

Calabash May Move On Sewer Program Without Referendum

BY ERIC CARLSON

Carolina Shores residents who wanted no part of the South Brunswick Water and Sewer Authority are likely to get their wish as the Calabash Board of Commissioners plans to eliminate them from service by a new central sewer system and a referendum to authorize

its construction.

Planning engineers for the proposed joint sewer system for Calabash and Sunset Beach were authorized Tuesday to prepare a financial feasibility report (FFR) and a Federal 201 Facilities plan that will allow the town to seek grant and loan funding for the \$27 million project.

Engineers Joe Tombro and Jim Billups of Powell Associates were told to "proceed under the assumption" that the town would no longer include the District 2 area of Carolina Shores in its sewerage planning and would call off a planned referendum on the project.

The residential golf and retirement community already has sewer service provided by the Carolina Blythe Co. Many of its residents have been vocal opponents of the town's effort to build a sewer system initially intended to serve the downtown restaurant and retail businesses in District 1.

The joint water and sewer authority was narrowly approved by the commissioners last December on the condition that it not be allowed to operate until the proposed sewerage system was approved in a referendum.

Early plans called for the purchase of Carolina Blythe's half-million gallon per day treatment plant as the cornerstone of the system. But negotiations between the town and the company broke down, forcing Calabash to pursue construction of

its own treatment plant.

The engineers developed a new plan that would allow downtown Calabash and portions of Sunset Beach to temporarily send its sewage to Little River, S.C., while the towns build their own 2.5 million gallon per day plant and collection system.

Consequently, the town no longer needs the approval or the customers in Carolina Shores to build its system. Since District 2 voters won't be served by the system and won't have to pay for it, the referendum no longer seems necessary.

Tuesday night the commissioners asked town attorney Michael Ramos to draft a formal resolution to that effect for consideration at the board's next meeting. A referendum still is planned for the voters of Sunset Beach.

Tombro and Billups said the two towns had been advanced to near the top of the list for funding under a N.C. Division of Environmental Management revolving loan program.

The towns hope to qualify for a nearly \$4 million DEM loan and \$11

million in Farmers Home Administration grants and loans to build the system. The remainder of the money would come from revenue bonds with all debt service paid for through user fees.

The engineers said they hope to have the FFR approved by the FHA, the DEM, the state treasurer and the N.C. Local Government Commission within 30 days, paving the way for the town to research bond funding for the project.

"Assuming all goes well, we would anticipate starting flow to Little River from the downtown area

and portions of Sunset by 1994 with construction on the treatment plant starting in mid 1995," Tombro said after the meeting.

Billups said that under the new arrangement Carolina Shores will have the option of continuing service with Carolina Blythe or tapping on to the South Brunswick Water and Sewer Authority system at a later date. He noted that system would cost District 2 voters nothing because no Calabash tax money will be used to build the system or to secure the bonds.

Workshop Planned On Calabash Sign Ordinance

Calabash's controversial sign ordinance will be the subject of a public workshop meeting of the Calabash Planning and Zoning Board Monday night, July 26, at 7 o'clock in the firehouse.

The board plans to review the sign ordinance and to consider whether revisions need to be made, said Chairman Al Smith. He encouraged business owners and residents alike to voice their opinions at the workshop.

"We want to get input to use in our deliberations in reviewing the sign ordinance," Smith said.

Strict enforcement of the sign ordinance has caused friction between the town and some local business owners. Several lawsuits have been filed by the town in an effort to force compliance with the law.

Jury Selection Begins In Evans Murder Trial

BY ERIC CARLSON

Jury selection began Monday and opening arguments are expected to start early next week in the trial of one of two Shallotte men accused in the alleged kidnapping, armed robbery and murder of an Ash man last October.

Bradley Tyrone King, 18, could face the death penalty if convicted in the abduction and shooting of Ronald Everett Evans, 20, whose body was found beside a dirt road on the edge of the Green Swamp several days after he failed to return from a trip to a Shallotte fast-food restaurant.

Investigators say King and William Earl Hill, 18, got into Evans' car after he went to bring dinner to his girlfriend at the Revco drug store in Shallotte. After leaving the parking lot, the two defendants allegedly pulled a gun on Evans and forced him into the trunk of the car.

Evans was shot twice from behind after King and Hill realized that Evans recognized one of the two men, according to sheriff's department detectives. They say both defendants have given statements implicating themselves in the abduction of Evans, but each one claims the other one did the shooting.

King and Hill were picked up shortly after the body was found and have been held without bond in the Brunswick County Jail since their arrest. Both are charged with first-degree murder, armed robbery and kidnapping.

Attorneys Michael Ramos and Steve Yount were appointed to defend King in what is expected to be a three-week trial that will be presided over by Superior Court Judge Orlando Hudson. Hill will be tried at a later date, represented by attorneys William Fairley and James Payne.

Assistant District Attorney Lee Bollinger, who has overseen the lo-

cal investigation into the Evans killing, will be joined by District Attorney Rex Gore in prosecuting the case.

Either one or both of the defendants could face the death penalty even if it is never proven who actually shot Evans. Anyone convicted of committing a felony—such as armed robbery or kidnapping—that results in another person's death can also be found guilty of murder.

At the adjournment of court Tuesday, the state had passed 12 potential jurors. The defense was expected to continue questioning jurors Wednesday.

Ocean Isle Board Raises Water Tap-On Charges

BY LYNN CARLSON

Advised that it has been losing money on water taps, the Ocean Isle Beach Board of Commissioners Tuesday raised its tap fees to \$300 in the town limits and \$350 outside them.

The new costs, effective immediately on all new water applications, represent a \$50 increase for taps in the town limits. There are few taps outside the town limits, said Building Inspector Druid Roberston, and their charges have been assessed "on a case-by-case basis."

The commissioners were also asked to raise water rates "in the near future" to compensate for the recent 10 percent increase in the rate the town pays the county for water.

"We are by far the cheapest of any municipality selling water in Brunswick County," longtime utilities commissioner Odell Williamson told the town board. "As long as Ocean Isle Beach owned its own pumps, we were able to make mon-

ey on water, but we don't anymore. We also have the lowest tap-on fee. I ask you to raise the tap-on fee now and see how we get along, how much money we lose."

He said the water service has been operated "as economically as it can be run," but that the higher rates are needed to cover the increasing costs of wages and benefits as well as the new county rates.

Williamson also encouraged the town board to build its water and sewer contingency funds and capital reserves to "a minimum of \$2 million." In its annual budgets, the town contributes to water and sewer capital reserve and contingency accounts to cover expansions and such costs as storm damage.

Sewer Assessment

The commissioners set sewer tap fees of \$900 and line assessments of \$7 per front foot for properties served by the recent sewer system expansion. Water line assessments were set at \$2.50 per foot. New cus-

tomers will probably receive their assessment bills in August, Mayor Betty Williamson said.

Engineer Finley Boney told the commissioners he is waiting for lift stations to be powered in order to complete the sewer system expansion on the island's east end. "Ninety-nine percent of the lines are in, and all the taps are in," Boney said. "We still have to clean up some driveways and some road shoulders."

Water lines to the area "are complete and in service," he added.

Explicit Material?

Town Attorney Elva Jess said more study is needed before the commissioners embark on ordinances to restrict the sale or display of "explicit materials" at Ocean Isle Beach.

The mayor and some commissioners said they have heard complaints about obscene T-shirts being sold or worn in the town. Jess warned that the police department might not be able to enforce an ordinance attempting to deal with the problem, and that care must be taken not to infringe upon constitutional rights of free speech.

Police Chief Curt Pritchard said he talked to officers in both Wrightsville and Carolina beaches, where such ordinances exist. "They

advise that they are extremely difficult to enforce; they're not enforcing them right now."

Commissioner Kendall Suh argued that "Ocean Isle Beach is a family beach. It's different from Myrtle Beach or Wrightsville Beach, and I don't think we need that image."

Jess said displaying a message on a T-shirt, "even though it might be offensive," might be construed as a form of protected speech.

"I don't know that we could stop people from wearing them, but I think we could stop them from being sold here," Suh said.

Pritchard said if sales are regulated, all explicit materials—not just T-shirts—should be prohibited.

Other Business

The commissioners also:
 ■ unanimously reappointed DeCarol Williamson to a three-year term on the town planning board. He currently serves as chairman.

■ set a public hearing for 8:45 a.m. Aug. 10 on a proposed zoning ordinance amendment requiring new or replacement heating, ventilation or air conditioning equipment to be elevated "to the first finished floor" or above the federal flood insurance base flood elevation, whichever is lower.

Five Vehicles Taken From Shallotte Used Car Dealer

Shallotte Police have recovered one of five vehicles reported stolen from a used car dealership Monday morning.

Det. Carey Gaskins said authorities have a suspect in the breaking and entering case at County Auto Retailers at Resort Plaza. Police planned a trip to South Carolina Wednesday to continue the investigation.

Reported stolen and still missing are a 1984 Ford Mustang valued at \$3,450; a 1984 Chevrolet Camaro priced at \$3,490; a 1987 Camaro listed at \$5,295; and a 1984 Chevrolet pickup truck valued at \$4,995.

Gaskins said a 1977 Chevrolet pickup taken from the dealership was found beside U.S. 17 just south of town. "It was about a half mile down the road. It apparently had quit on them."

Gaskins said police were notified of the auto thefts Monday around 9 a.m. "They entered through the roof of the building and took the keys from inside," he said.

Shallotte police also are investigating the theft of expensive stereo equipment from a stolen vehicle that was found Saturday morning on Mulberry Street.

Gaskins said the 1991 Toyota pickup truck was reported stolen from a motel parking lot in North Myrtle Beach, S.C.

The partially-burned truck was discovered in Shallotte around 8:30 a.m. Saturday, stripped of approximately \$17,000 in stereo equipment.

Gaskins said Shallotte police are coordinating an investigation with North Myrtle Beach authorities. "At this point we have suspects in the case," Gaskins said Tuesday.

When you leave the Brunswick shores, take the Beacon with you!

40% OFF IN STOCK PATTERNS

WALLPAPER PLACE

Bring this ad in and get \$20 off towards the purchase of any merchandise at our store. Limit one per customer *w/ purchase \$50 or more

Senior Citizens Receive 10% Discount

- Blinds
- Window Treatments
- Designer Wallpaper
- Bedroom Ensembles

TWO LOCATIONS

Main St., Shallotte (Next to Shallotte Electric) 754-2114

Northwood Plaza 7746 N. Kings Hwy., Myr. Bch, SC next to Food Lion (803)449-2840

DISCOUNT BLINDS

Reny's Any Old Thing

A unique collection of both past and present

Hwy. 130 At Waccamaw River In Ash

After 4TH Sale! Now thru July 21

up to **75% OFF** Selected Items

(919)287-3182 or 800-424-6286

It seems the more things change, the more they stay the same. From finger paints to Nintendo back to finger paints.

Make up your mind!!!

Happy 15th Birthday Patrick from the Beacon staff

Chicora Medical Group

Your Family Physician—a special kind of caring.

Lee Langston, MD Roger F. Nelson, MD

Jon Langston, PAC

Adults Hospital Care Children Minor Emergencies

Medical Group

Complete Primary Care

Shallotte Seaside

341 Whiteville Rd. (Hwy. 130 W) 754-8731 Seaside Plaza (Jct. Hwy. 179 & 904) 579-8512

Call for appointment—Vacationers Welcome.

20TH ANNIVERSARY SALE • 20TH ANNIVERSARY SALE

BITS OF SILVER & GOLD

20TH Anniversary Celebration

Spectacular trunk showing of gems from around the world 1/3 off

All mountings 1/3 off

Special selection of rings and pendants on sale

All 14K and Sterling Silver Chains 20% Off

2 days only, Fri. and Sat., July 16 and 17

Refreshments Bits of Silver and Gold

Jewelry Giveaway Contest Briarcliffe Mall

Financing Available (803) 272-6406 • Open 10-6

Biggest Sale Ever

20TH ANNIVERSARY SALE • 20TH ANNIVERSARY SALE