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School officials hope to pay teachers, staff more

By Eric Miller
Editor

MILFORD—Caroline County school officials plan to ask county officials for extra funds to cover teacher salary adjustments and a 12 percent pay increase for bus drivers, mechanics, clerical workers, teaching assistants and food service workers—some of whom make close to minimum wage.

Caroline County “teachers get two to three years of experience and then go 18 miles up the road and get a \$5,000 to \$6,000 raise,” said George Spaulding, chairman of the Caroline County School Board.

The proposed budget for the 2014-2015

fiscal year also calls for an extra \$505,000 to cover the increased cost of health insurance for the school division. “We don’t want the employees to have to pay extra for their health insurance,” said Dr. Greg Killough, Caroline school superintendent.

The Caroline County School Board and staff presented the proposed budget at a public hearing on Feb. 3 at Caroline Middle School, but no one from the public made any comments. The proposed budget is likely to undergo further fine-tuning, but the overall school budget for the new fiscal year, which starts July 1, stands at \$40.3 million. That is a \$3.5 million increase over

last year’s budget, Killough said.

Most of the \$40 million will come from the state and federal governments.

Roughly \$14.6 million would come from county taxpayers, and that represents a \$2.6 million increase over last year’s budget, he noted.

The board is expected to adopt a budget on Feb. 10 to take to the Caroline County Board of Supervisors for approval. Major categories of the budget are: \$1.5 million for salary increases, \$648,437 for new positions and benefits, \$538,454 for retirement rate increases, \$505,200 for health insurance increase, \$147,870 for material and

supplies, \$152,100 for equipment and fixtures and \$50,000 for professional development.

School board members want to adjust the teacher pay scale so that it’s more logical and better balanced. They want the pay grades among teachers to be in increments of \$900. In one case, there is only \$180 difference between two pay grades. In another case, the difference is over \$3,000.

By making this change in the teacher pay scale, the starting salary for a new teacher in Caroline would be \$38,600, compared to the current starting salary of \$38,166. After

see Teachers page 2

County’s fundraising falls short for YMCA



Basketball games are scheduled for this new gym in late March.

Grand opening is planned for March

By Eric Miller Editor

Despite concerns by some elected Caroline County officials, the county will take money out of its general fund to pay toward the \$103,000 loan payment that’s due in February for the Caroline Family YMCA.

The matter came up near the end of a Jan. 28 meeting of the Caroline County Board of Supervisors. Assistance with the payment, which is for interest only, doesn’t require a vote of the board.

The county provided \$60,000 for the August 2013 payment.

The grand opening of the facility in Ladysmith is planned for March, county officials noted.

“We’re working to get U.S. Senator Mark Warner as the keynote speaker for the grand opening,” Supervisor Wayne Acors said. Warner, a Virginia Democrat, is running for reelection.

In 2011, the Board of Supervisors entered into an agreement with the Rappahannock Area YMCA to give the organization \$5 million to build a Caroline YMCA. The county accomplished this with a secured loan from SunTrust Bank. The collateral for this debt is the Bowling Green Elementary School, which recently underwent a \$10 million expansion and renovation. Apart from this gift and the loan that made it possible to make the gift, there are 10 interest-only payments

see YMCA page 2

Students have missed 8 days but will make up 5

So far, Caroline County public school students have missed eight days of school but will have to make up only five, said Dr. Greg Killough, Caroline school superintendent.

The school calendar had four days built into the school year at the end of the school year, and the school system will compensate for a fifth day by opening schools on President’s Day, which is Feb. 17, which originally was going to be a holiday.

“They will have to make up five days,” Killough said. Bank time will be used for the remaining three days.

If schools are closed more than two additional days between now and spring break, then “we’ll have to look at taking some of spring break” to use as make-up days, Killough said. Spring break is Monday, April 21 through Friday, April 25.

Students are already scheduled to stay in school until June 19, which is the last day. Rather than extend the school year further into June, school officials will consider making April 24 and 25 regular school days, Killough said.

Schools have been closed this year due to extremely cold temperatures and snow and ice. If Caroline schools had been able to go all year without missing any days, then the last day would have been June 13. Graduation is set for Friday, June 6.

Caroline High School students will be taking state-required Standards of Learning tests Feb. 3-6. Friday, Feb. 7, will be a teacher’s workday and schools will be closed. When CHS students return on Feb. 10, they will start a new semester.



Bob Hebert, master of ceremonies, gives the signal for plungers to jump in/on the ice at Lake Land’Or Saturday..

Ready, set, jump on the ice!

They stood on the ice like polar bears at the ‘plunge’

By Eric Miller
Editor

LADYSMITH—This year’s “Polar Bear Plunge” lived up to its name as some participants—like polar bears—got into a frozen lake and stood dripping wet on sheets of ice.

The air temperature was 47 and the water temperature was 32 on Saturday morning, Feb. 1 for the eighth annual charity event at Lake Land’Or in Caroline County, said Molly Gee, a Polar Bear Plunge team member. Sponsored by Wright’s Chapel United Methodist

Church in Ladysmith, the event raised \$19,600 and that money is for food, rent and home heating bills for hundreds of financially struggling Caroline residents.

Last year, it took 70 participants to raise \$17,500.

This year, 52 participants braced themselves for the cold water and ran into the lake for a quick dip. However, two col-

see Plunge page 3



First time plunger Christine Jones of Ruther Glen bravely gets up to her knees in the 32 degree water.

Delegate Fowler wants to hear from voters

By Kate Miller
Capital News Service

RICHMOND—Although he’s a state delegate, Hyland “Buddy” Fowler, who represents most of Caroline County, said, “I don’t consider myself a special person.”

Fowler emphasized in an interview that he wants to hear from his constituents. “I welcome phone calls, emails, any kind of communication as to what issues that they believe are important and why.”



Photo by Kate Miller

Dale Hargrove Alderman, legislative aide, meets with State Delegate Buddy Fowler.

He and his legislative aide, Dale Hargrove Alderman, were in Fowler’s office at the General Assembly Building in Richmond recently as the two reminisced about Fowler’s time as a legislative aide for Alderman’s father Delegate Frank Hargrove (R-Glen Allen).

After working for Hargrove for nine years, Fowler became the legislative aide for Hargrove’s successor Delegate John Cox (R-Ashland).

Fowler, the newly

elected delegate for House District 55, now holds the seat once held by both Hargrove and Cox and said he learned how to best represent his district—which includes parts of Caroline, Hanover and Spotsylvania Counties—by following in the footsteps of Hargrove and Cox.

“The experience (of working as a legislative aide) was an outstanding education,” Fowler said.

Alderman said there is a “learning curve” as she and Fowler settle into their new positions but added that Fowler understands the needs of his constituents.

“He is an asset to the constituents because he knows the district,” Alderman said.

According to the Virginia Public Access Project, Fowler received 56.92 percent of votes—15,349 of 26,965 votes—in the November 2013 election.

One legislative issue of particular importance to Fowler is hunting.

Fowler—who has been a hunter for more than 40 years—introduced House Bill 1146, which would allow an individual who has an apprentice hunting license to hunt unsupervised if he/she completes a hunter education course.

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OBITUARIES AND IN MEMORIAM

William Brown "Billy" Delozier

William Brown "Billy" Delozier, 60, of Annandale, died Jan. 28, 2014.

Born in Fairfax, he is survived by his parents, James and Anne Delozier of Woodford; four brothers, Donald Delozier (Denise) of Pegram, Tenn., Larry Delozier of Woodford, Dale Delozier (Cathy) of Stafford and Jackie Delozier (Debbie) of Woodford.

A funeral service was at noon on Feb. 3 at Storke Funeral Home, Bowling Green. The family received friends before the service at the funeral home. Burial followed at Lower King & Queen Baptist "Wares" Church, King and Queen Courthouse.

The family requests that memorial contributions be made to Hospice-Capital Caring, 2900 Telesar Court, Falls Church, VA. 22042 or Fairfax REACH, Inc., Attn: Laura Yager, 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 836, Fairfax, VA. 22035 -1100.

You may sign a register book online www.storkefuneralhome.com.

Robert Lewis Ware

Robert Lewis Ware, 80, of Milford passed away on Jan. 26, 2014 in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

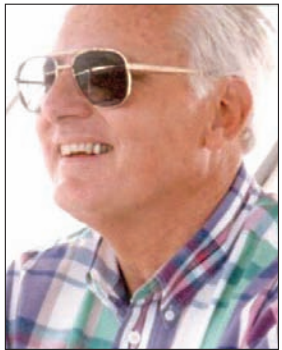
He was the son of the late Marshall Linwood and Eloise McEwen Ware of Lorton.

He is survived by his wife, Shirley Ware; his son, Robert Lewis Ware, Jr., and his wife, Michele, of Milford and his daughter Betsy Smith of Richmond. He is also survived by six grandchildren, Chris Austin, Tracy Austin, KayLee Ware, BreAnna Ware, Jessie Shelton and Owen Shelton - all of Virginia - and stepson Jeffrey Erb, of Dallas, Texas; two brothers, Richard Ware (wife Shirley) of Plantation, Fla., and Donald Ware (wife Carol), of Stone Mountain, Ga.

Ware was predeceased by his wife of 49 years, Penelope Freeman Ware, and by his youngest son, Charles Dean Ware.

Ware was a graduate of Washington-Lee High School in Arlington, and of General Motors Institute, Flint, Mich. In 1976, having worked as service manager for Cadillac dealers in North Carolina and Northern Virginia, he obtained Harbor View Marina in Oak Grove, which he operated for a number of years. He later became a broker for Bestway and Hylas Yachts. He loved boating, seeing America with his motor home, and spending time with family and friends. For them, he was the "go to" person, because everyone knew that "Bob could do anything," would tackle any job, and was always ready to help when needed.

A memorial service will be held at Salem Baptist Church in Sparta, at a time to be announced, with internment in the church's memorial garden. Those wishing to honor his memory may do so with memorial gifts to the Salem Baptist Church.



Kings Dominion to hire 4,000 to help kick-off season

DOSWELL—In preparation for Kings Dominion's once-in-a-lifetime 40th anniversary celebration, the park is now accepting applications to fill 4,000 seasonal positions for the 2014 operating season.

"Our 40th celebration fully relies on every associate delivering world-class customer service to all our guests," said King Dominion Human Resources Director Greg Talley. "It's our associates who make Kings Dominion such a unique experience and provide guests a lifetime of family fun and fond memories."

Kings Dominion's 40th celebration begins on Saturday, April 5 and will feature the return of classic park icons, including the infamous Singing Mushrooms and oversized candy apples in the newly re-themed Candy Apple Grove section of the park. In addition to the restoration of the International Street fountain, additional announcements regarding this "exciting celebration" will be released soon.

Kings Dominion is looking for applicants to be part of the 40th celebration and fill job openings throughout the park, including food and beverage, games, merchandise, rides, admissions, guest services, first aid, security and various other departments. Entry-level, as well as supervisory positions are available to qualified applicants.

Applicants must be at least 15 years of age and apply online at www.kingsdominion.com/jobs. Qualified candidates will be contacted to conduct an on-site interview.

Kings Dominion's entertainment team will be seeking qualified actors, dancers, singers, characters, technicians, theater attendants, stage managers, supervisors and more on the entertainment audition date:

Saturday, Feb. 8
1 p.m.: Singers, actors & character registration

5 p.m.: Dancers, stage managers, technicians & additional positions

Those attending the entertainment auditions should report to Kings Dominion's Human Resources Office, located at 16000 Theme Park Way in Doswell. Candidates who are unable to attend are welcome to submit an audition video online at www.kingsdominion.com/

YMCA from page A1

possible to make the gift, there are 10 interest-only payments on the SunTrust loan. The payments of \$103,100 are due twice a year—February and August.

Revenue from proffers from new construction projects in the county could be put toward the project and lower the county's contribution toward the February payment from \$103,000 to \$96,000, County Administrator Charles Culley said. "Any thing else that comes in, we'll add to it," he noted. Any remaining amount will come out of the county government's general fund.

Supervisor Jeff Black asked, "What happens if we don't make the payment?"

"We would default and this could affect our other areas of borrowing," Culley said.

"This is a giant slap in the face," Black told super-

visors. "A foundation came and said they would raise money. We're paying only the interest now. I have said this will be an \$8 million YMCA" instead of the original \$5 million.

In 2011, it was announced that the 42,000-square-foot, \$5 million facility would open in the fall of 2012. It has a gym, an indoor pool, a fitness center and exercise rooms. Membership fees are based on a member's income. Construction problems have delayed the opening. One problem occurred when concrete was poured when the outdoor temperature was too cold, which resulted in walls having to be torn down so concrete could be poured when the temperature was right.

Five years of \$200,000 annual payments adds up to \$1 million in interest alone, Black noted.

"No question, the YMCA is a good thing," Black said. But county officials were told no taxpayer dollars would be used. Black pointed out that \$200,000 is equal to a penny on the tax rate.

Black expressed concern that a \$1,000 contribution from a donor would go toward the interest on the loan, rather than the principle.

Acors said that would be \$1,000 that Caroline County didn't have to pay.

Jeff Sili, the vice chairman of the Board of Supervisors, said he would like to "see in writing the naming rights" for the YMCA.

"Making this payment is close to the end of our patience," said Floyd Thomas, chair of the Board of Supervisors.

"This discussion will continue to go on," Acors said.

"This is not about value," said Supervisor Reggie Underwood. "I didn't know we would be going down this road. The YMCA will belong to Caroline County. I've worked with the YMCA in Richmond and witnessed how they can change a community."

"I voted for the YMCA, but had I peeled the onion back more, I would have gotten to this conversation sooner," Underwood said.

"Yes, it is costing us," Underwood said. "But I hope we will get to the point where it is not costing the taxpayers. I'm frustrated, but I do see the light at the end of the tunnel. I'm going to do all I can to make sure we recoup the funds from the YMCA."

The Caroline YMCA lists as its mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all. According to its newsletter released on Jan. 29, the YMCA is enrolling members for spring swim lessons for March, April and May. Six classes are \$36 for members.

Starting in March, the YMCA will offer a middle school program to help students with homework and provide physical activities, as well as science and cooking projects. It also includes character building and community service—all for \$45 a week for members and \$65 a week for non-members.

Co-ed youth basketball registration starts Feb. 17 for members and is \$30. Non-member registration starts March 1 and is \$70. Games will start March 29 and be on Saturdays and Sundays.

Lonia Mae Jackson

Lonia Mae Jackson was called home on Jan. 21, 2014. She was a long-time resident of Bowling Green and was active in the community with her late husband, the Rev. Dr. Alphonso L. Jackson Sr.

She attended Shiloh Baptist Church in Bowling Green. They later moved to Lynchburg and became ministers. Lonina Mae preached the gospel to many in Lynchburg and in Africa. "She had big personality and was loved by so many people," said Alphonso L. Jackson Jr., her son. "She will truly be missed."

Teacher and staff raises from page A1

32 years of teaching experience, a teacher would receive a salary of \$66,500, rather than the current \$65,892.

Teachers with five years of experience would get \$42,200, while teachers with 10 years would get \$46,700. Salaries for teachers with 20 years would be \$55,700 and those with 30 would be \$64,700.

Currently, "our pay scale is all over the place," said Shawn Kelley, a School Board member. "This would be a nice little increase for everyone. We also need additional teachers and coaches. This is not a wish list as much as stuff we need for the school system."

"I really appreciate the board's support of the step increase," Killough said.

"This is a good start," said George Spaulding, chairman of the board.

"I hope we can get this from the Board of Supervisors," said Nancy Carson, vice chairperson of the board. "I just know the reality of this."

Carson mentioned that the Board of Supervisors is facing increased funding challenges, such as the new \$6 million emergency radio system for the county and repayment of the \$26.3 million bond referendum for expansion and upgrades to Caroline Middle School and Madison Elementary School. She said she had heard that the Board of Supervisors might be faced with new financial obligations that equal 11 cents on the tax rate.

"I'm concerned that the Board of Supervisors might get out the red pen," Carson added.

"We're down 59 staff compared to five years ago," Killough said. "We're still down \$500,000 less than our budget from five years ago."

Killough said a school

survey indicated a majority of respondents support the schools and favor salary increases for teachers.

"Does that surprise you when the school bond referendum got 80 percent of the vote" in November 2013, Kelley asked. Parents tell him they are concerned about "the tremendous staff turn over" in Caroline schools and that "we should be trying harder" to retain teachers.

County residents "need to come out to the Board of Supervisor meetings and participate," Spaulding said.

"We need quality programs to get our students ready for college and careers," Killough said.

"They can't say we're not running a tight ship," said Mack Wright, a School Board member. Student enrollment grows each year and is over 4,200 now. "We have \$500,000 less and 59 staff less."

During the 2008-2009 school year, Caroline had 576 full time staff members and 144 part-time staff members. During the 2013-2014 school year, it's 524 full-time staff and 137 part-time staff.

"A major concern of mine is the poor shape of the facilities," Wright added. "We must reiterate the fact that we know what we're doing and these are real needs. The writing is on the wall. People know this. They need to call the supervisors, send emails to them, write letters to the editor and come to the meetings."

"Why do we want to train someone to go somewhere else?" Wright asked. "We would probably have

better test scores if we had consistency in the teaching staff."

"If we were a business, we'd have been bankrupt a long time ago," Spaulding said.

Support staff need a 12 percent pay increase because "they are barely making minimum wage now," Killough said in an interview. "Twelve percent would go a long way toward helping these individuals." Compared to 12 school districts in Central Virginia for support staff pay, Caroline is "among the lowest" in pay, he noted.

The non-teacher salary increase calls for a 12 percent increase for hourly and 12-month employees and that would cost \$759,328. The 12-month salary scale would increase by 4 percent and cost \$110,871.

Pay increases for teachers and support staff would cost nearly \$1.4 million in additional funds in the 2014-2015 fiscal year.

Over the past five years, Caroline schools have lost 59 positions. This year, school officials hope to add three secondary teachers, four elementary school teachers, one SPED teacher, six instructional assistants, and three new coaching positions (soccer, assistant baseball coach and assistant softball coach). "We have an excellent baseball program," Killough said. The high school assistant baseball coach is needed for additional safety measures and also as a backup in case the regular coach is out.

During the 2008-2009 school year, the average daily membership (ADM)

was 4,105. As of Nov. 30, 2013, the ADM was 4,239.

The Virginia Department of Education ranks Virginia's 136 school divisions, based on the amount of local funds the schools receive. Caroline is near the bottom at 117. When it comes to local spending per student, Caroline is 129th, which means the average school division spends over \$2,000 per student more than Caroline.

The cost per pupil in Caroline was \$8,612 during the 2011-2012 school year, compared to the state average of \$10,969, according to www.doe.virginia.gov. That's a difference of \$2,357. During the 2010-2011 school year the difference between Caroline per pupil cost and the state average was \$2,182.

"We have to fund the school division," Killough said. "The supervisors have to make the tough decisions, and I truly respect that. We've got to spend more to provide the much needed resources. We're putting in some money for professional development and to improve teacher pay scales and for textbooks and technology."

Teachers pay part of their retirement, but the county must pay \$538,454 into the state retirement plan for teachers and non-professional school employees.

"We are very much in consensus that we want to provide the community with a quality education program," Killough said. "To do that, we need to make some requests in increasing our budget."



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