

Varnamtown Holds Tax Rate At 5 Cents

BY DOUG RUTTER

Varnamtown Aldermen adopted a \$57,994 budget Monday night featuring no change in the tax rate and more than \$10,000 for "community projects" that have yet to be determined.

The money could be used for the boat ramp parking lot, development of a community park, door-to-door trash pickup or other uses that town officials have not considered.

The 1994-95 budget features a tax rate of 5 cents per \$100 of property, which means the owner of a \$50,000 home will be billed \$25.

Based on Varnamtown's property valuation of \$14.9 million and a collection rate of 91.4 percent, the nickel rate should generate \$6,839 in town taxes next year.

Other anticipated revenues for 1994-95 are \$42,455 in state sales and use tax, \$5,500 in franchise tax, \$1,700 in alcohol beverage tax, \$1,000 in interest income, \$400 in food stamp distribution and \$100 in intangible tax.

The budget was approved exactly as it was presented by the town finance committee. With aldermen Tony Varnum and John David Dawson absent, board members Ennis Swain, Will Mumford and Ada McDonald voted unanimously in favor of the spending plan.

"I haven't heard any comments. I've had no calls," Swain, chairman of the finance committee, said at Monday night's budget hearing.

In addition to \$10,233 for community projects, the budget includes \$10,000 for the final payment on the park property, \$8,000 for street lights and \$3,200 for buildings and grounds maintenance and improvements.

Effective July 1, aldermen will increase the salary of Town Clerk Luellen Norris to \$4,200 per year.

Swain said the finance committee recommended the salary increase of \$100 per month because the clerk's work load has increased significantly in the past year.

Also, Norris will start having regular office hours at town hall starting July 6. Town hall will be open every Wednesday from 9 a.m. until noon, except Thanksgiving and Christmas weeks.

The budget also includes \$250 for mobile home inspections. Aldermen plan to pay inspector Maurice Galloway \$10 for each inspection in town and \$25 per inspection outside town. Until now, Galloway has not received any payment for inspections.

Aldermen briefly discussed changing the payment plan Monday, but decided to leave it as is for now.

McDonald said the inspector should not be paid \$25 if the inspection is just outside the town limits. "It seems to me if you had to go a certain amount of miles it would warrant \$25," she said.

Also included in the budget is \$3,000 for Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department and \$2,000 for Coastal Volunteer Rescue Squad.

The rescue squad donation was

increased \$200 from last year. Some town officials said Monday they would like to see equal contributions for both volunteer organizations.

"I'm not trying to say one is more important than the other, but the rescue squad is used more often than the fire department," McDonald said.

"The only thing I can say is both of them are a necessity if you need it," said Herbert "Midget" Varnum, a town resident and long-time volunteer with the rescue squad.

Mayor Judy Galloway said the

fire department donation is higher than the rescue squad because Tri-Beach officials came to the town last year requesting more money.

"The rescue squad didn't come and say it's in dire need like the fire department. That's why it is the way it is," Galloway said. "The reason the fire department's more is they came to us and said they needed it desperately and the rescue squad didn't."

"I think that's the plans of this town, to eventually make them equal," the mayor added.

Board Grants First Variance

Varnamtown officials made the first exception to the town's mobile home ordinance Monday when they agreed to allow a 14-year-old trailer to be brought into the community.

The ordinance prohibits mobile homes that are more than 12 years old in Varnamtown, except for those that were already in place when the code was passed in 1992.

However, aldermen voted Monday night to grant a variance and allow Linda Hewett to set up a 1980 model trailer. It is the first variance ever granted in Varnamtown.

Mayor Judy Galloway said the town's mobile home inspector, Maurice Galloway, told her the house is in good shape despite its age.

"It would have been a hardship if you had to turn around and sell it and buy another one," Mayor Galloway told Hewett.

Alderman Ada McDonald said the planning board recommended granting the variance. She said none of the neighbors objected to the trailer.

B I N G O

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O'Reilly Accepted By Academy

Jonathan D. O'Reilly of Northeast 47th Street, Long Beach, has been accepted to attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy with the class entering in July.

O'Reilly, who attended South Brunswick High School, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. William O'Reilly.

The announcement of O'Reilly's appointment was made June 24 by Congressman Charlie Rose, D-7th District.

Bus Driver Class To Begin Tuesday

A training course for would-be school bus drivers will be offered by the N.C. Division of Motor Vehicles July 5-7 at Brunswick Community College.

The class will meet all three days from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the multipurpose room of the Administration Building. Vicki Jenrette, driver education training specialist, will be the instructor.

There is no charge to take the course. Participants must be at least 18 years old, possess a valid North Carolina driver's license, and have had no two moving violations during the past 12 months.

For more information call Jenrette at 754-5098.

Class Of '75 To Be Reunited

West Brunswick High School Class of 1975 is beginning preliminary plans for a reunion.

Anyone who would like to attend and/or assist with class reunion arrangements should contact Mary Potts at 754-9974 or write Class Reunion, P.O. Box 745, Shalotte NC 28459.

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