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Energy Crisis Hits Home

Empty Tanks, Short Pump Hours Prevalent

By BOBBY HILL

The energy crisis struck the Southport - Oak Island area with a vengeance this past week.

As the area's gasoline supply dried up, those few stations selling fuel were swamped with lines of customers sometimes reaching several blocks. Reports have been received of flaring tempers while customers waited for a chance at the pump.

A telephone survey of several station owners showed general dissatisfaction and disapproval with Gov. James E. Holshouser's gas distribution system announced Sunday.

Holshouser's voluntary plan would have those with license tags ending

in odd numbers buying fuel on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Those with tags ending in even numbers could buy gas on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

The governor also asked drivers to avoid buying less than half a tank at one time. He urged stations to sell a minimum of 10 gallons per purchase.

Reaction to the proposal varied from the unprintable to an attitude of "leaving it up to the customer." No owner or operator said he expected to enforce the plan.

Distribution of nonexistent gasoline is the problem most area service stations face. As most station operators could put it, "Yes, we have no gasoline today."

Convenient Food Mart was one of the few retailers selling gas Monday morning. Of over 20 cars lined up for refueling, only two autos sported odd-numbered tags. Neither driver had heard yet of the distribution plan.

Convenient owner - operator Bryan Grimes closed his pumps at about 10 a.m. Within a couple of minutes, he turned away almost half a dozen gas-hungry vehicles.

Grimes said he "can't afford" to pump all day. He plans to pump unspecified hours in the morning and afternoon.

"Service station owners are doing a public service when they're pumping gas, because they're losing money," declared Grimes, claiming

price controls make no allowance for labor overhead.

With 4,000 gallons of the scarce commodity on hand, Grimes said he anticipates two more 8,000 gallon deliveries this month. His was one of the few stations reporting any optimistic prediction on fuel delivery.

At least half a dozen other station operators reported they are out of gas. Unanimously, these operators said their distributors have not given them any definite commitment on the next load of petroleum.

"They don't tell you a damn thing," one operator complained of his distributor.

A few stations have a small amount of fuel, which they intend to

stretch out — regardless of the 10-gallon purchase asked by the governor. Vereen's Gulf and Southport Sunoco of Southport and Joyce's Unico of Long Beach reported having limited amounts of gas.

High prices have accompanied the drought — with more certain raises in the future. Prices for regular gasoline ranged from 47.7 cents a gallon to 64 cents.

The wide difference of prices, according to Jimmy Cochran of Harbour Grocery, reflects the higher cost of Middle East crude oil and the relatively cheap domestic crude. He maintains the independents are supplied the costly foreign oil product, whereas the

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DEED TO LAND for a new fire department building at Boiling Spring Lakes was presented Friday night to the department by Arthur Greene, right, general manager for Reeves Telecom Corp., developer of the Brunswick

County community. Accepting the document is Loren F. Gay, chairman of the fire department's board of directors, while fire chief E.C. Meade looks on.

Aldermen Talking About Local Support Of Doshier

By BOBBY HILL

The Southport Aldermen Thursday instructed city attorney E.J. Prevatte to investigate "with urgency" the possibility of financing Doshier Memorial Hospital without county funds.

This came after the reading

of a local news account that trustees of the Brunswick County Memorial Hospital are proceeding with construction. They reportedly see lack of state approval for construction as "no problem."

"Are we going to allow this

matter to proceed unchallenged?" Mayor Eugene Tomlinson asked.

Tomlinson also criticized county commission Chairman W.A. Kopp, Jr., for failing to call a meeting between Doshier proponents and commissioners. Tomlinson said he has requested such a meeting from Kopp twice during the past two weeks. He said he had "waited patiently," and he charged that Kopp "has not had the courtesy to reply either to the telephone call or to the letter."

The aldermen also said they are considering a "sizeable contribution" based on a \$40,000 county commissioner donation to Doshier this fiscal year.

A letter was read from Southport county commissioner John Bray, urging the aldermen to make a "like contribution" to Doshier. Bray's letter reportedly stated he was "proud to take part" in the financial aid to the hospital. Bray was reportedly unable to attend the meeting because of illness in his family.

The aldermen maintained they have paid more than their share of the hospital's

upkeep in the past. They have reportedly paid \$5,000 so far this fiscal year (since July 1, 1973), which includes free electricity.

Doshier trustee chairman W.B. McDougle said an investigation of records since

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Coastal Act Expected To Be Watered Down

The Coastal Management Act last Thursday in the legislature faced a concerted attempt to water the bill down.

The House Water and Air Resource Committee last week considered several amendments in an attempt by proponents of the bill to pass it this session.

However, some stronger measures to gut the bill will reportedly be proposed this week.

Opponents of the act object to the proposed selection of the Coastal Resources Commission (the bill's policy-making body), which would

be appointed by the governor. The opponents are asking for additional local and county control in coastal management.

Efforts by Democratic coastal legislators have reportedly been made to insure this local control by the coastal counties in the selection of the commission. The 12-man commission would lay down planning guidelines for planning of areas of "environmental concern" in the 22 coastal counties.

No vocal opposition to the bill from Brunswick County has been heard. Rep. Tommy

Harrelson has repeatedly expressed approval of the plan, and the county commissioners have given their tacit approval.

Opposition to the selection and consistency of the commission has led Republican proponents, particularly from New Hanover County, to charge that opposition has been generated on strictly partisan lines. This charge has come despite the involvement of lobbying interests.

"If there was a Democratic governor in office, there wouldn't be any problem with

Simmons Changes Vote

Sheriff Will Get Cars; Willetts Gets Contract

By BOBBY HILL

The county commissioners Tuesday reinstated a contract with Willetts Ford for 14 cars for the Brunswick County Sheriff Department.

In other business, the commissioners stalled again on buying sanitary landfill equipment. Commissioner J.T. Clemmons first had proposed an unsuccessful motion to transfer landfill funds towards construction of Brunswick County Memorial Hospital.

The decision to give the \$54,000 vehicle contract back to Willetts came after heated discussions and two split votes. The final motion carried "instructions" to Sheriff Harold Willetts and County Manager Nell Mallory to insure fuel supplies for the cars.

Voting for the cars were Commissioners Vardell Hughes, Robert Simmons and Chairman W.A. Kopp, Jr. Clemmons and Commissioner John Bray remained in opposition.

Bray explained his negative vote as "strictly business" and "a point of legal matter." He maintained the contract had been breached by failing to meet the delivery deadline.

Clemmons originated the contract - voiding February 4, questioning the passed delivery deadline of January 1. He also questioned the judgement of buying 14 of the largest motors available in the midst of the energy crisis. Clemmons again em-

phasized the gasoline shortage Tuesday. "We're into a downright crisis, and I'm going to vote no unless somebody will prove we can get gas," he said.

Sheriff Harold Willetts replied that Clemmons should call the office of Governor James E.

Holshouser, Jr., for that assurance. "I believe the governor's office is closed, but I'd like you to call him, Mr. Clemmons," he said.

Sheriff Willetts spoke for almost half an hour in favor of buying the cars. "I'd appreciate it if you fellows reconsider what you've

done," he said. He maintained purchase of the cars will enable his department to purchase fuel under an emergency program giving a high priority to law enforcement vehicles. The sheriff deputies presently drive private vehicles and are awarded no privileges in obtaining gas.

Prior to the sheriff's presentation, Kopp read a list of statistics showing growth of the county law enforcement department from 1966 to 1973. He said papers served by deputies increased from 471 in 1966 to 4,326 in 1973.

Arless Willetts, representative of Willetts Ford, told the commissioners he had received seven of the cars. He said six of the vehicles are in Winston Salem and can be delivered "before the weekend." The remaining squad car, he said, is on the District assembly line and should be delivered

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Island Marina OK With State

A state permit has been issued for Carolina Cape Fear Corporation to dredge a marina on Bald Head Island. The corporation will be allowed to dredge a 10-acre marina and access channel by the Cape Fear River at the western side of the island.

In the modifying stage for two years, the permit was issued last Wednesday by the Department of Commercial and Sports Fisheries.

Steve Meehan of the State Department of Natural and Economic Resources said the permit includes certain standards to be followed. He said the corporation must contain all dredge spoil by dikes in a 25-acre area. The dikes must be grassed to prevent erosion and must be safeguarded to maintain water quality from dredging effluent of the project, said Meehan.

John Parker of the Fisheries Department said

the conditions are a result of three or four on-site meetings between developers and fish and wildlife personnel.

Parker said the permit, effective until December 31, 1975, also requires a drainage pipe at the low water line.

The use of septic tanks on the island is prohibited, according to Parker. He said

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County Roads Project Noted

Secondary road projects for Brunswick County during 1974 have been announced by the Department of Transportation.

Work approved for Brunswick County:

SR 1183 — Pave 0.60 miles from NC 904 to dead end, \$15,000.

SR 1356 — Pave 0.75 miles from SR 1302 to dead end, \$20,000.

SR 1345 — Pave 0.50 miles from US 17 north, \$15,000.

SR 1521 — Grade, drain, base, pave 2.10 miles from SR 1539 southeasterly, \$105,000.

SR 1439 — Base and pave 0.60 miles from SR 1438 to Sr 1347, \$30,000.

SR 1207 — Grade, drain and partial stabilization 0.40 miles from SR 1143 to dead end, \$7,000.

Brunswick County's total allocation for the year is \$240,000.

Doshier Shows Month's Profit

Doshier Memorial Hospital trustees Monday reported a profit of \$2,700 for January but an annual loss of \$34,000.

The trustees also granted privileges to admit patients to Dr. Paul Leslie Stuck, an obstetrician - gynecologist. Dr. Stuck was reportedly approved earlier that evening by the medical staff credentials committee.

Administrator William F. Cupit delivered the annual audit to the trustees. The board indicated they will give a further report on the audit at their next meeting, after having time to study the report.

Cupit also reported a 82-percent collection rate of patient billings since July 1973. He said he has collected

about \$8,000 of \$10,000 billed. "That's a very good collection," said Charter Medical consultant Don Caldwell.

A large part of Doshier's previous financial losses have come from uncollected patient bills. Charter is reportedly owed about \$200,000 in unpaid bills.

Trustee chairman W.B. McDougle was absent due to illness. Trustees A.H. Gainey, Jr. and L.T. Yaskell were also absent, with Yaskell reportedly on vacation.

Trustee Ralph Nordquest and vice - chairman Ed Johnson joined in requesting financial aid from the city of

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Filing Deadline

The deadline for filing for the May primary is noon Monday.

As of Wednesday afternoon, the following people had filed for office: Democrat W.A. Stanley, Jr. for county commissioner, Democrat Andrew Gray for county commissioner, incumbent May W. Barbee for county board of education, Republican Larry Andrews for coroner and incumbent Democrat Lowell T. Bennett for coroner.

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