



**Have A Bang!**  
Area communities celebrate Independence Day with fireworks, festivities. A round-up's on Page 4-B.

*Island Living*  
Supplement included in this issue.



**What's Biting?**  
Offshore anglers were catching kings and groupers this past week. It's in the Fishing Report on Page 14-C.

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COUNTY MANAGER JOHN T. SMITH confers with Finance Director Luthia Hahn during a commissioners' budget workshop last Wednesday in Bolivia. Since

beginning their work in late May, commissioners have had difficulty agreeing on how to balance the county's 1988-89 budget.

## Board Squabbles Over Budget As Adoption Deadline Nears

BY RAHN ADAMS

Grace Beasley nervously lit another cigarette. Benny Ludlum and Chris Chappell rocked in their swivel chairs. Frankie Rabon rested his face in his hands. And Jim Poole jotted figures on a notepad.

That was the scene Tuesday afternoon in the Brunswick County Commissioners' conference room, as the board prepared to end its eighth work session this month without adopting the county's 1988-89 budget. Excluding meal breaks and waiting on fellow commissioners, through Tuesday the board had deliberated on the budget for 28½ hours.

The deadline for adoption is midnight tonight (Thursday). Commissioners were scheduled to meet again Wednesday, in hopes of finalizing the budget and setting a property tax rate.

In the last action taken during Tuesday's three-hour meeting, the board defeated a motion by Ludlum to adopt a revised budget proposal that reflects no change in the county's current 50½-cent tax rate but includes extensive departmental budget cuts.

Beasley, Chappell and Poole opposed the motion, while Ludlum and Rabon voted in support.

"If you can't vote to fund them all, I say cut them all," Ludlum told commissioners, after the motion was

defeated.

County Manager John T. Smith presented the revised budget to commissioners June 21, after they balked at his original \$31.8 million proposed budget, which includes a 16½-cent tax rate increase.

Ludlum's support of what the board referred to as its "50½-cent budget" contradicted previous positions he took Tuesday and during previous work sessions. In fact, most of the action taken Tuesday by commissioners reversed previous board decisions.

Monday night, Ludlum's motion to allocate \$450,000 for construction of a minor league baseball stadium at Northwest Township District Park passed by a 3-2 vote, with Chappell and Poole dissenting.

That action came after the other four commissioners voted down Ludlum's proposal to delete Parks and Recreation Director Bobby Jones' position.

During Tuesday's meeting, Ludlum made a motion to grant the Brunswick County school system's full operating budget request of \$5.9 million, which is \$718,152 more than the allocation recommended in the 50½-cent budget. The motion was approved on a 3-2 vote, with Chappell and Poole again in opposition.

On Friday, the board had voted

unanimously to give the schools only the revised budget's \$5.2 million for operations, although they granted Brunswick Community College's full operating request of \$402,467. The vote on the college budget was 3-2, with Chappell and Poole opposing the motion.

On an identical 3-2 vote Tuesday, the board approved Ludlum's motion to revise an earlier decision concerning changes in the county's insurance package (see related story). The action cancelled what had been figured as an additional \$116,000 savings on insurance costs.

Also on Tuesday, Ludlum's motion to reinstate a \$35,000 environmental health supervisor's position in the Health Department also was approved, reversing action taken by the board on Friday. Chappell, who proposed the original action last week, was the only commissioner to oppose Ludlum's motion.

Before recessing until Wednesday, Ms. Beasley noted that adjustments to the budget had reduced Smith's original 67-cent tax rate proposal to 59 cents. Before Ludlum's flurry of motions Tuesday, the tax rate had been reduced to 57½ cents.

"It seems only logical that to decrease the tax rate, you need to start subtracting," Ms. Beasley quipped, before recessing until Wednesday at the board's request.

## State Health Director Invites Briefs On Holden Beach Request

Holden Beach Commissioners and the N.C. Division of Health Services Sanitation Branch have until July 14 to file briefs with State Health Director Dr. Ronald Levine.

The documents—pro or con—would address a petition filed by Holden Beach Commissioners seeking Levine's ruling on recent interpretations of a state septic tank regulation.

"Parties who are known to have an interest in the issue are invited to file briefs outlining their positions," Levine said this week. After receiving and reviewing the briefs he then has until mid-September—60 days after the petition was filed—in which to make his ruling.

Added Chris Hoke, chief of the N.C. Division of Health Services' office of legal assistance, "It's not whether

it's good, bad or ugly, but what it says."

If the town commissioners like Levine's ruling, he continued, "Everyone lives happily ever after." If not, the board of commissioners can appeal the decision to N.C. Superior Court.

A revised Holden Beach petition, received by Levine's office in Raleigh on June 22, asks for a declaratory ruling on a recent rule re-interpretation that the town says has affected approximately 288 plat- ted lots. They are now generally considered unsuitable for septic tank installations.

In its first draft of the petition, the board said that since the new rule regarding "naturally occurring soil" was adopted in 1982, 464 septic tank system permits had been issued in

Dare County and are still being issued there for lots on finger canals similar in soil conditions to those at Holden Beach. However, the revised petition states that 464 permits had been issued for septic tank systems on Holden Beach canal lots, not Dare County lots.

It adds, "The petitioner (Holden Beach Board of Commissioners) has information that Rule .1950 is not being enforced in Dare County, and they are still issuing permits to lots similar in soil conditions to those at Holden Beach."

The town board contends that such inconsistencies in interpretation of the rule and in opinions regarding water quality in the finger canals are causing "confusion" among property owners and town officials.

## Commissioners Restate Support For 911 Emergency Phone System

BY RAHN ADAMS

When it came to deciding where to begin making budget cuts, Brunswick County Commissioners last week decided that a proposed 911 emergency telephone system—even with its \$250,000 price tag—wasn't the place to start.

Last Wednesday night during their fifth budget work session, the commissioners ended a drought of indecision on budget issues in general by reaching a unanimous consensus to fund implementation of the 911 system.

The action came after Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan brought the

board up to date on cost estimates and other information pertaining to the system, which would require the installation of specialized telephone equipment and a centralized dispatching point for the county's 29 fire departments and rescue squads.

In May, all five commissioners had expressed support of allocating \$250,000 for 911 in the county's 1988-89 budget.

However, three weeks ago when they instructed County Manager John T. Smith to cut a proposed \$31.8 million budget in order to keep the county property tax rate at its current 51½ cents, Smith was forced to delete the proposed 911 funds.

Gene Sellers, president of the Brunswick County Fire and Rescue Association, and seven members of the Pilot Club of South Brunswick Islands appeared at a budget work session last Tuesday night to ask that the funds be reinstated. Commissioners made no decision on the matter at that time.

At last Wednesday's meeting, Logan told commissioners that he could not provide a true cost estimate for the system until the two telephone companies involved—Southern Bell and Atlantic Telephone Membership Corporation—make definite proposals on the service.

(See SUPPORT, Page 2-A)

AT OCEAN ISLE

## Sand Sculpting Clan Creates With Shovels And Spray Paint

BY DOUG RUTTER

While many families spend their summer reunions at picnic tables munching on barbecued chicken wings, at least one family spends its annual get-together on the beach with shovels and paint cans in hand.

Last week, for the seventh year in a row, the Moore family spent much of their time together at Ocean Isle Beach creating brightly-colored images in the sand each morning.

This year, 32 family members spanning three generations and ranging in age from 18 months to 58 years attended the week-long reunion at the west end of the island. The reunion also doubles as something akin to a sand sculpting exhibition.

Allen Moore, chief architect of the family of sand sculptors, said the crew comes to the beach from as close by as Fayetteville and Charlotte and as far away as Michigan, Texas and California. Moore is a resident of Vacaville, Calif., but has been attending the reunions since their beginning.

Last Thursday, the family worked the morning away sculpting a crab,

complete with large red claws and raised yellow eyes.

Color came from about a dozen cans of spray paint used for each of the works produced during the reunion. David Mayerly of China Grove was the designated painter in the group and was also the one who came up with idea of using spray paint three years ago.

Moore said the sand sculpting started simply enough but gradually progressed into a major family operation. "We just started with a whale one time and it grew from there. One thing led to another and here we are with shovels and paint cans in our hands."

As other family members performed various tasks required to finish the crab, bystanders admired work from the previous four days. On the strand next to the crab were likenesses of a hammerhead shark, sea turtle, serpent and whale.

Moore said all of the sculptures were built above the high tide line to make sure they would last the entire week. "Even if it rains they hold up,"

(See SAND SCULPTING, Page 2-A)



INTERESTED BEACHGOERS admire the sandy works of art which took shape last week at Ocean Isle Beach. As sculptors continue working on the

crab (far right) last Thursday, small children and adults marvel at a 30-foot hammerhead shark and sea turtle completed earlier in the week.