

Calabash May Ask Legislators For New Gun Control Laws

BY ERIC CARLSON

The town of Calabash will consider asking state legislators to enact new laws against shooting guns "in an unsafe manner," but has shied away from placing new restrictions on an annual turkey shoot in the town.

Discussion of proposed firearms restrictions at Tuesday's town board meeting came in response to a recent complaint from a citizen about an incident at the Carolina Shores Resorts condominiums.

Gere Dale, president of the resort's homeowners association, told the board Sept. 13 about a tenant who "fired a sidearm in the vicinity of a lady" who knocked at his door last month. Dale said the incident occurred near the pool area, "where 11 children were playing."

A sheriff's deputy was called and responded "very promptly" to the scene, Dale said. But when he called

the sheriff's department to find out what had been done about the matter, Dale said he was told that the woman did not wish to press charges. Nor was there any violation for which the deputy could charge the man.

Calabash has an ordinance prohibiting the discharge of firearms. But the condo complex, also known locally as the "Stack Shacks" is outside the town limits.

The report prompted Commissioner Theodora Altreuter to suggest that the town contact county and state officials and ask them to consider drafting laws to make such behavior illegal.

At Tuesday's commissioners meeting, the board was asked to consider authorizing the mayor to send letters to State Sen. R.C. Soles and State Representative David Redwine addressing the town's con-

cerns and asking them to request legislation to address them.

Another letter was drafted to inform Brunswick County Sheriff John Carr Davis of the incidents and the town's intentions. That letter describes two such occurrences at the resort complex.

"In the first incident, an apparently intoxicated man fired a gun into the air," the draft letter reports. "In the second incident, another apparently intoxicated man, this time using a bee gun, was shooting at cans and bottles on the ground which he had thrown down from his second floor balcony."

The letter praises the sheriff's department for responding to a security guard's call "in a very timely, efficient manner." But it criticizes the department for not furnishing the homeowners' association with the incident reports it requested concerning the matter.

Besides describing these "horrifying" events, the draft letter to Soles notes that "no arrests could be made because there are no North Carolina laws against firing a weapon in an unsafe manner or being drunk and disorderly."

The letter concludes, "We think such conduct should be a crime. We hope you will work to get legislation passed which will make such conduct a crime...and soon, for we might not be so fortunate next time."

No action was taken on the letters Tuesday. Altreuter was asked to modify the text and return them to the board for consideration at its next meeting.

In an unrelated matter, the board agreed to allow the local Veterans of Foreign Wars chapter to hold its annual turkey shoots on Friday and Saturday nights during October and November. The competitions have

been held in Calabash for the past 14 years to fund community service projects in the town.

Mayor George Anderson said the board received a letter from a resident who complained about noise from the shooting. It asked the commissioners to consider halting the "outmoded" practice.

There was a discussion of possibly requiring the organization to stop the events at 10 p.m. instead of the traditional 11 p.m. That proposal was withdrawn when one commissioner noted that the town's noise ordinance already prohibits loud noises, but only after 11 p.m. The

board voted unanimously to allow the turkey shoots to continue as scheduled in the past.

Altreuter suggested to VFW members present that they attempt to contact the resident who voiced the complaint to explain the nature of the event and the organization's community service efforts.

In other business, the board set a public hearing for Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. for the purpose of explaining the status of the town's discussions with Carolina Blythe Utility Co. owner Billy Burnett regarding a proposed purchase of the sewage treatment facility.

Redwine Named To East Coast Fisheries Board

Gov. Jim Hunt Tuesday announced the appointment of state Rep. David Redwine of Shallotte to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The 45-member commission was established in 1942 when 15 East Coast states entered into an agreement to address the concerns of the East Coast fishing industry and protect and promote marine resources.

Other states on the commission include Maine, New Hampshire, Massa-

chusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. One-third of its members are appointed by state legislatures, one-third are appointed by the governors of each state and the remaining third are state marine fisheries directors.

Hunt said, "Rep. Redwine has been a strong voice for North Carolina's fishing industry in the state House, and will do the same as a member of this commission. He shares my belief that we all have a responsibility to protect our coastal resources and the people who earn their living in the fishing industry."

Redwine, vice president and partner of

Coastal Insurance and Real Estate, has represented the 14th House district—covering part of Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover and Robeson counties—since 1985. He serves as co-chair of the Joint Study Commission on Seafood and Aquaculture, vice-chair of the Welfare Reform Study Commission and as a member of the Mental Health Study Commission.

He is chairman of the Business and Labor Committee, vice chairman of the Insurance Committee and serves on the Appropriations subcommittee on Justice and Public Safety and the Judiciary II and Public Employees committees.

He was appointed by House Speaker Dan Blue to the N.C. Economic Development Board.

Shallotte Board Okays Sewer Expansion Plan

Shallotte officials last week approved a plan to more than triple the town's sewer system capacity and now must wait for the state to give its blessing.

At a special meeting Sept. 21, aldermen adopted the 201 Facilities Plan prepared by McKim & Creed Engineers of Wilmington that outlines a \$1.9 million expansion pro-

ject. Town officials plan to expand the wastewater treatment capacity from 206,000 to 750,000 gallons per day (gpd) to accommodate projected residential and commercial growth for the next 20 years.

In adopting the plan last week, aldermen authorized the engineers to apply for state approval of the first

phase of construction and funding for the project.

Shallotte officials are proposing the expansion in two phases, with the first phase increasing capacity to 400,000 gpd at a cost of \$1,113,200. The cost estimate for the second phase is \$681,200.

The 10-year-old sewer plant currently treats about 140,000 gpd. That figure is expected to more than double over the next 10 years and reach 750,000 gpd by the year 2014, according to the facilities plan.

To pay for the project, Shallotte will apply for a low-interest loan through the State Revolving Fund.

Town officials will use impact

fees, capital reserve fees and acreage fees to pay back the loan. Aldermen also anticipate increasing the minimum monthly sewer charge from \$12.84 to \$17.04.

The expansion will require construction of a 24-acre storage lagoon and a 1,500-gallon-per-minute pump station, an upgrade of the chlorine feed system at the Forest Drive plant and the addition of 170 acres of spray fields.

Town officials received nothing but support for the proposal at a Sept. 6 public hearing on the facilities plan.

Once work begins, it should take about 18 months to complete.

Brunswick Awarded \$500,000 Grant For Housing Improvement

BY ERIC CARLSON

Brunswick County has been awarded a half-million-dollar state grant to replace and restore dilapidated homes that do not meet North Carolina building code standards, Public Housing Director Thurman Everett announced Tuesday.

The \$500,000 in funding from the N.C. Division of Community Assistance will be used to replace six homes and completely rehabilitate six others, mostly in the Shallotte area, Everett said.

Only 20 such Community Development Block Grants were awarded for low-income housing improvements in North Carolina, with Brunswick County placing sixth out of 58 applicants for the money, Everett said.

This is the second time Brunswick has applied for the money and the first time the county has been approved for funding. Everett credited a "real strong application" and support from the county com-

missioners for landing the grant.

Several of the homes identified in the application as needing repairs are without plumbing or running water, which fit well into the state's criteria for grant approval, Everett said.

In approving the grant applications, state regulators put a high priority on upgrading housing that lacks plumbing facilities, Everett said. The governor has set a goal of eliminating all privies and outhouses in North Carolina by the year 2000.

Some of the target homes need walls or ceilings replaced. Others need extensive electrical refurbishing. Six of the homes are in such bad shape that they will have to be torn down and replaced, he said.

Any house that qualifies for repairs under the grant will be brought up to state building codes.

Everett said the state has identified more than a thousand substandard houses in Brunswick County.

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