

Fire, Rescue Units Created For Navassa And Northwest

BY SUSAN USHER

Fire and rescue service should soon improve in Brunswick County's northernmost corner with the establishment Monday of new departments in the town of Navassa and Northwest Community.

Countywide service also got a boost in a related move.

A former county crime prevention van will be transformed into an emergency support vehicle that will be located at Supply Volunteer Fire Department and available to back up all units. Commissioners voted Monday to give the van to the Supply department stipulating it would be for countywide use.

Commissioners authorized creation of both fire and rescue departments at Navassa and Northwest and accepted their articles of incorporation at the meeting, bringing the total number of fire and rescue units to three each in District 5.

Approximately 40 residents of

Navassa and Northwest attended the session to show support.

"We have people dedicated to the cause of fire and rescue," said spokesman Jerry Munn of Northwest. "We are willing to make sacrifices. We realize it's not an easy task."

Leland volunteer fire and rescue units are presently the only emergency departments located in District 5. Acme-Delco Reigelwood departments in Columbus County are often the first to respond to calls in the more distant Northwest community.

Addition of the departments means an increase in county fire and rescue funding of \$40,000 next year. The county allocates \$10,000 per year to each unit under its current funding plan.

Munn said he hoped a weekend collection at his church would be the last taken for the Columbus County units: "I hope the next one is for Brunswick County."

Within the last two months, he said,

fires had "completely destroyed" two homes before firefighters arrived on the scene. "No one was hurt or killed," he said, "but we can't afford to sit back and take a chance that someone might be killed next time."

Chris Chappell, chairman of the commissioners, confirmed that, while the county had not received an official request from Columbus County, a rumor is circulating that the sister county planned to ask Brunswick for support of its squads that answer calls across the county line.

Commissioner Grace Beasley of District 5 recommended establishment of the four departments, saying their presence would also enhance the area's attractiveness to industrial prospects.

"We're going to need the additional protection," she added.

Earlier this year the addition of one fire department had been proposed for the Northwest community, but the idea was expanded to include Navassa at a district-wide meeting of persons interested in fire and rescue service.

Crime Van

Supply firefighters had asked for the sheriff's department crime prevention van last month, but the county decided to check first to see if any departments wanted it. Sheriff John Carr Davis said the vehicle is no longer of use to his department.

Requests came in from two departments for the van, County Manager Billy Carter said. The Emergency Management Agency proposed converting it into a mobile command center, while the Parks and Recreation Department wanted to make it into a mobile arts and recreation unit. In either case, he said, the county would have to maintain and

operate the vehicle at its expense.

Supply firefighters plan to mount a Cascade unit on it for refilling the portable breathing support systems used by firefighters, and other equipment that can't be carried on a fire truck but is needed on the scene of a fire.

One citizen in the community has also offered, said Chief David Robinson, to mount a fundraising campaign for a "Jaws of Life" extraction tool to be mounted on the van as well, making it of even greater use to rescue squads.

Robinson said the van would be on call with staff 24 hours a day.

"It will go to good use," he pledged.

Artificial Reefs

Commissioners endorsed a proposed artificial reef program off the Brunswick County coast as requested by petitioners Bill English and Dale McDowell, but made no financial commitment.

The speakers had requested a small appropriation of no more than \$5,000 as soon as possible to help get the program started, but added, "we also need a long-range commitment."

Their two-year plan calls for re-establishing one reef that exists on paper only, restoring the only active reef off the coast and establishing six new reefs at distances from three to 18 miles offshore. The countywide reef committee represents sports fishermen from all points in the county. English and McDowell said they are seeking financial support from federal, state and local governments and "in a big, big way" from private sources that include local individuals and groups as well as upstate fishermen that fish here.

Other Business

In other business, commissioners: •Met behind closed doors for nearly two hours to discuss land acquisitions for water and landfill operations with County Planner John Harvey and County Engineer Dan Shields, but took no action.

•Adopted Ordinance 62, which puts into force all volumes of the state building code. The county will proceed to hire inspectors and establish an inspection office within the county planning department.

•Authorized County Manager Billy Carter to implement the merit raise program approved by commissioners last year. The prior board set aside, but delayed expending until the first of the year, an amount equal to 2½ percent of county salaries to provide the first merit raises received by county employees since 1981.

Merit increases in varying percentages will be allocated by department heads to deserving employees under their supervision and to department heads by the county manager and commissioners.

•Updated the county's memorandum of understanding with the N.C. Agricultural Extension Service that outlines how the local extension program operates and how personnel are hired.

•Accepted by unanimous vote a booklet of bid specifications for a data processing system for the Register of Deeds office that had been prepared by a hired consultant over questioning from Commissioner Frankie Rabon. Rabon wondered if the registrar couldn't have prepared the specifications, which Carter estimated may have cost as much as \$5,000, a sum allocated earlier for the study.

•Named Jim Poole to an advisory committee for a pilot dropout preven-

tion program that the county school system may be selected to participate in.

•Approved and authorized collection of a revised 1984 tax levy of \$12,563,685.

•Approved a \$17,989 bid for a mobile filing system for the Brunswick County Department of Social Services. The state will reimburse 60 percent of the cost.

•Named Commissioner Frankie Rabon to serve on a county thoroughfare plan team to meet with state officials and solicit their support for a 20-year road plan for the county.

•Asked staff to investigate the need for a mirror in the ladies' restroom at the county courthouse following a request from Teddi Neal of Bolivia. She said it was her understanding the original small mirror was stolen and recommended the county install a wall-length mirror "so no one can walk out the front door with it."

•Voted to ask the N.C. Department of Transportation to take immediate action to improve a one-mile section of S.R. 1410, Green Hill Road, as requested by Clyde Harrison.

•Denied a request from SENCL and Community Action Inc. to use a county dump truck for a community cleanup project in Longwood. Chairman Chris Chappell made the motion "we don't start loaning vehicles out in this instance or in the future because of the additional liability to us."

Even with a "hold harmless" agreement the county would still be liable if an accident or injury occurred while a vehicle was being used by someone else. A county policy provides guidelines for allowing use by other governmental or community groups.

Two Indicted Drug Suspects Still Free

BY TERRY POPE

Two of 22 suspects indicted by the Brunswick County Grand Jury last week on drug charges have managed to avoid arrest from the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department.

Since last Tuesday evening, detectives have arrested and charged seven more suspects with the sale or possession of either cocaine or marijuana. Two of the 20 suspects arrested thus far are still being held in the Brunswick County Jail under bond.

The indictments are the result of a six-month undercover investigation of illegal street drug sales in the county. Called "Operation Brass," the investigation led to the indictment of 22 persons on 66 drug charges last week.

Detective David Crocker gave "Operation Brass" its name by using the letters in "brass" to stand for the cooperation received from the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department and Charlotte and Southport police departments. Both Charlotte and Southport cooperated in the investigation by providing undercover officers.

Among those arrested last week were residents of Southport, Bolivia and Leland. Al Arthur Doshier Jr. of Southport was arrested and charged with possession of cocaine with intent to sell and deliver and the sale and deliver of cocaine. Doshier was also charged with two counts of sale and deliver and possession of marijuana. He was released under \$50,000 bond.

Tim Lanier, 26, of Chadwick Trailer Park, Leland, was charged with two counts of sale and deliver and possession of marijuana. Lanier is still being held in jail under \$12,500 bond.

Lloyd Fields of Fawnbrook Trailer Park, Bolivia, was charged with possession of marijuana with intent to sell and deliver and the sale of marijuana stemming from an alleged drug deal made with undercover officers Jan. 6, 1985.

Gene Martin of Southport was released from jail under \$10,000 bond after being charged with conspiracy to sell and deliver marijuana. Both Danny Martin, 17, and Steve Babson, were released under \$20,000 bond after being charged with possession and the sale and deliver of marijuana. Gary Miller was charged with possession and sale and deliver of cocaine from an alleged drug sale to undercover officers Sept. 9, 1984.

Oliver Hansley Jr., 31, of 3314 Winston Blvd., Wilmington, is still being held under \$45,000 bond following his arrest last Monday morning. Hansley was charged with possessing and selling marijuana on Nov. 26, 1984.

Released under \$25,000 bond was Dale Arthur Hewett, 33, of Shallotte Point, who was charged last Monday with possessing and selling cocaine. The following were also released under bond last week: Malcolm McHose, 24, of Long Beach, \$40,000 bond; Scott Barham, 20, of Long Beach, \$3,000 bond; Ray Duncan, Long Beach, \$20,000 bond, and Phillip Taylor, Southport, \$50,000 bond.



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