

Commissioners Speak Against Nuclear Waste Disposal Bills

BY SUSAN USHER

Two Brunswick County commissioners went to Raleigh Tuesday to make what Chairman Grace Beasley hoped would be a "strong statement" opposing bills that target the county in key roles for low-level nuclear waste disposal.

One bill would make Brunswick County one of three possible counties for location of such a facility; another would require the county to "donate" \$953,000 in property taxes yearly to a county that volunteers to host the site.

At an afternoon hearing conducted by the Water and Air Resources Committee, Commissioners Chris Chappell and Jim Poole urged the state legislature to rethink its position on low-level nuclear waste disposal, including Senate Bill 46's proposal to withdraw from an eight-state southeastern regional compact. They were accompanied by Regina White, clerk to the board.

S.B. 46 also calls for placing the state's own low-level nuclear waste facility in one of the three counties

that house nuclear-fueled power plants, Brunswick, Mecklenburg and Wake.

According to the county's statement, low level waste should be housed "in the area which is safest, and that site should be selected from the state at large."

Adopting pending low-level waste legislation without looking at related scientific data and without studying the legal implications if the state withdraws from the compact, they suggested, "sets the stage for a big

vs. small, majority vs. minority confrontation."

Benefits of energy produced at CP&L's Brunswick Plant reach across county lines, they said, and sharing the consequences of this energy form as well as its benefits "is only equitable and affords equal protection to all residents."

The county is also concerned that withdrawal from the Southeastern compact could put the state in the position of having to accept waste from other states.

And it questions the county's suitability for low-level nuclear waste storage "due to high water table depth, shallow aquifers, high flooding potential, high soil and sediment permeabilities, the degree of hydrogeologic complexity and high groundwater migration rates."

Rep. E. David Redwine called for the hearing, he said, as a way to "buy time" for further consideration by the legislature of the options available to the state.

He has worked on several proposals designed to counter the effects

of S.B. 46, including the shallow land burial bill. It would prohibit the siting of the facility in any area with a seasonal high water table of seven feet from the surface. Also, said Redwine, the commission responsible for choosing a location would have to consider factors such as interstate routes and four-lane highways.

"I believe these factors and others that I hope to get passed will preclude Brunswick County from consideration for the facility," he noted in his weekly legislative report.

THE WILMINGTON BEACON

HOAG & SONS BOOK BINDERY
12/31/99
SPRINGPORT MI 49284

Twenty-fifth Year, Number 35

Shalotte, North Carolina, Thursday, July 9, 1987

25c Per Copy

36 Pages Including Supplement



Waving Old Glory

Three-year-old patriot Bryan McDonald of Wilmington gets into the spirit of Independence Day as he waves

Old Glory at Saturday's parade in Southport. More coverage of the parade is inside this issue.

STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

Mill Creek Residents Want KBK Enterprises To Haul Ash Elsewhere

BY SUSAN USHER

While KBK Enterprises plans to look again at other sites, Vice-President Jerry Chumley said Monday the company still considers a Mill Creek tract a good business choice for its proposed coal ash transfer site.

The Marietta, Ga., company has applied for a permit to temporarily stockpile coal ash from the Cogentrix plant due to begin operation at Southport in October. The plant will sell process steam to Pfizer Chemicals Inc., and use the surplus to make electricity for sale to Carolina Power & Light Co.

KBK plans to market the ash for use as fill in construction projects and to experiment on-site with its potential farming applications. It has an option to buy from Worth Mercer an 85-acre tract off N.C. 87 near its intersection with Danford Road.

Brunswick County Commissioners took no vote Monday on the proposal. But, reflecting the concerns of about 20 Mill Creek area residents in the audience, Chairman Grace Beasley told Chumley it was the board's con-

sensus that KBK should look at alternate sites. "We want to work with you," she said, "but our citizens don't understand it."

"We want you to be happy corporate citizens and we want the people to be happy."

A few moments earlier Chumley told Beasley and other commissioners, "We want your support, but the only thing we need for a permit is a letter from the planning director."

However, state environmental regulations governing transfer facilities states the permit application requirement differently: "An approval letter from the unit of government (emphasis added) having zoning authority over the area where the facility is to be located." The site is in an unincorporated area of the county.

The county does not have a zoning ordinance. However, its CAMA land use plan offers broad land use designations on its accompanying maps, which are used by the state and federal government in reviewing various types of permit applications for conformity with the plan.

On the county's current land use map, the tract is located in an area designated for agricultural, not industrial use. While routine, an amendment to the map could take two to four months, Planner II Don Eggert indicated Tuesday afternoon. The request must be approved by the county planning board, commissioners and the Coastal Resources Commission.

Chumley said choosing the Mill Creek site had been a good business decision because of its central location in its proposed market area, its proximity (12 miles) to the Cogentrix plant, and its "total isolation from local residents." The nearest house is about a half-mile away, according to Chumley.

KBK expects to handle twelve 25-yard covered truckloads of ash from the Cogentrix plant per day, operating five days a week from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Chumley said the company had looked at other sites that were already designated as industrial tracts, but their locations weren't as

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\$28.7 Million Budget Requires Four-Cent Property Tax Hike

BY SUSAN USHER

A final draft of the county budget ordinance adopted by Brunswick County Commissioners Monday morning calls for a 50.5-cent tax rate, a four-cent increase over the current 46.5-cent rate.

Approval of the ordinance was the final step in the budget adoption process, Vice-Chairman Benny Ludlum was absent and didn't get to sign the ordinance.

Last week's Brunswick Beacon incorrectly reported the new tax rate as 52.5 cents after commissioners adopted the new general fund budget and an interim water system budget.

The major source of revenues in the new \$28.7 million budget will be an estimated \$18.45 million in property tax revenues, while the county will appropriate \$3.7 million in fund balances. Another major source of revenue is its share of two half-cent sales taxes, \$4.5 million, which, in varying percentages, must be state law to be used for school and county capital outlay projects and water and sewer projects.

Included in the budget is \$6.5

million for debt retirement for water, school and technical college, road and bridge issues from various years. It also includes \$4.77 million in current expenses for the school system, plus \$534,000 in capital outlay, of which \$134,000 will be placed in the capital reserve fund, along with another \$1 million in half-cent sales tax proceeds. The county also has a water capital reserve fund of \$1.5 million and a county capital reserve fund of \$500,000.

By department, budget allocations are as follows:

- Governing Body, \$120,632.
- Public Inspections, \$227,530.
- Engineering, \$64,168.
- County Administration, \$196,359.
- Board of Elections, \$162,186.
- Planning, \$163,442.
- Utility Operations Board, \$76,904.
- Finance and Purchasing, \$191,750.
- Computer Services, \$244,934.
- Tax Supervisor, \$507,106.
- Tax Collector, \$223,858.
- County Attorney, \$190,996.
- Register of Deeds, \$439,498.
- Housekeeping, \$212,894.
- Buildings and Grounds, \$581,611.

- Maintenance Garage, \$1,129,664.
- Sheriff, \$1,401,070.
- Jail, \$291,890.
- Veterans Service, \$43,455.
- Emergency Management, \$81,880.
- Soil and Water Conservation, \$38,689.
- Parks and Recreation, \$887,787.
- Agricultural Extension, \$154,506.
- Integrated Pest Management, \$2,300.
- Operation Services, \$473,408.
- Corps of Engineers, \$35,500.
- Sanitary Landfill, \$887,638.
- Coroner, \$16,150.
- Courts, \$33,702.
- Non-departmental, \$1,353,191.
- Contribution to agencies, \$1,424,436.
- Debt service contribution, \$6,508,288.
- Public Health contribution, \$807,309 of the Health Department's \$1.26 million budget.
- Revaluation, \$56,250.
- Social services contribution, \$1,050,093, plus another \$140,024 designated for programs for the elderly, of the Department of Social Services' total \$2.97 million budget.

Holden Administrator Begins Work July 27

BY TERRY POPE

Holden Beach commissioners voted unanimously Tuesday to hire Thomas C. Birmingham, former building inspector at Ocean Isle Beach, as the town's new administrator.

Birmingham accepted the town's offer Tuesday morning following an emergency meeting of the council. He will begin work on July 27, earning \$20,000 annually.

Town Administrator Bob Buck is scheduled to retire July 31. He will work with Birmingham for the first week.

"We're going to spend a week together," Birmingham said Tuesday, "so I can get use to everything." Birmingham, a native of Charlotte, said he was happy to be returning to Brunswick County. He currently lives in Wilmington.

He served from 1982 to 1984 as

building inspector at Ocean Isle Beach before leaving to enter into private business as a building contractor.

"We'll have to move to Holden Beach," Birmingham said. "That's a condition of my taking the job."

Birmingham and his wife, Gloria, have three children.

Prior to becoming building inspector at Ocean Isle, Birmingham was employed with the City of Charlotte for 17 years in the traffic engineering and building inspection departments.

He has received a number of building code and administrative certificates for studies at UNC-Chapel Hill, Guilford Technical Institute in Greensboro, Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro and Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte.

While employed with the City of

Charlotte, Birmingham taught classes in land use planning and zoning at Central Piedmont.

Commissioners interviewed seven persons for the job from a list of about 100 applicants, said Mayor John Tandy.

The town had hoped to hire a replacement for Buck last Tuesday, but negotiations with that person stalled. The board met in executive session last Friday and again on Tuesday before announcing it had hired Birmingham.

At last Friday's meeting, commissioners also voted to set the town's filing fee for candidates for municipal offices at \$5.

The board also agreed to hire a full-time maintenance person and to eliminate a part-time position in the department. The full-time position has been budgeted for 1987-88.

Search Renews For Manager

The search is on again for a new Brunswick County manager. Brunswick County Commissioners have authorized County Attorney/Interim Manager David Clegg to invite three candidates for interviews with the board.

Two were finalists previously interviewed, while the third is "someone new we learned about," said Commissioner Jim Poole following Monday's meeting.

M. Thomas Barnes, the first man hired to succeed William Carter as manager, resigned June 22 before ever reporting to work. Commissioners asked for his resignation after learning Barnes had failed to disclose that he had been the subject of an FBI probe while serving as Halifax County administrator. He was cleared, with no charges filed.

Barnes was one of 70 applicants for the Brunswick County job, four of whom were interviewed.

Clegg has been serving as interim manager since April, when Carter took medical retirement and then signed on as a part-time budget consultant with the county.

Only Three Pay Filing Fees

As of Tuesday afternoon, only three people had filed for municipal office in Brunswick County's 13 towns, two at Ocean Isle Beach and one at Shallotte.

The filing period for candidates began earlier this year and has also been extended, from noon July 3 to noon Aug. 7.

Ocean Isle Beach Mayor LaDane Bullington has filed for re-election to another two-year term.

Ms. Bullington, 39, has been mayor of Ocean Isle since 1973. She ran unopposed for re-election in 1985.

Also filing for re-election at Ocean Isle was Betty Williamson, who is seeking another four-year term as

commissioner.

Three commissioner seats are up for election in the fall. Each carries a four-year term.

Shallotte resident Jay Gould (Jody) Simmons, 28, may have been the first person to file for office in Brunswick County. The former Ash resident is seeking election to the Shallotte Board of Aldermen.

His wife, Janet, notarized the forms required for him to file on July 3, a holiday and the first day of the filing period. The Brunswick County Board of Elections received his fees July 7.

This is Simmons' first time seeking public office.

State Treasurer To Speak At Water Plant Ceremony

State Treasurer Harlan E. Boyles will be the guest speaker for the official opening and start-up of the county's Northwest Treatment Plant and water system.

The ceremony will be held July 18 at the plant on Butler Road, seven miles west of the Leland exit off N.C. 74-76. It begins with a tour of the facility at 3 p.m., followed by a ribbon-cutting by Grace Beasley, chairman of the county commissioners.

The public is invited. In responding to the invitation to participate, Boyles wrote Planning Director John Harvey, "I think this is a dream come true for many people, and I know that you and all of your associates are proud of the part you played in making it a reality. It is something which is good for everyone, and in which all can take pride."

The new additions to the county water system include the 24 million gallon per day water treatment plant, transmission lines that run from Malmø along U.S. 17 to Shallotte and along N.C. 87 to Southport, several storage tanks and pumping stations.