

# Varnamtown Sets Up Committees

BY DOUG RUTTER

Varnamtown Aldermen this week established committees which will help formulate the town's first budget, search for a site for a town hall and welcome new neighbors.

The action came Monday night during the board's second regular meeting. The full board, its volunteer town clerk and four residents met at Dixon Chapel United Methodist Church for only about 50 minutes.

The first committee approved will be responsible for determining the financial needs of the town for the next year and proposing a budget that addresses those needs.

At the recommendation of Mayor Tracie Varnum, Mayor Pro Tem Ennis Swain will chair the committee. It will also include Alderman Marion Davis, Town Clerk Paul Vealey, and residents Judy Galloway and Luellen Norris.

The committee will prepare a budget ordinance for consideration by the full board of aldermen. A public hearing will also have to be held before adoption of the budget.

Since the budget will have to include a town tax rate and anticipated revenues from taxes, town officials have been trying to determine property valuation inside the corporate limits.

Alderman Davis, who has been going over county tax maps since last month's meeting, said Monday that the approximate valuation for real property is \$8,588,200.

He said the figure will probably go over the \$9 million mark once personal property such as vehicles are added. Davis said it should take another two or three weeks to come up with a total, but noted that the per-

sonal property figure will change some at the start of next year.

Also this week, the board appointed Aldermen John David Dawson and Roger Robinson to work on acquiring land and possibly a building for a town hall.

Since talk of incorporation began, the community has been meeting at the two churches in town. "We will need a town hall in the near future," said Mayor Varnum. "We're at the mercy of our two good churches."

A town welcoming committee will be headed by board member Ada McDonald, who was given the authority to select residents from different sections of town to assist her in making new neighbors feel at home.

Mayor Varnum suggested the committee as a means of passing on information about area churches and businesses.

Also Monday, the board appointed Alderman Dawson as a liaison between the town and the Brunswick County Building Inspections Department, which will continue to do inspections inside the town limits. Dawson has worked as a contractor for about 25 years.

In another matter, aldermen tabled a decision concerning membership in the N.C. League of Municipalities, which serves as an advocate agency and resource for 484 cities and towns in the state.

Although the town would not have to pay a service fee until next July, board members decided they did not have enough information on the benefits and costs of joining. Alderman Davis also said that the town will probably not have any substantial amount of money until January, 1990.

## Other Business

In other business this week, aldermen:

•Set their next meeting for Monday, Dec. 12, at 7:30 p.m. in Gospel Center Baptist Church. Mayor Varnum said he would like to set regular meeting times starting in January. Aldermen also agreed that anyone wishing to speak before the board at one of its meetings must notify the town clerk at least 48 hours before the meeting.

•Heard from Alderman Davis that the state Department of Transportation will be erecting town limit signs

in the near future.

•Heard from Mayor Varnum that the Coastal Area Management Act survey needed to set the town tax rate was completed before the community was incorporated two months ago.

•Agreed to write a thank you note to Brunswick County Farm Bureau for its recent adoption of a resolution supporting cleanup of the Lockwood Folly River. The mayor had earlier estimated that about 40 families in town derive income from that river, which has been closed since August due to pollution.

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