lena Pope Home has been called for, and we think one should be conducted—the sooner the better.

This is not to imply that the Star-Telegram is convinced that the charges brought against the agency are totally valid, or even partially so. But the charges have been made; they are serious, and that leaves no recourse from the standpoint of the public's interest or the reputation of the agency but to have the investigation.

It has been said that under the administration of Lena Pope Board President Rice Tilley Jr. the quality of care offered residents of the home has been allowed to deteriorate. Allegations of inefficiency and ineffective use of resources have been made. At the root of the problem, it is said, is an unconcerned board several of whose members have serious conflicts of interest.

The charges have arisen from two sources—from Miss Lena Pope, founder of the home, and some former employees; and from County Commissioners Court.

The Pope home executive committee has decided to sever its financial ties with the Commissioners Court, which had been making payments to

the home to offset cost of care provided persons referred to it by the county. That precludes the investigation that had been threatened by the court.

But the home is still subject to investigation by the United Fund, from which it receives its principal support.

As a major United Fund agency, the Lena Pope Home has had the confidence and support of the people of this community for many years. It may be that the allegations against the agency stem partially from the fact that its task has grown and that changes have had to be made in operations in order to handle the increase in residents. But the public has a right to know whether or not this is the case. And Mr. Tilley and the board have the right to have their names completely cleared if the charges are groundless. And, either way, the home itself deserves an opportunity to go on serving a great community need and enjoying the respect and support of compassionate citizens.

For these reasons we hope that the United Fund will conduct an investigation, and that it will do so quickly and thoroughly so the home can resume effective operations in an undisturbed atmosphere.

WELFARE LEAGUE HIT

Mrs. Pope Raps Probe of Home

Mrs. Lena Pope today criticized the organization being considered to investigate the children's home which bears her name.

United Fund President O. Roy Stevenson said yesterday the Child Welfare League of America in New York would conduct the inquiry if the UF's executive committee approves.

An investigation, she said, would evaluate programs, not personalities, and would concentrate on the quality of care provided the children as well as such things as how well the board functions and financial statements of the home.

MRS. POPE and several former employees of Lena Pope Home challenged the league's ability to make an impartial investigation.

The league, said former employe John Burton, received \$457 in dues from Lena Pope Home this year.

Also, Mrs. Pope said, the selection of the Child Welfare League is "a decided slap against Texas social workers."

She said groups within Texas are capable of conducting an investigation.

BURTON initiated the request for an investigation of the home several weeks ago. He told county commissioners the home is being mismanaged under administrator Leland Hacker.

The basic philosophy of the home ("a good, loving, Christian home") has changed under Hacker's administration, Burton charged. There are reports now, he said, of sexual abuse and destruction of property and some of the children have police records.

The home's board, he claimed, is "nothing but a rubber stamp board."

BOARD members, he contended, accept the administration's statements about the home's operation instead of "getting out themselves and making themselves knowledgeable."

Mrs. Pope said at a press conference that she had "tried to leave the administration of the home to Mr. Hacker" and stay out of the fight between the former employees and the administration.

But the announcement that the Child Welfare League might investigate the home caused her to speak out, she said.

She said the league, which is an accrediting agency for children's homes, tried to enter into a contract with Lena Pope Home "a quarter of a century ago," but only if Mrs. Pope would step down as administrator, and the home's board be abolished.

Miss Zelma Felten, director of field operations for the league, said the league would investigate the home if asked by the home, but probably would not if asked by the United Fund.

SHE SAID the organization tries to deal directly with homes, not with third parties.

If the United Fund were to tell Lena Pope Home to ask the league to investigate, she said, the league probably would do so.

Miss Felten said the league would be objective about the investigation although Lena Pope Home is an associate member of the league and pays dues.

She said the league would not hesitate to drop an accredited home from membership if it didn't meet league standards.

Lena Pope Home is not accredited by the league, she said, but the league provides a two-day evaluation of the home each year.

Grand Jury Submits Secret Report; Loftin Case Included

For the first time in the memory of courthouse observers, a Tarrant County grand jury has returned a term report but could not make a public disclosure of it.

The grand jury, which has spent much of its term investigating alleged election irregularities, returned a six-page report today to Criminal District Judge Gordon Gray.

Gray, acting for Criminal District Judge J. E. Winters, told the grand jurors that he had been asked by Winters to withhold the report.

HE SAID WINTERS wanted to read through the report to insure that "controversial material" is not released.

Gray then looked at grand jury foreman Harry Noah and said, "I understand that this grand jury intends to make a press release."

Noah said, "It's not exactly a press release but a clarification of our previous work."

Gray said, "It wouldn't be a good idea for the grand jury to make a press release."

Gray kept a copy of the grand jury's press handout and said that he would refer that to Winters for consideration.

AFTER LEAVING the courtroom, Noah told reporters, "All we can do is abide by the advice of the court."

He added, "As far as the grand jury is concerned, there is nothing in the so-called press release or (in the) report that could do anything except be of benefit to the general public."

He said the report and news release did in part deal with the investigation of charges that County Clerk Ed Loftin attempted to alter election returns from the May 6 primary.

That investigation wound up with a statement from the grand jury clearing Loftin of all charges.

IN THE LAST few weeks,

the grand jury has resumed the investigation.

Recently, the jury indicted Loftin's accuser, Mrs. Judy Draddy, on two counts of per-

jury in connection with her testimony against Loftin with the grand jury.

When asked if the report made reference to an alleged

"conspiracy" surrounding Mrs. Draddy's charges, Noah said, "It does make reference to that matter."

Winters is currently attend-

ing a judicial conference in Houston.

He will probably not be able to view the grand jury's report until Monday.

City and County Should OK Merging of Health Services

City Council and County Commissioners Court will be asked Monday to create a board with power to integrate the health agencies of the city and county into a countywide health service.

The combination of the two services into one would be a logical step, and we hope the city and county fathers will take it Monday without further hesitation.

Earlier this year, city and county leaders made a cautious move toward establishing the single health service. Dr. W. V. Bradshaw, head of the city public health service, was appointed to head the county service, too, and an advisory committee consisting of three appointees each from the county, city and Tarrant County Medical Society was named to study the feasibility of the merger.

The committee has discovered what knowledgeable observers already knew. There is much duplication between the two services, and

better service at a financial saving to taxpayers would be possible with the centrally administered service.

Dr. Bradshaw's availability to head the countywide agency is another plus factor for the merger.

In both agencies and in all levels of local government, Dr. Bradshaw is respected as an administrator of outstanding ability. He has also earned the confidence of the entire community as an honest public official and a dedicated human being.

As one member of the present advisory committee has said, there would be nothing to be gained by delaying the merger until Dec. 31, the target date set when the committee was appointed. The single health service is an idea whose time has come.

We hope the city and county will accept the committee's recommendation to form the new city-county health service board now, so it can begin to implement the changes needed to enable the two agencies to become one.

Countywide Ambulances Said Favored

County Fire Marshal Mason Lankford contends that Tarrant County communities are running "four to one" in favor of a countywide ambulance service.

Yesterday, Lankford said such a system back to Comhe plans to take his case for commissioners Court on Oct. 16.

Last month, the fire marshal laid out a plan for a 40-vehicle ambulance service to commissioners and municipality leaders.

His plan envisions a 32-ambulance network—eight to be used as spares—which would be financed by the county from its portion of shared federal revenue.

Lankford said reports and critiques are still coming in from county municipalities but that "we're far enough along so we know what the answer will be."

"They are running about four to one in favor," he said.

Commissioners Given Answer On Legality of Civil Service

Legal counsel for county commissioners today filed an answer to County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart's suit to have county civil service declared unconstitutional.

The answer, filed in 48th District Court, is a general one alleging that all of the allegations in the original suit are untrue with the exception of a few perfunctory claims.

ADVICE at the basic unconstitutionality claim attorney John McBryde's answer says, "... Each such deputy tax assessor-collector is an employe of Tarrant County, Texas, who obtained his position by appointment and who is not authorized by statute to perform governmental functions 'in his own right' involving any exercise of discretion

and none of them is the holder of an office the term of which is limited by the Constitution of the State of Texas."

The original suit claimed in essence that deputy tax assessor-collectors are appointed officials empowered to act in the same capacity as their elected boss.

THE SUIT also claimed that the deputies are appointed for a limited term in office.

By virtue of these claims, Stewart claims that it is unconstitutional to limit his powers over his employes or limit their terms of office through a civil service system.

McBryde's answer also asks for a special hearing on the contention that all other

claims in Stewart's suit are too vague for the defendants to answer.

Stewart's suit was filed against county commissioners, County Judge Howard Green and the county civil service commission members.

McBryde was hired by commissioners recently to represent the county.

He is a private attorney and not a member of the county's regular legal staff.

Computer Is Selected By County

Tarrant County Commissioners today awarded International Business Machines Corporation a contract to bring the county into the age of data processing.

The county's computer selection committee, after several weeks on evaluating bids, recommended IBM and commissioners accepted.

The estimated cost of a lease-purchase contract will be approximately \$300,000 a year, County Auditor Jack Benson said.

THAT COST WILL be shared by the county, the Tarrant County Hospital District and the federal government, Benson said.

Commissioners differed over which of the three bidders—IBM, Honeywell and Burroughs—should get the contract.

Commissioners George Richardson favored Honeywell and Commissioner Dick Andersen sided with him.

Richardson said that the cost for IBM services will go up in the long run and the cost of Honeywell will not.

THE DIFFERENCE, Richardson said, is that IBM charges for services beyond the original equipment and Honeywell does not.

Richardson said the difference could cost the county \$3,000 to \$6,000 more a month.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus moved for acceptance of the IBM bid and Richardson made a substitute motion favoring Honeywell.

Richardson's motion failed by a 3-2 vote.

Richardson, saying unity was necessary, then seconded Mebus' motion to award the contract to IBM on a unanimous vote.

IN ADDITION TO the \$300,000 a year cost for the equipment, Benson said the county also will have to spend \$300,000 to \$400,000 a year for peripheral equipment, salaries and other expenses.

Benson said the computer probably will be in service by April or May of next year.

The computer system will handle such county functions as the annual tax roll, voter registration, court docketing, child support payment processing and record keeping.

IT WILL ALSO handle billing for Peter Smith Hospital. Also law enforcement functions are to be worked into the computer.

County officials currently have a request in to the federal Criminal Justice Council and the North Central Texas Council of Governments for approximately \$600,000.

Monday Morning, October 16, 1972

LOTS OF SMOKE, HEAT

Firemen's Training Short on Glamour

By RAYMOND TEAGUE

HALTOM CITY — All hard work, sweat and blood, and plenty of smoke and fire, with "no glamour to it," was Tarrant County Assistant Fire Marshal Bob Looney's appraisal of the firemen's training school here Sunday.

More than 150 volunteer and paid firemen from over the county participated in the third of four yearly schools sponsored by the Tarrant County Firefighters Association.

Rich black clouds of smoke billowed from the training center off Texas 121 near Minnis Drive from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. as mock fires provided opportunity for firemen to practice firefighting techniques.

Outdoor classes consisted of drills in house firefighting, rescues with ladders and exposure to severe heat.

"The house fire drill gives firemen practical experience in going into a house and the problems encountered indoors," Looney said.

Another drill provided practice in raising and lowering ladders and making rescues off ladders.

Indoor classes met to discuss such topics as fire investigations, arson, codes, air masks and sprinkler systems.

Looney said the training sessions have proved helpful. "Roughly a fourth of the men here have never been to an actual fire," he said.

Firemen at the training sessions also profit from exchanging ideas with other firemen during breaks, Looney said.

He said a second training

field for county firemen currently is being built in Forest Hill.

Thursday Morning, October 26, 1972

More DA Office Changes Seen

Tim Curry, unopposed Democratic candidate, who will take office as district attorney Nov. 27, is expected to have the option of replacing at least six staff investigators at that time.

Curry has said he would like to reorganize the investigative staff, but was inhibited from doing so by civil service regulations.

UNLIKE ASSISTANT district attorneys, six of whom he has already notified they would be leaving in November, the 13-man investigative staff headed by Jim Greener is covered by civil service regulations which prohibit wholesale hiring and firing when the administration changes hands.

County Personnel Director Stanley Zinn, however, said Wednesday that civil service could aid Curry if he wishes to replace some of the investigators.

Zinn said four men on the staff are past the mandatory retirement age of 65 and if Curry chooses not to certify them for further employment, they would be retired.

He also said the county is planning to write a different sort of budget for next year under which each department would be allotted a certain number of jobs.

Previously, said Zinn, departments operated on a "money basis," with each unit determining how many jobs it could finance while staying within its own budget.

Curry is expected to

submit his 1973 budget request "sometimes between November and the first of the year," Zinn said, and could seek more investigator positions in it.

Zinn also said he expected two of the present investigators to resign their positions.

Curry has said he had heard rumors that one or more investigators plan to quit, but that no one had tendered a resignation to him personally.

Zinn confirmed that one

county employe has applied for a job as investigator.

Courthouse sources said at least two more county employes—one of them with the sheriff's department—are also interested in the jobs.

SUPPORT SEEN

Richardson Has Eye On Statewide Office

As everyone involved was tying off loose ends from one large election Wednesday, one county official who was not involved was reported to be looking forward two years with an eye on a statewide post.

Courthouse sources said Precinct 4 County Commissioner George Richardson won't stand for re-election in 1974. They said he is seriously studying the possibility of taking on Robert Calvert for the job of comptroller of public accounts or Jesse James for the state treasurer's post.

In any case, they said Richardson has decided not to try to keep his present job.

THE COMMISSIONER, a former four-term state representative from Tarrant County, is known to believe he has statewide support, particularly from organized labor in Texas.

While still in the House in 1967, Richardson got both financial and moral support from the Texas AFL-CIO in a losing race against Ben Barnes for speaker of the House.

Contacted Wednesday night, Richardson declined to confirm or deny the report.

He would say only that "there is always a possibility."

It was rumored last summer that Richardson was Gov. Preston Smith's choice for appointment as commissioner of the Texas Bureau of Labor Statistics after another appointee, Rep. Jack McLaughlin, failed to gain Senate confirmation in the post.

RICHARDSON said he was never formally offered the job and that since July, an interim commissioner had been appointed until the new governor could take over.

Richardson was the first Tarrant County officeholder to endorse the Dolph Briscoe campaign for governor and said recently that he was the only one to actively support him.

Comptroller Calvert, 80, and Treasurer James, 67, are both longtime officeholders who won re-election Tuesday.

Friday Evening, November 10, 1972

DA-Elect Undecided About Old Staff

Dist. Atty.-elect Tim Curry said today that he hasn't decided what action to take if the five persons in the district attorney's office refuse his request for their resignations.

Recently, Curry sent letters to several of Doug Crouch's staff members asking them to resign.

All of the persons asked to resign are under county civil service which prohibits firings for political reasons.

At least two of the persons notified have said publicly that they do not intend to resign, thus forcing Curry into a position of having to either fire them and perhaps face a

civil service hearing or let the matter go.

The two are Mrs. Rita Hayworth, head of Crouch's delinquent tax department, and Armour Stewart, an investigator.

If he does choose to fire the employes and they protest to the civil service commission, Curry is going to have to prove grounds for the firing other than simple politics.

Other persons notified that they should resign were DA investigator Johnny Gonzales and Mrs. Connie Feaster and Mrs. Evelyn Oxford, who are on the staff in the hot check division.

Court Supports End to Gasoline Dole

The "little red pump" appeared to be on the way out again Monday morning. Commissioners expressed approval of a recommendation by Auditor Jack Benson to end free gasoline handouts to county employees.

Last January commissioners voted to end the gasoline dole and replace it with 10-12 cents-a-mile allowances for employees using private vehicles on county business.

Within a week the court reversed itself and restored the free gasoline.

Monday, however, Jerry Mebus hailed a similar recommendation by Benson and its subsequent informal approval by commissioners as the courthouse's finest hour.

Benson recommended that, "starting Jan. 1, 1973, no gas be dispersed from the county pumps except for use in county-owned vehicles. This would be for vehicles actually owned by the county and licensed by the county."

"All other county personnel who receive a car allowance and who use their cars on official county business," he said, "would be reimbursed at 3 cents per mile on mileage driven on official county business."

Car allowances, most of which are \$125-\$150 a month now, would remain the same, he said.

Benson said his recommendation was based on evidence gathered "by the auditing department and the personnel department . . . that this gas is used, in a great majority of cases, for official county business."

"However, it has also been noted that, in some isolated cases, we feel that more gasoline has been used than is necessary."

All four commissioners indicated approval, but delayed action for a week until a formal resolution could be submitted.

It's the greatest thing that

could happen to us," said Mebus.

Commissioner Dick Andersen said the resolution "will have my vote." George Richardson pledged his support.

In other business, commissioners approved preliminary plans for a new subcourthouse, heard a proposal for a communications network and listened again to Mrs. Lena Pope.

Paul Koepp, an architect with the firm of Earl F. Koepp and Associates, outlined plans for land acquisition and construction of the subcourthouse near the Lake Worth City Hall.

Cost of the land, 2.246 acres, would be \$19,574, he said, while the building itself would cost \$25 per square foot with 7,000 square feet of space estimated.

The building will have offices for a peace justice, constable, assistant district attorney and a deputy tax assessor-collector and will feature drive-through tax collection.

The court also heard a proposal by Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin for a radio communications network which would put radios in all the commissioners' autos as well as employees of the public works department.

It would require seven base stations and 32 mobile units, said Erwin, and would cost \$50,000 to \$70,000.

Benson, however, challenged the plan, saying he felt "there will be some duplication. I'd like to get with the sheriff."

The issue was delayed despite a claim by Erwin that he had talked to Sheriff Lon Evans who said he would "highly recommend it."

The last person to appear before commissioners was Mrs. Lena Pope, who appealed to the court to use its influence to see that a 14-year-old boy presently in the

state hospital at Wichita Falls not be sent back to Lena Pope Home when he is released.

She also asked that John Burton be allowed to play certain tape recordings which she claimed "prove that we are not wrong" in charges of mismanagement and mistreatment of children at the home.

As Mrs. Pope began to speak, she was warned by County Judge Howard Green that "we have no jurisdiction and will not be able to take any action on anything you say here."

She went on to renew attacks against the administration, claiming the 14-year-old had been beaten and that Burton had been offered a "bribe" if he would cease his attacks on the Home.

Mrs. Pope called a story which appeared in the Star-Telegram earlier this month an attempt to discredit her and Burton.

Commissioners took no action.

Curry Delivering Campaign Promise of Reorganization

New Dist. Atty. Tim Curry is working on one of his campaign promises—reorganization.

There is an assortment of new faces in the DA's office.

Top assistants like Joe Shannon Jr. and Cue Lipscomb are already known, but there are others—some young attorneys like Steve Chaney, who came to Curry's complaint section after a short stint in private practice and a longer one in the military, and older ones like Gerald Summerford, who has a reputation as an expert on governmental law and is filling a position in the civil section.

ALSO, THERE is an even larger assortment of old faces in new places.

Asst. Dist. Atty. Bill Leonard, until last week a prosecutor in Criminal District Court No. 4, is now chief of the complaint and hot check sections.

Curry has been so busy that one staffer remarked with mixed emotions, "He's already had three staff meetings in the first week. We never had those before."

The staff meetings, Curry

said, were to set out the reorganization plan.

His structuring of the DA's office is not a radical departure from old procedures, but there is a major change in the complaints section.

CURRY HAS changed the name of the section from complaints to "pre-trial."

The section headed by Shannon will deal with all things that happen to a criminal case before it actually goes to trial.

"Each case will be assigned to an attorney and he will carry that case all the way through the grand jury," Curry said.

Under the old system, a few attorneys handled all complaint work and one attorney handled virtually all the grand jury work.

Curry calls the procedure a screening process.

THE OBJECT, Curry said, "is to keep the dogs out."

"Dogs," as used by Curry's terminology, are bad cases in which the grand jury may return indictments but which, as a practical matter, can not be tried because of a lack of

evidence, legal technicalities or other reasons.

By assigning cases to specific attorneys, Curry said, he and his chiefs will be able to place blame when a bad case does get through to the courts.

In connection with this change, Curry has cut back the staffing of the criminal district courts from four prosecutors to three.

Curry said the early screening of bad cases ought to cut down on the courtroom case load enough to justify this move.

Each of the four district courts will have two experienced attorneys and one inexperienced attorney for training purposes, Curry said.

HE ADDED that he expects to rotate the court assignments to let some of the other attorneys, particularly those in complaints, into the courtroom.

When Curry's chief of the trial section, John Anderson, frees himself of private commitments the new acting chief, Rufus Adcock, will become second in command and chief of the office's training program, Curry said.

Curry said he expects to

have a non-attorney office administrator on the job by early next year.

Also in the works is another of Curry's campaign promises—a consumer fraud section.

CURRY SAID that the section, under Asst. Dist. Atty. Bill Leonard, will probably be ready to begin work early next year.

NOVEMBER 29, 1972

Civil Service Called Illegal by New DA

Dist. Atty. Tim Curry said Tuesday it was his legal opinion that civil service in Tarrant County is unconstitutional and will be declared so by the courts.

"This is just a lawyer talking," he said. "I've read the law and I feel it is unconstitutional."

He said, however, that he would work within its regulations until a court rules on the matter.

Such an action is pending in district court here, but involves the county tax assessor-collector's office rather

than the district attorney's office.

Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart filed a suit earlier this year challenging civil service as illegal because it denies him the right to control his own employees.

Curry, too, ran afoul of civil service regulations before he took office when he asked for the resignations of several employees.

Those employees, investigators and secretaries, declined to quit and cited civil service as protecting their jobs from political maneuverings.

With the exception of appointing a new chief investigator, W. R. Willingham, Curry has had little to say about the issue.

Willingham, an investigator since 1967, was with the Fort Worth police department and the sheriff's department prior to that time.

Curry said Tuesday that Jim Greener, who has been considered the chief investigator for several years, was actually a "chief special investigator."

Greener had been expected to resign, but was sworn in along with the rest of the staff Monday morning.

County Discusses Use of Revenue Sharing Money

County commissioners today discussed what they want to do with federal revenue sharing money.

Without setting any priorities, they considered at least 20 ways to spend the \$3.1 million the county will be receiving for the 1972 and 1973 calendar years.

By the time all the cost of all the things they want were added, the figure was almost double the amount the county will receive.

AT THE TOP of the list is a major remodeling of the county courthouse.

The cost of that is about \$2 million.

Commissioners are talking of rewiring the old granite building, putting in air conditioning and heating and completely redoing many offices.

The rewiring work became a particularly pressing problem recently when County Fire Marshal Mason Lankford told the court the building is a fire hazard.

HIS STATEMENT followed by about a month a basement fire which destroyed one room and coated walls and

ceilings with black soot in the rest of the basement.

Also on commissioners' list of things to do are the construction of three subcourthouses at \$150,000 each; payments to volunteer fire departments, totaling about \$92,000; the purchase of the county's computer for about \$750,000, and the construction of a records warehouse for \$100,000.

County Auditor Jack Benson, who headed up the discussion today, said, "There's no way that we can do all this in one year. But we have to start making decisions soon."

Benson said he's going to make up a revised list of possible expenditures and return to commissioners next week for further discussion.

AS A PART of the discussion but not directly related to revenue sharing, commissioners talked of building a parking garage for both county and public use.

Commissioner George Richardson said that such a facility would probably be funded through revenue bond sales.

He said, "If we can judge

from the success of the parking facilities at the convention center, this thing will pay for itself."

Richardson suggested that county employees pay \$5 a month for the parking and that at night the facility be opened to the public on an hourly rate.

He theorized that with the forthcoming Tandy Corp. complex at the courthouse end of downtown, parking space is going to be in demand.

Union Leader Supports Civil Service for County

J. D. Givens, business agent for the Tarrant County Employees Union, Local 125, issued a statement Monday supporting county civil service despite opposition by at least two county officials.

"I cannot understand," he said, "why some of the other elected officials are now raising these objections to civil service."

"Do they want to return to the spoils system?"

One county official, Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Ste-

art, has filed a lawsuit seeking to have the system declared unconstitutional, while another, Dist. Atty. Tim Curry, has said he believes civil service is unconstitutional, but will work with it until the suit is ruled upon.

"I ask these elected officials to give civil service a chance," said Givens. "To destroy civil service now would be a giant step backward and the people who want to go backward should not be elected to public office."

He said, "We feel strongly that civil service in Tarrant County will put into effect a system whereby the employees will obtain their jobs and receive promotions strictly on the basis of education, experience and ability and not on the basis of political connections."

COMMISSIONERS THINK AGAIN ON LITTLE RED GASOLINE PUMP

Action to establish the "little red pump" as the provider of gasoline for county-owned vehicles only was delayed by commissioners court Monday.

A recommendation by Auditor Jack Benson last week that would bar fillups for anyone not driving a county car or truck was halted facetiously as "the greatest day in the history of the courthouse."

It was planned then to adopt a resolution at Monday's meeting.

Monday morning, however, Benson said he thought the commissioners would proba-

bly like to have another week to think it over.

The court agreed.

"I think we need some more discussion on it," Commissioner Jerry Mebus said, adding, however, that "we might as well face it then."

The resolution is now expected to be voted on next Monday.

Countywide Park System Is Asked

County commissioners today heard a recommendation from their park study committee that the county should create a countywide parks system. But there are no specifics as to what should go where.

John Orr, a member of that 12-member study committee, told commissioners that the group could not offer any detailed county park plans but could say that county control appears to be necessary for a useful park system.

The report said, "Land, as a component of recreation, is rapidly disappearing . . ."

"The 37 municipalities in Tarrant County . . . have no convenient, effective way to coordinate their planning and their programs."

THE COMMITTEE recommended the creation of a county parks board and a park and recreation department within the county.

The two entities would, by the committee's recommendation control park and recreation development in some areas and offer technical, coordinating aid to municipalities and other areas.

Also recommended was the creation of a citizens advisory group be appointed, one member each, by the various cities in the county to offer local participation in the county's program.

The committee suggested that the county and various cities try to share the cost of parks programs so that citizens will not be taxed twice for the same services.

ORR SAID the committee ran into a particular problem over the attitudes of local citizens toward county government.

The report said, "They (citizens) often are apt to see it (county government) in terms of an antiquated, self-seeking political bureaucracy, unproductive, departmentalized, obsolete and neurotic."

Commissioner George Richardson said park development also faces a problem with antiquated Texas laws which limit commissioners' ability to take action in the park and recreation area.

IN OTHER action today, commissioners opened bids on their new array of road equipment which is supposed to be used to bring county roads up to par with state farm roads.

No decision was reached on the bids because county purchasing agent Ed Smith asked for a week to review them.

However, the estimated cost of the equipment is \$135,000.

Commissioners also gave Smith permission to take bids on a new county two-way radio system.

The system, one of Public Works Director LeRoy Erwin's projects, is estimated to cost \$55,000.

HIS RADIO system will consist of seven relay stations — one in each precinct garage, one in public works, one in the purchasing office and one in the sheriff's office — with mobile units in about 32 county vehicles.

Erwin said the system is designed to increase operating efficiency among county work crews.

Monday Evening, December 4, 1972

COUNTY AWARDS

Unhonorable Service Done On Plaques

"Boy, when you try to do something nice for people ...," one county official said. Recently, county commissioners voted to award plaques for meritorious service to 15 former members of the Tarrant County Hospital District board.

They also were going to give two plaques to Jim Morgan, former legal adviser to both Commissioners Court and the hospital board.

PURCHASING Agent Ed Smith sent the order off, and the plaques were returned yesterday.

Commissioners Court secretary Jerry Foster found that on 16 of the 17, the engraver had spelled Commissioners Court "Commission Court."

She thought the 17th plaque, Morgan's for his service to Commissioners Court, was correct until she surveyed it more closely.

The engraver had spelled outstanding without one "t" outstanding.

THE PLAQUES cost about \$23 apiece and will have to be redone.

One county official said that it is rare when Smith will agree to spend money on things like this.

"This time," the official said, "Smith not only went along, he bought the best and ..."

The engraver is supposed to stand the loss for redoing the plaques.

CHECKS HAVEN'T ARRIVED

Commissioners Court 'Spends' Sharing Funds

Tuesday Evening, December 5, 1972

STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

County Park System Recommended

Tarrant County's park study committee recommended to commissioners court Monday that it create a countywide park system to be supervised by a seven-member board of park commissioners.

Committee chairman John Orr submitted a 12-page report on the subject, complete with an organization chart under which the county board of park commissioners would supervise a county park and recreation department.

Terms for board members would be for two years each. Authority of the panel would include responsibility for hiring the departmental staff, authority to approve or reject plans for responsibility and to answer to commissioners court or its designee.

Services would include all phases of design and administration of a countywide recreational program, said the report, and "various municipal participants could select and negotiate a suitable arrangement of contract to best fit the unmet recreational needs of members of their community."

"The county could well consider purchasing certain existing services from the cities ... monies allocated by the county for these services would be non-discriminatory and citizens of all municipalities would share equally in carrying the tax burden."

Cities which desire county-provided services would have to adjust tax revenue to reimburse the county for the services.

"Should, for instance, the City of Fort Worth desire the county to take over operation of the Forest Park Zoo, to establish a countywide tax base for financing, it is anticipated that the taxes collected by the City of Fort Worth to operate the zoo would flow to the county and contribute to the operation of the zoo," it said.

It pointed out that the county is only authorized under state law to collect .05 cents per \$100 valuation for the entire project, "only about \$550,000. The annual expenses of the zoo alone would exceed that amount."

The committee said it had found during the course of its meetings and public hearings that "many citizens are confused about county government."

"They are often apt to see it in terms of an antiquated, self-seeking political bureaucracy: unproductive, compartmentalized, obsolete and neurotic."

However, the report said, after discussion of services currently handled by county government, those individuals usually "conclude that in-

stead of being the obsolete progeny of a horse-drawn past, Tarrant County government today is the only hope we have for effective coordination of our municipal multiplex."

The committee also said it had considered the "known implications" of the establishment of the comprehensive planning program for the county.

Their report said the parks system concept would be "even more valid" if comprehensive planning is adopted for the county.

Tuesday Evening, December 5, 1972

County OKs Paved Road For Addition

The seven-family Peaceful Valley community in south Tarrant County will get its road paved, Commissioners Court decided Monday.

Peaceful Valley is a nine-home addition near the intersection of Farm Roads 1187 and 1034 and has a roadway which the developer promised the county would maintain several years ago.

Apparently the road wasn't built to county specifications, and the county declined to accept it as a county road.

COUNTY PUBLIC Works Director LeRoy Erwin Monday recommended that the 1,400-foot stretch of road be brought up to county specifications and taken over by the county.

Commissioners agreed and Erwin began making preparations for the work, which he estimated will cost taxpayers about \$1,500.

Erwin said county road specifications call for a 60-foot right of way and a 24-foot-wide roadway covered by eight inches of compacted gravel.

The developer or the landowners must maintain it in proper condition for a year, he said, before it can be dedicated to the public and taken over as a county road.

Erwin said owners of several other tracts of land will appeal soon for the county to maintain their roads.

MOST OF them, he said, involve residents who were told by developers that their streets would be maintained by the county no matter what condition they were in.

Commissioner Dick Andersen, in whose precinct Peaceful Valley is located, said Friday he and state Rep. Gibson Lewis are planning to submit a bill to the next legislature which would allow counties to control land development.

Commissioners to Help In Picking History Panel

County commissioners will take a hand in choosing members of the County Historical Survey Committee for the first time Monday.

County Judge Howard Green said Thursday that the 11-member panel, which is named annually, was until this year the exclusive responsibility of the county judge.

A statute passed by the last Texas legislature changed that, however, and now commissioners will be able to name two persons each to the board.

"The principle objective of the committee will continue to be the marking, interpretation and preservation of Tarrant County history," said Green.

"They have a goal for the 70s program which has been drawn up by the state survey committee. That will provide the focus for the county committee's work with historians, commissioners court and tourist-related organizations," he said.

The court, he said, would try to name persons "who have an interest in preserving and developing the historical resources of the county."

County commissioners Monday committed themselves to spend almost \$3 million, all of which will come from federal revenue sharing checks which have not arrived.

The commissioners approved in rapid succession remodeling of portions of the county courthouse which is estimated to cost \$630,000, replacing its windows for \$200,000 and re-wiring the building which should cost \$175,000.

Other big-money items approved included \$750,000 for the county computer, \$80,000 for a county records storage warehouse, \$140,000 for a garage to house county firefighting equipment and \$285,000 to pay off cost overruns on the Criminal Justice Building.

Also, \$185,000 is to be spent on construction of each of two new subcourthouses in the northwest and southwest portions of the county.

THREE ITEMS which were on the county auditor's list of priorities were not acted upon. They were a \$15,000 new roof for the jail, \$75,000 worth of office equipment and \$104,000 in aid to libraries in the county.

Commissioners took about 10 minutes to vote their approval of the expenditure, which totals \$2,906,400, \$194,000 less than the total \$3,100,400 expected from the federal government for revenue sharing in 1972 and 1973.

The first check is expected to be delivered later this week or early next week.

Commissioners also approved motions to hire architectural firms of Deeley and Brown to design the records Warehouse, Reavis and Associates to design the fire marshal's garage and Earl Koeppel & Associates to handle remodeling of the courthouse.

In other business, the court opened bids on the remodeling of the adult probation department.

Ed A. Wilson, Inc., bid \$47,250 with 90 working days while the apparent winner, James H. Connally, Inc., bid \$42,460 with 66 working days.

THIS EXPENSE is also to be covered by funds from revenue sharing.

Commissioners then heard from their legal adviser on two other money matters.

Asst. Dist. Atty. Cue Lipscomb told the court that he would have a legal opinion by Friday on whether they could give the YWCA \$20,000 it had asked for.

Lipscomb proposed to the court that it turn county condemnation business over to the district attorney's office.

"Mr. Curry says he very definitely feels like he wants to do it," he said. "He wants to do it and he would like an opportunity to do it."

Lipscomb claimed that it

would be cheaper for the DA's office to handle condemnation matters than to allow the business to remain with former Dist. Atty. Doug Crouch.

It was Crouch who originally had recommended that the handling of condemnation proceedings be taken away from a private law firm and given to the district attorney's office.

After the court approved the proposal, Commissioner Dick Andersen asked that the DA's office also look into high-priced farm land which the county has been forced to buy for road rights of way.

He said some farm acreage goes for "\$1 per square foot" and called the price "absurd."

Commissioners early in the meeting received and approved amendments to the budget of the Tarrant County Hospital District.

Ambulance Plan Appears Doomed

Fire Marshal Mason Lankford's countywide ambulance service plan appears to be doomed, at least, for this year.

Lankford appeared before commissioners yesterday afternoon to report on reaction to the plan from local city officials.

With the report he offered a drastically reduced version of the ambulance service. His new plan calls for 15 ambulances manned by 91 employees instead of the original 40-vehicle proposal.

The 15 vehicles would service the 13 municipalities in Tarrant County which said they favored the countywide ambulance service.

THE COUNTY'S other 24 cities either said they didn't like the proposal or offered no answer to Lankford's queries.

The new proposal would cost the county almost \$900,000 most of which would come from federal revenue sharing funds and fees charged for the ambulance service.

Commissioners noted the limited favorable reaction to the proposed service and also said the plan doesn't fit well into their priorities for spending revenue-sharing money.

No definite priorities are established for the federal money, but after several discussions it appears that sub-courthouses, courthouse remodeling, the main systems to the county's computer system and a few smaller projects rank above Lankford's ambulance plan.

LANKFORD wanted to pay the initial equipment cost out of 1972 revenue sharing and issue time warrants against 1973 revenue-sharing money for additional costs.

Commissioner Jerry Mebus said, "Generally speaking, I think the commissioners have been thinking about other priorities."

Commissioner George Richardson concurred. No official action was taken on the proposal.

Curry Appoints Chief Investigator

Newly installed Dist. Atty. Tim Curry announced today that 62-year-old W. R. "Willie" Willingham will be his chief investigator.

Willingham, a long-time veteran of police work, will replace Jim Greener in the position.

According to Curry, Greener is not the chief investigator in the DA's office but a "chief special investigator." Curry said today that there is no chief investigator in the DA's office to do what Willingham will be doing.

IN COURTHOUSE circles, Greener has been considered chief investigator for a number of years and he is carried that way on the county payroll.

Greener was expected to resign from his position to go into private investigative work, but yesterday when Curry was sworn into office Greener was there and was also sworn in.

Curry said that he does not know what he will do about Greener's position. The new DA does not want to cause a stir just after entering office by challenging the county's civil service program—a program which protects Greener from being fired without cause.

"I'LL WORK with it (civil service) until such time as it's declared unconstitutional," Curry said. "and I think it will be declared unconstitutional."

At one point prior to being installed in office Curry asked for resignations from six staff members, not including Greener. He had to back off from the request after the staffers cited civil service as a protection for their jobs.

Greener, too, said that he didn't know what he was going to do.

"I DON'T even know what position I have in this office," Greener said.

Willingham began police work with the Texas Department of Public Safety in 1936.

He has been with the Fort Worth police department and Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.

He became a member of the district attorney's investigative staff in 1967.

He is now working as an investigator in Judge Byron Matthews' Criminal District Court No. 1.

Punch-Card Voting Decision Delayed

County officials met with local leaders of the two major political parties Thursday to rehash the strong and weak points of punch-card balloting.

They decided to conduct several more meetings with interested parties — the League of Women Voters was mentioned specifically — before making any recommendations to Commissioners Court.

Present at the meeting were County Auditor Jack Benson, Purchasing Agent Ed Smith, County Clerk Ed Loftin, Public Works Director Le Roy Erwin, Republican County Chairman Ed Palm and Democratic County Chairman Estil Vance of a all members of a Commissioners Court appointed committee.

Everyone present expressed approval of the punch-card voting systems speed and efficiency, although Loftin had reservations about cost in the long run as compared with cost of lever machines.

Benson said the punch-card devices would cost about \$175 each, while lever machines run \$2,000 each and "we can buy seven or eight of the punch-card machines for what it would cost for a lever machine."

Benson also said some precincts always abuse the hiring program by taking on more personnel than they needed, no matter what kind of machine is used.

Smith said he feels punch-card machines are the coming thing, adding that Los Angeles County "is 10 per cent punch-card and they are so big they have to fly their ballots by helicopter to the computer center."

Loftin advocated elimination of write-ins altogether.

"Write-ins are a problem all over the State of Texas," he said. Saying that each election produces a deluge of

votes for "Monkey Man, Shirley Temple and Walt Garrison," he suggested the county "do away with all the write-ins and eliminate all this bureaucracy."

Punch-card mail-in votes, which caused the only major delay in counting this year's general election, should be replaced with paper ballots, several commissioners said.

Loftin said it would take six to eight hours to count paper ballots in a major election and added that part of the problem this year was "dirty material."

He said the county could have prepared "for just a little more money" higher-quality punch cards more difficult to mutilate in the mails.

The Fort Worth Press, Friday, December 8, 1972

Benson wants reasons for reduced funds

By TERRY KELLY

Reductions in federal revenue sharing funds may alter plans county commissioners mad Monday for spending the money.

Tarrant's portion of revenue sharing was lowered from \$882,000 to \$713,117 on the first revenue checks mailed in Washington today. The checks are half the first year's amount.

Auditor Jack Benson said that the reduction could affect some proposed use for the funds.

"It will cause some adjustments to be made," Benson said. "When anybody takes \$170,000 away it affects us very much."

Benson said that the county was figuring on getting \$850,000 on the first check and about \$3.1 million for the first two years. "In two years time it (the difference) will be over \$500,000," the auditor said.

"I can assure you, we are going to find out why it was cut," he added.

He said he did not know now what adjustments would have to be made and that it would take study.

However, he said, he wanted to get the formula used by the federal government to determine the shares "to see if we get a fair shake."

Benson added that he would get in touch with the National Assn. of Counties immediately for more information.

Commissioners Monday approved spending an estimated \$2.9 million of federal funds, including about \$1 million for remodeling the courthouse, \$750,000 for buying a computer and \$370,000 for building sub-courthouses in the northwest and southwest sections of the county.

All the projects voted on were to go into the planning stages.

Thursday Evening, December 14, 1972



—By Edna Sime, Star-Telegram Cartoonist

Friday Evening, December 15, 1972

Commission OKs Funds For YWCA

County commissioners today voted to give \$20,000 to the YWCA.

The vote came despite a legal opinion that contributions to private organizations by county government are illegal. The report was provided by County legal adviser Cue Lipscomb.

Commissioners also gleaned from the report that they could give the YWCA the cash if the contribution were made in a contract for services rendered.

Today's vote instructed the district attorney's office to draw up such a contract with the payment to be made before Jan. 15, 1973.

Friday Evening, December 15, 1972 FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM 11-A

Health Service Discussion Sets Off Tempers at Meeting

By JIM DAVIS

City Councilwoman Margret Rimmer paid county commissioners a surprise visit this morning and it turned into more than she had expected.

The councilwoman, who is also a member of a city-county liaison committee, arrived to deliver a report on the proposed city-county health service and to arrange for a meeting on that subject between commissioners and councilmen.

The report promptly triggered a discussion of county-wide health services in general.

DURING THAT discussion, Mrs. Rimmer said Commissioner Dick Andersen had publicly accused the city of trying to dump the health service off on the county.

Andersen replied, "Well, you are."

During the ensuing talk, Mrs. Rimmer told commissioners, "Well, if that's the way you feel about it, we can just forget the whole thing."

Tempers cooled quickly, however, and commissioners found that nothing had been settled yet on the arrangements for creating a county-wide health service.

COMMISSIONER George Richardson said, and Mrs.

Rimmer agreed, that the general object right now is to work the health service into the Tarrant County Hospital District operation over the next several years.

Mrs. Rimmer said that negotiations between County Auditor Jack Benson and City Manager Rodger Line have run into a stumbling block on that point.

The two apparently can't decide how the transition to hospital district control is to be made.

THE COUNTY suggestion,

Benson said, is to continue mixed city-county contributions to health service in 1973 and then over the next two or three years, alter the funding method until the hospital district can take the health service over completely.

Under his proposal, the hospital district would run the health service on a contract arrangement with the city and county.

The city representatives, Mrs. Rimmer said, want to move faster.

Friday Evening, December 15, 1972

County Budget Cut In Store—Auditor

County officials want to spend about \$2 million more than the county will have, Auditor Jack Benson said today.

He said that a cursory study of 1973 budget requests

indicates that the officials want a total of \$19 million.

He said revenues for the general fund and road and bridge funds will probably total about \$15 million.

Adding to that some carry-overs from the 1972 budget and an expected transfer of money from right-of-way revenues, Benson arrived at the \$2 million deficit.

His suggestion was, "We are going to have to cut the budget quite a bit."

HE ALSO NOTED that the latest requested budgets do not include a 5 per cent pay raise for county employees — another \$430,000.

Benson said county officials want \$470,000 worth of new employees, most of whom will be in the tax office and law marshal's office.

He also noted that the county is going to have to spend \$252,000 to pay federal Emergency Employment Act workers who are no longer paid by the federal government. "Our income has gone up substantially, but not \$2 million."

IN OTHER ACTION today commissioners organized 12 of the 13 members of the County Historical Survey Committee.

Under a new state statute, the power to appoint persons to the committee has been spread to all county commissioners.

In prior years, all appointments were made by the county judge.

Appointed today were Mrs. Ed Sampson Jr., Mrs. James David Edwards, Mrs. Jerry D. Beale, Dr. John Perkins, Mrs. Jacob Holl, Mrs. Ann Smith, Joe Roney, John L. Hall, Mrs. George S. Crane, Mrs. Clarence Jones, Mrs. Richard Lee Brown and Mrs. Jim Ellison.

Commissioners OK Anti-Nepotism Rule

12-26-72

Quickly and quietly, county commissioners today approved a nepotism ruling for county employees.

On a recommendation from Personnel Director Stan Zinn, commissioners agreed that no two persons from the same family would be allowed to work in the same department in county government.

Zinn told commissioners that the nepotism rule does contain a "grandfather clause" which protects all persons currently employed by the county from the rule.

Immediately after approving the rule, commissioners voted to hire "temporarily" a woman in the tax office who is the relative of another tax office employee.

On questioning Zinn said that after the woman's temporary employment ends she will have to go through the regular employment procedures and she will not be able to work in the tax office.

Public Should Know More About County Government

Assuming that the finished product will be both accurate and easy to read, the \$3,000 County Commissioners Court has approved to help the League of Women Voters print a booklet on county government is money well spent.

County government almost certainly will be carrying greater and more complex responsibilities as urban growth and development increase within Tarrant's boundaries in the future. As the county's role expands, it will be more and more important for the people to know what it does and how it works.

Clearly, that knowledge is lacking at present on the part of a large number of Tarrant County citizens.

Some county commissioners made this sad discovery recently in investigating the possibilities of a county-wide park system. They found, in contacts with landowners who were potential sources of tracts needed for

area parks, that many of the owners knew little about the county government and its programs and, in general, held government at the county level in low esteem.

When the league submitted its proposed booklet, the commissioners became even more acutely aware of the widespread lack of understanding of county government. At one point, the booklet said the county purchasing agent is appointed by Commissioners Court when, in fact, he is named by district judges in the county.

With this and possibly other corrections, however, the booklet should be a valuable instrument for county voters. In the years to come, they will need to know their county government far better than most of them do today, and the commissioners and the League of Women Voters are to be commended for this effort to help them.

CIVIL SERVICE Stewart Testifies In Challenge Suit

County Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart was the lone witness yesterday in the hearing on his declaratory judgment suit challenging county civil service.

Stewart answered questions from his attorney, William M. Brown, the county's attorney, John McBrayne and District Court Judge Walter Jordan for almost two hours.

Stewart is challenging the constitutionality of the state statute which allowed county commissioners to bring county workers under civil service.

HE IS CONTENDING that the workers in his office are appointed public officials rather than employees and that their tenure is regulated by law and cannot be regulated by civil service rules, too.

Stewart testified that his workers are sworn in as deputy tax assessors every four years, that is, each time Stewart is re-elected.

Stewart, a 39-year veteran in the top position in the tax office, admitted that "maybe" he hasn't been following the letter of the law in using four-year terms for his workers.

This year he said he installed his workers for a two-year term.

MURKIN DIDN'T call any witnesses on the case, saying that he had presented all the evidence he needed through the cross-examination of Stewart.

A large portion of the questions asked by McBrayne centered around the job descriptions of Stewart's employees.

The questioning was evidently aimed at the possibility that Judge Jordan will rule that the state statute is unconstitutional.

If the 4th District Court judge does, then the question remains whether Stewart's workers are by a statute in the statute that exempts public officials.

MURKIN WAS apparently attempting to introduce evidence which would convince Judge Jordan that not all of Stewart's workers fall in the legal definition of public officials.

Stewart testified that although all of his employees are appointed periodically, they are also responsible to him at all times.

Both sides in the suit entered briefs in the case yesterday and another side chase to present a final argument.

Judge Jordan will both sides that he would like to make a ruling on the suit quickly.

Priority Changes Eyed for County

County Auditor Jack Benson today recommended that county commissioners rearrange their revenue sharing priorities so they can have a balanced budget.

Benson estimated that the county will receive about \$2.5 million in 1973 from the federal government.

The commissioners had decided earlier to use the federal funds for an assortment of projects.

Benson wants to drop some of those projects, and, in his recommendation, committed some money to the purchase of road equipment by each of the commissioners.

Benson also sought today to explain the transfer of \$1.2 million from the right-of-way fund to the county's general fund.

THIS TRANSFER came in the face of a recommendation from Highway Department District Engineer J. R. Stone that no such transfer be made.

Benson said that the transfer will leave the county with \$1.28 million in revenues from the right-of-way tax in 1973.

Stone told the county in his letter last week that the highway department expects the county to need at least \$3.5 million next year.

Benson told commissioners that he believes the right-of-way fund will be sufficient in 1973, but he added, "In the latter part of the year, we may have to go to time warrants."

He said he didn't know what effect this year's transfer would have on the 1974 right-of-way funds.

STONE PROJECTED that the county will probably need another \$3.5 million in 1974.

Commissioner Dick Lewis took particular objection to the transfer, saying, "you are betraying the people of Tarrant County by moving the money. It's supposed to be for drainage and right-of-way only."

Benson replied, "We were betraying the people long before I got here."

Benson says that transfers from right-of-way to the road and bridge fund (and now into

the general fund) began in 1967 under Auditor J. M. "Star" Williams.

Since that time, \$6.5 million in transfers have been made, mostly to support the debt service payments for the Tarrant County Convention Center, Benson said.

Benson also introduced the commissioners to the "1973 balanced budget."

"Balanced budget" means that county officials not spend more than Benson thinks the county will receive.

THOSE COUNTY officials submitted budgets early this month and requested about \$2 million more than Benson's 1972 revenue figure of \$17,344,272.

Benson's balanced budget includes a number of cuts to make up for that overage.

The major cut came in commissioners' budgets.

According to the budget turned in today, Benson wants them to take about \$800,000 out.

About \$250,000 of this will be replaced out of revenue sharing.

Commissioners balked earlier this week at the idea of Benson taking any money out of their budgets.

However, after a private meeting yesterday, the commissioners seemed to be more willing to give up some of what they considered needed cash.

Other major cuts hit Fire Marshal Mason Lankford, Sheriff Lon Evans, Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart and County Clerk Ed Loftin.

County Asked to Up Library Funds

12-29-72

Fort Worth library board president Dr. Howard Wible today asked for \$277,287 in county financial support for Fort Worth's libraries.

Commissioners took no action on the request, but they asked Wible to go back to the City Council to try to get some county representation on the library board.

Commissioner George Richardson who made the suggestion to Wible, said, "The city always seems happy to get the money from us, but they don't like to talk about representation."

HE SAID THAT county representation on the board has been brought up twice in the last two years. "Both times the city turned a deaf ear on it."

Wible said that his money request was based on a study of the library's circulation outside of Fort Worth.

An earlier study by a county committee had suggested that the county give the libraries about \$225,000. That study was based on population, Wible said.

"Circulation is more germane to actual use of the library by county residents," Wible said.

FOR THE LAST two years, Fort Worth libraries have received \$147,000 from the county.

In other action today, commissioners voted to renew a contract with Fort Worth to keep City Health Director Dr. W. V. Bradshaw as head of the city-county health service.

Commissioners had to take the action before the end of Bradshaw's current contract, Jan. 1, 1973, while they work out the details of a completely combined health service.

Decision on Tax Deputies Studied

A ruling that Tarrant County's civil service act applies to Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart's deputies could set a precedent for state as well as county employees, Stewart's lawyer said yesterday.

William M. Brown said no decision had been made last night on whether or not the ruling will be appealed.

Dist. Judge Walter E. Jordan handed down the ruling about noon yesterday. He said the civil service act is constitutional and it applies "to all of Reed Stewart's people."

STEWART AND Brown had contended that deputy assessor-collectors are public officers, not employees.

Jordan said his decision was based on whether or not deputies were officers on whom "any sovereign function of government is conferred."

He said Stewart's testimony convinced him the deputies were employees completely under the assessor-collector's control.

And, he said, he had little doubt prior to studying the case that the Civil Service Act, passed by the legislature last year, was constitutional.

THE ACT GAVE Tarrant, Dallas, Harris, Bexar and El Paso counties the right to put county employees under civil service after approval by voters or by commissioners courts.

Brown said similar civil service systems had been held unconstitutional under a 1961 ruling, which threw out a 1929 civil service act sponsored by Julian Hyer, a former Tarrant County state senator.

Stewart appeared before

'Grandfather clause' saves jobs for many

A "grandfather clause" will allow the Tarrant County Tax Assessor-Collector's office to keep some of its older employees.

District Judge Walter E. Jordan has ruled that the deputies of that office fall under the Civil Service Act, thus placing a mandatory retirement age of 65 on employees.

However, the "grandfather clause" will allow deputies now over 65 to stay on until January, 1978, the ruling stated. Tax Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart said there are employees in his office who are 65 or older who he feels are valuable to his operation. He said there are 151 persons in his office who are affected by the overall ruling.

Judge Jordan's ruling provided that the Tarrant County Civil Service Act is constitutional and applies to employees of the assessor-collector's office. The ruling was seen as precedent-setting for county employees throughout the state.

Judge Jordan said he based his ruling

on whether the deputies were officers on whom "any sovereign function of government is conferred." He said Stewart's testimony indicated the deputies were employees.

Jordan would not predict whether his ruling would affect other offices in the county, but some observers say it could affect the offices of County Clerk Ed Loftin, Sheriff Lon Evans and Dist. Clerk Jim Boorman. Evans and Boorman said they will not contest civil service rules for employees.

Of an appeal, Stewart said, "The judge has just ruled against me. I'm a good loser. I will co-operate."

Jordan said he had little doubt prior to studying the case that the Texas Legislature's 1971 Civil Service Act was constitutional. By that act, Tarrant, Dallas, Harris, Bexar and El Paso counties were given the right to put county employees under the civil service regulations if either voters or commissioners courts approved the action.

Vote ending civil service may face legal challenge

Political patronage predicted to return

By LARRY NEAL

A county civil service commissioner said Monday he is considering legal action to void Commissioners Court's vote ending county civil service and abolishing the civil service commission.

Frank Barron, president of the Tarrant County Central Labor Council and a civil service commissioner, said he would meet soon with the two other members of the civil service commission, lawyers Rex McEntire and David Chappell, to consider what action to take on the court's 3-1 vote abolishing county civil service.

ed prohibits its abolition without an election, commissioners were able to do so because they were in violation of the Texas Open Meetings Law when they passed the order creating civil service.

IN MAKING his motion, Lewis said he was "willing to give consideration to submitting this issue to the people," if enough citizens seek an election, to "let them decide on civil service once and for all."

Griffin, who seconded Lewis, said he wanted to be rid of civil service for several reasons, including: — "Hiring practices are not uniform in Tarrant County." — "Civil service does not

Turn to Ending on Page 2

Garfield Thompson, an AFL-CIO representative and former president of the county employes union, predicted a return to the "political patronage" system if civil service is removed.

"I'd hate to go back and see an elected official black-jack his employes and say, 'Contribute to my flower funds and to my campaigns,'" Thompson said.

BARRON told the court that he and the other commissioners were "trying to bring Tarrant County into the 20th century."

As an example of what civil service was doing, he said, "We had one case where an elected official wanted to hire a clerk-typist who couldn't eventype."

The Supreme Court of Texas indicated civil service was legal and a good bill," Thompson said. "We feel civil service is serving and has served Tarrant County."

Thompson said he felt the district attorney's office — where civil service has been opposed since Dist. Atty. Tim Curry took office — was responsible for the decision.

Commissioner Dick Lewis made the motion to rescind the order creating civil service and was joined by Commissioners B. D. Griffin and Jerry Mebus.

Commissioner Dick Andersen, who voted against the original motion to set up civil service, was alone in voting to keep it.

County Judge Mike Moncrief did not vote.

Although the law under which civil service was creat-

14-A FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM Wednesday Morning, March 12, 1975

EDITORIALS

Vote means step back to patronage

County Commissioner Jerry Mebus is fond of saying, "This is a step in the right direction" every time the court does something he deems worthwhile.

Commissioner Mebus with one vote Monday in cahoots with two of his fellows negated many of his best steps.

Mebus, on a motion by Commissioner Dick Lewis and a second by Commissioner B. D. Griffin, voted to abolish county civil service.

They voted return to the days of patronage past.

The days when a newly elected official could at his whim empty his office of employes.

The days when he could drag from his workers campaign contribution in abundance because the workers had no recourse.

The days when county employes worked 16- and 20-hour days in election years, primarily on campaigns, because their jobs were on the line.

The days when people were hired because they could get votes or had gotten votes, because they were somebody's relative or somebody else's friend.

The days when people were not necessarily hired because they knew how to do the jobs they were hired to do.

We've watched county government and its civil service system since the system's inception. We're gravely disappointed in the outcome.

We concede to Commissioner Mebus that civil service has not lived up to its expectations.

But we would contend that it has not been given a chance.

Those who saw civil service in the beginning saw that it could only be successful in time—perhaps a long time.

The Tarrant County government is an old system, built on tradition and practice, and not accustomed to sudden revolutionary change.

It is an organization—employers and employes alike—that cannot change old habits and old thinking in minutes or hours or even three years.

But it can change. It had begun to change. Civil service would have been at the heart of the change.

We also concede to Commissioner Mebus that county government is

fragmented and that civil service has had hard times under the conditions.

But we contend that civil service stood virtually alone as an affirmative action aimed at binding the fragments together.

Civil service and the court rulings that came out of it proved as a matter of law that county employes are county employes no matter which office they work in.

We concede to Commissioner Griffin that civil service is a terrible burden to an elected official at times.

But we contend that no matter how terrible the burden it is one worth carrying.

Civil service, like the criminal justice system from which Commissioner Griffin graduated, exists for the protection of the very few who might be abused by the system.

As in the justice system, those in authority often have to suffer apparently unnecessary loads in dealing with those who would take advantage of the system so that the very few who are taken advantage of by the system can be protected.

We concede to Commissioner Lewis that all county employes are not equally covered by civil service and that the situation was wrong.

But we contend that taking everyone else away from civil service is not exactly a solution to the problem.

The solution lies in those who have the intestinal fortitude to fight to bring all county employes under civil service.

To Commissioner Dick Andersen who without uttering a word of argument on either side waited until the abolition had already passed and voted no on the question—we would say that wasn't enough.

To County Judge Mike Moncrief who lists among the aims of his new job "dignity at the courthouse"—we would say dignity would have been served by your speaking up in defense of civil service.

To all we must say that for all the steps taken backward Monday, it will take twice or perhaps three times as many to recover.

Why? Because you, gentlemen, have shown weakness in your decision and have undermined public confidence in your leadership.

The only way to go'



—By Harold P. Maples, Star-Telegram Cartoonist

'This is what I think about that'

2-F FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM Thursday Evening, March 20, 1975

Editorials:

Commissioners, Go Fetch the Baby

County Judge Mike Moncrief said commissioners court "is very concerned about the jobs of all county employes" and that a committee composed of some commissioners and department heads will be established to formulate personnel policies.

Gosh. County Commissioners Jerry Mebus and Dick Andersen said commissioners court is formulating guidelines which may make provision for testing of job applicants and formation of a grievance committee. The two commissioners said they wanted to make sure the county gets qualified job applicants. The grievance committee would serve in much the same way as did the civil service commission, which got a kick in the rump the other day.

Gee. Asst. Dist. Atty. Cue Lipscomb, the court's legal adviser, suggested the county set out a policy of equal employment opportunity "without regard to race, creed, color or sex."

Wow. County officials, you had a system which was meeting these needs and others as regards county workers.

Sure, there were some problems with it. Sure, there must have been some facets of it which ticked you off now and then.

But civil service was in its infancy. Considering its tender age, civil service was working rather well. Given time, it would have served the county — county officials, county workers and county taxpayers — even better.

And we certainly have no doubt that civil service would work much better than the piecemeal, hodge-podge, informal set of county personnel policies county officials are now discussing.

You had a good system, county officials.

But you threw the baby out with the bath water. Go quickly, county officials. Go quickly and fetch the baby.

THE NEWS-TRIBUNE February 28, 1975

County Can't Pay Health Premiums

Attorney General John Hill ruled this week that a county may not legally pay premiums on a health and life group insurance policy for retired employees who are eligible for benefits under the County and District Retirement System.

Even if the qualified retirees pay their own premiums, a county cannot legally pay the group insurance premium for county employes when the group rate would reflect and be partially based upon losses sustained by the retired employees.

The opinion was requested by District Attorney Henry Wade of Dallas.

Continued from page 1

cover all Tarrant County employes.

Griffin also complained that in his recent bouts with civil service over the transfer of one employe and the firing of another, one employe was "publicly condemned without a hearing" and another was denied a speedy, closed hearing.

HE SAID CIVIL service was good for federal employes, but costly and confusing to the government of Tarrant County.

Mebus said he was voting against continuation of the system because "I don't believe the county should suffer any more mental anguish over this issue."

"I really don't think we've accomplished what we set out to do," he said. "The cooperative spirit is just not there."

"As long as county government is as loose-knit as it is, the organization is fragmented and I believe civil service has no future," Mebus said.

Andersen said afterward that he simply had voted according to his conscience.

Moncrief, asked how he would have voted if he had to break a tie, said, "I didn't come down to a tie vote so you'll never know."

Commissioners, on the same motion, voted to ratify all the other court orders since 1969 in question except actions involving Golden Triangle Boulevard in Precinct 4.

The commissioners also apparently mistakenly left in limbo an action vacating a small tract of land near Arlington in 1971.

When Griffin was reading the numbers of court orders involving Golden Triangle, he included the number of the title vacation order involving a triangular plot in Mebus' Precinct 2 near Arlington.

"I guess we'll have to strike that out of there," Mebus said afterward.

The commissioners' legal adviser, Asst. Dist. Atty. Cue Lipscomb, said the actions to ratify or invalidate previous court orders were needed because the orders could be challenged on the basis of the Open Meetings Law violations.

A third option, he said, would be to take no action and "anything you choose to leave in a state of limbo... will remain on the voidable list."

Barron Sworn In As TRA Member

Labor leader Frank Barron said today he will favor a renewed effort to develop the Trinity River into a barge canal but added it would have to be far in the future.

Barron made the comment after being sworn in as an at-large member of the Trinity River Authority board.

BARRON WAS sworn in by County Judge Howard Green in a brief ceremony attended by about 20 persons including State Rep. Betty Andujar, long-time board member O. P. Leonard and TRA General Manager David H. Brune.

Barron also said the Trinity River should be developed in other ways, to its fullest extent.

"People on the Brazos and Colorado rivers have gotten way ahead of us. We've got to do some work to catch up with them."

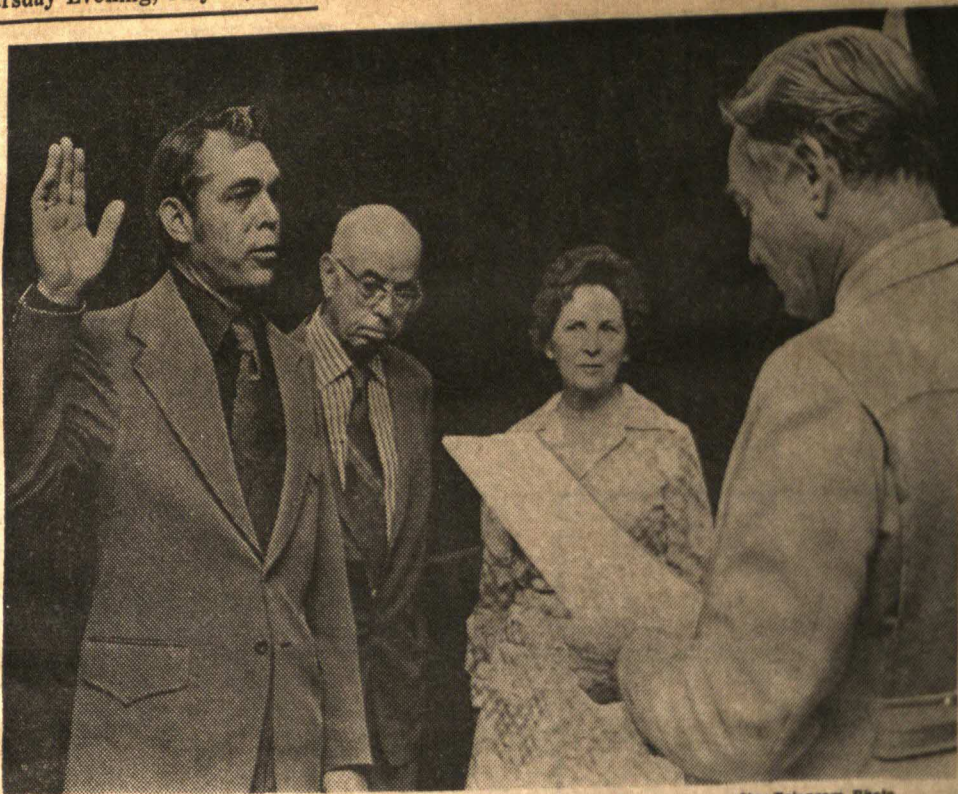
On the canal project Barron said, "It was an emotional issue at election time."

"I DON'T have any quarrel with the environmentalists," he said, "but I think that when the people get the full picture they will favor the project."

Barron is president of the Tarrant County Central Labor Council.

He was appointed to the TRA board recently by Gov. Dolph Briscoe.

As an at-large member he is to represent all of the people in the five full counties and portions of 12 other counties which are within the Trinity River watershed.



SWEARING IN . . . From left, Barron, Leonard, Andujar, Green

—Star-Telegram Photo

Court to Hear Arguments on Civil Service

Fort Worth Bureau of the News

FORT WORTH—The Eastland Court of Civil Appeals will hear arguments Sept. 12 in a suit which challenges the civil service system at the Tarrant County courthouse.

County Assessor-Collector Reed Stewart filed the suit.

Stewart contends that, as an elective official, he has the constitutional right to hire, fire and promote employees of his office.

Stewart appealed after Dist. Judge Walter Jordan ruled against him and the Fort Worth Court of Civil Appeals asked the Eastland court to consider the appeal. Its jurists will come to Fort Worth for the hearing.

Attorney William M. Brown represents Stewart. County commissioners employed John McBryde, a Fort Worth civil lawyer, to defend the civil service system.

for our Woodstock place

12—The Fort Worth Press Wednesday, October 23, 1974

surprised that Jackie Onassis

Tarrant County sued over job discrimination complaint

A 25-year-old woman has filed suit against Tarrant County because she was told she didn't qualify for a "man's job" in the sheriff's office.

Scientist rites set

Funeral services are scheduled at 10 a.m. tomorrow in Denton for world-famous nutrition and textiles researcher Dr. Pauline Beery Mack.

Dr. Mack, former head of the Texas Woman's University Research Institute, died yesterday in a Denton hospital. Funeral will be at St. David's Episcopal Church in Denton with burial in State College Cemetery in State College, Pa.

Dr. Mack was honored in 1970 for her work for the National Aeronautics and Space Admn. She and her staff studied bone density with special X-ray equipment she designed to determine how much calcium is lost from bones during long periods of inactivity such as as astronaut's experience in space.

She came to TWU in 1952 as dean of the College of Household Arts and Sciences, leaving that post in 1962 to devote full time to research. She resigned as the TWU Research Institute's head in 1973, due to illness.

Pam Smyth says she learned of a job as a civil process server with the county from the Texas Employment Commission.

When she went to the personnel office in late September, she says she was told that only a man would be accepted for the job.

Jim McCreight said today that he did tell the woman that, but only because that was the instruction from the sheriff's office.

Capt. Bill McConnell, head of the sheriff's civil division verified today he requested a man for the job.

He did say, however, that he would be willing to hire a woman if she could qualify.

"It might be good. I don't know," McConnell said. "I suppose they might could work."

PERSONNEL Director Stan Zinn said he received notice from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) yesterday that Ms. Smyth had filed charges.

Zinn said it has been the practice to follow the request of the various departments in hiring personnel.

"There is no use sending them (job applicants) over there (to the various

departments) if you know all they're going to get is a deaf ear."

"As far as I'm concerned, they (the sheriff's office) are going to have to defend why they don't want a woman," Zinn said.

Ms. Smyth said even the Texas Employment Commission tried to talk her out of filing suit with the EEOC.

She said a man at the TEC told her, "Old Lon Evans is old fashioned. He's never going to have a woman in there."

SHE SAID she'd called the district attorney's office to have them represent her in the matter, as the EEOC had advised her to do.

The DA's office advised her, she said, that they were "in a quandary" and she should get her own attorney.

"I just can't believe they won't do anything about it," Ms. Smyth said. "I wish I knew what a 'quandary' is."

Ms. Smyth says she is a

certified law enforcement officer with four years experience as a dispatcher and warrant officer for the River Oaks Police Dept.

She is presently a dispatcher for the police department in another suburban community.

Captain McConnell said the process server job involves serving various notices and warrants from the civil courts, picking up children for the domestic courts and sometimes taking property under court order.

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INFORMATION RELEASE ON TARRANT COUNTY OFFICE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The Tarrant County Office Administration Building is a five-story office building consisting of 110,000 square feet. When completed, it will provide court and office facilities for Commissioners' Court and other departments as follows:

Public Works Department
Planning Department
Personnel and C.E. T. A. Administration
Information Services Department
Tax Assessor and Collector
Auditor's Office
Credit Union

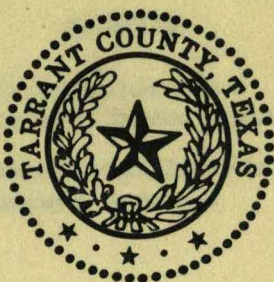
The completion of the Office Administration Building will allow for the remodeling and restoring of the original courthouse for use as court rooms and related activities as future courts are needed for Tarrant County.

The architect for the Office Administration Building is Al Komatsu and Associates. The design is intended to blend with the original courthouse. The north wall, overlooking a landscaped plaza, will be made of reflective glass which will reflect the image of the original courthouse. The east and west walls will be of brick that has been selected to blend with the granite walls of the original courthouse.

The plaza on the north side of the building will accent and harmonize with the landscaped area east of the original courthouse.

The construction manager for the project is Walker Construction Company. Actual construction work is to begin within thirty to forty five days. Completion is expected to be in July of 1981.

The Tarrant County Office Administration Building, along with the City-County Public Safety and Courts Building which is now in the planning phase, will add greatly to the many building and restoration programs now underway or being planned for the downtown area.



GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS
OFFICE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

10:30 A.M.

OCTOBER 24, 1979

PROGRAM

Invocation Dr. William Jablonowski
Pastor, St. Stephen Presbyterian Church

Welcome Mike Moncrief, County Judge
Master of Ceremonies

Introduction of Commissioners:

Dick Andersen	Precinct 1
Jerry Mebus	Precinct 2
A. Lyn Gregory	Precinct 3
B. D. Griffin	Precinct 4

Introduction of Other Honored Guests:

Woodie Woods	Mayor of Fort Worth
Thomas M. Holland	Chairman of the Mayors' Council of Tarrant County and Mayor of River Oaks
Phil North	Chairman of the Board and President, Tandy Corporation
Bayard Friedman	Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Fort Worth National Bank
Paul Mason	Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, First National Bank
Robert Gerrard	Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer, Continental National Bank
James Nichols	Chairman of the Board, Fort Worth Area Chamber of Commerce
Al Komatsu	Architect
Joe Walker	Vice President, Walker Construction Company
Ed H. Smith	Tarrant County Purchasing Agent
Jack Benson	Tarrant County Auditor

Remarks Woodie Woods

Remarks Thomas M. Holland

Remarks Mike Moncrief

Ground Breaking Commissioners' Court and All Other
Honored Guests.



LeAnne Gardner

260 CENTRAL BANK PLAZA
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: 332-1278

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Coll# 245

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