

Weather

Mostly cloudy mornings with partly cloudy afternoons. 20% showers today, 30% showers on Thursday. Minimum low 74, maximum high of 88 today. Tomorrow's minimum low 75 with maximum high of 89. Winds gusting at 12 to 20.

The Battalion

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CS council protests utility hike

By JERRY NEEDHAM
City Editor

At a special meeting Thursday night, the College Station City Council voted to send a letter to the Bryan Council protesting the proposed utilities rate increase Bryan is asking.

"I don't see any justification for the increase on the basis of the reasons given," said Councilman Gary Halter.

The council agreed to meet with the Bryan Council in the near future to discuss the proposed increase. A tentative date for the meeting has been set for May 28.

College Station City Manager

North Bardell conducted a study of the proposed rates and found that based on the past year's demand, the proposed rates would increase College Station residents' total utility bills by 13.9 per cent, which amounts to almost \$200,000.

Under the new rates, the costs would increase 20 per cent for water, 25 per cent for sewer service and 12.6 per cent for electricity.

Bryan also wants College Station to extend the expiration date of the utilities contract to cover the life of the bonded indebtedness being assumed by the City of Bryan. The Bryan Utilities System has some bonds that expire in 2004. Bryan

City Manager Lou Odle said the length of the contract would be negotiable.

"I think they want to tie us down because of the risks they are taking on lignite," said Councilman Larry Bravenec. He added, "I think we should become a member of the power pool."

Bardell said College Station is eligible to become a member of the pool but only if the city has its own power generating facilities.

The council appointed a three-man committee to discuss General Telephone's rate increase request with a committee from Bryan. Councilmen Larry Bravenec, Jim Dozier and Gary Halter will meet with a Bryan committee composed of Mayor Lloyd Joyce and council-

men Jim Wright and Henry Seale. The date for the meeting has not been set.

The council accepted the Westinghouse bid on materials for the Shady Lane power substation improvements. Westinghouse submitted the lowest bid at \$27,083.90.

A bid of \$57,050 was accepted on a tractor for the Parks and Recreation Department. The International distributor won the contract.

College Station will contribute \$400 toward the construction costs of a helipad at St. Joseph Hospital. The cost of materials for the project will run to \$1,600 with the Jaycees volunteering the labor.

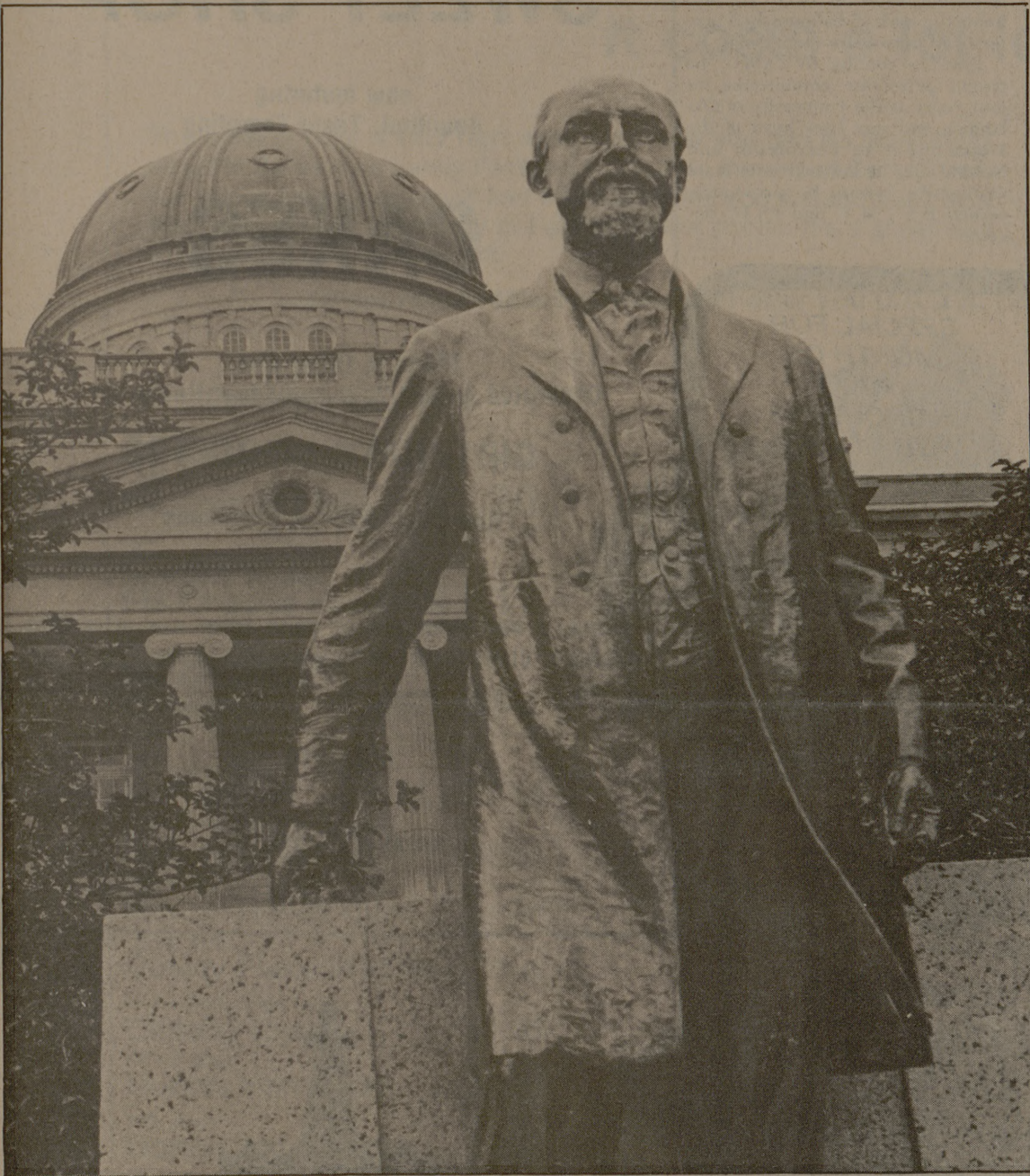
Starting in June, the council will hold two regular meetings per month. The second and fourth

Thursdays were approved as the meeting dates.

The council approved an experimental plan whereby the Texas Highway Department will install new signalization timing on the lights on Texas Avenue. The new signalization will regulate the timing of the lights according to traffic flow. The system will be in operation by April 1976 and will be master-terminated by a digital computer.

The formal dedication of the swimming pool at Bee Creek Park was set by the council for May 31. The public will be admitted free on that day.

The pool will be officially named the Art Adamson Pool in recognition of public services rendered to the community by Art Adamson.



Consol school board

Banks, Bibles discussed

The A&M Consolidated School Board received two bids for the school district's depository contract at a four-and-a-half hour meeting Monday night.

The depositor acts as the treasurer for the school district and must be a bank. Every two years the depository contract comes up for renewal with Monday night's bids being taken for the period of Sept. 1, 1975 to Aug. 31, 1977.

The Bank of A&M and University National Bank were the only eligible bidders because of a state law stating that the banks must be located within the school district.

Mr. Dan Warden of the A&M Church of Christ expressed his desire to see an accredited Bible study program started in the high school. The program suggested by Warden is now being used in the Dallas

schools. The classes in Dallas are held after regular school hours in area churches. The teachers are furnished by the church where the class is held.

The Board expressed an interest in the program and may have further discussion at a later meeting.

For six weeks this spring, the elementary schools in College Station have been engaged in an enrichment program through mini-courses. The children were able to choose or suggest an area in which they would like to learn more about.

Student evaluation surveys of the mini-courses released during the Board meeting indicated a majority of the children approved of the courses and learned something from them.

Superintendent Fred Hopson re-

ceived a letter from the Texas Education Agency informing him that the state will not be able to make scheduled purchases of textbooks until such time as the final appropriations act is passed.

The implications of this action are that the district will begin next year with the same textbooks with no repairs on existing texts, Hopson said.

The Board adopted a contract with Region VI of the Education Service Center and appropriated \$2565 for fulfilling the contract. The contract allows the district to use over 11,000 films, tapes and other items in the Regional Instructional Media Library.

Supt. Hopson also reported that last Thursday religious materials were distributed to Middle School students during the noon hour

without notification of school authorities. The action occurred on Holick Street, which bisects the Middle School campus.

In the absence of any policy concerning such actions, Hopson has instructed the Middle School authorities to advise such distributors to terminate the activity or to call the police upon refusal to do so.

In this particular instance the distributed materials were Gideon New Testaments, but Hopson asked the Board to establish a general policy to cover all instances.

The Board voted to allow the Superintendent to draft a policy to present to the Board concerning the areas and times under district supervision in order to establish guidelines for the distribution of such materials.

The ever present statue of "Sully" stands watch over the now empty campus with the dome of the Academic building in the background. One lone unidentified person (below right), however, has remained behind to keep "Sully" company during his lonely vigil. Things should begin to pick up in the next couple of weeks, however, as students once again start arriving for the first summer session scheduled to begin June 2.

Photos by Tom Kayser



Environmental group discusses Brazos county strip mining

The Environmental Studies Workshop (ESW) presented a special report on strip-mining in Brazos County May 7 on the TAMU campus.

The group did not take a stand for or against strip-mining but tried to objectively present the facts.

The study concentrated on experiences with strip-mining in Texas and Brazos County and also the options Brazos County has in meeting future energy needs.

Coal will have to provide forty per cent of the fuel for energy consumption in the United States from 1979-1985 and twenty per cent after 1985, according to the study. Coal is now providing a negligible amount of power.

Some of the arguments presented against surface mining were:

1) Strip-mining destroys land, forests, soil and water.

2) Deep coal outweighs surface coal thirty-four to one.

3) Due to improved deep-mining technology, strip-mining isn't really needed.

4) There is no national legislation controlling strip-mining.

The arguments for strip-mining are:

1) Strip-mining is faster than deep-mining.

2) Deep-mined coal costs about sixty-three per cent more than strip-mined coal.

3) Strip-mining is more efficient than deep-mining.

4) Reclamation after strip-mining sometimes improves the land.

Environmentalists basically maintain that with all the deep coal available in the United States, surface coal should be used only as an

emergency energy source.

Other information brought out in the report included:

1) Texas has 8200 square miles of bituminous coal as compared with 1500 square miles of surface coal.

2) Studies by the cities of Austin and San Antonio indicate that it is cheaper to buy coal out of state than to mine Texas coal.

3) Environmentalists feel that pending state legislation on strip-mining is inadequate.

The ESW report says there are two areas in Brazos County designated as probable strip-mining sites. One area is in the southern part of the county lying along a line between Carlos and Singleton. Another includes the Reliance and Steep Hollow communities.

The ESW group concentrated their study on a sample 13,262 acre area in the Reliance/Steep Hollow area.

Using aerial photographs, it was determined that fourteen per cent of the area is densely wooded, eight per cent is sparsely wooded and seventy-eight per cent is meadows and open fields.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department classifies the deer hunting in the area as marginal but all leases are usually taken up during hunting season. The soil in this area is primarily a claypan type which is susceptible to erosion.

The water table in the area varies between forty and one hundred feet. The effects of strip-mining on the water table have not been studied, but would appear to cause a lowering of the table in the immediate area.

The land is presently being used

for livestock production and is selling for \$750 to \$2500 an acre.

In accordance with current lease agreements, a five foot seam of coal will bring the land owner approximately \$2200 an acre and a ten foot seam will bring \$3900 an acre.

With the tremendous growth in the Brazos County area, the primary determinant of the land's market value will be its suitability for residential purposes.

Considering the area's growth rate, it is highly likely that the demand for residential areas will raise the land values above the \$3,900 mark. Since the suitability of reclaimed land for supporting homes or any other structures has not been proven, it is highly likely that the land can be used for both residential and strip-mining purposes.

The ESW group investigated the current strip-mining operations at Fairfield and Rockdale and found they both used the same reclamation procedures.

The top soil is not saved for reclamation purposes. The top soil at Fairfield was set aside for a time but was shown by subsequent studies to be unnecessary. The top soil is mixed with the rest of the overburden material. It is believed that this mixing makes for a better soil by bringing up rich nutrients that have been leached down from upper soil levels.

The spoil banks from the operations are then dozed to approximate original terrain, seeded with Coastal Bermuda grass and fertilized. The ESW team was told by officials at the mining operations that less fertilizer is required on reclaimed land than on unmined land.

The ESW team reported that the reestablished grasses appear to be doing well but it is too early to tell how well the trees will do.

A study of the proposed strip-mining area in Brazos County was made by the Soil Conservation Service of Bryan. In that study it was recommended that the top soil be saved during mining instead of being mixed. The Soil Conservation Service also suggested that Bermuda, Coastal Bermuda and Hahiagrass be used instead of the native vegetation. Bahiagrass is good for both deer and cattle. It is uncertain what effect the clearance of natural cover will have on the deer population in the area.

A questionnaire was given to four lessors (those now leasing their land for strip-mining), fifteen non-lessors, four city officials, twenty realtors and forty-two city residents in Brazos County to determine their feelings toward and knowledge about strip-mining.

All the lessors expect their land to be suitable for ranching purposes after reclamation is complete. The lessors questioned seemed to feel that they will not profit significantly from the coal on their land.

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Correction

In the May 7 issue of the Battalion it was incorrectly stated that radio station KORA did not possess adequate facilities or disc-jockey operation. It has been learned since that time that KORA does have facilities for disc-jockey operation. The Battalion regrets the error and wishes to apologize for any inconvenience to the owners of KORA.

Services provided for in TAMU budget increase

The House Appropriations Committee has approved its final version of the House Appropriations Bill, Committee Chairman Bill Prenal said. With some minor increase, the Committee accepted the recommendations of the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). Texas A&M University's Main Campus received \$119,301,530 for the next biennium.

There were some changes in formula items such as operating expense and faculty salaries, as a result of enrollment increases at Texas A&M," Prenal said.

The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station received about \$500,000 per year over the LBB amount. This increase was mainly for water and natural resource research, and Crop and Crop Products. The Agricultural Extension Service received \$300,000 per year over LBB for new positions.

An increase of approximately \$160,000 per year is allocated to the Forest Service. "Most of the in-

crease is in the Forest Management Program," Prenal stated.

The Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory would receive a \$55,000 increase in 1976. The increase is for the purchase of the Col-

lege Station Laboratory.

"The increases to the A&M budget should provide for the increased student enrollment and the essential services the University provided," Prenal concluded.

MSC operation slows during intersession

Minimum curtailment of Memorial Student Center services will occur during Texas A&M's intersession period. Spring classes and final exams ended last week. Registration for the first summer session in June 2.

With student activities at a minimum, the bowling-games area of the MSC will be closed through June 1. Hours of operation of the browsing library and snack bar have been curtailed, according to Business Manager Sanders Letbetter.

The browsing library will be open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. It will be closed Saturday and Sunday, May 24-25, and open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. May 30 to June 1.

MSC snack bar hours will be 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.