

BOE reverses decision, approves Financial Recovery Plan

By Dee Ann Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – In a special meeting on Monday evening, the Choctaw County Board of Education reversed a decision made last week on a proposed Financial Recovery Plan to bring the school system in compliance with the Accountability Act of 2006.

In an unanimous vote, the BOE voted on Monday to approve the plan that was recommended by the

state Department of Education to help the system establish compliance with the law – the same plan that the board rejected last Tuesday.

Act No. 2006-196, passed in March of last year, requires local school systems to maintain a minimum reserve fund equal to one month's operating expenses. The Choctaw County system has an amount equal to about three tenths of one month.

According to financial records, the county system

ended Fiscal Year 2006 with a balance of \$285,616 in the General Fund, meaning that the Board must recover some \$842,094 and put together a plan that would allow the maintenance of \$1,127,710 in operational reserve funds.

The Recovery Plan proposed by the state and submitted by Supt. of Education Sue Moore last Tuesday evening and again on Monday held the following recommendations:

- Eliminate 2.88

locally funded positions through attrition or reassignment to save approximately \$172,800.

- Eliminate four custodial positions that are probationary employees for a savings of \$100,000.
- Review the instructional aide program which employs 16 aides with salaries paid by various funding sources. Submit a plan to the Board in April to reduce the number to those that are essential and can be paid from federal fund sources for a savings of \$480,000.

Eliminate one non-certified position in the central office through attrition (such as retirement), or reassignment for a savings of \$40,000

Employ future career tech personnel under the length of contract provided by state funds as attrition occurs.

If implemented in its entirety, the plan would potentially save the system a total of \$792,800, with a savings of \$450,000 the first year and the required balance met by the end of the second year.

Moore informed the board last week that the state had mandated that all 29 counties who are not in compliance with the Accountability Act submit a plan for recovery by the end of the month. Last Tuesday, the recommendation to accept the plan failed by a 2 to 2 vote, leaving no Recovery Plan in place to meet the March 30th deadline.

But the same measure passed 4 to 0 on Monday. The fifth board member, Ronald Hampton, was not present at the meeting.

Prior to their vote to approve it, the Board voiced no discussion about the plan or any of its provisions. But following the adjournment of the meeting, Alabama Education Association (AEA) Uniserve Director Cynthia Older and members of the public spoke up about the plan.

"Is this the same plan we proposed Tuesday night?" asked Older.

"It's the same plan," responded Moore.

"Can we discuss a plan to save these people's jobs?" Older asked, refer-

ring to the custodians and instructional aides who had attended the meeting. "These are the people who you are talking about cutting. Talk to them on your way out."

"They haven't been cut," responded BOE member Turk Phillips.

"This is a plan that we had to put in place," added Moore. "We had to put out a plan that says what we can do most. We want to do what we can do least. We are not in the business of getting rid of employees. We know how valuable they are. This plan was due in by the 30th of March. We had to approve this plan. It won't go into effect until 2007-08. But in the meantime, anything we can do to save a job, we will do."

BOE Chairman Isaac Johnson added that he had spoken with Assistant Superintendent for the Alabama Department of Education Craig Pouncey about the issue.

"We had to submit this plan," Johnson said. "This is the plan we were given. That doesn't mean that things won't change. I'll do my best to keep every person on board that we can. We are trying to make this a smooth action. But we have to submit a plan."

"Well, let's submit a plan to save these jobs," Older responded.

"We encourage your help on this," Johnson told Older.

Board members will meet for a work session at 4:30 p.m. on April 2 at Choctaw County High School, followed by their regular monthly meeting at 5:30 p.m.



Butler Policeman Carl Ray Jackson and an unidentified volunteer look on as emergency personnel assess the condition of one of the victims of the early-morning crash.

Wreck

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The wreck happened about 2:55 a.m. on March 17th.

State Troopers said the 1996 Chevrolet was driven by George Tyson, of Butler. Passengers reportedly included Anthony Giles, Matthew Williams, Kelly Glosson and Jeremy Logan. Ages and addresses of the driver and passengers were not available.

One passenger was transported by Choctaw EMS Ambulance to a Meridian hospital, while three others were taken to emergency rooms by family members in private vehicles.

Giles was airlifted by LifeFlight helicopter ambulance from the field behind Gilbertown Town Hall to a Mobile hospital where he was reportedly treated and released later in the day.

Assisting were members of the

Choctaw Co. Sheriff's Department, Butler Police Department, Gilbertown Jaws of Life® unit, Choctaw Co. Rescue Squad, Butler and Gilbertown Vol. Fire Departments, Bill Gibson with the Choctaw Emergency Management Agency, units with the Choctaw EMS Ambulance Service, Alabama State Troopers, and dispatchers with the Choctaw E-911 Center assisted with the call.

State Trooper Chuck Gilliland was the investigating officer.

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The Choctaw Sun!

Calendar

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family. Old Vanity Fair location. Vendors can pick up forms at Town Hall or by calling 205-459-3459.

Tuesday, April 9th
TOWN HALL MEETING, Congressman Artur Davis, Courthouse, Butler, 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 14th
BEAUTY REVIEW, South Choctaw Academy, 5 p.m. General admission tickets \$5. Reserved seating will \$7 and will go on sale in the gym on Monday, April 9 at 8 a.m.

Sunday, April 15th
RIBBON CUTTING AND RECEPTION, Toxey Town Park, 2-3 p.m.

Monday, April 16th
CHOCTAW COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION BOARD meeting, 5 p.m., Courthouse.

Tuesday, April 17th
HEALTH COUNCIL MEETING, noon, Extension Office. Call 205-459-2133.

Saturday, April 21st
TOXEY REUNION, 9 a.m. till 3 p.m., at the Toxey Town Park between the Vol. Fire Station and the restored Masonic Lodge.
AIMWELL CEMETERY MEMORIAL, Marengo County.

Tuesday, April 24th
AARP SUPPER MEETING, 6 p.m., Butler Senior Citizens Center, Riderwood Drive.

Monday, April 30th
SCES PTO MEETING/PARENT CONFERENCES, 6 p.m., in the gym. Grades 4 and 5 will present the program. Election of new officers.

Thursday, May 3rd
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER observance.

Friday, May 11th
CHOCTAW CO. RELAY FOR LIFE event, old Vanity Fair grounds, Butler. Late afternoon through the night. Watch the Sun for more details.

Fri., July 6th – Sat., July 7th
FAMILY REUNION, Sammie and Sherry Moss home, 2510 Ala. Hwy. 10, Lisman. Any family member who would like to participate, please call Shirley Moss Portis at 205-392-5221 or Sammie Moss at 205-398-2144.

August 17th –19th
CHOCTAW CO. PICNIC AND REUNION WEEKEND, Atlanta, Georgia.

Saturday, October 6th
"A CONCERT FOR CHOCTAW COUNTY: The Ty Herndon 2007 Homecoming", sponsored by Gilbertown and Friends Relay for Life Team, to be held in conjunction with Oktoberfest. Watch the Sun and listen to WPRN Radio for ticket information.

Friday, Oct. 12th and Sat., Oct. 13th
FOURTH ANNUAL BUTLERFEST. The Backyard Cook-Off will be held Friday (12th) and the Memphis in May Event will be Saturday (13th). If you have questions please call the Butler City Hall at 205-459-3795 or email butlercityhall@tds.net.

Don't drive ATV's, golf carts on Butler streets

By Tommy Campbell
The Choctaw Sun

BUTLER – Persons who live in the city limits of Butler are being asked to stop driving four-wheelers, golf carts, riding lawn mowers and other unauthorized vehicles on city streets.

Chief of Police Chuck Breland told the Sun on Monday that if the use of these vehicles doesn't stop, his department will soon begin issuing citations.

"It's dangerous," Breland said. "These vehicles are not licensed for use on streets or the highway,

and people need to use common sense and keep them off the streets."

Sooner or later, he said, someone is going to get hurt or killed.

"It's really a problem in places like Green Acres, where a lot of folks park on one side of the street, leaving pretty much a one-lane street for traffic to get by on," he said. "When you add these small vehicles to the picture, it gets dangerous really fast. My fear is that some child is going to be seriously injured or killed because of traffic trying to dodge

these vehicles."

Breland said that this notice is being given as a "friendly reminder."

"If people can't stop it voluntarily, we are going to help them stop it," he promised.

Another problem that officers will be cracking down on is drivers who allow children to sit outside of an approved child safety seat, stand up unrestrained by their parents or grandparents who are driving, or even sit in their laps, and drivers without permits who park in handicapped parking spaces.

Obituaries

Dustin Salter

SILAS – Graveside services for Dustin Salter will be held Monday, March 26, 2007 at 10 a.m. at Black Creek Baptist Church in Silas.

Salter died March 19th in a Fort Worth, Texas healthcare facility. He was critically injured in a bicycle accident in November, 2006 at his home in South Carolina.

He is survived by his wife, Leigh Anne Taylor Salter, formerly of Silas, and three children, Jacob, Nathan and Meredith. Salter was the son-in-law of Jim and Helen Taylor, of Silas, and the late Linda Taylor.

A complete obituary will appear in next week's edition of the Sun.

Junior Lemone Taylor

MILLRY – Junior Lemone Taylor, (J.L. or "Uncle J.") died March 13, 2007 in Pensacola, FL.

Taylor, 77, was a retired businessman. He was co-owner of Trio Electric Supply and Nutek Inc. He was a member of the Masonic Blue Lodge #15, Scottish Rite, York Rite, and Hadji Shrine. He served as chairman of the Escambia County, FL., Civil Service Board for eight years.

Services were held March 16 at Barlow United Methodist Church with Rev. Isham Scarbrough, Rev. Joel Wasson and Rev. Lamar Brown officiating. Interment was in the Barlow United Methodist Church Cemetery.

Survivors include his wife, Ernestine; one son, Mike; one brother, James Taylor; and five grandchildren.

Pallbearers were Randy Scarbrough, Ronnie Scarbrough, Andy Williams, Buford Scarbrough, Bennie Scarbrough, and Bobby Bryars. Honorary pallbearers were Willard Scarbrough, T.J. Brown, Jr., Leslie Stokley, Rusty Thompson, Jim Harris, Henry Johnson, Rudy Bray, Clyde Scarbrough, and Jim Bromley.

Phillips Funeral Home in Gilbertown was in charge of arrangements.

Louise Scott

BUTLER – Louise Scott, 84, died March 12, 2007 at Rush Foundation Hospital in Meridian, MS.

Funeral services were held March 14 at Rock Springs Cemetery with Rev. Russell Wray and Rev. Phillip Webb officiating. Interment was in Rock Springs Cemetery.

Survivors include three nieces, one nephew, and one brother-in-law.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of arrangements.

M.E. Presley Young

GILBERTOWN – M.E. Presley Young, 79, died March 13, 2007 at Southwest Alabama Medical Center in Thomasville. She was a retired seamstress at Choctaw Manufacturing Company.

Services were held March 15 at the Mosley Cemetery in Gilbertown with Rev. Leon Ross officiating. Interment was in the Mosley Cemetery.

Survivors include one daughter, Edith (Aubrey) Young Clark of Petal, MS.; one son, Bruce Raymond

(Marsha) Young of Gilbertown; two grandchildren and one great grandchild.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Mason Ray Young, and 11 brothers and sisters. She was the daughter of the late Wilton and Mary Lee Wilson Presley of the Pleasant Hill community.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of arrangements.

Betty Ruth Tyson

BUTLER – Betty Ruth Tyson, 50, died March 14, 2007 at Rush Foundation Hospital in Meridian, MS. She was a homemaker.

Services were held March 16, 2007 at Shady Grove Assembly Of God Church with Rev. Billy Jowers, Rev. Chuck Scrivener, Rev. Clifford Moore, and Rev. Stevie Abston officiating. Interment was in the Shady Grove Cemetery in Butler.

Survivors include two daughters Sherry (Thomas) Faust, Donna (Stacey) Freeman both of Meridian, MS.; two brothers Charles Tyson of Meridian, MS., Lee Tyson of Butler; five sisters Nellie Blackmon, Bobbie Tyson both of Butler Jo Anne Ochoa, Dorothy Tyson both of Haines City, FL., Loda Skipper of Buckatunna, MS., and five grandchildren.

Pallbearers were Phillip Avery, Owen Presley, Jr., James Jenkins, Al Moore, Jr., Doug Brewer, and Timothy Vann. Honorary pallbearers were James Gunn, Michael Tyson, and Rodney Tyson.

Bumpers Funeral Home in Butler was in charge of arrangements.