

MONEY APPROVED, IMPROVEMENT PERMIT ISSUED

School System Ready To Go With Septic Repairs At Supply

BY SUSAN USHER

Money and permit secured, Brunswick County Schools are ready to proceed with repair of a failed septic system at Supply Elementary School.

Monday night Brunswick County Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the schools' use of \$363,000 in half-cent sales tax money provided by the state to meet school needs. Most of the money, \$230,000, will be used to repair the septic system.

Tuesday afternoon, the Brunswick County Health Department issued a repair improvement permit for the project.

After receiving a letter from the state Division of Environmental Health giving its approval of the repair plan, said Bruce Withrow, a county environmental health program specialist, "a few loose ends still needed to be tied up," but are addressed in the repair permit.

Repairs are expected to take four to six weeks, said Johnston. The Brunswick County Health Board had set a Nov. 12 deadline for making the repairs or facing possible closure of the school until the system is fixed.

In allocating the funds, County Commissioners' Chairman Don Warren told the school board he hopes it will "take some action" regarding accountability for failure of the septic system.

"It's not just the money, but the principal of the thing," he said.

School board attorney Glen Peterson, whose firm has been investigating the matter, said Monday night he plans to make a recommendation to the school board at its Nov. meeting.

The school has been paying to have sewage pumped and hauled away for disposal since the system failed in March. Under the current contract, the tank is pumped at least four times a day, more often if needed, at a cost of \$80 per pump, or \$1,600 to \$1,800 per week, said Finance Officer Rudi Fallon.

In an effort to speed the repair process, earlier this month the school board accepted a bid of \$179,130 from Pipeline Utilities of Wilmington for the repair, based on plans that had received only tentative approval from the state.

The repairs will be made under supervision of the county health department, under specific instructions. A permit condition requires that representatives of the school's engineering firm and soil consultant will be on site at all times during site preparation.

In addition to pump tank and control panel repairs, the state is requiring installation of two new supply lines and two new low pressure pipe drainfields, an under drainage system around the fields and piping repairs. It has also recommended refit-

ting the school restrooms with water-conserving facilities and installing a device to keep kitchen grease from the wastewater stream.

Johnston said some of the money would also be used to install a ditch culvert with the approval of county and state environmental agencies. Condensate from the air conditioner unit will be routed along downspouts into the culvert and away from the sewage system. The schools have until spring to complete this part of the project, since the air conditioning system is not in use now.

The balance of the half-cent sales tax allocation will be used for site improvements as needed, such as repair or replacement of heat pumps; wastewater pumping at Supply Elementary; a bus washing facility at the school garage that may also be used by the county; and work on underground storage tanks and stormwater run-off at the school maintenance facility and garage needed to meet environmental standards that go into effect in 1995.

County Manager Wyman Yelton recommended adoption of the proposed expenditures. In County Attorney Michael Ramos' opinion, the commissioners "were not required to do so under the court order."

The \$363,000 is the balance of state half-cent sales tax revenues expected to remain after this year's repayment on certificates of participation that will be issued for construction of Leland Elementary School. Use of the tax revenues was requested as a lump sum in the proposed budget resolution submitted to the county last spring, but was resubmitted with more specifics in the resolution adopted at the school board's Oct. 10 meeting.

Because of the ongoing funding

dispute between the schools and the county, the school system had operated under an interim budget since July 1. The resolution adopted reflects a Superior Court judge's recommendation for the county to provide the schools \$10.2 million in local funds pending appeal of a jury verdict that directed the county to award the schools an additional \$4.8 million over the allocation originally proposed by the county.

School board attorney Glen Peterson said he has received formal notice from the N.C. Administrative Office of the Courts that the N.C. Court of Appeals has agreed to both the school system's and the county's requests to hear the appeal "as quickly as possible," foregoing oral arguments.

Holden Beach Interviews 4 For Manager

Holden Beach Commissioners interviewed four applicants for town manager Tuesday and agreed to make an offer to one of them.

Mayor Gay Atkins said the board interviewed three men and one woman during a day-long, closed-door session at town hall.

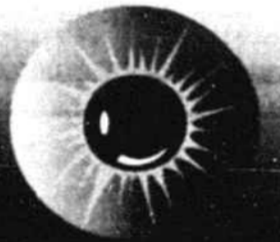
"We have discussed the applicants and I am going to make an offer to one of them," Atkins said.

Town Manager Gus Ulrich announced several months ago that he plans to retire around the end of the year.

Atkins said the town board was unanimous in deciding which applicant should be offered the job. She said town officials could know as early as Wednesday whether they have a new manager.

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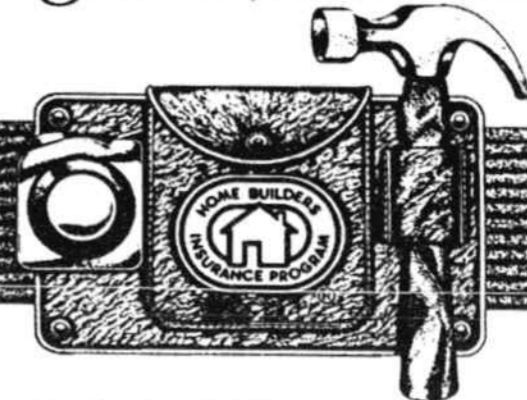
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Clergy and Laymen's Alliance For Justice Presents A Pre-Election Health Care Forum

You are invited to attend a pre-election health care forum on Friday, October 28. All Brunswick County residents who have no health care insurance, and those who are now paying high premiums should attend. Come sign-up to join an alliance to provide "basic" health care coverage. Premiums are expected to be \$50 per month, per family. Individuals' premiums are expected to be \$25 per month.

Robert C. Anderson, candidate for U.S. Congress, will be speaking at the forum.

Due to the enormous amount of donations by our local businesses to support an alliance to provide basic health care coverage to all North Carolinians who do not have health care insurance, a free dinner will be served starting 6 P.M. sharp!

Any businesses who have not contributed yet to this worthy cause and wish to donate food, drinks, etc. should contact Ella Gray at 842-6742.

Paid for by Jane Stephens

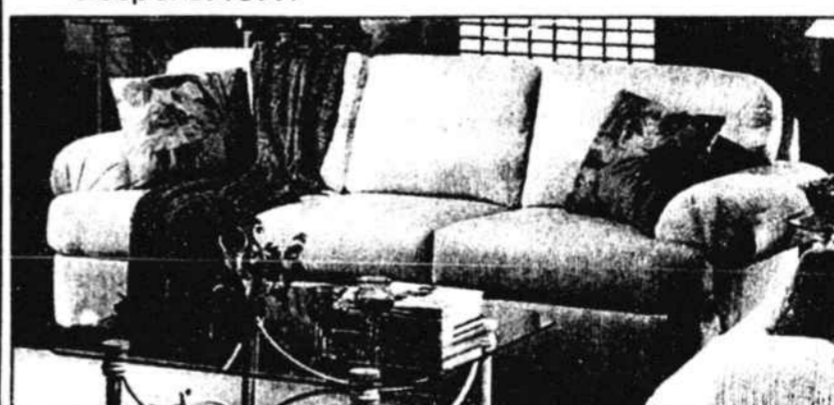
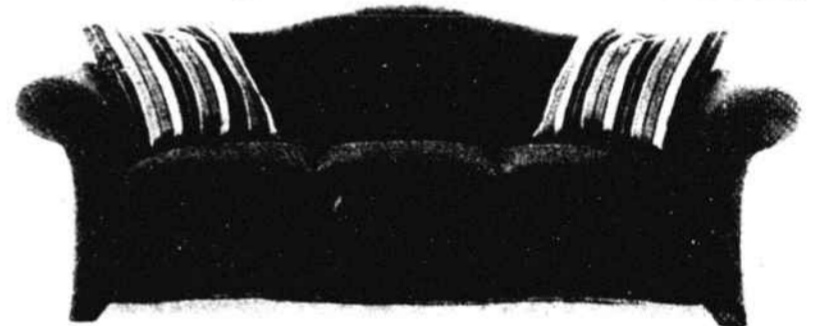
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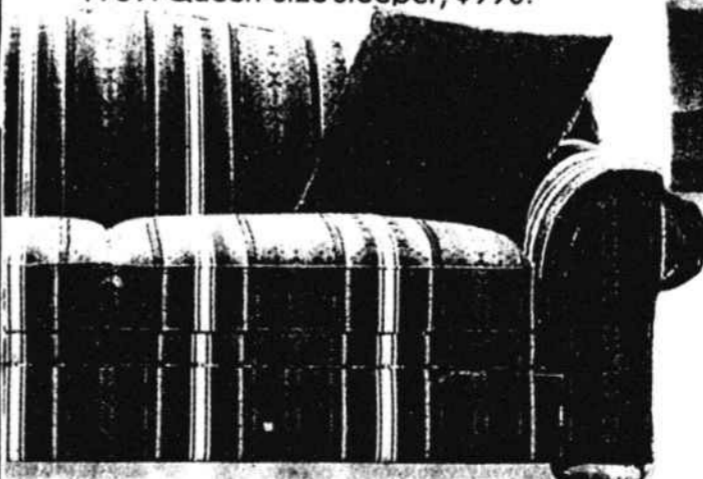
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