

TRC news & views

TEXAS REHABILITATION COMMISSION

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Salary, Benefit Increase Sought

TRC Commissioner W. K. Harvey took the opportunity of the July 14th regional staff meeting to publicly announce the Commission's budget request to the Texas Legislature for fiscal years 1982-83. In general, Harvey said he is requesting more revenue from the State to match available funds.

More specifically, the Commissioner said he will ask that Governor Clements recommend a 3.4% emergency pay raise for TRC personnel, effective February 1, 1981. If that increase is allowed, Harvey is requesting a 13.6% salary increase for all employees in fiscal 1982 (17% if the 1981 emergency increase is not granted) and a 10.2% increase for fiscal 1983.

The budget request also includes:

- a 1.7% line item of the total payroll for merit raises ...
- \$.25 per mile for travel expense (an increase of \$.05) ...
- \$55 per diem for in-state travel (an increase of \$15) ...
- \$60 per diem for out-of-state travel (an increase of \$20) ...

- full State participation in funding of longevity pay ...
- \$15-20 more per month in State participation in State Employee Insurance Plan ...
- \$150,000 per year in fiscal 1982-83 for Independent Living funds (to match federal dollars) ...
- \$2.5 million in fiscal 1982 for continuing support of Extended Rehabilitation (\$1 million more than present) and \$2.7 million in fiscal 1983 ...

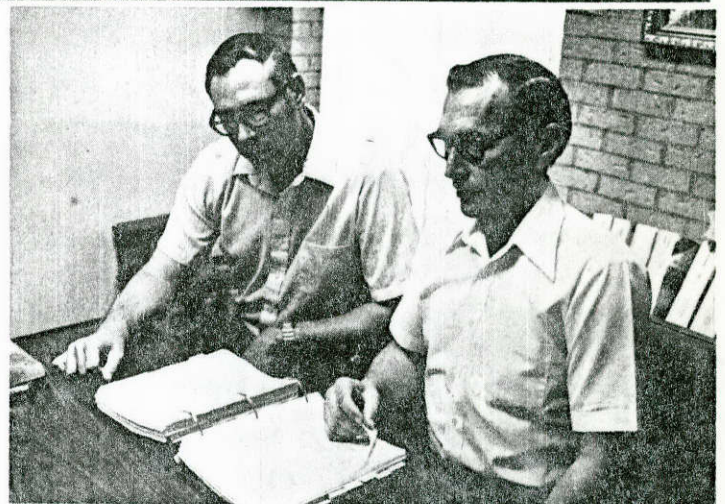
A broad outline of the budget was considered and approved by the TRC Board of Directors at the May meeting. The formal budget request was filed with the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor's Budget Office on July 9. A hearing before the budget examiners was scheduled for July 29th.

Commissioner Harvey says he feels the Legislature is "keenly aware of our needs" and will give appropriate consideration to the request.

10 Years and 25,000 Feet Later Robinson Retires

This month we say goodbye to John O. Robinson, retiring Director of TRC's Purchasing and Supply Division. Robinson will vacate his post on August 15th after 10 years of service with the Commission.

Robinson came to work here in March of 1970, shortly after TRC became independent from the Texas Education Agency. On his first day here, Robinson had to go to the drugstore to buy pencils. "I couldn't believe a State agency could be so low on supplies," he said. Getting his hands on office supplies for Commission personnel became Robinson's first priority. He leased 5,000 square feet of warehouse space and started buying supplies and equipment. But, because the demand was so great, Robinson couldn't keep the stock in supply and it



Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Purchasing and Supply John O. Robinson is getting ready to turn over a new leaf — into retirement, that is -- with the help of incoming P & S Director Milton Turnipseed.

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Robinson

was two months before the shelves in the warehouse started filling up with reserve supplies.

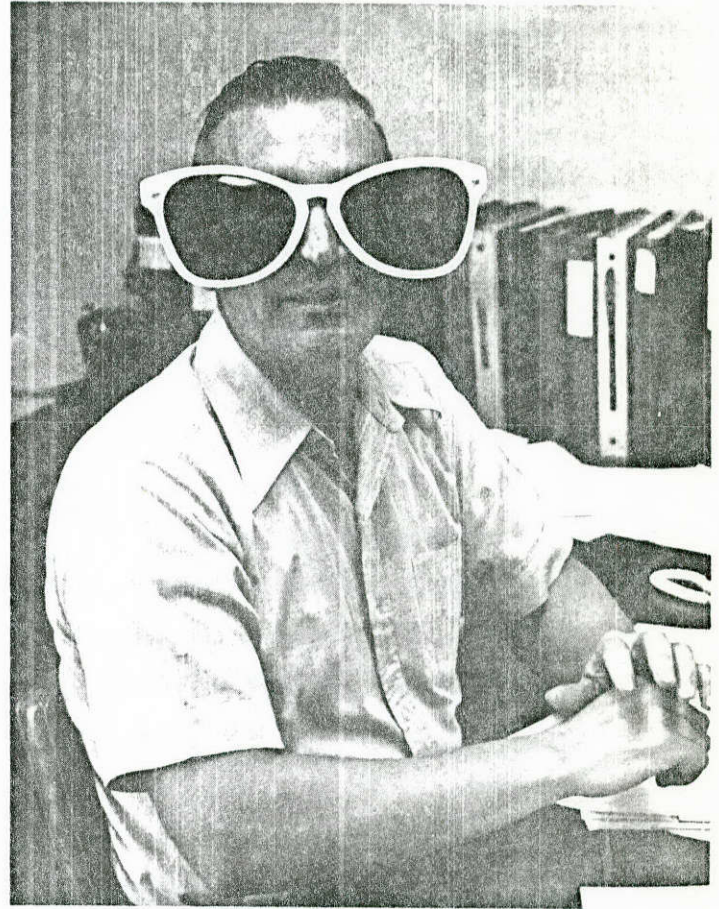
It wasn't long before Robinson started to worry about TRC clients, who were accustomed to waiting as long as three to six months for tools, equipment and furniture. Robinson started to stock some of the items most requested by clients. "As their needs were known, we took care of them," he says. Now, many clients can have the equipment they need in as little time as a day or two. This, of course, means there are fewer interruptions in the rehabilitation process.

The warehouse space has increased over the years. Now, 25,000 square feet, the warehouse holds an inventory worth some \$650,000. Robinson is proud of the system, which he says was developed strictly on the needs of Commission personnel and clients. There is none other like it in the country, Robinson says.

According to James L. Jackson, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Administration, Robinson's most recent contribution is in the area of developing technical training programs for administrative technicians and administrative officers dealing with auto mechanics, welding, small engines, air compressors and related accessories. As an instructor in most training sessions, Jackson says, Robinson has helped our administrative technicians be better prepared to assist counselors and clients in selecting and maintaining tools and equipment.

After serving for 27 years, Robinson is retiring from State employment, but he won't quit working. He and wife, Doris, plan to devote their time to maintaining the rental property they own around Austin. But first they plan to spend some time at their ranch on the banks of the Llano River.

Turnipseed was born in Falls County, Texas. He is a 1962 graduate of Marlin High School. He and wife, Peggy, have been married for 16 years. In fact, they celebrated their 16th anniversary the day Turnipseed learned he would be coming to work for TRC. They have three children: Dennis, 15; Michelle, 10; and David, 5.



Such a deal! John Robinson models the sunglasses presented to him recently by the Region IV Administrative Technicians. In the true spirit of Purchasing and Supply procedures, the ad. techs. took bids from Nieman Marcus, Lord & Taylor and K-Mart. K-Mart was able to meet the "specs" and got the bid.

Turnipseed Replaces Robinson

TRC welcomes Milton Turnipseed, who joined our staff as the new Chief of Purchasing and Supply on August 1st. Turnipseed came to us from the State Purchasing and General Service Commission (formerly the State Board of Control). During his six years there, Turnipseed was actively involved in buying many items requested by TRC personnel. Earlier, Turnipseed was Assistant Purchasing Agent for M.D. Anderson Hospital in Houston. He also worked in a managerial position with the Walgreen Drug Company in Houston. The Baylor University graduate holds a degree in business management.

Until August 15th, Turnipseed will work with retiring Chief of Purchasing and Supply, John Robinson. Officials here are looking forward to a smooth transition because the two men will have the chance to work together for this time.

TRC Calendar of Events

August 1980

- Aug. 5-7 Medical Training for VR Counselors - Phase II, San Antonio
- Aug. 11-15 New Personnel/Specialized Orientation Workshop, Central Office
- Aug. 25-29 National Rehabilitation Association Annual Conference, Louisville, Kentucky

... By Kaye Beneke

For Your Information

It's official now ... the Texas Rehabilitation Commission has a Public Information Office. As your new Information Specialist, I am anxious to start working with you to get the story of the Commission before the public.

Since most of you don't know me yet, perhaps you would like to know a little about me. I was raised in Richardson, Texas, and graduated from high school there in 1971. After spending my freshman year in college at the University of Missouri, I transferred to the University of Texas at Austin. In 1975, I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Journalism. Since then, I have worked as a television news reporter at two Austin stations ... KTBC (Ch. 7) for just over a year ... and KTVV (Ch. 36) the remainder of the time. At both stations, I worked as a news and feature reporter, film and videotape editor, news photographer, producer and anchor.

I joined the Rehabilitation Commission on July 1st of this year. Since that date, and even before, my head has been spinning with visions of what might be accomplished through this office, if we all work together. The possibilities are only as limited as our imaginations.

There is much for me to learn about rehabilitation. I am learning, and hopefully, it won't be too long before I have a good grasp on things. I already know that you are working very hard ... and you're getting excellent results. The public should know that, too. And that is where my job becomes involved.

You should know that I am not here simply to speak for the Central Office. This just happens to be where my office is located. But, this is YOUR Public Information Office and I hope that each of you will feel free to use the services we can provide.

At the moment, I am busy trying to get this office organized. But, it won't be long before I can spend more of my time meeting you and learning about the work you are doing. I am anxious for that day to arrive. But, in the meantime, if I can be of any service to you, don't hesitate to call. In case it isn't listed in your directories yet, my phone number is (512) 447-07745 (TEX-AN 823-4745). My secretary's name is Marisela Herrera and she'll be happy to help you if I'm not in. Our office is in Room 164A at the Central Office. If you're in the neighborhood, please stop in for a visit.

Thanks to all of you who have helped make my first weeks on the job so pleasant. I am very happy to be here, and look forward to a long association with you.

Former Chief of Program Evaluation Dies

W. F. Morehead, former Chief of Program Evaluation at TRC's Central Office, died earlier this month at his home in Longview, Texas. He was 73 years old. Morehead was buried July 10th at the Lakeview Memorial Gardens in Longview. Mr. Edward Flanders, Chief of Program Audit, represented the Central Office at Morehead's funeral. A number of TRC personnel, many of them from the Longview area, attended the services.

Born in 1907 in Ben Franklin, Texas, Morehead was the son of a country doctor. He was a 1936 graduate of East Texas State Teacher's College, where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree and, later, a Master's Degree in Education. Over the next several years, Morehead served in the U.S. Army. When he was honorably discharged in 1946, he had attained the rank of Captain. He remained in the Army Reserve and ultimately retired as a Lieutenant Colonel.



William F. Morehead

Morehead's association with TRC started in the fall of 1947. He served as a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor in the Longview area for the next 19 years. He moved to Austin in 1966 to work in the Vocational Rehabilitation Central Office (then part of the Texas Education Agency). The purpose of that move was to establish the Program Evaluation Section. Morehead served as Chief of that division until his retirement in June, 1977.

Morehead is survived by his widow, Mary R. Morehead; one son, William K. Morehead; two daughters, Patricia M. Terrell of Longview and Ann M. Stetson of Livingstone, Maine; one sister, Buella McClure of Dallas; four grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews.

TPEA Asks Carter to Halt Wage/Price Controls

The Texas Public Employees Association is calling on President Carter to do everything he can to keep the federal government from imposing wage and price controls. In a letter to the President, dated June 27, 1980, TPEA described the current plight of the State employee as a catch-up game, which, if lost, could result in the loss of competent, dedicated State employees.

Part of the problem, the letter explains, stems from the legislative process in Texas. The State Legislature considers salaries only once every two years ... during the regular session. Projecting salaries two years in advance, the letter continues, is near impossible, considering the rapidly changing economy.

During the next legislative session, which begins in January 1981, legislators will set salaries for 1981-83. At that time, TPEA says it will work for an emergency pay raise to be effective in February, 1981, and 13.6% and 10.2% increases for fiscal years 1982 and 1983. If wage-price controls are imposed, TPEA claims the lawmakers will not be able to bring State employee's salaries in line with the average worker's salary.

Ten years ago, the letter states, Texas employees' salaries ranked 35th in the nation. Today, it says, they rank 37th. In order to improve the situation, according to TPEA, wage-price controls must not be imposed. Such controls, the organization tells President Carter, "would have a devastating effect on the state employee work force in Texas."

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Letters . . .

I've been working for TRC for two and a half years now. The day I applied, I had never heard of such an agency for the handicapped; in fact, I wasn't sure what Texas Rehabilitation Commission was. I know that sounds dumb, but I'm being honest! Everyone always told me I would like case work and working for the counselors. They were exactly right. I do ... I love it. What is even more rewarding than that, though, are the changes I've seen in me, a secretary.

Attitude! Attitude! Attitude! I never thought about my attitude before I worked at TRC ... now that's all I hear. You know something? I've learned that if I "try" to always keep a positive attitude, things go great. That's a good feeling, and I like the feelings Rehab gives me. Every day brings a new problem. Every problem brings a new challenge and a new opportunity. It is so exciting to see the results of a rehabilitation facility. I know the handicapped are appreciative ... so am I. I never thought of myself as "handicapped". Boy! I found out real quick I have some handicaps ... Rehab helped me. Now, I look for opportunities to help other people. I find myself practicing the counselors counseling. Gee, it really works on me.

The staff doesn't know it (maybe they do), but they are actually rehabilitating me! TRC has been great for me, and I feel it has broadened my horizons.

Melita Jo Harris, Secretary
Lubbock District Office South

TRA Elects First Woman President-Elect



Schwiening



Vaughn

Sara Schwiening, Supervisor of TRC's San Angelo District Office, is the new President Elect for the Texas Rehabilitation Association. Schwiening, who has served with the Commission since 1966, will be installed as TRA's President next summer, during that group's annual conference. She was elected for the post at the TRA Annual Conference held last month in San Antonio.

An interesting note, Schwiening is the first female President Elect in TRA's 29 year history.

The TRA President for the current year is another TRC employee. Ray Vaughn, Director of Facilities Management, was installed at the July conference. Vaughn succeeds outgoing TRA President Raymond L. Dabney

Two TRC employees were elected to serve on the TRA Board of Directors. They are Bob Goodspeed, Regional Director for Region VII and Elaine Rowe, TRC counselor in Dallas.