

# New Personalities Take Office In Shallotte Government

BY SUSAN USHER

Change was in the air last Wednesday night when a new mayor, a new governing board and a new fire chief took office in Shallotte at a meeting that was mostly ceremonial.

Saying "I'm going to go back here and sit down and watch you," longtime Mayor Beamon Hewett turned over the gavel to a visibly nervous Jerry Jones. Formerly an alderman, he was elected mayor in November.

Hewett did not seek re-election. He had served 16½ years as mayor and four years as alderman, he told The Beacon.

Jones presented Hewett with a plaque from the town, and a reception in his honor was held following the meeting.

Hewett said he was proud of what the town had accomplished during his tenure, but he added, "You can't invest 20 some years of your life

without feeling some regrets, some sadness."

Also sworn in was Sarah Tripp, the first woman to serve on the board, and Paul Reeves, who was re-elected to a third term with the highest vote total of any candidate. He was re-elected mayor pro tem, casting the only "no" vote. Continuing on the board are Aldermen Wilton Harrelson, David Gause and Bobby Ray Russ.

### Chief Approved

The board also resolved an issue tabled by the previous board, appointing Michael Arnold chief of the Shallotte Volunteer Fire Department on a motion by Harrelson.

Russ abstained, saying he was a fireman. "I don't think it would be fair to Mike or David to choose bet-



FOR THE FIRST TIME in 16½ years, the gavel of leadership changed hands in Shallotte Wednesday night, as Jerry Jones made the transition from alderman to mayor. Outgoing mayor Beamon Hewett conducted the swearing-in.



SARAH TRIPP (right), the first woman to serve on the Shallotte Board of Aldermen, was sworn in to office Wednesday night by outgoing Mayor Beamon Hewett, along with re-elected incumbent Paul Wayne Reeves. Reeves was re-elected mayor pro tem by the new board.



MICHAEL ARNOLD  
New Fire Chief

ween them," he said.

Arnold had been elected or nominated by town firefighters on a split vote in November. David Moore, the acting chief, was the other candidate. As assistant chief, Moore had assumed the job of acting chief in August after Arnold's father, Curmon, retired.

The town board must approve the annual election of the chief or else the department must submit another nomination.

At their last meeting, aldermen studied two sets of ordinances and met behind closed doors, but still couldn't make up their minds. They

tabled the question and appointed Moore as acting chief.

Several members of the fire department questioned that action, since they had elected a new assistant chief in November.

Old town ordinances and bylaws governing the fire department required that the chief have held prior office, a condition both Moore and Arnold satisfied though the rule no longer applied. When the rules were revised in November 1982, no members met that qualification, so it was dropped, leaving essentially a one-year active membership requirement.

### Other Business

In other business, the board voted to meet on Monday, Dec. 30, at 7:30 p.m. since their regular meeting day would fall on a holiday, Jan. 1.

•Rescheduled a hearing on the proposed rezoning of Emerson Arnold's property on Shallotte Avenue until the next meeting because the hearing had not been properly advertised.

•After meeting behind closed doors for approximately 40 minutes, voted to advertise to hire a sanitation worker to replace Henry Rabon, who has resigned. The employee will start at an annual salary of approximately \$9,100 (E-5).

—welcome—

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