

Sunset Beach Council Targets Island Streets For Paving

BY DOUG RUTTER

If property owners are willing to share the expense, Sunset Beach Town Council is willing to oversee a project to pave five dirt roads on the island.

During their regular meeting Tuesday night, town council targeted North Shore Drive and Canal Drive as well as First, Sixth and 30th streets as the roads in most need of a paved surface.

The town plans to send letters to property owners on those streets asking if they are willing to petition the town to pave the streets and pay half the cost. If more than half of the landowners on any one street respond, the town can then proceed with the paving and assess lot owners to recover a portion of the town funds.

As proposed, the program would work similar to the canal dredging project completed last year with the town paying for the paving upfront and assessing lot owners once the work is completed, based on the actual cost.

However—unlike the dredging project which was funded entirely through assessments—the town will pay 50 percent of the street paving cost. Depending on the amount of grading and drainage work needed prior to paving, property owners should have to pay about \$300 per 50-foot-wide lot.

Town council settled on North Shore Drive, Canal Drive and Sixth Street because paving those roads would complete paved loops on the island that could help take traffic off Main Street. First and 30th streets were chosen because they already have drainage systems in place that could be damaged if the roads aren't paved.

A public hearing is required before the town can approve any assessments. And opinions as to whether or not property owners will respond to the town proposal varied Tuesday night.

Mayor Mason Barber, who suggested the paving program, said, "I feel like we're gonna get some takers on this."

Councilman Al Odom, however, voiced an opposing view. "Don't think all the people are gonna jump on this," he said. "There's a lot of

people who don't want their street paved."

Street paving was only one of the capital improvements on the discussion table Tuesday night, as council members also kicked around the idea of running sidewalks along Main Street.

On a 4-1 vote, council authorized Town Administrator Linda Fluegel to hire an engineer to develop bid specifications for sidewalks along Main Street between 10th and 33rd streets. The cost of preparing the specifications is not to exceed \$1,000.

Councilman Odom was the only one to vote against the idea. He said he doesn't believe most of the taxpayers want sidewalks.

However, other board members spoke in favor of walkways. "I think from a safety standpoint they're necessary," said Ed Gore.

The full town council was present for the two-hour regular meeting, which ended with a 15-minute executive session called to discuss a legal matter with the town attorney. No action was taken in open session.

Policy Adopted

Sunset Beach water customers who think their quarterly water bills are too high can now apply for a partial release of the bill.

Under a policy adopted Tuesday night, a water user may be eligible for a partial release if a water line break has been verified by a town employee and the town determines that the break was not caused by the negligence of the consumer.

Any water customer seeking a release will have to file a written request along with a copy of the water line repair bill with the town administrator within 30 days of the mailing of the bill in question.

Water bills will be adjusted by charging consumers the town's cost of water for the estimated water loss. The town administrator will enforce the policy, deciding when a customer is entitled to a partial release and the amount of the release.

Ironically, adoption of the policy came about one week after a major winter storm caused water pipes to freeze and break across the county. Leaks were found at more than 85

homes in Sunset Beach.

Contracts Awarded

Council awarded two contracts to auditor John Carraway of Wilmington Tuesday night with the hope that a little money spent now will save the town in the long run.

For \$5,850, Carraway will develop standard operating procedures to ensure more professional handling of town financial transactions and develop job descriptions for each employee. For another \$350 per quarter, the auditor will review the books every three months. The quarterly review should save time and money when it comes time to do the annual audit.

Moving Right Along

Mayor Barber hopes town council meetings this year go faster than the lengthy ones the board labored through in 1989.

With that in mind, he suggested Tuesday that the administrator submit written monthly reports to council members summarizing activity in the police, public works, water, and building inspections departments.

For the past couple years, the reports have been given orally at each monthly meeting. Barber suggested the written reports be also be given to the press and be posted at town hall.

Council members were open to the proposal, and the town administrator gave her reports orally for what might have been the last time Tuesday night.

Mrs. Fluegel said the town issued nine building permits in December with a construction valuation of \$623,774. Sunset Beach also issued one mobile home permit and two CAMA permits. Police officers handed out three parking tickets during the month and assisted the county sheriff's department 17 times.

As another time-saver this year, Mayor Barber also said he hopes to keep impromptu public input down to a minimum. "It's getting to where people are standing up and talking without being recognized."

Other Business

In other business Tuesday, council:

—Voted to ask the state Department of Transportation to turn off the conventional traffic light at the pontoon bridge from November through March of each year and use a flashing red light instead. Council members feel the change would improve traffic flow in the off season.

—Agreed to meet with the planning board later this month to discuss the annexation feasibility study completed several months ago. Based on the study, the town planning board had recommended annexation of an area that includes a condominium complex at Oyster Bay Golf Links. Mayor Barber said Tuesday it's time for the town council to act one way or the other. A date for the joint meeting was not set.

—Adopted a resolution allowing the town administrator to sign documents on behalf of the town to receive federal aid for costs associated Hurricane Hugo. Mrs. Fluegel said the town will receive \$9,100 in public assistance.

—Took no action on a proposed street lighting policy drafted by the town administrator. Instead, town council plans to update and follow a master street lighting plan that Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. recommended several years ago. That master plan was never adopted.

—Authorized the town administrator to get informal bids for the paving of the town hall parking lot. Council will probably award a contract at the next regular meeting.

—Learned that Councilman Odom had presented the town with a print of the Sunset Beach Bridge on display at town hall.

Speeders Charged With Auto Theft

A 1990 Dodge Caravan stopped for speeding through downtown Shallotte last Thursday morning turned out to be a vehicle that had been stolen just hours earlier in Jacksonville.

Shallotte Police Chief Rodney Gause said officers forced the vehicle off U.S. 17 near Hardees at 2:15 a.m. last Thursday after clocking it traveling south on Main Street at 65 mph, 30 mph over the speed limit.

Patrolmen Rhea Altizer and George Samek arrested Jermaine Chadwick, 18, of Jacksonville, and Aubrey Meadows, 20, of Maysville. Both men were charged with possession of stolen property and giving false information to police. Furthermore, Meadows was charged with careless and reckless driving and driving without an operator's license.



Battle Of The Sexes

STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

Sisters Brandi and Crystal Whitesides (foreground, from left) hurl snowballs at a fort manned by their brothers, Josh and Seth Whitesides (from left), early Friday afternoon outside their residence on Wall Street, Shallotte.

Sheriff's Department Truck Slides Into Stopped Vehicle On Snowy Road

Three motorists escaped serious injury when a Brunswick County Sheriff's Department pickup truck slid into a Pitt County man's in a Christmas Day collision near Supply.

According to a Highway Patrol report, the accident happened Dec. 25 at 11:15 a.m., on U.S. 17 near Randolphville Road. Drivers were sheriff's department member Georgia Phelps, 27, of Route 2, Supply, and Francis Patrick Sprankle, 27, of Greenville.

Sprankle's 1986 Chrysler was stopped in the road against a snow bank, when Ms. Phelps' on-coming 1988 Ford four-wheel-drive truck slid into the driver-side door of the car.

Ms. Phelps and a female passenger in the Sprankle auto were not injured. Sprankle complained of minor injuries and was taken by ambulance to The Brunswick Hospital at Supply.

Trooper R.L. Murray filed no charges in the accident. He estimated damages at \$2,500 to the Sprankle car and \$1,200 to the sheriff's department truck.

Elsewhere, a New Hanover County man was slightly injured in a single-vehicle wreck Saturday near Shallotte. According to Highway Patrol spokesperson Ruby Oakley, the accident happened Saturday at 3:30 a.m., 4.9 miles south of Shallotte on U.S. 17.

A 1987 Nissan pickup driven by Samuel Heywood Hinson Jr., 24, of Wilmington was headed north on U.S. 17, when it swerved off the right side of the road, ran down an embankment and overturned. Hinson said he had fallen asleep at the wheel.

Hinson was not injured. His passenger—Elbert Kennedy Jr., 24, also of Wilmington—suffered minor injuries, but apparently did not require hospital treatment.

Trooper D.B. Harvell charged Hinson with careless and reckless driving. Damage was estimated at \$4,000 to the truck.

In another weekend wreck, Lucian R. Hornstein, 19, of Southport, also was charged with careless and reckless driving. Ms. Oakley said the mishap occurred Sunday at 11 a.m., three miles from Yaupon Beach at the N.C. Wildlife access area near Fish Factory Road.

Hornstein's 1988 Pontiac was traveling at a high rate of speed when it went out of control and overturned. Hornstein was not hurt.

Trooper J.V. Dove investigated the wreck. He estimated damage to the car at \$3,000.

Ms. Oakley said Brunswick County closed out 1989 with three less traffic fatalities than during the previous year. There were 13 traffic deaths last year, compared to 16 in 1988.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Shelling On New Year's Day

Brandi Hope Lyles of Laurinburg took advantage of sunny skies on the first day of 1990 as she and her family searched for shells at east end of Holden Beach. Among other things, the five-year-old found these treasures during her walk.

History Titles Span Pirates, Postcards

Reproductions of 520 picture postcard views of North Carolina taken early in the 20th century—most of which have never before been published—are featured in one of the latest publications of the N.C. Historical Publications Section.

A *North Carolina Postcard Album, 1905-1925*, is one of the new titles offered for the first time in the division's new 1989-90 catalog, available to the public free of charge. The catalog lists 150 books, maps and other printed materials to aid in the study and understanding of North Carolina history. Included are county histories, books about North Carolina's participation in military engagements, periodicals, maps, facsimile documents and archival guides. New titles and those of special interest to genealogists are designated.

Old favorites of local interest included in the volume are *North Carolina Legends*, *North Carolina Lighthouses* and *The Pirates of Colonial North Carolina*.

Offered in the catalog as well is the series *North Carolina Troops*, a key resource for genealogists, local history and Civil War buffs. Reprints of Volumes I through VII are now available for \$35 each, including addenda, and the addenda may also be ordered separately. A limited number of sets of Volumes I-X are available for \$314 plus postage. Volume XI, which includes the records of the 45th through 48th infantry regiments, is also available now.

To obtain a copy of the catalog, write the Historical Publications Section (N), Division of Archives and History, 109 E. Jones St., Raleigh, NC 27611, or call (919) 733-7442.

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