

\$677,422 BUDGET APPROVED

Shallotte Hires Stovall As Chief

BY SUSAN USHER

A new police chief reports to work in Shallotte on Monday, July 8, bringing with him 23 years of law enforcement experience.

Late last Wednesday night, at about 11:30 p.m., Shallotte aldermen hired Don Stovall, assistant police chief at Holden Beach, to fill the position that has been vacant since April. He will earn about \$16,702. His first year will be probationary.

He is the third chief the town has had in two years. Hoyal "Red" Varnam Jr. was fired in 1983 after being indicted on drug charges. And Stovall's immediate predecessor, John Wayne Campbell, was fired in April after being accused of privately taping a conversation with the mayor.

Stovall, 47, had applied for Shallotte's top law enforcement post once before, in 1983, when Campbell was hired.

He was one of nine candidates for the Shallotte job this time around and one of three finalists interviewed by the board last Wednesday. Also interviewed was Rodney Gause, a sergeant on the Shallotte force and the son of Aldermen David Gause, who abstained during the vote. Another alderman, mayor pro tem Paul Wayne Reeves, is ill and did not attend the meeting.

Stovall worked for the High Point Police Department and the Davidson County Sheriff's Department before joining the Holden Beach Police Department in 1982.

In Shallotte he will supervise a four-officer force that includes Sgt. Gause and Patrol Officers Nellie Evans and Eddie Reynolds. There is one patrol slot vacant.

Budget Approved

A \$677,422 budget for 1985-86—\$500 more than first proposed and \$11,258 more than the current year's budget—was adopted unanimously with little discussion Wednesday.

Included is \$380,269 in the general fund; \$36,493 in revenue sharing, which will all be used for street improvements; and \$250,760 in the water and sewer fund, including two new positions to meet the increased demand for services.

The \$500 adjustment reflects the board's decision to charge \$3 each for town license tags rather than give them away. In the only other change approved by the board, funds in the police department budget were increased to reflect pay of \$4.25 per hour rather \$4 per hour for reserve officers.

Alderman Jerry Jones had proposed charging for the tags, requiring their purchase but not requiring their display. He suggested setting aside the proceeds for improvements such as sidewalks. Noting that street funds can be used for sidewalks, the board simply approved a \$3 charge for the tags without specifying how the money would be used.

No one spoke during public hearings on the proposed budget and the proposed use of Revenue Sharing funds for street improvements.

Growth

Aldermen also adopted new water and sewer rates and installation fees. Water will cost \$8 for the first 3,000 gallons and \$2.20 for each additional 1,000 gallons. Sewer service will cost \$7 for the first 3,000 gallons and \$2 for every 1,000 additional gallons. Sewage usage is based on 90 percent of water usage.

The cost of installing utilities will increase to \$2,000 for sewer and \$350 for water, with the difference in the town's cost and the customer's cost—about \$250 total—to go into a capital reserve fund to help pay for future expansion of the system.

Board members agreed with Alderman Wilton Harrelson, who said those who would be served by the expansion should bear the brunt of its cost.

Aldermen delayed consideration of two proposed annexations, however, to allow more time to develop a schedule for impact fees for commercial utility users.

The planning board had recommended annexation of both the Earline (Pet) Bellamy tract on N.C. 179 and the Al Willis property between Sellers Drive and U.S. 17, with rezoning as requested in both cases.

If the town attorney agreed with the procedure, the annexations were to be contingent upon whatever impact fees the board adopted to generate funds for a capital reserve fund to expand the sewer system. But the board decided to wait after hearing from a member of the audience.

"It's not fair to charge the same impact fee for a clothing store as for a restaurant," noted Tommy Miller, a rest home owner in the audience who said one type of business could have a much larger impact than another on water and sewer facilities.

After brief deliberation, the board agreed and tabled action on the fee schedules and the annexations until its July 3 meeting.

"We probably need to classify all our businesses," said Mayor Beamon Hewett.

The commercial fees, as proposed by town sewer system engineer Finney Boney, would have been \$500 for every 5,000 square feet of commercial property or \$125 per every 1,000 square feet of commercial property in town; and double those rates for businesses served outside town, or brought into the town limits once the fees are adopted. Fees for residences will be based on the number of bedrooms, with a minimum charge of \$500 in town and \$1,000 out of town.

Parking Proposal

Aldermen took no action on changes proposed by the planning board that would ease parking requirements for businesses.

The planning board has recommended requiring one parking space for each:

- 200 square feet, rather than 100 square feet, for a public building or public club;
- 300 square feet, rather than 200 square feet, for a "high volume" retail business;
- 400 square feet, rather than 100 square feet, for a "low volume" retail business;
- 400 square feet, rather than 250 square feet, for an office;
- 200 square feet, rather than 75 square feet, for a bank; and
- 200 square feet, rather than 100 square feet, for a frequently-visited service establishment.

Other Business

In other business, the board:

- Approved an agreement with Van Weeks to make electrical inspections for the town at the same rate charged the county.

- Accepted a low bid of \$28,650 for a backhoe from Waccamaw Tractor Co. of Conway, S.C., with delivery in 60 to 90 days.

- Sold a motorcycle owned by the Shallotte Police Department to Donald Gates for \$300, the highest of two bids received.

- Re-advertised for insurance bids, since none were received by the deadline. The mayor was to check on a one-month binder or some other arrangement to cover the town's insurance needs until new coverage is obtained.

- On Maintenance Superintendent Albert Hughes' recommendation, hired Larry C. Pigott to read water meters.

- Extended permission for a mobile home residence to remain on the site of Brunswick Village rest home on Mulberry Street for one year, and decided that the status of the access road to the rest home be investigated. It has not been brought up to state standards for dedication to the town as the three property owners had previously agreed. Rest home owner Tommy Miller had offered to share in the cost, though he did not own the property.

New Water Policies Encourage Tap-Ons

BY SUSAN USHER

After months of discussion Brunswick County commissioners adopted three policies Thursday night that are intended to help extend water service to as many county residents as possible.

The water system policies address oversized lines, multi-unit developments and easements along private roadways.

If the county decides that a line size larger than that needed to serve a particular development would enhance the county's future ability to deliver water service in the area, it can offer to cover the difference in cost between the line proposed by the developer and the line it thinks is needed.

But instead of paying directly for the difference in line size, the county would provide the equivalent sum charging no additional fees for a specified number of connections to the system.

The developer would install the larger-diameter line at his own expense, then the number of no-charge connections would be calculated by the county based on the difference in installation costs.

However, the policy would only apply to water distribution lines that are 1) 10 inches or more in diameter and 2) in a tract or parcel of land being developed as a subdivision, shopping center, mobile home park or multi-family development. All the lines would be dedicated to the county water system.

The idea behind the policy is that it is cheaper to put in a large line to accommodate growth in an area than to replace the smaller lines at a later date.

A second policy provides for installation of a single "master meter" in planned multi-unit developments with single, common or cooperative ownership.

This policy would apply to developments such as condominiums, apartment developments, office parks, mobile home parks and shopping centers.

Billing would be forwarded to a single firm, corporation or partnership, rather than to the occupants of the individual units. The party billed would have the legal responsibility for payment.

A third policy provides that when a water distribution line is to run along a private roadway, the property owners must also dedicate to the county an easement for public utilities and storm drainage purposes.

If the roadway is less than 30 feet in width, an additional adjoining easement must be granted so that there is a minimum of 30 feet for the placement of the line and an area of at

least 20 feet for use in maintaining the line.

In a related matter, Rep. David Redwine said Tuesday a bill concerning water line extensions in existing subdivisions should be reported out of committee Wednesday. The bill is based on a policy approved earlier by the commissioners.

The bill had been approved by the committee, but Redwine delayed its forwarding to the House for a vote until he recheck the question of its constitutionality.

Under the bill, the county could collect funds from property owners on a prorated basis and then repay a third party which has advanced all or part of the money needed to install water distribution lines in an existing subdivision. The bill would not apply to new subdivisions, where installation of lines would for now remain a responsibility of the developer.

County Attorney David Clegg had requested the bill on behalf of the county commissioners. In consulting with the Institute of Government, Redwine was told the county already had the authority to collect such funds.

But Clegg, at a meeting with commissioners last week, said that while the law specifies that municipalities have this right, it is not specifically allowed for counties.

He and commissioners criticized Redwine's delay of the bill, but Redwine said Tuesday he had checked with Wicker once again.

"He said he has no problem with the bill if it will make the county commissioners and the county attorney feel better."

The bill was to have been reported out of committee favorably Wednesday.

Sweet Potato Growers Vote

Brunswick County sweet potato growers were to vote Tuesday on whether or not to continue the voluntary self-assessment to support promotional activities of the N.C. Yam Commission.

The referendum is authorized by the State Board of Agriculture, through action of the N.C. General Assembly. The authorization was for a three-year period.

The official ballot listed the following item, "To authorize continued collection of five cents per bushel on sweet potatoes sold for fresh market purposes and five cents per 100 pounds on sweet potatoes sold to processors to raise funds to support the N.C. Yam Commission, Inc., in its efforts to promote the production, marketing, and consumption of N.C. sweet potatoes."

Anyone involved with commercial production of sweet potatoes was eligible to vote in the special referendum, including growers, farm owners and sharecroppers.

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Navassa Expects Largest Crowd At Homecoming

Homecoming in Navassa on July 6 promises the biggest and best celebration in the event's four-year history, says Eulis Willis, town commissioner and parade chairman.

"Last year we had in the neighborhood of 2,500 here," he said. "This year we're expecting about 3,500. They come home from all over the country."

Natives of the northwestern Brunswick County community will return home from as far away as Germany and Hawaii, he added, with large contingents from New Jersey and Maryland. "They usually run a bus from Baltimore."

Willis said surrounding communities are also involved in this year's event.

The official celebration begins at 10 a.m. with the parade through town, followed by a minicarnival in the Navassa Park. Proceeds from the park concessions will go to support a local fire department and rescue squad now organizing.

"They need money to buy equipment," he said, including a fire truck.

Featured in the parade will be Miss Navassa, Tracey Mosley, the

15-year-old daughter of Thurman and Barbara Mosley. Approximately seven floats, six or seven "fancy" marching units, the North Brunswick High School Band and visiting honorees from nearby communities will also participate.

Activities for all ages will be featured at the carnival, Willis said. The Brunswick County Parks and Recreation Department is bringing horses for horseback riding, professional storytellers and will offer a variety of children's games.

Also planned are a horseshoes pitching tournament, dunking booth, minirides, romper room balloon, volleyball and disco music.

As a bonus event, Willis said he hopes to get the fancy marching units to compete for prizes.

This is his fourth year as chairman of the parade committee. Serving with Willis on the parade committee are Barbara Mosley, Bernard Merrick, Willamena Horton, Charlene Alston and Vera Alston, Valerie Brown, Joe Weston and Stephanie Hooper.

"Tell the people to come on down," said Willis. "We're fixing to have a good time."

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