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(Photo by Geof Nesosis)

FOUR HOMETOWN SOUTHERN BELLES served as hostesses last week for a Cape Fear Garden Club - sponsored tour of Bald Head Island. Approximately 100 persons visited the island as part of the Azalea Festival program, and toured Bald Head with Diane Ratcliffe, Kim McDougle, Katherine Hufham and Lynn Flowers, all students at South Brunswick High School.

By Long Beach Mayor

Last-Minute Decisions By Manager Criticized

Two 11th-hour decisions by ex-acting town manager Ed Liggett were criticized Thursday by the Mayor of Long Beach.

Before leaving the town job earlier this month, Liggett hired James Hamlett of Hillsborough as Long Beach chief of Police for \$12,000 a year, and designated 3rd, 7th, 31st and 49th East as streets to be paved with Powell Bill funds.

Both decisions will stand. Mayor E. Morgan said that "until last Wednesday (April 10) I didn't know we were going to have a chief of police." Hamlett, who resigned his Hillsborough police job to come to Long Beach, said Liggett hired him on March 21.

Saying that Hamlett "is in

keeping with the qualifications for such a salary (\$12,000)," new Town Manager Frank Kivett said the board should establish pay scales for town employees.

Morgan, adding that he had no doubt of Hamlett's qualifications, said he felt it

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necessary "to bring out" how the new chief was employed. He said he understood the hiring was well-known around Hillsborough, where a newspaper report of Hamlett's new job had been

published two weeks earlier.

Kivett said it was "unfortunate that Jim (Hamlett) gets personally in this."

The new town manager said he would check with municipalities comparable in size to Long Beach as a basis for new pay scale recommendations, but that it is "kind of hard to figure out what the size of this town is." Long Beach has 153.2 miles of road, but only about 500 population according to the 1970 census.

It was agreed that present population is far above that figure, not counting the seasonal influx of people that starts now.

One spectator said that because the former chief of police was also designated "acting", that the hiring of Hamlett should not have come as a surprise. Another said Liggett should have had the "common courtesy" to tell elected town officials about the hiring.

Hamlett said his contract calls for \$12,000 a year, but that he expects "all raises the rest of the department gets."

The decision to employ the new chief for \$12,000 a year was unanimous.

Morgan said the selection of which streets to pave with Powell Bill funds was done by Liggett alone. "To quote him (Liggett)," the mayor said, "I selected the streets myself."

The Town Council referred the making of street-paving policy to Kivett, who expressed personal concern over the condition of Ocean Highway and Yacht Drive. He also suggested that financial participation of property owners may be necessary if suitable paving is expected.

Councilman Russ Morrison noted poor road conditions on 4th and 61st streets; and Morgan cited "all sorts of problems" detailed in a letter from a 10-year-old.

Sales Tax Increases

Collection of the local - option sales and use tax in Brunswick County increased during March to \$51,786, the best report since the first of the year. The March total compares to the February collection of \$46,743 and the January total of \$41,906. The three - months' collection will be divided among the county and Brunswick municipalities in the next few weeks.

Home Administration explain conditions governing loans to these organizations for purchase of new equipment and land and for construction of buildings.

Also present were Jerry

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Representatives of most volunteer fire departments serving rural areas of Brunswick County met Tuesday night with members of the board of commissioners to hear Ed Johnson of the Farmers

'Realistic' School Budget Asks 71% More Funding

All the Board of Education can do, said Chairman Wilbur Rabon, is "present what we feel is a realistic budget" for consideration by the county commissioners.

This year's tentative request, reviewed by the Board of Education Monday night, involves an 87-percent increase overall and a 71-percent rise in local funding compared to last year's final budget.

But board members expressed the opinion there was not much fat in the proposed \$4,735,884 school program.

Over half the total (\$2,470,954) would be "capital outlay," a category devoted primarily to construction. Of this amount, approximately \$1.4 million would pay for Southport Primary School (for which bids have already been accepted) and another \$800,000 is proposed as initial local funding of a \$10-million, countywide school improvement program over a six-year period.

The other sections of the proposed budget are current expense (\$1,974,369) and debt service (\$290,561). Neither would have the flexibility of the capital outlay budget.

Of the approximate \$4.7

million proposed budget, \$1,606,147.76 is "available funds" that include state and federal money and a \$749,000 carryover from the present budget to be applied to Southport Primary School costs.

The \$800,000 proposed for the "Capital School Reserve Fund" is tied to a \$6 million bond issue requested by the board of education and now before the board of commissioners. At their most recent meeting April 18, commissioners tabled the bond issue request until their May 6 meeting.

Prospects for approval of the school budget - even with the sizeable increase in requested local funds - have been enhanced by a flourishing Brunswick County economy. County budgets for this coming fiscal year are expected to be figured on the basis of \$800 million valuation, and Tax Collector Homer McKeithan has one of the best collection records in the state - over 98 percent.

The funding for county schools this year exceeded expectations. Supt. Ralph King was instructed Monday night to determine exactly

what the school system received from local funds compared with what the schools are asking for now.

The difference will not be as great as the actual budget figures for fiscal 1973-74 and fiscal 1974-75.

Because of the switchover to 100-percent valuation of property the county tax rate would be 71 cents per hundred dollars instead of the \$1.42 last year if the same receipts were expected. To provide the funds requested by the schools would require 56 or 57 of the 71 cents, not taking into account sales tax or revenue sharing funds which could reduce the needed share of ad valorem taxes. Last year the schools received 82.3 cents of the \$1.42.

According to Supt. King, the budget request "basically represents the needs of the school system."

TEACHER PAY

A letter from the Political Action Committee for Education (PACE) requested

an \$800 bonus for all county teachers (about \$300,000 total) and a \$20-per-pupil local expenditure for instructional supplies and field trips to eliminate the need for fund-raising projects by children.

No action was taken but the board will respond to the letter, a copy of which was sent to the county commissioners' office.

The board also extended an invitation to representatives of the Classroom Teachers Association (CTA) and the N.C. Association of Educators (NCAE) to attend board of education meetings.

ARCHITECT FIRM

The board heard a presentation by the Raleigh architectural firm of L.R. Evans and Associates for the possible design of future schools in Brunswick County. The firm is associated with the Pierson and Whitman engineering consultant firm that is overseeing con-

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Water System Bids Requested

Bids for the construction of Phase I of the Brunswick County Water Distribution System will be opened here Tuesday.

The 2 p.m. bid opening, scheduled for the Hood Building, will be conducted by the county board of commissioners. Work involved in the project will be done in the immediate Southport area (particularly for Pfizer) and the Oak Island beach communities.

A Phase II project for other Brunswick County communities is currently being planned.

Bids are being asked on the following Phase I work:

30,000 lineal feet of 24 - inch water main; 20,000 lineal feet of 12 - inch water main; 15,000 lineal feet of 8 - inch water main; one elevated tank foundation and a million - gallon elevated tank.

Contract documents, including plans and specifications, can be seen locally at the county manager's office in the Hood Building.

Part Of County Program

Long Beach Is Seeking 'Complete Water System'

A contract to develop plans for a complete Long Beach water system was awarded Tuesday night to Pierson and Whitman, a Raleigh engineering firm involved in the countywide water project.

Pierson and Whitman representative Troy Doby met with the town council during a 45-minute executive session, then outlined preliminary plans for the proposed system that would be incorporated in Phase II of the county water supply.

Also approved unanimously by the board was the employment of Pierson and Whitman to assist with applications for 87-percent state and federal funding of a future sewer system for the town, possibly within the next 3 or 4 years. Application to the state will

result in development by the N.C. Department of Water and Air Resources of a "Facilities Plan" which in turn will create a local planning district.

"We need to get in the water system first (for experience and to build a cash reserve)," Doby told council members. "One (system) will come right on the heels of the other."

Local share of the sewer project, when initiated, would be 12 1/2 percent.

The town has had a contract with Henry Von Oesen and Associates of Wilmington since at least 1968 for development of a water system, but that firm reportedly will excuse the town from the pact in exchange for fair payment for services rendered. Doby and Town Manager Frank Kivett

will be expected to review the material Von Oesen has compiled to determine what value it will be to the work proposed by Pierson and Whitman.

Kivett identified three advantages of employing the Pierson and Whitman firm: the contract calls for a 5-percent fee (the same as is charged the county); the firm already is operating on the water system in Brunswick County; and the town owes nothing if the water system is not provided.

The county reportedly proposes to revise Phase II plans to include Long Beach and 300,000 - gallon storage tank for the town. The local system is proposed to be self-sustaining, with no tax funds of assessment needed.

The new system most likely would necessitate the

North Atlantic Ave., Southport. Donors of items for the sale may arrange to have them picked up and transported to the sale site by telephoning Crowe at 457-8387 or Aldredge at 278-5237.

Beach Officer Is Uninjured

Long Beach Police have reported that officer Wayne Adams was shot at with a firearm Tuesday night while on duty. He was not injured.

The reported shooting occurred approximately 8:45 p.m. at 79th Street East, near the town boundary between Yaupon and Long beaches. A roadblock was immediately set-up and maintained by Long Beach and Yaupon police and Sheriff's deputies.

The incident is under investigation.

replacement of all present lines, Doby noted, because lines now in use could not meet fire protection requirements.

Another bond issue will be required. An earlier bond issue for a complete water system was soundly defeated in January.

The rejection of the first bond vote was seen by Mayor E.W. Morgan as a termination of a May 17, 1973 contract with the Dunn law firm of Bryan, Jones, Johnson, Hunter and Greene, but new town attorney James R. Prevatte says maybe not. The contract called for specific payment (\$15,000) for specific work (applying for a Farmers Home Administration loan), and

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FHA Help For VFD's Possible

Home Administration explain conditions governing loans to these organizations for purchase of new equipment and land and for construction of buildings.

Also present were Jerry

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