

Holden Beach Planning Board Continues Annexation Talks

BY ETTA SMITH

Holden Beach Planning and Zoning Board members say annexation opponents who think the town would collect \$200,000 a year in taxes from the move are wrong—and they'd like a chance to tell causeway residents why.

At the board's Jan. 21 meeting Chairman Alan Holden said he had

expected some causeway residents to attend, since he invited them during a recent meeting called by annexation opponents.

He said he hoped to clear up the misunderstanding about how the annexation area was chosen and clarify the tax rate levied by the town.

"We're going to be hearing from

them soon and we'll be asked to go over the formula we used to determine the area," said Holden. "Hopefully, a joint meeting will give us a better rapport with them."

Town commissioners voted to draw up a letter of intent to annex the area on Jan. 5 after the planning and zoning board had prepared a map of the proposed area. The map is what some opponents say they're upset about, alleging it selectively includes as business area that already has paved roads and water.

Perrian Padgett, an alternate on the planning and zoning board, said he had received calls from some causeway residents who feel the town only wants to take in the area for taxes.

Member Jack Scarborough added, "The fact has been brought out in the media that we have a 25-cent tax rate, and that needs to be straightened out."

Opponent Cletis Clemmons told about 50 people at a Jan. 8 meeting to discuss annexation that based on a 25-cent tax rate, Holden Beach would add about \$200,000 in tax revenues from the area if it were annexed—a figure Holden Beach Town Administrator Bob Buck said is wrong.

Holden Beach's tax valuation is 11 cents on every \$100 of property, said Buck. Based on a 90-percent collection rate, the town expects to collect only \$220,000 on property taxes from all of Holden Beach this year, he said.

Holden said the town couldn't possibly collect that amount of revenue if it annexed the causeway area.

"It's a question of what Holden Beach can offer North Holden Beach," he added.

Study Discussed
Scarborough, chairman of a committee that's studying planned unit development (PUD), reported that the committee has received some literature on the subject. He asked any board members interested in the subject to read the available literature.

PUD is a type of development that allows housing units to be built closer together or combined into one structure as opposed to several structures without increasing population density, according to Brunswick County Planning Director John Harvey, who spoke to the committee Jan. 19 on the subject.

Planned unit development is an innovation that allows better use of land, he said, and is a concept supported by every planner he knows.

Dog Case Goes To Court Today

The fate of a dog declared vicious a year ago by the Brunswick County Health Department rests in the hands of a district court judge today (Thursday).

According to a warrant taken out by Brunswick County Animal Control Supervisor Zelma Babson, P.J., a calico owned by Leu and Rocky Hopchas, publisher of The Brunswick Free Press in Shallotte, bit George Hricz of Calabash Acres in the hand last Dec. 23 as he was leaving the newspaper office.

Defendant Lou Hopchas, P.J.'s owner, is charged with failure to comply with a vicious dog order issued by former Health Director Thomas Blum on Feb. 11, 1986.

Under that order, P.J. was to be controlled by leash when inside the newspaper office during public business hours.

According to the complaint, at the time of the alleged incident, the dog was in the office and was not leashed.

Health department records show that Hricz is the fifth person bitten by

P.J. since Jan. 1, 1985. Before Dec. 23, the last incident occurred on Feb. 11, 1986, prompting issuance of the health director's order.

The Hopchas had successfully appealed to the health board an earlier declaration issued after a June 30, 1985, biting incident. The board voted on Aug. 11, in a 4-3 motion, that the dog was not vicious.

At that time, three biting incidents—several involving children—had been reported to the animal control staff. The incidents occurred on Jan. 1, Jan. 20 and June 30, 1985.

After the latest incident, on Dec. 23, P.J. was impounded immediately. She was released from the county pound 10 days later to W.L. Brooks.

According to a letter to the health department from Mrs. Hopchas, the dog has since been placed in a home outside the county.

The bite to Hricz's hand required medical treatment. It involved the top of the middle finger and the area between the little finger and the ring finger.

Some Waters Close While Others Open

Some Brunswick County waters were closed to shellfishing Tuesday just hours after other areas were opened.

In the Southport-Oak Island area, the Elizabeth River, Dutchman's

Creek and the Bald Head Island area were temporarily closed by order of the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, due to "unsatisfactory bacteriological results" in the Cape Fear River and Carolina Beach areas.

Waters in New Hanover County also are affected. Specifically, the order refers to "all waters bounded on the northeast by the Wrightsville Beach prohibited area and on the southwest by the Cape Fear River prohibited area."

Meanwhile, shellfishermen began harvesting oysters Tuesday morning from areas in the Lockwood's Folly, Shallotte River and Eastern Channel areas that had been closed since last spring after they were planted with stock taken polluted areas.

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DSS Board Rejects Pay For Off Days

BY ETTA SMITH

Title III workers in the Brunswick County Social Services Department aren't pleased with the days they had to take off from work over the Christmas holidays.

Four of those workers told the social services board at its Monday evening meeting that temporarily closing the nutrition sites where they work put an unfair hardship on them—and they'd like to be paid for the time they had to take off from work.

After a two-hour executive session, the board approved a motion by Chairman Frankie Rabon not to pay them, but to find a way to prevent them from having to be off next year.

Board Member Louis Brown cast the only dissenting vote.

The department closed the four county nutrition sites on Dec. 22 through 31 and Jan. 1 and 2, after a survey showed few elderly patrons would use them during that period.

The sites are located in Shallotte, Leland, Southport and Oak Island. Department Director Jamie Orrock said the seven affected workers were offered the opportunity to participate in a training workshop with pay for two of those days, but only two of them expressed an interest. He also said that one site manager and one van driver had the option of transporting food to the homes of shut-ins, but didn't express an interest in that either.

Leland Nutrition Site Manager Dorothy Harrison said she would have washed windows or whatever was needed to be able to work the few days between Christmas and New Year's. She added that the days without pay has hurt her financially.

"This is the first time this has ever happened," she said. "They always paid us before when they shut down."

Board Chairman Frankie Rabon, who is also a county commissioner, said, "We can't pay you if you didn't work; we've got a county personnel policy to go by."

Board member Louis Brown, dissenting, said if other county employees worked on the days between Christmas and New Year's Eve, then these workers should.

Transfer Proposed
The board also approved Orrock's request to present a budget revision to county commissioners that would transfer about \$3,800 from the

Carolina Power and Light Energy Assistance Grant Program to the Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) crisis budget.

Orrock said that 50 percent of the \$41,000 in AFDC crisis funding had been spent as of Jan. 14. The program is designed to help families in emergency situations pay their power bills.

Unit Reports

The Protective Services unit received 12 reports of child abuse during December. Eighty-five people were listed on the Title XX program, where department-paid employees help the elderly with household chores. Twenty-two persons received in-home personal care, while eight were served by the CAP, or alternative to nursing home program.

Eighteen people were interviewed for the AFDC Energy Assistance Program and eight were approved between Jan. 1 and 14.

During December, 215 individuals participated in the congregate meals program for the elderly. According to Ronnie Robinson, all but 28 of 1,600 meals ordered for the program were consumed.

Contributions for those meals totaled \$68 from the Leland site, \$95 from Oak Island, \$51 from Shallotte and \$33 from Southport.

Twenty-eight individuals participated in the home-delivered meals program and all of the 368 meals served were consumed. Contributions for the program totaled \$181.

The nutrition and medical transportation unit reported 56

medical and human services, and 444 shopping assistance calls.

The fraud unit reported \$7,000 overpayments in December. Of those cases, \$4,134 has been recovered through repayment agreements with clients.

The absent parent caseload was 1,280 as of Dec. 31. Fifteen paternity cases were established, four of which were done through blood testing. Thirty-four court ordered support cases were listed and 15 people were ordered to pay medical coverage for their children. Thirty-two contempt cases were processed and five income withholding cases. Support collected in December totaled \$22,356 through the department and \$6,172 through the court.

Approved food stamp recertifications totaled 320 out of 326 applications. New applicants and reapplications totaled 229.

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