



LELAND SANITARY DISTRICT board members weren't always pleased with what they heard during a joint meeting with county commissioners Friday night, but the two boards did reach agreement on the district

buying water from the county. From the left are district commissioners Jim Medlin and John Jones, attorney Glen Peterson, chairman Leo Nowak and district commissioner Ava Thomas.

Sanitary District, County Reach Terms On Water Sales

BY SUSAN USHER

Brunswick County will sell water to the Leland Sanitary District and at the same rate charged other wholesale customers, county and district commissioners agreed in a joint meeting Friday night.

Residents of the district won't know their exact water rate until both the district and the county prepare 1986-87 water system budgets next spring.

But it should go no higher than the \$3.04 per 1,000 gallon figure used in estimates prepared by the district's engineers and should be lower, sanitary district commissioners were told again Friday as they pressed for the cost figure their potential customers are demanding.

"The rate will be based on cost. It is as difficult for you to give them a rate as it is for us to give you a rate," replied County Manager Billy Carter. "You're not going to know what your rate is until you know your debt costs and operations and maintenance costs will be."

The sanitary district board voted several years ago not to require its residents to connect to the system, the most precise basis for calculating costs.

District commissioners first asked the county to "lock in" to a specific rate of 97 cents per 1,000 gallons for the system's first two years of operation or else place a 10 percent cap on annual increases. Both proposals would force the county to charge its customers varying rates, which County Attorney David Clegg said would be discriminatory.

"We want you as users," he said. "However, our services to the Leland Sanitary District must be equitable with those provided other users."

A suit filed by Pfizer Chemicals, the county's largest water user, relates to the rate formula and could

change the county's billing approach.

District commissioners caucused in the lobby before voting on the proposed contract at the end of the 2½-hour meeting. Before the caucus, district Commissioner Jim Medlin acknowledged, "I'm not above paying what everyone else pays. As long as its fair and equitable, I can live with it."

The high-estimate rate in the district's engineering report is based on a county water cost of from \$1.50 to no more than \$1.97 per 1,000 gallons, with supplements to the water budget if needed, Carter said.

Even at the higher rate, Ms. Beasley said the cost of water would still be reasonable—about \$18.62 monthly for a family of three that used 65 gallons of water per day per person.

"We have to estimate just like you do," District Secretary Ava Thomas admitted to the county. "I thought our rate was contingent on what you were going to tell us tonight. But that wasn't true."

The boards approved in principle an agreement like those signed by the county's municipal customers except that it includes a rate formula, not a specific rate. The agreement is subject to approval by the Farmers Home Administration and technical and word changes that may be agreed upon by David Clegg, county attorney, and Glen Peterson, sanitary district attorney.

FmHA must approve the contract before releasing funds for construction of the system. It has agreed to lend the district \$1.31 million at 5.9 percent interest. Grants from FmHA and from the state will pay the remaining cost of the \$3.2 million system.

Still not settled is how the district will provide operation and

maintenance for its transmission lines.

The county estimates it can contract to provide billing, operations and maintenance for about a third of what it would cost the district. But Nowak said the sanitary district board isn't convinced of that.

County Manager Billy Carter reiterated several times the county's willingness to provide technical assistance to the district.

Chairman Leo Nowak said the sanitary district board he heads is "a little gunshy" dealing with the county because earlier water service deadlines had not been met.

The district wants to be in a position to sell water as soon as its lines are in place, he cautioned. "You know what happens when our system is ready. The clock starts ticking."

The district and county anticipate advertising and letting bids in a coordinated effort—the earliest date appears to be sometime in the fall.

To insure water is available, Nowak said he wants the district lines finished about two months after segment one of the county water line is operational in late summer or early fall 1986.

The county plans to "mothball" its new water treatment plant at Malmo, which should be completed in September, Engineer Dan Shields said, delaying testing until April or May 1986.

Sanitation District Commissioner Jim Medlin said the district has 700-plus connections. The figure includes about 20 trailer parks, the three area schools and churches, Commissioner John E. Jones added.

Before proceeding, the district would like to have 85 percent, or about 1,217 of its roughly 1,400 potential customers committed to receiving water. Otherwise it may have to scale down its project and risk losing a grant that would pay a large part of its construction cost.

With 85 percent hookup, the district's projected usage of eight million gallons per day would represent about a four to five percent increase in tap-ons for the county water system, Director Kenneth Hewett estimated.

A July 15 cutoff date has been set for signing onto the sanitary district system at preconstruction prices. A three-quarter inch connection will cost \$25 now, while those who sign on later must pay the actual cost of the meter and installation, about \$150 to \$200.

"The most important thing for people in the Leland Sanitary District to know is that the more people who sign up and the more usage you're talking about, the lower the (water) rate will be," County Manager Billy Carter reminded the district's governing board.

The board will meet in July on the second Thursday night, since its usual meeting date falls on Independence Day.

Forms for joining the water system are available at the Old Towne Cookery in Belville, Lee's Petroleum in Woodburn and at the Leland branch library. They are to be sent to the Leland Sanitary District, P.O. Box 1030, Leland.

Sunset Beach Bridge Is Debated

(Continued From Page 1-A)

It's still a scary thought to know that once that bridge is tied off during high tides and high winds, there's nothing we can do."

Permanent resident Minnie Hunt presented Garrett with a prepared statement that questioned if the public boat landing on the causeway would be affected by the replacement bridge and if archaeological studies would be conducted on the site. According to the revised recommended route, the bridge would cross the Intracoastal Waterway south of the present bridge with right-of-way acquisitions affecting \$725,700 in property value and one resident.

That resident is Mason Barber Jr., who recently built a home on one lot that is scheduled for right-of-way acquisition under the recommended plan.

"I built my house and they (Sea Trail Links) built a golf course," Barber said. "DOT circled the golf course to go through my house."

Barber said he questioned the "ethics of the entire matter" and was never contacted by DOT officials about the revised route and plans to acquire his home for right-of-way purposes. Instead, Barber said he had to contact DOT officials in Raleigh twice to gather the information, although the department had already appraised his property.

"How is it that the state is so deeply involved in this town anyway?" Barber asked.

Ocean Isle Beach developer Odell Williamson, who has purchased a lot on the island to provide parking, also spoke in favor of constructing the new bridge. High-rise replacements are in progress at both Ocean Isle and Holden Beaches, and are scheduled to open in 1986.

"I am for progress and I'm also for the area," Williamson said. "And people will be going to Myrtle Beach if we don't allow them to get to the hen that layed the golden egg—the Atlantic Ocean."

Williamson said when the people of Sunset Beach get their new bridge, they are "going to be proud of it. You'll

find it's not going to change your lives all that much," he added.

Sunset Beach developer and councilman Ed Gore said the "allegations that the new bridge would change zoning on the island is ludicrous."

There has been no multi-family zoning changes on the island, he added, only on the golf courses that are now under construction on the mainland. Congregating the multi-family units into one area on a golf course actually "creates less density than it would if it had remained single-family," Gore added.

Gore said the town needs a new bridge, and building a high-rise "is the best buy." He thanked the DOT officials for doing a "thorough job in looking at all viable alternatives" for the town.

"I'd also like to lay the idea to rest that it would make more money for me," Gore said. The rumor that he is prepared to lay out another street and sell lots along the accreted oceanfront if the new bridge is constructed is also a "ludicrous lie," Gore said.

"I, and my family before me, did welcome and still welcome newcomers to the beach," Gore added.

Jim Smart, a resident of Landing II on N.C. 179 near Calabash, said the residents were trying to "operate an exclusive club over there."

"The beach does not belong to anybody exclusively because you own property over there," Smart said. "I don't understand why you're so afraid of anyone else going over to the beach."

Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan said the new bridge is needed for emergency evacuations, during man-made or natural disasters.

"I can't see where it's going to create any more problems than they have at the present time," Logan said. "I do have concerns for the residents of Sunset Beach."

The fact that a replacement bridge has been recommended "does not mean anything has been finalized and will not be, nor cannot be, until we've had a chance to analyze the public input," Garrett said.

Murder Suspect Faces Court Hearing Monday

A Shallotte man charged with first-degree murder in the shooting death of a supply man will face a probable cause hearing Monday, July 1, in Brunswick County District Criminal Court.

Gary Reeves, 28, of Shallotte, was charged last Wednesday with first-degree murder in the shooting death of Mark Tolliver, 33, of Route 2, Supply (Stone Chimney Road).

Reeves, a Shallotte electrician, was released from the Brunswick County Jail last Thursday under \$200,000 bond, said Brunswick County

Sheriff John Carr Davis.

Tolliver was shot and killed at his home around 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, according to the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department. Reeves was taken into custody at the Tolliver residence and taken for treatment at the Brunswick Hospital in Supply.

He was later charged by Detective Lindsey Walton with first-degree murder. The State Bureau of Investigation's crime scene unit was called to investigate the shooting last Wednesday morning.

In District Court last Thursday, Judge Lee J. Greer Jr. agreed to set bail at \$200,000 after about 25 people appeared to testify on Reeves' behalf and to post bail for him. About five people testified before Judge Greer on Reeves' reputation. He is represented by Shallotte attorney Roy D. Treast.

Assistant District Attorney Napoleon B. Barefoot Jr. first requested that no bond be set on Reeves. He later requested that Judge Greer set bond at \$2 million, but it was denied.

Elections Board Threesome Named

One continuing member and two new members of the Brunswick County Board of Elections will take oaths of office July 16 at the Brunswick County Courthouse, the State Board of Elections announced Tuesday.

Harry Orie Gore of Southport will be the only continuing member of the Brunswick County Board of Elections when it is reconstituted next month.

The only Democrat on the three-member panel, he was reappointed for another two years Tuesday by the State Board of Elections, indicated Lucille Suiter, administrative secretary to the State Board of Elections. He is the current chairman of the local board.

Appointed to their first two-year terms were Republicans Larry Andrews of Shallotte, a mortician, and James F. Jeffries of Boiling Spring Lakes, a retired businessman.

State election laws allow the executive committee of the party in power to nominate candidates for two seats and the minority party executive committee to nominate candidates for the remaining seat.

Each county executive committee submitted three names, in order of preference, to the state board for selection.

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