

These cutbacks likely with 15 mill tax increase

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

The 15 mill tax increase included in the tentative budget for the Dallas School District would require some reduction in personnel and programs. Each mill levied on the assessed valuation of property is worth approximately \$44,000, so the difference between the tentative budget and a 22 mill tax hike supported by some residents would bring an additional \$308,000 to the district.

Based on the present 14.1 mill rate, the 15 mill increase equals 11 percent, 22 mills is nearly 17 percent.

According to Superintendent of Schools Gerald Wycallis, the 15 mill increase would probably result in the following curtailments or cuts, keeping in mind the school board has some discretionary funds with which to deal.

- Home Economics could be part time in the Middle School.
- A part time music teacher would replace Mrs. Florence Sherwood, who is on sabbatical.
- Two administrative interns, one in senior high, one in the Middle School will return to the classrooms.
- Staff Development programs led by Eugene Howanitz will be discontinued. Howanitz will return to the classroom and could bump someone with lower tenure.
- In-school suspension (DEAL) would be discontinued.
- A clerical person would be bumped
- An aide eliminated.
- One custodial employee would be eliminated (One is now out on disability, so this may have no consequences.)
- A guidance aide cut. No effect since one is retiring.
- One health and one Phys Ed position would be eliminated (who is not certain).
- A part-time elementary position would be eliminated.
- Early retirement would be restricted.
- Conference and field trips would be deleted.
- Library periodicals would be reduced by \$3,000.
- Curriculum conferences would be cut.
- Supply purchases for student activities would be reduced from \$52,000 to \$18,000.

Wycallis emphasized that the board could change some of the items or trade funds from other categories.

There has been some talk of an 18-mill increase. Wycallis said that would add only \$132,000 in revenue and unless additional revenue came in from other sources, he said it would be difficult to say what the difference would achieve.

The 22-mill budget, although predicted to leave everything in the program as it is now, may not necessarily do so because of other line items that the public is not aware of.

Tax Hike

(continued from page 1)

taxes at all," said Wilma Geffert of Parrish Street, Dallas. "If you're going to do some housecleaning start with the administration down."

Joe Balavage of Shavertown said, "An increase should not exceed 10 mills."

One taxpayer questioned the higher tax rate's impact on those who work for low wages. "I work from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m. for \$4.25 an hour and keep an invalid mother. How can I pay any more taxes," she said.

"I am 71 years old and I have to keep on working to pay my bills," said Lillian Soveroski of Trucksville. "I'm not against eliminating teachers. When I stopped working full time and went to part time I had to cut some things."

Sandra Namey Richards asked what the increases were for, that she would like a general explanation. Board member Jack Cleary explained that since Dallas was classified as an affluent district, their allocation of funds was cut, and also that special education expenses and mandated programs by the state control 95% of the budget and 70% of that are salaries.

"If 95% of the expenses are controlled why don't you let the teachers' pay part of their health benefits?" asked Clint Smith.

But not everyone at the meeting was opposed to a higher millage. Ann Russin of Dallas said she had the names of 22 senior citizens who represent support of a 22-mill increase. Russin did not name the persons, or leave a list with school directors.

When Marilyn Gregorski of Dallas asked, "Does the 15-mill increase meet all necessary standards of education?" Board President Litz told her that it did.

Charlotte Ehret of Wyoming said she questioned whether it met standards. "I have a student in sixth grade for whom I bought a

\$400 instrument. Is it to remain idle until he is in higher grades?"

Wycallis explained that the choral program in sixth grade may not be picked up but that instrumental music is a co-curricular program and will be taught after school. "The band director is responsible for teaching music and band," Wycallis said.

"In our sports programs some parents may have to purchase T-shirts or shoes for some of the sports but the district will pay for safety items" Wycallis said.

Wycallis explained that the governor's proposal last year for tax reform would have helped the Dallas District but it did not pass.

"Hopefully before June 29 we will get some extra money in earned income tax or state budget money or by picking up some delinquent taxes," said Wycallis. "The board is supportive of education but is also concerned about people on fixed incomes. All segments of the society are being heard."

Bobbie May said she and her husband both work and live from pay to pay, but she was still in favor of 22 mills if it meant better education. David Crake, a former graduate of Dallas said, "You get what you pay for, that's why I did not go into teaching. It doesn't pay enough."

Anne Brinola of Trucksville asked why the board didn't sell the township school as they did the other schools. Board members said the income couldn't be used for budget expenditures but would have to go into the capital account. "I have two children in the district and every time they send information home I get two letters. Why can't the district send only one, that would be enough. This probably happens in lots of homes in the district. Cutting back would save money. Also a surplus of paper is being used by the classes. Why not start to conserve?" she asked.

Irene Katyl of Dallas suggested

taxpayers take other action. "Everyone is saying Governor Casey did this and did that. I think it's time to start writing letters to him and to others in Harrisburg and to our legislators and call them on the phone." The board members agreed with her, that people should contact their legislators.

"It seems every time you look toward Harrisburg," said Jim McDonald of Dallas. "You're looking at a dinosaur. Why not go after the assessors office. Get them to do something."

Marion Kunigonis of Dallas wondered if education was being negatively affected by spending on sports programs. "What about the

three 'R's'? How many more sports programs can we accommodate? Call a halt somewhere," she said.

George Bauman of Dallas asked if there was a cap on property tax millage. The directors explained that there was not. "You mean the sky is the limit!" Bauman exclaimed.

On that note president Litz adjourned the meeting for a five minute break before the start of the regular board meeting.

He announced later that a budget meeting open to the public will be held Friday, June 28, at 8 p.m., at the Middle (formerly Junior High) School Auditorium.

Some teachers used scare tactics on students

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Writer

Students have reported that scare tactics were used by some Dallas teachers in an attempt to convince them to ask their parents to attend the June 3 meeting of the Dallas School Board to support a 22 mill tax increase.

Some teachers told their students to go home and tell their parents that vital programs would be cut next year under the tentative budget that contains a 15 mill tax hike. At least three of the students gave that information to their parents, urging them to attend the meeting. Only one parent took the message seriously enough to attend the meeting, but she came home from the meeting disgusted with the attitude of the crowd of protestors.

"I signed the petition when it was circulated but now I am sorry that I did. I wish there was some way I could delete it since the petition did not really state the

issues clearly nor honestly," said Shavertown resident Fran Ochman, whose daughter, Mary Ann is a student at the junior high school.

"Neither do I believe that teachers living outside of the district and students, who are not taxpayers should be urged to sign the petition which they did. I listened carefully to what the board had to say and I don't believe there are any curtailments nor cuts that will hurt the school's educational program," Ochman said.

A petition which was presented at the meeting contained 361 signatures. However, a look at the sheets reveal that many students signed it as did many teachers, some of whom live outside of the district. One high school student told The Post that a petition was circulated in school by a fellow student whose parents are teachers.

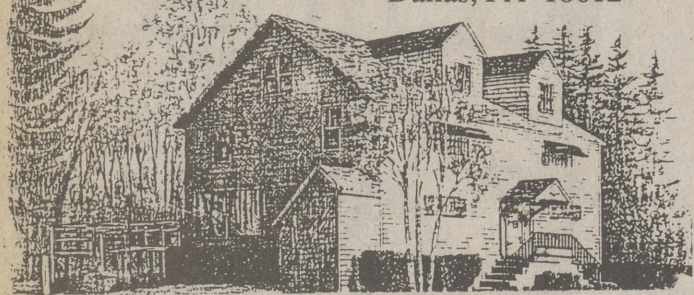
The board members will meet June 29 at 7 p.m. to adopt a final budget for the 1991-92 school year.



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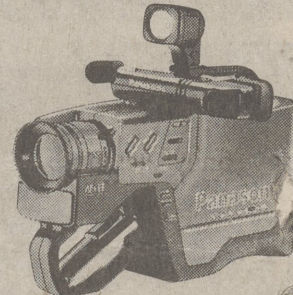
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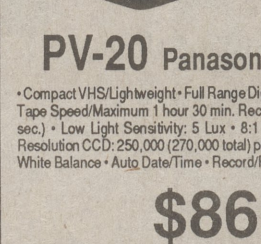
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