

# THE STATE PORT PILOT

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## Unanimous Vote To Support

### Beach Show-Of-Hands Favors Doshier Facility

By BOBBY HILL

As the audience applauded, the Long Beach town council Thursday voted unanimously to join the move to keep Doshier Memorial Hospital open.

Mrs. Rosetta Short and Harold Crane were appointed to a Doshier Renovation and Retention Committee. The council also passed a resolution favoring continued medical facilities at Doshier "at least equal to those presently operating."

Prior to the vote, Councilman Ellis Dudley reported on a Doshier meeting held January 8 in Southport. He said the Doshier move is "not against the new hospital. "We all feel we need more than 60 beds in Brunswick County," he said of the state limit on hospital beds in this county.

Southport Mayor Eugene

Tomlinson asked for the Doshier committee and resolution of support in a meeting with representatives of incorporated areas in Smithville Township. Tomlinson proposed that the committee meet with the county commissioners before February 1 about the hospital situation.

The county hospital was denied state approval to begin construction until assurances are received that Doshier will close. "We are going to settle for nothing less than our 30 beds, or we will hold firm and preclude construction of the new hospital," Tomlinson told the town's representatives.

The Long Beach meeting was attended by more than 60 persons, an unusually large turnout. Mayor E.W. Morgan polled the audience on the hospital situation, and an overwhelming majority of the hands were raised in favor of Doshier.

Morgan called Doshier an "asset to the Smithville area." After Dudley's report, he said, "We are about to lose Doshier."

The next step proposed by Tomlinson is a trip to Raleigh by a Brunswick County delegation, composed of county commissioners and the Doshier committee. They would meet with the N.C. Division of Health

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### BSL Votes 'No' Won't Use Taxes

Boiling Spring Lakes commissioners Monday turned thumbs down on the Doshier Retention and Renovation Committee proposal.

However, an addition to the resolution termed the non-support of the movement due to an unwillingness to increase city taxes.

The resolution reads: "The city of Boiling Spring Lakes goes on record opposing actions of the Doshier Renovation and Retention Committee unless the support of this committee would not entail obtaining funds from the city of Boiling Spring Lakes through increased taxes."

Commissioner Arthur Greene asked for a "show of hands" from the audience, and over half of about 40 persons present indicated a position against the Doshier plan.

Only one member of the audience protested the position, saying the tax question was an attempt to "scare people" and was "holding a club over your head." However, Greene said, "That's (the tax issue) the only question."

Southport Mayor Eugene

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### Yaupon Supports Doshier Retention

Yaupon Beach commissioners Monday voted to support the Doshier Renovation and Retention Committee.

Passing a resolution identical to one approved Thursday by Long Beach, the Yaupon group called for medical facilities at Doshier Memorial Hospital to remain at least equal to those now operating.

No delegates to the Doshier committee have yet been appointed, commissioners said.

However, the Doshier committee is scheduled to meet with the county commissioners on or before February 1, Southport Mayor Eugene Tomlinson repeated Tuesday.

## 30-Bed Figure For 'Negotiating'

### County Makes Doshier Payment, Asks City To Pay 'Fair Share'

By BOBBY HILL

After dispensing \$15,000 to Doshier Memorial Hospital, the county commissioners Monday indicated their willingness for the state to settle the Doshier-county hospital impasse.

The Brunswick County Memorial Hospital was denied state approval last month to begin construction until assurances are received that Doshier will close. Doshier advocates have said the hospital will not close.

Chairman W.A. Kopp, Jr., said during Monday's session he is willing to submit the issue to the N.C. Division of Health Planning. "Whatever their decision is, it'll just have to be abided by this board," he said.

These comments came during a discussion of whether or not to dispense the final \$15,000 of \$40,000 allocated for Doshier in the commissioners' fiscal 1973-74 budget. Doshier trustee chairman W.B. McDougle,

Jr., had come before the board earlier to request the funds to pay off debts.

McDougle also answered some commissioner questions on the hospital impasse.

Commissioner J.T. Clemmons asked McDougle if the trustees had any plans to "phase out" Doshier in the face of the county hospital, and McDougle replied, "No."

"I think it (Doshier) belongs to the owners," McDougle replied, saying his board has

no plans to close the hospital. Southport and the county are joint owners of the hospital.

Clemmons also asked McDougle of any plans by his board for additions to the hospital. He said a "14-room addition" was "publicized in the paper." McDougle answered the trustees have "no plans, none whatsoever."

The commissioners also called on the city of Southport to pay its "fair share" of the hospital operations.

W.B. McDougle answered

commissioners' questions by saying the city has paid \$1,200 so far this year to the hospital.

McDougle said this money comes from \$200 a month regularly donated to the hospital by the city. He added that he understood "finances are being worked up" by Southport for Doshier.

Kopp said Doshier's charter calls for Southport and the county to "share and share alike" in financial support of the medical facility.

While instructing that the funds be dispensed later in the day, Kopp further said, "I think it is incumbent on the

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### Doshier Hires OB Physician

Dr. Paul Leslie Stuck will begin an obstetric-gynecology (OB-GYN) practice at Doshier Memorial Hospital by February 1.

Dr. Stuck has moved to Southport with his wife and two children — Leslie and Sally. His wife, the former Attie Page, is from Acme-Delco.

Dr. Stuck practiced OB-GYN at Fairbanks, Alaska since 1965. He was also a general practitioner at New Hanover Memorial Hospital from 1947 to 1954.

"I'm ready," Dr. Stuck said, pointing out that he is now opening an office in two rooms on the upper floor of Doshier.

When asked by Doshier trustee L.T. Yaskell if the hospital's physical facilities are "OK," Dr. Stuck replied, "I think you can do good OB there, if you set your mind to it."

No child has been born in Brunswick County under medical care for the past three and one-half years.

Queried on the future of Doshier as an acute-care hospital, the doctor said, "I would like to see an addition built onto Doshier hospital. I can't see throwing away the hospital."



AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR the Southport area appears on US 17 at the intersection with NC 211 at Supply. The sign points toward Southport, telling travelers from the south there is another

way to get past Wilmington. The ride across the Cape Fear River on the ferry is a pleasant one, and well worth the time it takes.

## Board Denies Violating Meeting Law, Claims It's 'Unconstitutional'

County commissioners Thursday filed their answer to the Open Meetings lawsuit brought by two county newspapers, claiming the newspapers had failed to show sufficient evidence to warrant action by the court.

In response to the lawsuit that was commenced July 25, 1973, by publishers James M. Harper, Jr., of The State Port

Pilot and Kelvin B. Mackey of the Brunswick Beacon, the commissioners denied "each and every allegation" in the complaint.

The commissioners asked the Superior Court to recognize their claim of constitutional "right" to meet privately other than in regular or special called sessions, and to meet privately

with their attorney — notwithstanding the statute to the contrary.

The commissioners have asked for a trial by jury.

Harper and Mackey contend that after a warning to board of commissioners chairman William A. Kopp, Jr., on April 10, 1973 the board repeatedly violated the N.C. Open Meetings Law and abused the privilege of executive session. The law in question states that any meeting of a majority of board members at which county business is discussed shall be an open meeting. The privilege of executive session is noted.

The plaintiffs contend that on July 22, 1973 four members of the county board of commissioners met at the office of the county attorney to discuss aspects of locating a new county hospital. The meeting was secret, they allege, and the public was thereby denied the right of access.

Following a series of

requests for interrogatories, depositions were commenced in October, resumed in December and concluded earlier this month. Each of the key witnesses — including the five commissioners, five

newspapermen and the former clerk to the county board — have testified under oath.

The case reportedly now is set for review by the Superior Court.

### Editorials Are Contest Winner

Editorials that appeared last summer in The State Port Pilot have won for the writer first place in the annual North Carolina Press Association weekly division contest.

The three editorials, written by Ed Harper, were "Of All The People — Not Just The Commissioners", "Sectionalism Is Not Dead", and "Where The Buck Stops".

According to the judge's evaluation, "It is apparent that the editorials are written

without fear or favor, regardless of the effect on special interests in the community.

"In addition, the newspaper has taken a very strong stand in favor of open conduct of public business, a principle which desperately needs attention during these critical times."

Second place was awarded to Tim McDowell of the Mebane Enterprise-Journal, third place to Sam Ragan of

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## County Commissioners Meet

### Board Seeks Delay For One-Site Landfill System

The county will ask the State Board of Health for a one-year delay on the July 1 deadline for a one-site landfill system, the county commissioners decided Monday.

The commissioners proposed to start the one-site operation in October, 1975. This move would allow the present five landfill sites to be completely utilized, commissioners said.

Bids on collection equipment will be readvertised and the equipment delivered within 90 days from February 4, county manager Neil Mallory said. Mallory reported county attorney Thomas Horne had ruled, illegal previous landfill equipment bids accepted November 8 by the commissioners.

The next bids will require more specified bidding on a garbage truck and only 100

four-cubic-yard refuse containers, Mallory said.

The commissioners lauded the delay as an opportunity for a "gradual transition" into the new landfill system by towns in the county.

Chairman W.A. Kopp, Jr., termed Horne's changes in the timetable "solid recommendations."

Kopp also said that the refuse collection should be instituted as soon as possible to "meet the crying needs" of rural residents not being served by door-to-door garbage collection.

In other business, the commissioners again delayed action on an education board request for a \$5 million bond issue to improve county school facilities.

Mallory has been instructed to investigate the financial feasibility of the issue, and he reported he is

checking with the Institute of Government.

Mallory also recommended that the commissioners accept free assistance in capital improvement budget planning from the Cape Fear Council of Governments. He said this would be an aid in situations like the school bond decision. The commissioners agreed for COG executive director Beverly Paul to present the assistance plan to them at their next meeting.

Three executive sessions were held during the course of the day, with no action being announced at the end of any session. All the sessions were called for the reported discussion of "personnel" matters. Sheriff Harold Willets conferred privately with the board for over half an hour. Mrs. Lula

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