

Holden Beach Going After Two State Grants

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach is going after two state grants that could provide money for updating the town's zoning regulations and map and a new beach access for handicapped people.

At their meeting last Wednesday, commissioners authorized Town Manager Gary Parker to proceed with both grant applications. However, board members said they may turn down the planning grant if it's awarded.

Mayor Wally Ausley broke a 2-2 tie with a vote to apply for a grant that would pay a planning consultant to propose changes in the zoning code and map so it complies with the latest land use plan update.

The state would pay two-thirds of the cost and the town would pay the rest, which will be \$990 under the proposal presented last week.

If Holden Beach is awarded the grant but town officials aren't satisfied with the

consultants' proposals, they can turn down the grant and ask the planning and zoning board to do the work instead.

Asked by a member of the audience how it felt to vote for the first time since taking office in December 1991, Ausley replied, "I don't know. I'll tell you after I get out of here."

Commissioners Sid Swarts and Gay Atkins had voted in favor of the grant, while David Sandifer and Jim Fournier opposed. Mayor Pro Tem Gil Bass was out of town and missed the meeting.

Town board members unanimously supported applying for a beach access grant that would pay 90 percent of the cost of a handicapped access at 262 Ocean Boulevard East. The lot was recently donated to the town.

Current plans call for a boardwalk, covered gazebo, shower and parking for seven vehicles. However, plans for the gazebo and shower may be scrapped if the town doesn't get the grant.

Parker estimates materials for the access would cost about \$4,000. If the grant isn't awarded, he said the town board may want to ask local builders to donate labor.

Commissioner David Sandifer said he liked the idea of getting volunteers to work on the access and other projects. "I think we're looking at an awful lot of money here."

Landscaping Approved

Holden Beach's beautification committee will be busy this spring landscaping around the police department building.

Planting of shrubs and flowers around the recently-renovated headquarters will be part of larger project to pave the parking lot and erect a privacy fence along the south side of the lot.

Parker said the project will cost about \$9,000. Approximately \$4,000 for the landscaping and fence will be taken from the beautification committee's budget.

In approving the project last week, com-

missioners decided to take about \$5,000 for the concrete parking lot from the police capital outlay fund and town hall improvements fund.

"Everyone felt this was going to look good," said Commissioner Gay Atkins, a member of the beautification committee. She said the work should be completed before summer.

Holden Beach will seek bids on the concrete paving and privacy fence. Carolina Landscaping of Holden Beach designed the beautification plan and will provide the plants.

The concrete lot will include parking for about six vehicles and include one space reserved for handicapped people.

The beautification committee plans to landscape around the Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department substation on Starfish Drive later this year.

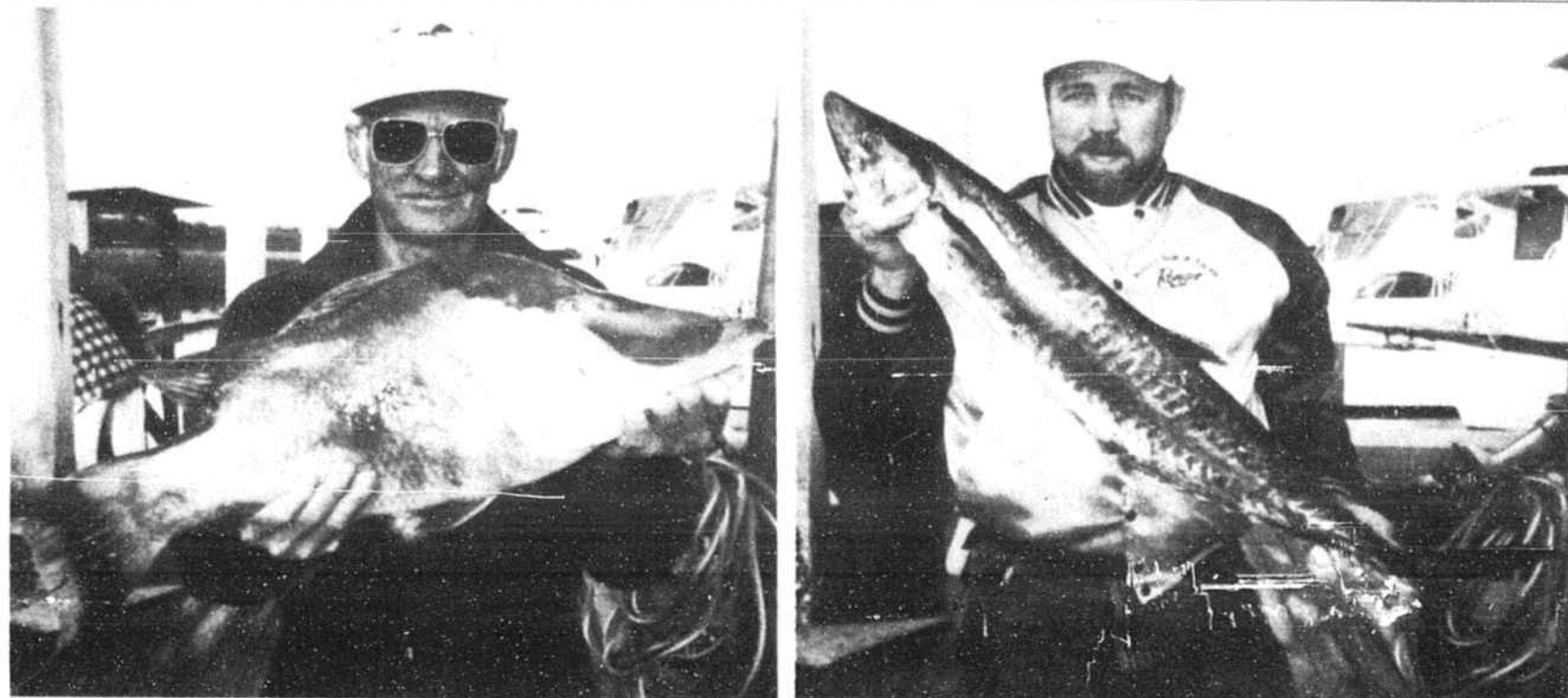
Other Business

In other business last week, commis-

sioners: Accepted the low bid of \$41,800 from Southern Corrosion to paint the interior and exterior of the water tank. Parker said officials in Southport and Ayden were pleased with recent work done by the company. Vision Cable, which has some equipment attached to the tank, will pay \$18,220 toward the cost. The town's share will be \$23,580.

Continued discussing the definition of "ground level" as it relates to the town's 35-foot building height limit. Board members indicated they may adopt the new definition at their April 5 meeting.

Heard that dredging was recently completed in Heritage Harbor and should be finished soon in Holden Beach Harbor. Heritage Harbor lot owners voluntarily paid \$16,454 of the \$22,400 project cost in advance. The town received \$74,000 of the \$130,000 needed from Holden Beach Harbor. Lot owners who haven't paid will be assessed to collect the rest.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Early Spring Fishing

These visitors landed some nice fish 40 miles offshore Sunday aboard the Super Salty 1 out of Holden Beach. Don Neill of Elizabethtown (left) caught a 10-pound hog snapper. At right is Rudy Lennon of Clarkton, who brought in a 15-pound king mackerel. The Beacon's weekly fishing report resumes April 15.

C.B. 'Cash' Caroon Quits N.C. Fisheries Commission

BY DOUG RUTTER

C.B. "Cash" Caroon of Southport resigned from the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission last week after the governor appointed a lawyer to replace Caroon as chairman.

Gov. Jim Hunt appointed Selma attorney and recreational fisherman Bob Lucas as chairman last Wednesday, listing his experience in law and local government as qualifications for the post.

"The simplest way of putting it is the governor's way of regulating the fisheries and mine are worlds apart, and him being the big boss I had no choice," Caroon said of his resignation.

First appointed in 1975, Caroon served approximately 12 years on the commission, including the last eight. He was vice chairman six years and chairman for the last 1 1/2 years.

Caroon said he was told last Tuesday that the governor planned to appoint a new chairman. At that point, he agreed to stay on as a commission member and help the new chairman.

However, the former Southport mayor changed his mind and decided to resign from the fisheries board the next day after hearing who Hunt had selected.

Lucas has practiced law for more than 14 years and was mayor of Selma from 1989 to 1991. The East Carolina University graduate received his law degree from Samford University in Alabama.

"Bob's experience in law and local government give him the perspective he needs to lead the marine fisheries commission as it makes important decisions concerning a major North Carolina resource," Hunt said in a statement.

Caroon said Monday the Marine Fisheries Commission chairman needs more than local government and law background to serve effectively.

"If that's what he feels qualifies a man to lead the fisheries commission, then I feel I have to resign," said Caroon, who has owned and operated a crab processing company in Southport for 28 years.

"My philosophy is have a working knowledge of the resource," Caroon said. "How can you lead something if you don't know anything about it? Local government and the law practice doesn't teach you much about marine resources."

Asked if someone involved in the commercial fishing industry would be a better chairman, Caroon said, "I think somebody who knows something about the resource would be, sure."

N.C. Fisheries Director Bill Hogarth said Caroon will be missed on the commission because of his experience with marine resources.

"I think Cash was one who voted what he thought was right for the fishermen and the resource," Hogarth said. "He looked ahead and had a vision about what he thought was right for the resource."

HEARING IS NEXT WEEK

Shellfish Tags Among Proposed Rule Changes

BY DOUG RUTTER

Local shellfishermen will have to start tagging their baskets of oysters and clams if a proposed rule change is approved by the N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission.

The new regulation would prohibit the possession or sale of shellfish unless a durable, harvest tag is fastened to the outside of each container in which oysters, clams or mussels are transported.

The shellfish tag requirement is one of 17 rule changes the fisheries commission is considering this year. If approved, the new regulations would take effect July 1.

A public hearing on the proposals will be held Wednesday, April 7, at 7 p.m. in the Public Assembly Building at the Brunswick County Government Center in Bolivia.

Area fishermen will be invited to comment on the proposal to require water-resistant shellfish harvest tags and other items affecting commercial and recreational anglers.

The harvest tags would have to be at least 2 1/2 inches by 5/8 inches. They would list the har-

vester's name, address and shellfish license number, date and location of harvest, and type and quantity of shellfish.

N.C. Fisheries Director William Hogarth said the new rule is being mandated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for interstate shipments of shellfish.

"They want to be able to trace all shellfish back to the harvester and harvest area," Hogarth said Monday. The tags also are needed to protect people from shellfish harvested in polluted waters.

Hogarth said he thinks the FDA mandate is going to be difficult to comply with because wholesalers combine shellfish harvested by different fishermen in different areas when shipping to retailers.

"It's going to be a tough one to do in my opinion," he said.

The commission also is considering a proposal to expand the fisheries director's authority so he can restrict commercial gear and activities in areas where it conflicts with recreational fishing.

The new rule would allow Hogarth to specify

commercial harvest days, seasons, areas, quantity and methods after holding a public meeting in the affected area.

Hogarth could use his proclamation authority to impose restrictions in the ocean, state parks, marinas, harbors, navigation channels and within a half mile of public fishing piers.

The fisheries director said the new rule is primarily needed to reduce conflicts between recreational anglers and commercial fishermen who use gill nets or beach seines in areas used heavily by recreational fishermen.

Another proposal going to public hearing next week would prohibit the possession, sale or purchase of finfish less than four inches long except for use in crab pots and as bait fish.

The Marine Fisheries Commission is expected to vote on the proposed rule changes at its May 5 meeting in Raleigh.

Written comments must be received by April 16. They can be mailed to the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, N.C. 28557.

Week's Tide Table

		APRIL			
		HIGH		LOW	
Day	Date	A.M.	P.M.	A.M.	P.M.
Thursday	1	2:19	2:58	8:51	9:16
Friday	2	3:26	4:05	9:56	10:22
Saturday	3	4:29	5:07	10:53	11:22
Sunday	4	6:20	7:03	-----	12:46
Monday	5	7:23	7:58	1:18	1:37
Tuesday	6	8:16	8:51	2:11	2:26
Wednesday	7	9:08	9:42	3:03	3:14

ADJUSTMENTS
 SHALLOTTE INLET—add 17 min. high tide, add 32 min. low tide.
 LOCKWOOD FOLLY—subtract 22 min. high tide, subtract 8 min. low tide.
 BALD HEAD ISLAND—subtract 10 min. high tide, subtract 7 min. low tide.
 SOUTHPORT—add 7 min. high tide, add 15 min. low tide.
 LITTLE RIVER—subtract 11 min. high tide, add 18 min. low tide.

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