



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

### Recognized For Service

James Marlow, outgoing vice-chairman of the Brunswick County Department of Social Services Board displays a commemorative plaque awarded to him by fellow members for "outstanding service and dedication" during his six years on the board. Marlowe attended his last meeting as a board member Monday after serving the maximum two consecutive terms. Show with him (from left) are Percy Woodard, Eulis Willis and Brenda Grissett.

### NO TAX INCREASE

## Calabash Drops Manager Idea, Passes 1993-94 Budget

BY ERIC CARLSON

The Calabash Board of Commissioners talked about hiring a town manager last week, then dropped the idea like a hot rock before adopting a 1993-94 budget that maintains the tax rate at 9.5 cents per \$100 property valuation.

Following a brief and sparsely attended public hearing on the budget Wednesday night (June 23), the board reconvened for its regular monthly meeting, where Commissioner George Anderson asked the others if they wanted to consider hiring an administrator to oversee the town's operations.

Several commissioners quickly made their feelings known about the idea.

"I don't see any reason for a town manager," said Ed Rice. "It makes no sense. He wouldn't have enough to supervise. And for what we could afford to pay, we couldn't get much of one."

The town currently has two full-time and three part-time employees.

"I don't see any drastic changes in the budget that would justify hiring a town manager," said Ray Card. "I don't think there are enough people in town to mandate having one."

But Commissioner Robert Noe disagreed, saying the town will eventually need a town manager and could benefit by hiring one now.

As the idea fizzled without a vote, Mayor Doug Simmons remarked, "It's good to be thinking about these things." Then he called for a motion to adopt the budget, which passed unanimously.

There were few significant changes in the budget, which anticipates a total of \$316,982 in revenues and an equal amount of spending, an increase of \$7,274 over last year. As usual, most of the town's income, an estimated \$123,500, will be derived from its local option sales tax.

A total of \$85,229 is expected to be collected in ad valorem taxes, based on a total property valuation of \$91.6 million and a collection rate of 98 percent.

One of the few new expenses included in the budget is a \$6,000 allocation to set up a retirement fund for town employees.

Only one request for additional funding was made at the budget hearing, where Calabash Volunteer Fire Department President Bob Crocker asked the board to increase its \$2,500 allocation for the year.

Crocker said the department operates on an annual budget of \$65,000, of which \$14,500 is appropriated by Brunswick County and another \$2,200 is derived from local ABC funds. The remainder of the department's expenses are financed through its private fund raising activities.

Noting that the town of Sunset Beach appropriates \$20,000 to its fire department, Crocker said, "We don't expect you to give us \$20,000. But we'll accept anything you can

give us."

Rev. Henry Opperman, a volunteer fire fighter, also spoke in favor of an increase in the town's allocation to the department.

In its only adjustment to the proposed budget before adoption, the commissioners voted unanimously to allocate an additional \$2,500 each to the town's fire department and the rescue squad.

In other business the board:

■ Heard a complaint that Mayor Simmons received from a Calabash business owner who said Building Inspector Edward Schaack had "acted a little rude to one of his salespersons" by asking her to "get off the property." Schaack said the woman had set up a booth with temporary

banners and signs to give away free packages of cigarettes, an activity he said violates several town ordinances. The commissioners agreed to invite the offended parties to attend the board's next meeting.

■ Discussed a letter from a Carolina Shores woman asking the board to do something about a six-foot alligator she has seen frequently in her area. Noting that the reptile "hasn't chewed up any golfers yet," Card suggested that the letter be forwarded to state wildlife officials.

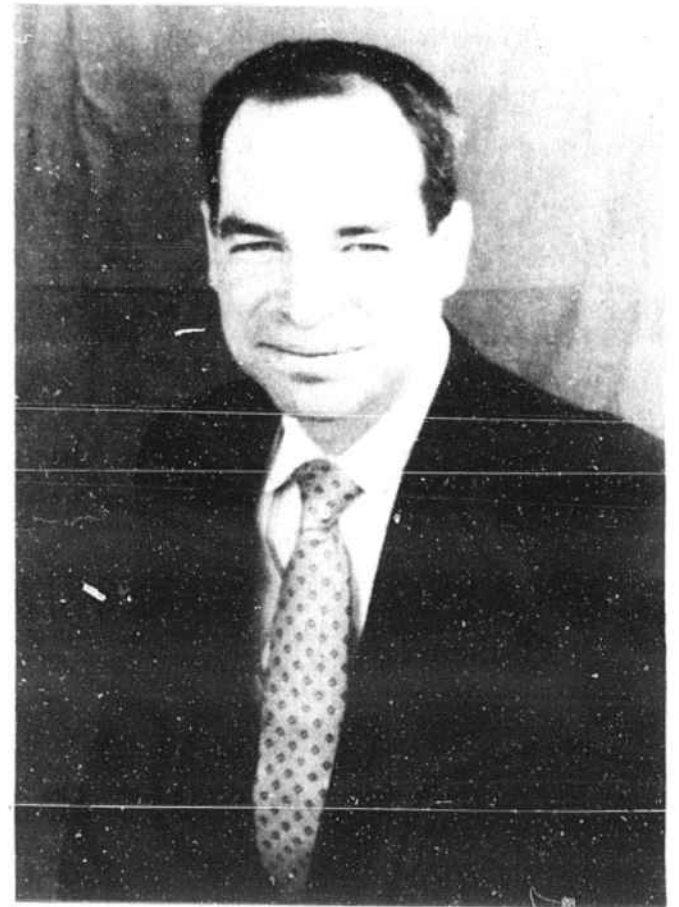
■ Agreed to cancel the board's regular meetings scheduled for July 27 and Aug. 24. For several years the board has limited its summer meetings to once a month to avoid scheduling conflicts.

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