

# Harvey Declines UOB Support; 16 Apply For Utilities Post

BY RAHN ADAMS

Brunswick County Planning Director John Harvey said last week he wants no part of a squabble between two county boards over who is hired as the county's new director of public utilities.

Meanwhile, 16 persons have applied for the public utilities director position, according to Personnel Officer Deborah Bowling. The application period ended Friday.

Brunswick County Water Systems Manager Kenneth Hewett confirmed Friday that he is one of the applicants.

Controversy over the newly-created position became apparent following a Sept. 14 meeting of the Brunswick County Utilities Opera-

tions Board (UOB), when board member Ed Gore said he felt Harvey should continue as the administrative head of the UOB, according to minutes of the meeting.

Harvey was assigned as the UOB's "administrative staff" in January by commissioners. Since that time, he also has served as planning director and administrator of the county's building inspections department.

Gore also stated that the public utilities director job description appeared to be for a water system superintendent, which the county already has in Hewett.

But according to the job description, Harvey does not qualify for the job, which requires that the director be a licensed water treatment plant

operator with experience in operation of a water plant in a supervisory position.

County commissioners and UOB members met in joint session Sept. 23 in Bolivia to discuss the utilities director position and other "basic relationships and means of operation of the UOB."

However, the only mention of the utilities director post came near the close of the meeting when Harvey told commissioners he earlier had informed UOB members that he did not want to be personally involved in the dispute.

Harvey made a brief comment to that effect at the close of the UOB's Sept. 18 meeting.

"I saw the need for a re-establishment of better communica-

tions between the two boards," Harvey said following the joint meeting. "I saw the possibility of a confrontation if this were not done."

"I thought the Utilities Operations Board had a big enough matter in hand... without having other unnecessary matters to worry about," he said, referring to discussions between the utilities board and commissioners over a proposed water service policy.

In explaining his earlier statement to UOB members, Harvey said: "I said... I asked that you (UOB) withdraw that I have to be your director. And if you still have the concern that some of you expressed Monday night (Sept. 14), as to bringing to the attention of the Board of

Commissioners qualifications you feel are necessary for your director as against the job description that has been released, that you should do so, but in an objective way without John Harvey being a part of it."

County Manager John Smith said Friday that he discussed the matter with Harvey, and that the planning director said he would continue to work with the UOB until a full-time director of public utilities is named.

"He'll work with them until we get someone," Smith said, "and then he'll still be working with them from the planning area."

According to Bowling, 16 persons—the majority from North Carolina—applied for the public utilities director post by the end of

the application period Friday at 5 p.m. One applicant is from Mississippi, another from Ohio.

"We got a good spread (of applicants)," Ms. Bowling said, noting that the opening was advertised in metropolitan newspapers across the state as well as in local newspapers.

She also said only one of the applicants is currently employed by Brunswick County, but did not identify the applicant.

When contacted late Friday, Hewett said he had applied for the job but declined further comment.

Commissioners were to receive copies of the applications Monday night to review on their own before later selecting applicants to be interviewed, Ms. Bowling said.

# Fall Enrollment Drops At Brunswick Tech

BY DOUG RUTTER

Following a statewide community college trend, fall quarter enrollment at Brunswick Technical College has dropped to a three-year low of 650 students.

According to Connie Powell, public information officer, about 650 students had enrolled as of 3 p.m. Tuesday; the deadline for enrollment was 8 p.m.

Ms. Powell said a statewide trend of low enrollment in vocational areas finally surfaced at Brunswick Tech after years of continuous growth.

"We had been beating the trend over the past few years," she said, with enrollment at the seven-year-old institution gradually increasing each year.

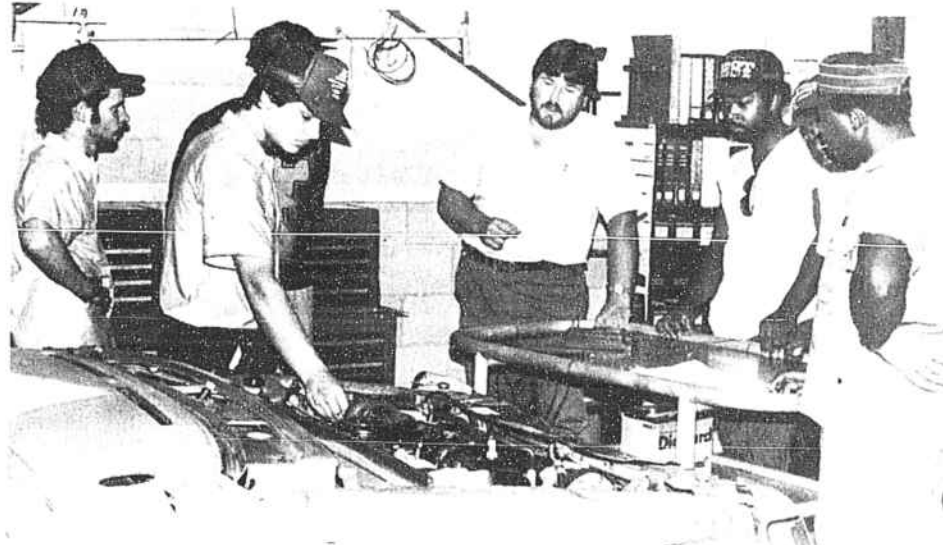
Ms. Powell said the college's administrators last week had expected about 800 students to enroll.

She said she did not expect any classes to be dropped or teachers let go because of the lower than expected enrollment.

Ms. Powell said this year's fall enrollment compares with that of two years ago, when 656 students enrolled. Last year's fall enrollment was 711.

She also said that while vocational enrollment at the college is down, enrollment in general education and technical areas has continued to increase.

Ms. Powell said college ad-



TIM MILLIKEN (center) gives students some hands-on instruction during an auto carburetion and ignition class last Thursday at Brunswick Technical College. Enrollment in technical areas such as auto mechanics

has continued to increase at the college, while vocational and overall fall enrollment has dropped for the first time in the school's seven-year history.

ministrators do not attribute the decrease in fall enrollment to a recent State Bureau of Investigation inquiry or recent changes in top administrative positions.

The decreased enrollment does, however, follow months of controversy at Brunswick Technical College beginning with the SBI investigation

that started in March.

Following the SBI inquiry, the 13th District Attorney's office was instructed to investigate alleged fraud involving continuing education classes at Brunswick Tech.

The start of this SBI investigation at Brunswick Tech was followed by the Aug. 24 firing of college president

Dr. Joseph Carter. College trustees then appointed Interim President William "Mike" Reeves Aug. 31 to act as president for a term of six months or until a permanent replacement has been selected. Vice President Louis "Vernon" Ward then announced in early September his intentions of retirement.

# No Offense Taken, Official Says

An official with the South Brunswick Islands Homebuilders Association says criticism of a questionable joke told in public last week by Brunswick County Manager John T. Smith is making "a mountain out of a molehill."

According to Nick Newton, the association's program chairman, Smith was the guest speaker at the organization's monthly meeting held Sept. 22 in Calabash.

Newton said association members did not appear offended by what was later described to county commissioners as a "derogatory and racist" joke.

"It's something being blown up to make a mountain out of a molehill just because the man is a public figure," Newton said. "I'd like to see it die. It's being blown completely out

of proportion."

Newton said members actually appeared impressed with Smith and later made favorable comments about the county manager's talk.

"He comes across as a man with a lot of knowledge about county government," Newton said, "and he appears to be a man with the betterment of the county in mind."

When contacted Tuesday, Smith admitted telling a joke about a black minister and a widow to help explain his job as county manager. He said the joke fit into his presentation, but when taken out of context, "it doesn't sound too nice."

Smith said he apologized to two women present at the meeting, but added they told him they had not been offended by his remarks.

However, according to Commissioner Chris Chappell, the joke was brought to the commission's attention Sept. 23 by State Post Pilot News Editor Richard Nubel, whose wife, Kitty, was present at the homebuilders meeting.

Chappell said Nubel "expressed his concerns in executive session to the board and Mr. Smith."

Commissioners took no action following the 45-minute executive session, which Chappell had called to

discuss "personnel."

Chappell said he contacted Newton the following day to see if association members had taken offense to Smith's remarks; in turn, Newton told him they had not, Chappell said.

"I don't think he (Smith) made any statement he thought would be wrong," Chappell said Tuesday. "I think the commissioners have got to look at it from what the public response is... It's a wait and see type situation."

# Temps, Rain Near Normal

Temperatures and rainfall in the Charlotte area are expected to be near normal through the weekend.

According to Charlotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady, the area can expect temperatures of around 60 degrees at night to around 80 degrees during the day.

Also, the area should get about one-half inch of rainfall during the same period.

For the period Sept. 22-28, Canady

recorded an average daily high temperature of 83 degrees and an average daily low of 58 degrees.

The daily average temperature was 70 degrees.

The maximum high was 86 degrees on Sept. 26; the minimum low, 52 degrees on Sept. 24.

Canady also measured .90 inch of rainfall at Charlotte Point during the period.

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# Calabash—

(Continued From Page 1-A)

person elected mayor at that time will serve four-year terms, with the next election for those seats coming in 1993 and each four years thereafter.

Currently, the entire council and mayor are elected every two years.

This resolution is almost the opposite of one made recently by Holden Beach voters, who voted to return to two-year terms after switching to four-year staggered terms for the board of commissioners and mayor.

### Supports Plan

Council members also gave unanimous support to a proposed countywide major thoroughfare plan presented by Stuart Bass, a county planner.

Bass said the plan would be "a show of support and solidarity" among the towns and would carry much more weight with the N.C. Department of Transportation.

"This gives us a little more clout with Raleigh," he added, calling the plan a "bureaucratic tool."

### Offers Heard

Also Monday, council heard from two more consultants interested in obtaining a contract to develop the town's first land use plan.

Howard Capps of Capps and Associates and Roger Briggs of McKim and Creed Engineers both presented council with information and background concerning previous work as land use consultants.

Calabash had received an \$8,000 planning grant from the state in early September, with the condition that the town put up another \$2,000 for a land use study.

Council had previously heard from Edward Stone Jr. and Associates and Talbert, Cox and Associates concerning the study.

Town Clerk Janet Thomas said two other consultants are expected to be at the next meeting, Oct. 12.

### Budget Amended

Council also voted twice to amend the town budget.

Following the first vote, \$2,500 was added to the budget because of underestimated franchise checks received from state utilities.

Ms. Thomas said \$955 had originally been budgeted for the franchise checks, but that she recently received a check in the amount of \$2,559. She said this was the first and largest of four franchise checks expected this fiscal year from the state.

Council voted to allocate \$1,000 of this money for town hall maintenance, \$1,000 for town insurance and \$500 for printing costs.

In another budget-amending vote, council members approved a \$183 increase in revenue sharing, the sum remaining from last year's federal revenue sharing funds. Ms. Thomas said the state may still decide to withhold the money.

### To Join Fund

Council also adopted a resolution of intent to join the Interlocal Risk Financing Fund of North Carolina to cover all insurance needs of the town, authorizing Mayor Doug Simmons to sign the insurance contracts on behalf of the town. Ms. Thomas said the insurance will cost about \$1,000 per year and will be cheaper than maintaining policies with several independent companies.

### Extension Sought

Members took no action on a request from Little River Trash Service Manager Bill Jordan for a five-year extension of his current contract under the same terms. His contract expires April 15, 1988.

Town Attorney Mike Ramos said he wanted to look over the contract before allowing council to take any action.

Councilman Robert Weber said, "I don't see any problems with it. I think you're doing an excellent job."

Council members agreed that they hadn't heard any complaints from residents.

### Other Business

In other business, council members:

- Heard a mosquito control request from resident Paul Schasney. Ms. Thomas is to contact the county about having the area sprayed. Said Schasney, "I think it would be a good idea for the future for Calabash to be on the list of areas getting treated for mosquitoes."

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