



**HOLDEN BEACH WORKERS** fix a safety fence at Surfside Pavilion that was knocked down in last month's storm. The seawall at the pavilion is expected to be torn down before the summer.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

**STORM CLEANUP CONTINUES**

**Holden Board Discusses Rebuilding Dune**

**BY DOUG RUTTER**  
With Easter weekend and tourist season closing in, Holden Beach homeowners are continuing to clean up from last month's severe winter storm.

Commissioners, meanwhile, have started discussing the possibility of rebuilding oceanfront dunes damaged in the March 13 storm.

Town Manager Gary Parker said at last week's board of commissioners' meeting that the town could use sand trucked in from elsewhere to plug holes and fill in low spots in the dune.

It would cost Holden Beach about \$14,000 to reinforce the berm at 50 lots where the remaining dune offers little or no protection from the ocean, Parker told the board last Wednesday.

But at least two commissioners indicated they aren't willing to support that proposal. Sid Swarts and Jim Fournier said oceanfront landowners have some responsibility to help rebuild the dune and the town shouldn't pay for the whole project.

"I think the town has to protect the road and its property, but I don't think the town has full responsibility to protect private property," Swarts said.

Fournier, who lives in the Herit-

age Harbor canal subdivision, said there was more flooding from canals overflowing in his neighborhood than there was on the oceanfront.

He indicated that the town would be wasting its money by rebuilding the dunes. "You can spend millions and millions putting it out there and the ocean's going to take it right back," Fournier said.

Commissioner David Sandifer said the town needs a long-term solution to strand and dune nourishment. He said the board may want to consider buying a dredge to pump sand on the beach.

"Our approach to protecting our island has always been Band Aid," Sandifer said.

While the dune issue wasn't settled last week, commissioners did agree that the town needs to get storm debris cleared from the roadsides and strand as soon as possible.

Storm damage at Holden Beach was estimated at \$8 million, mostly caused by hurricane-force winds. Commissioners urged Parker to solicit help from Brunswick County and the N.C. Department of Transportation.

"We've got Easter coming up," Commissioner Gay Atkins said. "We need to push them. We need them to come over and help. We do

pay taxes."

Parker said the storm cost the town \$36,000 in beach accessways, trash cans, roof damage and pay for police and public works employees. The figure could reach \$50,000 before recovery is finished.

To cover the storm losses, officials may dip into the occupancy tax fund. The town expected to collect \$205,000 this fiscal year in accommodations tax, but has already taken in \$202,000 with several months remaining in the year.

In the near future, town officials plan to meet to evaluate the response

to the storm. Sandifer said last week Holden Beach needs a more comprehensive plan for emergencies that occur without warning like last month's storm.

"This storm caught us off guard," he said. "This pointed out to me we need more than a hurricane evacuation plan. We need an emergency response plan."

Waste Industries will perform a special pickup of storm debris such as shingles and wood on Friday, April 2. Debris should be left beside the road to be picked up.

**Winnabow VFD Sets Saturday BBQ**

Winnabow Volunteer Fire Department will be serving barbecue on Saturday, April 3, from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Plates will include pork barbecue, potato salad, coleslaw and hush puppies. Cost will be \$3, or \$4.50 for a "super plate."

The department is on Governor's Road off U.S. 17 in Winnabow.

**2,400 Feb. Calls Answered**

Brunswick County Sheriff's Department deputies answered 2,424 calls in February, an average of more than 86 per day, according to a monthly officers' activity report released by Sheriff John Carr Davis.

Deputies and detectives made 46 arrests as prosecuting witness in February. Six suspects were arrested on charges of being drunk and disruptive.

There were 165 domestic cases answered and 445 investigations made. Deputies found two doors or windows open and discovered one fire while on patrol, the report said.

Deputies served 441 civil papers and summoned 166 witnesses. Three mental and inebriate papers and 11 juvenile petitions were served, along with 287 local warrants and 60 foreign warrants.

More than 125,351 miles were logged, including 20 trips out of the county. The transport van logged 600 miles. The department used a total of 7,966 gallons of gasoline.

Sheriff's personnel spent 11.5 off-duty hours in court and 74 on-duty hours. There were 50 crime prevention meetings.

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