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THE BRUNSWICK COUNTY HISTORICAL Society has presented a \$200 check to the Frying Pan Lightship Commission to help with the restoration of the vessel on the Southport waterfront. Presenting the check on behalf of the society is Mrs. M. Henderson Ruark, president, and accepting on behalf of the commission is Southport Mayor Dorothy Gilbert.

Others present at the ceremony were, left to right, Commission Member Harold Davis; W.P. Horne, chairman of the commission; Mrs. R.R. Stone, a benefactor of the project; Miss Helen Taylor, secretary and treasurer of the society; and Harold Aldridge, vice-president of the society. (Brunswick Town photo)

'Honest Mistake'

SHC Rejects Bid For Bridge Work

The State Highway Commission has rejected the apparent low bid for construction of the Oak Island Bridge because of an "honest mistake" by the contracting firm in submitting its estimate. An opening date of May 1, 1974 still is possible, according to a SHC spokesman.

The Commission voted on Thursday to reject the low bid of Triplett and Ryan of Chester, S.C., for \$3,090,936 and re-advertise bids next month. The bid was \$212,170 under the state's estimate of construction costs, but was listed at \$299,910 less than it should have been due to the contractor's error in transferring figures from a work sheet to the bid sheet. The problem occurred when a decimal point was misplaced, making an intended \$90 per cubic yard price for class "A" concrete 90 cents instead.

"The bidder made an honest mistake," said Billy Rose, State Highway Commission assistant administrator. He reported that the bidder discovered the mistake only hours before the bid opening November 21 and asked that the bid be rejected. The Triplett and Ryan bid was easily the lowest; other estimates were received from Bellamy Brothers, Inc., of Ellenwood, Ga. (\$4,199,621) and McLean Contracting Company of Baltimore, Md. (\$4,386,874).

A contractor will not be selected until at least February, but the two-month delay should not result in any extra delay in constructing the bridge, said David Parnell, Highway Commissioner from this district who introduced the motion that all three bids be rejected. The final completion date is to remain October 1, 1974, as the successful bidder will be expected to begin work immediately after a contract is awarded. An opening date of May 1, 1974 for bridge travel has been proposed by State Highway Commission officials; finishing touches — such as walkways,

paint, handrails — would be added later.

The Triplett and Ryan firm indicated that their bid should be rejected because of financial hardship that might follow. "I feel the mistake was irreparable as far as the contractor is concerned," SHC Official Rose said. "We should not take advantage of this situation."

Bruce White, legal advisor to the State Highway Commission, said if the state chose to hold the contractor to the erroneous low bid it was almost certain to lose any case brought in court. "The law allows equitable relief to bidders or contractors," he said, provided the error is brought to the state's attention before the bid is set.

SHC Board Chairman Lauch Faircloth said he was in favor of rejecting all three bids and re-advertising the project to avoid the possibility of a lengthy lawsuit that could delay completion of the bridge project even longer. He added that he understood the federal Department of Transportation also was in favor of the rejection because of the involvement of federal funds in the project.

"It appears we don't have a lot of choices," Faircloth said. "We either award the bid to the low bidder or reject all the bids."

The two-lane swingbridge that was the only link between Oak Island and the mainland was demolished Sept. 7, 1971, when a barge-tug combination hit the steel structure, collapsing the span into the Intracoastal Waterway. A ferry service was initiated, and continued to be the only means of travel to the island until the present one-lane, pontoon bridge was put into service a little more than a year ago.

The new high-level span, which will be of sufficient height to let waterway traffic move below its fixed roadway, is to be constructed a short distance west of the present crossing.

School Board Holds Meeting

The Brunswick County Board of Education met last Monday in a regular session and discussed a brief slate of business.

Lt. Col. Stanley of the U.S. Army Headquarters briefed the board on its obligations in securing personnel for the ROTC program to be initiated during the 1973-74 school year. Salary schedules for personnel were discussed.

Jack Croft, school architect, briefly discussed the status of high school building program.

The board approved teaching contracts for the following teachers: Bolivia - Nadine Tolar; Shallotte - Marcus D. Stanland and Union - Mitchell C. Evans.

The board also accepted a resignation from Marilyn N. Smith, teacher at Brunswick County-Southport Middle School, and granted Marlea Carey, teacher at Lincoln Primary School, a leave of absence for the remainder of the 1972-73 school year.

A group of parents from Lincoln Primary School appeared before the board to discuss local school needs. Edison Moore, chairman of the Local School Committee, acted as spokesman. Concerns expressed were the removal of existing residential road from the school property, expansion of the present playground area, rest room facilities for the faculty, a faculty conference room and tiling of the lunchroom floor.

The board awarded to Sears-Roebuck and Company

In Yaupon Beach Districts

Moratorium Placed On Multi-Family Dwellings

The Yaupon Beach Board of Commissioners held its monthly meeting last Tuesday night with Mayor Clarence Murphy presiding and Commissioners Jack Allen, Frank Aman, Gibson Barbee, Jr., William McDougle and William Smalley present.

The first order of business was to bring the Planning Board up to full strength so action could be taken on the application of Mrs. Carolyn Hornstein to rezone the two and one-half acre plot on Elizabeth Drive to "Apartment-"

ments of Multiple Dwellings". Commissioner McDougle reported that he was advised by the town attorney that the Planning Board should have no less than three members. In view of this, Commissioner McDougle made a motion that since William Smalley had replaced Jackie Herring on the Commission due to her resignation, he should also replace her on the Planning board. The Commissioners were in favor of this appointment.

Planning Board Chairman

McDougle then advised Ian Hornstein of a list of requirements to be submitted to the Yaupon Beach Zoning Board and Region O Council

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Shrimp Areas Are Reopened

North Carolina coastal waters, closed since early in December to shrimping, are to be reopened.

Arthur W. Cooper, director of the Department of Conservation and Development of the Division of Commercial and Sports Fisheries, set the reopening of the shrimping

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Board Ponders County Recount

The State Board of Elections is expected to announce today its decision on the request of Durwood T. Clark for a recount of ballots cast in the general election in Brunswick County for the office of Register of Deeds.

The official canvass showed Clark the loser to Republican Arthur Knox by a margin of 10 votes.

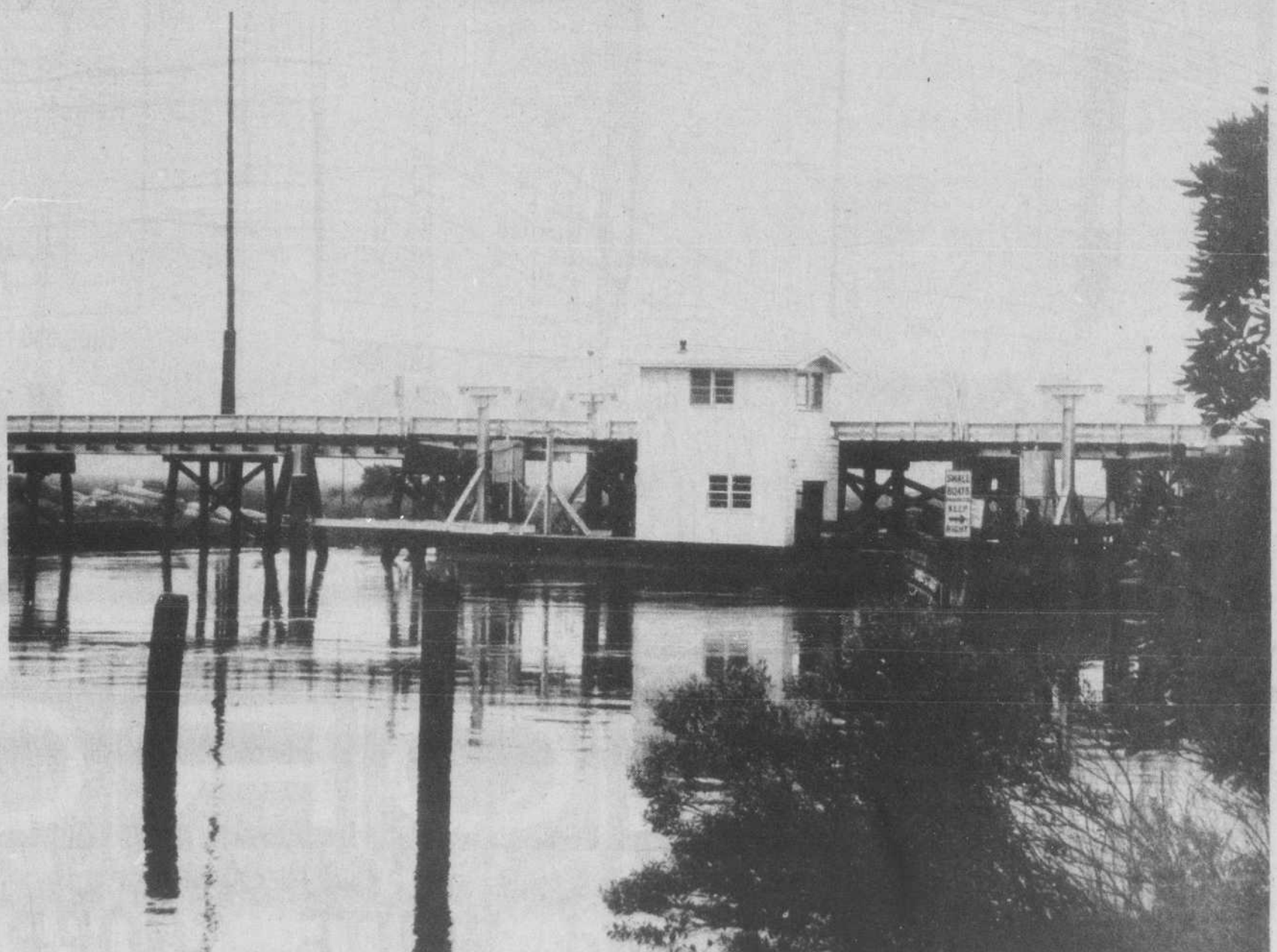
Clark appealed his case to the state board after the Brunswick County Board of Elections failed to come up with a ruling. In the local appeal there was a tie vote,

with one member of the board not present due to a business commitment outside the county.

At the hearing in Raleigh on Monday, a brief presentation was made by Ernest E. Parker in behalf of Clark, and Wilmington attorney George Clark presented affidavits to support the request of Knox that a recount be denied. The only witness called was Hubert H. Bellamy, chairman of the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

A. H. Gainey, Jr., a member of the board, also was present. The only other Brunswick County citizens attending the hearing in Raleigh were V.A. Creech, Jr., of Leland and Durwood Clark.

The Brunswick County appeal was one of three heard by the state board. One was from Wake County and continued all day Tuesday. It was believed that board members will make a decision on all three cases today (Wednesday) and announce their action.



THE FAMOUS BRIDGE connecting Oak Island with the mainland was again the center of attention this week as the State Highway Commission rejected an apparent low bid for construction of a high-level bridge to replace "is one-lane facility. Citing an "honest mistake" by the contractor that was

discovered before the bids were formally received, a spokesman for the SHC said the final completion date for the bridge is expected to remain Oct. 1, 1974. The new bridge could be put into service as early as May 1 that year.

Early Edition

Next week's edition of The State Port Pilot will be printed one day early, on Tuesday, to be distributed in the mail Wednesday morning. Advertisers and persons wanting news items in the paper should have their copy in the office on Howe Street before 4 p.m. Monday.

The early edition of The State Port Pilot Will be the last issue published before Christmas.