

# Calabash Pays \$500 To Break Peirson And Whitman Contract

BY TERRY POPE

An offer of \$500 to break a long-standing contract agreement between Calabash officials and Peirson and Whitman Inc. was accepted by the Raleigh engineering firm last week, said Mayor Sonia Stevens.

Town council members voted Monday afternoon to pay the \$500 bill and to invite Shallotte engineer Jerry Lewis to attend the next meeting to "tell us what needs to be done" in order to install a town water system.

Town attorney Robert Serra of the Southport firm of Murchinson and Taylor drafted a letter to the designers of the town's 1975 water system asking that they accept the \$500 offer.

"Over the phone, they were talking \$1,200," Ms. Stevens said. "So I'm glad it's just \$500."

Peirson and Whitman engineers designed the town water system under a contract signed by the council in 1975. Those plans were never accepted by the town and were never paid for, Ms. Stevens said.

There was no clause in the contract stating when it would expire, and when the town would not be held responsible for paying the engineering fees, which could have gone as high as \$2,000, Serra said. A return certified letter last week stated the company was willing to end the contract for the minimum price.

A resolution must be prepared by the attorney bearing both Ms. Stevens and company officials' signature to legally break the contract before Lewis is contacted by the town. The board voted to allow Ms. Stevens to sign the resolution when it is prepared within the next few days.

Lewis is expected to attend the March 11 meeting to discuss another contract agreement.

"Let's watch this contract," said Councilman Virgil Coleman.

"We will not sign a contract until the lawyer has seen it and approves

it," Ms. Stevens added.

To pay the \$500 bill and approximately \$835 in attorney fees Monday, Town Clerk Janet Thomas had to shift town funds, taking some money from the administration, office supplies and advertising budget in a series of budget amendments. Close to \$300 that was not spent for the annual audit report was also used to pay the bills.

Ms. Thomas said the attorney's bill was for services dating up to Jan. 30, 1985. Instead of billing the town on a monthly basis last year, only one bill was sent, she said, creating the expense. The firm has agreed to bill the town on a monthly basis in 1985, she said.

Last Thursday, council members Coleman and Robert Simmons met with the Brunswick County Water Policy Committee and with members of the Calabash water committee at the Harbortown Restaurant in Calabash.

"They said there was no way they could help us," Coleman said. "They said it was actually better for us to get our own contractor."

In a letter addressed to the town dated Feb. 11, county engineer Dan Shields asked the town to send two of its representatives to the dinner and meeting to discuss the water situation.

Ms. Stevens asked that Simmons and Coleman attend the meeting, and to report to the board Monday.

"We're on the right track," Simmons said. "We've got to get our engineer and he can advise us what's right."

County commissioner Chairman Chris Chappell said the largest problem facing the town was the Peirson and Whitman contract. With it now out of the way, the town can install its own lateral water lines and then dedicate the system to the county, who would maintain the system.

If the town ever wanted to sell its own water as a public utility, then the county would be willing to sell the lines back to the town, Chappell said.

Others attending the meeting were County Manager Billy Carter, at-

torney David Clegg, commissioner Frankie Rabon, residents Clark Callahan and John David Frink and water policy member Ed Gore.

**Annexation Petition**  
A public hearing on the annexation

of .57 acres of land has been set for March 25 at 10 a.m. Tom Jones, owner of the Victoria's Ragpatch shop south of the Calabash town limits requested the annexation Monday.

Jones said there was no specific reason for asking that his 100-foot by 250-foot lot be annexed into the town. The clothing store on N.C. 179 already has county water, he said.

**Meetings Changed**  
The board also changed the time for council meetings from 4:30 p.m. to 10 a.m. each second and fourth Monday of the month, starting with the March 11 meeting.

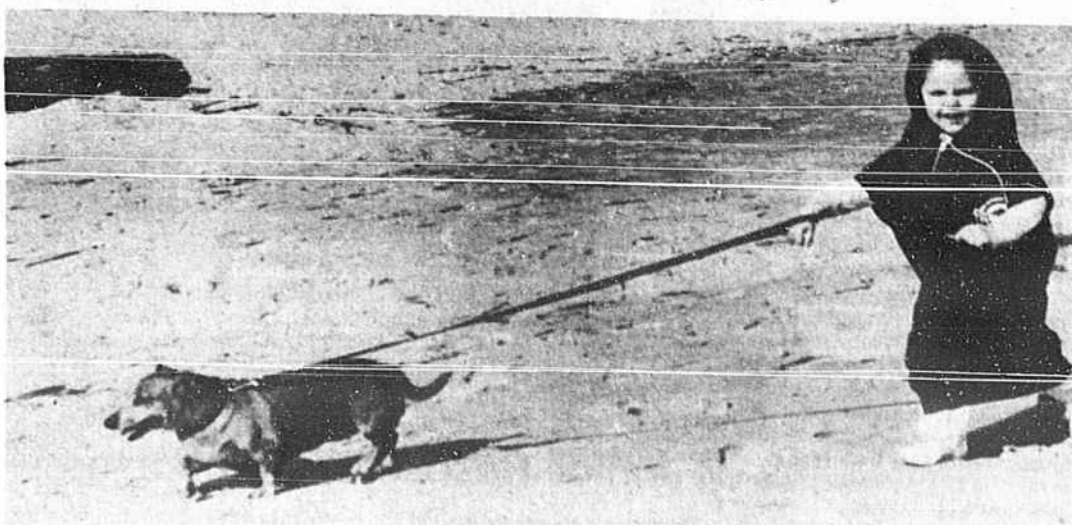
Council member Marie Brown, a school nurse, said she would not be able to attend meetings until school is out for the summer vacation.

"If we don't have quorums, then we can always go back to five on Mondays," Ms. Stevens said.

**Other Business**  
In other business Monday, the board:

•Appointed Sam Weber, John Johnson, Jody Nance and Jiggie High to the town planning board.

•Heard from Donnie Beck, operator of 24-hour heavy equipment repair service, who has plans to build a garage between Shallotte and North Myrtle Beach. Beck said he was checking with towns in the area to see if there is enough business to justify building a shop in the area. His company does repairs and maintenance work for Columbus County and Tabor City, with a specialty in repairing heavy equipment, such as trash disposal trucks with hydraulic equipment, he said.



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

## Can't Wait For Summer

Like a lot of other sun lovers, little Kelly Holden can't wait for summer. A sunny Sunday afternoon found her at Ocean Isle Beach, bundled up against the wind and trotting to keep up with a four-legged friend. Kelly and her sister Valerie, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Kelly

Holden of Route 3, Shallotte, were with their sitter, DeVane White. Lightly-clad early bird sunbathers also flocked to the beaches last weekend to catch their first rays of sun.

## Sunset Beach Department Notes Personnel Changes

A new officer has joined the Sunset Beach Police Department and another has been promoted, Chief William Hill announced recently.

Patrolman Joseph Daniel O'Brien has been promoted to lieutenant, effective Feb. 1, and is second in command of the force. Auxiliary officer Greg Wood has been hired as a full-time patrolman.

A letter to O'Brien from Hill said he was promoted because of his "experience, ability to work with others, character and appearance."

Wood, 25, has served the department as an auxiliary officer since

May 1983. He fills the position previously held by Patrolman John Goodwin, who resigned to attend the N.C. Highway Patrol School.

The Duplin County native is the son of Rev. and Mrs. Macon Wood of Route 5, Shallotte. He was formerly employed by Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. Wood has completed rookie school and has been certified by the N.C. Criminal Justice and Training Standards Commission.

Hill also said that Officer Condray Webster "Webb" Brown is attending radar school.

## Soles Heads Committee

State Sen. R.C. Soles Jr. of Tabor City has been named chairman of the committee on judiciary IV by Lt. Gov. Bob Jordan.

Jordan announced the appointments of about 29 committee leaders following his opening address to the N.C. General Assembly in Raleigh on Feb. 5.

In opening the 1985 assembly, Jor-

dan said the state needs to continue to provide for education of its children.

"Although the budget approved this session will total around \$16 billion," Jordan said, "your deliberations must assure that the money is utilized where it will do the most good for the most people without waste and without duplication."

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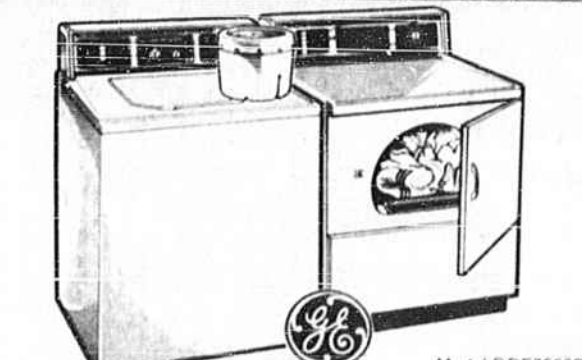
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