

Life at Town Hall – Tax Time and Tax Issues

By Joan Lamson, Mayor

It's getting close to tax time and although some of you have finished filing and may have already received your tax refund (if you get one,) others of us are still pulling numbers together and frantically looking for this record or that record, calculating contributions and so forth. Anxiety prevails, it seems, at this time of year.

You may have heard on TV or read in the newspaper that the Town of Pine Knoll Shores recently supported the Carteret County Commissioners in their move to reschedule property revaluation from every eight years to every four years. It is required that counties revalue property at least every eight years and no more frequently than every four. The prior board of county commissioners had changed the schedule two years ago from four to eight. The current board ordered a revaluation to take place in January, 2007 (the earliest practical date) which makes this cycle one of six years. Thereafter, the revaluation will take place every four

years...until the board changes it again. The towns were asked to support the county commissioners in regard to this issue by the Mayor's Association. In times of rapid increases in market values of property, some feel that a four-year revaluation cycle eases the sticker shock brought about every eight years. The four-year revaluation cycle also "levels the playing field," allowing for a more fair and equal distribution of taxes on all communities.

Because of the timing of meetings, we asked for a voice vote from our commissioners for a letter of support to the county. The voice vote was affirmative four to one. Voice votes are rarely used but are very helpful in emergencies or in situations where timing does not allow for the issue to wait until the next regular meeting and where it would not seem to be of such magnitude to require a special meeting. Voice votes are also not binding until ratified by the board of commissioners at a regular or specially called

meeting. Well, as you might have guessed by now, when it came time to ratify the voice vote some of our commissioners changed their minds. The motion was made to ratify, the second was made, discussion held, and sure enough, it was voted down. What this means is that the Town of Pine Knoll Shores did not support the position of the majority of the county commissioners to reschedule the revaluation cycle.

It is important to note that the valuation of property and the taxes you pay, although related, are two separate things. The link between the two is the tax rate. The board of commissioners sets the tax rate every year as part of the budgeting process and will do so late this spring as we prepare the budget for approval in June. The question is does it take more money or less money to provide services to the citizens of the town this year versus last year? What do you think? Are you getting the services you need and want? Let us know what you think.

Editors' Note

One challenge in bringing back The Shoreline has been to develop a distribution system that would be cost-effective and produce thorough circulation coverage beneficial to the town and its citizens and to the advertisers whose participation makes the publication possible.

For the first few months the publisher and the town have shared responsibility for distribution; the publisher handling door-to-door delivery in Pine Knoll Shores itself while the town mailed copies to property owners who receive their tax bills at out-of-town addresses. To help defray the cost of mailing, the town receives a percentage of advertising revenue developed by the publisher.

It was quickly apparent that door-to-door delivery had its drawbacks, with uncollected copies on driveways and lawns causing concern

for a number of reasons. To alleviate the situation, distribution resources have been realigned so that all copies of The Shoreline are now being mailed, both in-town and out.

To accomplish this, the publisher has agreed to double the percentage of advertising revenue accruing to the town to help defray the increased cost of mailing. In turn, the town will oversee the mailings and distribution to a few locations in PKS where the public may pick up copies, thereby relieving the publisher of distribution responsibilities.

The new distribution system went into effect last month. Any property owner who is not receiving a copy of The Shoreline, or is receiving it at the wrong address or at multiple addresses, is urged to bring the situation to our attention by writing to The Shoreline at 100 Municipal Circle, Pine Knoll Shores, N.C. 28512

Police Report

By Chief Joey Culpepper

The Pine Knoll Shores Police Department responded to 108 calls for service during January. These included one accident, six Fire/EMS assists, five motorist assists, four town ordinance violations and 18 well-being checks. Residence checks found four open doors.

Also reported were 20 citations involving charges for driving while impaired, speeding, seatbelt, drug, and alcohol violations.

One instance of breaking and entering was reported.

Farmers Market Sets Springfest

The New Bern Farmers Market will usher in the new season with a Springfest 2005 celebration from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Mar. 19. More than 40 vendors will be on hand, offering local produce, food stuffs, arts and crafts, handsewn items, woodwork, jewelry, pottery, tractor and yard equipment, and lots more.

The festivities will also be spiced by a demonstration of buttermaking, a petting zoo, pony rides and clowns for the children, and a barbecue plate lunch. Anyone wishing to participate may contact Ted Mays at 249-2431.

Seek Volunteers For CERT Team

The town will be starting a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) in the near future. Police Chief Joey Culpepper is interested in finding residents who are willing to serve. He is seeking 15 volunteers to launch the program. Anyone interested should contact the chief at 247-2474. There will be certain limitations which Chief Culpepper will outline for applicants.



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Fire & EMS Report

By Acting Emergency Services Director Bruce Flynt

The department responded to nine calls this month. Four required emergency medical response.

Training for the month of January was on Rehab For Fire Scene Operations, taught by Paramedic Randy Shaffer, it included monitoring blood pressures and pulses. We are starting training classes on Pump Operations and Emergency Driver Training, and Mutual Aid Training with Atlantic Beach.

We welcome two volunteers: Clyde (Buddy) Tweed, a Firefighter II and EMT who was with Reynolds Fire near Asheville, NC, and Eamon Kromka, who lives in Pine Knoll Shores and has joined as a trainee.

In Memoriam
 February, 2005
 Roberta Coker
 William MacDonough