

The Honorable Board of County Commissioners met in their said office at 10:00 a.m., February 16, 1981, it being third Monday.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT:

Edward W. Williamson, Chairman

L. A. Hinson, Vice-Chairman (Absent)

C. Waldo Marlowe

Junior W. Dew

Lynwood Norris

James E. Hill, Jr., Attorney

Emogene W. Suggs, Clerk

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman and the invocation was given by Walter Jones, Director of Missions, Baptist Association.

The minutes of the December 15th and February 2nd meetings were approved as recorded upon motion by Commissioner Marlowe and seconded by Commissioner Norris.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marlowe, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed to approve the payment of an invoice from Ledwell & Associates in the amount of \$102.00 to cover expenses over and above the previous appropriation of \$2,000.00. Funds are to be appropriated from Surplus.

Alexander Singletary, spokesman for Parents of Handicapped Children in Columbus County, met with the Board to request funds to continue summer training for handicapped children. He was accompanied by four other parents. The request is for \$4,000.00 which is an increase of \$500.00 over last year's appropriation. The Board will respond to their request by April 15th.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norris, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed to purchase floor-covering to be installed at the Department of Social Services for a total cost of \$450.00 which will cover 480 square feet of space.

Velma Haley, acting as liaison for Governor Hunt, presented a sign, COUNTY OF INVOLVED VOLUNTEER CITIZENS, to the Board in recognition of the Involvement Council of Columbus County. She requested that the sign be displayed at the Courthouse for three months and then moved to each of the following for three months each: Library, Hospital and Health Department. After this, the sign should be moved to a permanent place for display.

Mrs. Haley presented a list of names which the Council recommends to be appointed by the Board to serve on the Council.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dew, seconded by Commissioner Norris and passed to appoint the following persons to serve on the Involvement Council, Ella Logan (No affiliation), Chief Douglas Keller, Whiteville City Police; Rachel Woodard, Retired Supervisor, Whiteville City Schools; Doris Norris, Columbus Standard Insurance Company; Christyne Patrick, Home Maker; Susan Hammuth, Womens' Center, Southeastern Community College; and Marshall Shephard, Criminal Justice, Southeastern Community College.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dew, seconded by Commissioner Marlowe and passed to approve the following extensions for listing 1981 taxes:

Fair Bluff Medical Services, PA	Sixty Days
Farias & Hilal - Partnership	Sixty Days
Dr. Donald A. Cunningham	Seventy-Five Days
Hill's Food Stores & Dewey Hill	Thirty Days
C. & J. Tire Service & Jerry Stephens	Sixty Days
Firestone Stores	Thirty Days
Cooke's Department Store & Hubert and Alice M. Cooke	March 1, 1981
Manufacturers Hanover Leasing Corporation	Sixty Days

Mrs. Janet Kinsey of the Acme-Delco Community met with the Board to complain about the condition of the Acme-Delco High School. She stated that the building is in deplorable condition and that the Commissioners should not spend any money on school buildings that are in that condition. She said that children could not get a good education while sitting in classrooms covered with water after rains. Other conditions she pointed out were that there are no cloak-rooms, no lockers, inadequate fire alarm systems and officious odor in the classrooms. The Board stated that they were not aware of these conditions and appreciated her letting them know. Mrs. Kinsey stated that she had been to the Board of Education with the problem but with no results.

Terray Suggs, with Lowrimore, Warwick & Company, met with the Board to present an analysis of the bids received in December for the purchase of a computer system for Columbus County. A bound copy of EVALUATION OF PROPOSED EDP SYSTEMS was presented to each member of the Board and a presentation and discussion followed. After this, a motion was made by Commissioner Marlowe, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed that the County accept the bid from InterACT Corporation, Raleigh, NC, at a cost of \$110,050, plus sales tax, as recommended by Lowrimore, Warwick & Company. Funds are to be appropriated from Surplus.

The Clerk was instructed to contact the Hospital to inquire if they would be interested in leasing space on the system.

There was a meeting of Department Heads and the following Departments were represented: Library, Tax Collector, Recreation, Dog Warden, Landfill, Health Department, Social Services, Elections and Tax Supervisor.

Ralph Brake, representative for Blue-Cross/Blue-Shield Hospital Insurance Group, met with the Department Heads to answer questions about the coverage of the group policy. There have been some complaints about the coverage of the policy (or lack of coverage) in some areas. Mr. Brake suggested that the County upgrade the coverage on professional allowance and add major medical coverage rather than extended benefits which we now have. The Board asked Mr. Brake to review the cost and report to the Board at the next meeting on the increase in cost if the Board decides to make the changes. Mr. Brake went to the Board of Elections meeting room to meet with other employees that wished to talk with him about any problems they may have.

The annual tax charge was approved by the Board to be sent to the Tax Collector for collection in the amount of \$5,686,819.28 for the General County Fund; \$15,044.23 for Riegelwood Sanitary District and \$13,300.06 for the Fire Districts. This information is reported to the Board by the Tax Supervisor.

Hobson Ivey, Supervisor of Landfill operations, met with the Board to request a salary adjustment for Elrich Turner, a Landfill employee. No action was taken on this request.

Chairman Williamson stated that a trailer had been given to the County by Justin Oliver, Mental Health, and there was a discussion as to where the trailer should be parked until a further decision is made of its use. The Board asked Mr. Williamson to contact the School Bus Garage Supervisor and request the trailer be parked there until further notice.

It was agreed by the Board that Dr. Black continue on as part-time director of the Health Department until June 30, 1981. He had originally been hired as part-time director through December 30, 1980, and to be reconsidered at that time.

The following Plan was passed upon motion by Commissioner Dew and seconded by Commissioner Marlowe:

NOISE ABATEMENT PLAN

The County of Columbus herewith provides a noise abatement plan to reduce the existing noise levels to conform with the US Department of Labor's OSHA standards, and until such time that the noise levels are reduced sufficiently to conform with these standards, then to protect the hearing of the exposed employees by administrative controls.

This Plan will comply with noise standards published by the US Department of Labor as 29 CFR 1019.95, entitled "Occupational Noise Exposure". The County of Columbus intends to develop and adopt the program described herein. Such a program will safeguard the hearing of employees exposed to noise levels exceeding the federal criteria until such time as the noise levels are reduced by engineering, administrative, and other procedures to those levels that would not normally produce a loss of hearing.

PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

The abatement and compliance program implemented by the County of Columbus will include the following phases: educational, noise surveys, engineering and administrative controls, issuing of personal protective equipment, and audiometric testing.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM:

The County of Columbus recognizes the need for a strong educational program. Therefore, the County of Columbus intends to educate properly its existing work force. At least every quarter, all new employees will be reminded of the need for an effective hearing conservation program. The educational program will consist of at least an initial 25 to 55 minute educational presentation concerning the need for an effective hearing conservation program. During this program an explanation of County policy relative to the requirements of wearing protective devices will be given. All employees will be encouraged to ask questions concerning the program. Handouts describing a hearing conservation program, employees' responsibility, will be given to the employees during the educational training program.

The County of Columbus recognizes the need for a continuing educational program in the implementation of a hearing conservation program and will regularly remind the employees

of the necessity for preserving their hearing. This will be achieved by posting educational materials at appropriate locations. All areas where hearing protection is required will be posted with appropriate signs designed to alert the employees to the need of wearing protective devices.

Employees not exposed to noise levels exceeding the accepted guidelines will be encouraged to participate in the educational programs. The County of Columbus recognizes the fact that a loss of one's ability to hear can occur from many causes other than the industrial environment. Therefore, all employees would benefit from this additional education. Since the hearing conservation program described herein protects the employees' hearing from possible harmful environment and could possibly alert the employee to potentially harmful physical disorders, the program is considered an additional benefit program for the employee.

It is anticipated that the educational phase will begin on or before April 1, 1981.

SURVEYS:

The success of the hearing conservation program depends upon an accurate knowledge of the existing noise environment. An inaccurate knowledge of the existing noise environment. An inaccurate survey could define areas on underexposure where, in fact, a harmful noise environment exists. This would result in a needless loss of hearing that would not normally be selected since these employees would not be tested. (This is common in work areas where pure tones exist.) Therefore, the County of Columbus will conduct a detailed survey noise using instruments meeting the appropriate ANSI standard, as a minimum, and calibrated externally before and after each survey. The initial survey will include the measurement of sound levels using the appropriate scale and meter responses and an octave band analysis at appropriate locations. The measurements will be made at the employee's normal working position and a general survey will be made of the production area(s). This procedure will allow an approximate estimation of the employees' overall exposure in instances where the employee is required to move from one working location to another in his daily work routine.

Follow-up general surveys will be made at least yearly and also when engineering, production, and administrative modifications are made that affect employee noise exposure. The results of all surveys will be properly recorded and made available to the North Carolina Department of Labor OSHA Division upon request.

It is anticipated that the initial general survey will be completed on or before April 1, 1981.

ENGINEERING AND ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS:

The County of Columbus recognizes the desirability of controlling the existing noise levels by engineering and/or administrative controls. Therefore, the possibility of control procedures will be properly considered. Due to the complexity of some of the machinery and equipment used by the County of Columbus, a part of the challenge for reducing noise may have to rest with some of the suppliers of machinery and equipment. Suppliers

of machinery and equipment normally purchased by the County of Columbus which produce noise in excess of permissible standards will be requested to redesign their products to meet these standards. As an interim solution, the County of Columbus will consider possible modifications of existing equipment, the building of partial or total enclosures, and other engineering noise control procedures for reducing the existing noise levels.

Within the limitation of work schedules and employee training and backgrounds, possible administrative controls will be considered. Where practical, over-exposed employees will be moved at appropriate intervals to work areas having acceptable noise levels. In addition, equipment operation procedures will be modified so that during any one twenty-four (24) hour period, the allowed exposure times will not be exceeded.

It is anticipated that engineering and administrative controls will be implemented on or before August 1, 1981.

ISSUING OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:

Until such time as engineering and/or administrative controls reduce the amount of noise exposure to conform with the allowed limits, appropriate personal protective equipment will be properly issued and made available. It is recognized that the use of this equipment is to be considered a temporary solution to the problem which eventually must be eliminated by engineering and/or administrative controls.

The wearing of ear protective equipment will be required. Failure of an employee to properly wear the protective equipment can result in the termination of his employment with the County.

When the need for ear protective equipment results in the wearing of devices inserted into the ear canal, the individual responsible for issuing and fitting this protective equipment will be trained by and under the supervision of a qualified person and certified as qualified for this activity.

The issuing of ear protective equipment will always be preceded by some form of educational program and/or personnel supervision and training.

It is anticipated that the issuance of ear protective equipment will begin on or before March 1, 1981.

AUDIOMETRIC TESTING PROGRAM:

The objective of the hearing conservation program developed by the County of Columbus is the preservation of the hearing of its employees. In order to achieve this goal, an effective audiometric testing program will be initiated. It is anticipated that this program will include pre-employment audiograms, an initial survey of the work force in order to establish a base-line, and termination audiograms when possible. All employees exposed to levels equal to or exceeding the published maximum noise level will be given an audiogram once a year.

The success of the hearing conservation program will be evaluated by comparing the randomly selected audiograms of at least twenty percent of the work force exposed to damaging noise levels at the end of each retest cycle. If the work force tested is

a hundred employees or less, at least twenty audiograms will be reviewed. If the work force screened is less than twenty employees, then all of the audiograms will be reviewed. If twenty percent of these employees have incurred a significant additional hearing loss above that normally expected due to aging, the program will be judged ineffective and an immediate review of the overall program will be made by management and appropriate action taken. This procedure should improve the protection provided and as a result protect the hearing of the employees.

It is anticipated that the initial testing of the existing work force will begin on or before April 1, 1981.

Attested:
/s/ Emogene W. Suggs, Clerk

Board of County Commissioners
/s/ Edward W. Williamson, Chairman

It was further stipulated that the Clerk send a certified letter to each employee that is covered by the above plan requesting a signed statement from each employee that they will/will not abide by the regulations of using protective ear equipment and make them aware of the provisions of the plan. Howard Stanley is to carry out the plan as is set out by the Department of Labor 29 CFR 1910.95 entitled "Occupational Noise Exposure".

*See minutes
of 3-2-81*

A motion was made by Commissioner Marlowe, seconded by Commissioner Dew and passed that the slot for deputy at the Sheriff's Department, that has been funded partially by a grant, be funded from County funds until such time as there is a vacancy in that Department and that vacancy be filled with the temporary slot.

Upon motion the meeting adjourned until March 2, 1981, at 10:00 a.m.

Emogene W. Suggs
Clerk

APPROVED:

Edward W. Williamson
Chairman