

County board OKs talking with college on president search

By TAD BOGGS
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The Burke County Board of Commissioners will join with the Western Piedmont Community College presidential search committee to seek answers for financial problems in the search process.

The board decided to collaborate with the search committee on request from W. Stanley Moore, a WPCC trustee and search committee chairman. Moore told the board at a meeting Tuesday night that a committee appointed by the commissioners is necessary "to sit down together and exchange views on our common responsibility" to find a replacement for former WPCC President Dr. Gordon C. Blank, who resigned last summer.

Board Chairman Johnny Pons told Moore "it is only proper" that the com-

missioners serve as such an advisory board. He said arrangements will be worked out for the search committee and the commissioners to confer.

Moore cited economic difficulties in finding a successor to Blank. The News Herald reported last week that the search committee would ask the commissioners for an increase in the \$5,000 county supplement now paid to the WPCC president. Moore said last week a supplement between \$5,000 and \$15,000 more than the current amount would be necessary to recruit a highly qualified candidate for the post.

Commissioner James Gordon said in an interview last week that the trustees are seeking a \$20,000 supplement. The search committee has approached commissioners individually about the problem.

Moore made no formal requests of the board other than to ask "that you make arrangements to appoint a committee on this matter, or that you serve as this committee yourselves."

In other action, the board:

- Appointed Larry McDougal, an engineer with Drexel-Heritage Furnishings, to a three year term on the county planning board. McDougal succeeds Ed Seagle, who resigned his post.

- Tabled action on an appointment to the Veterans' Service Advisory Board.

- Appointed Gilbert Turner to a position on the Morganton Board of Adjustments.

- Appointed Lib Good, Marta Leone, Tom Hensley, Jerel Dean Carroll, Mrs. Olin Stiff and Ed Bounous to the Public Transportation Study Committee. Burke County is participating in the study along with the three other Unifour counties (Catawba, Caldwell and Alexander). A \$14,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation will fund the project.

- Approved budget amendments of about \$11,000 for air conditioning repair at Western Piedmont Community College and for electrical alterations to high school classrooms, and of \$1,400 for a new typewriter for the county Department of Community Development.

Commissioner Charles Winters was absent from the meeting because of a family emergency. The board meets again in regular session on March 6.