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Procedure Outlined

Action Noted On Petitions

A report on what to do with the Smithville Township hospital petitions was presented to the Brunswick County board of commissioners Friday night by county attorney James R. Prevatte, Jr.

According to the attorney the petitions have been properly drawn, and seek permission of the Township to issue bonds and levy taxes in support of a separate hospital. With the approval of the county board, the commissioners were told, the N.C. Medical Care Commission would conduct a public hearing to determine the advisability of a separate hospital district.

In response to a question from Commissioner Rusty Russ, residents of the town of Boiling Spring Lakes could not be taxed for support of a facility because the town board voted to not endorse the petition drive.

A hospital district, Prevatte said, "becomes a corporation" which can issue bonds. The county board of commissioners can levy a tax rate approved by a majority of voters in Smithville Township.

The board of commissioners would be the governing body of the hospital, with trustees named from within Smithville Township. Commissioners would levy appropriate taxes to support the medical facility.

According to Prevatte, the

next step of the commissioners would be to "approve" the petition so that the Medical Care Commission could act. "It is part of getting the ball rolling," Prevatte said.

The next Medical Care Commission meeting is in

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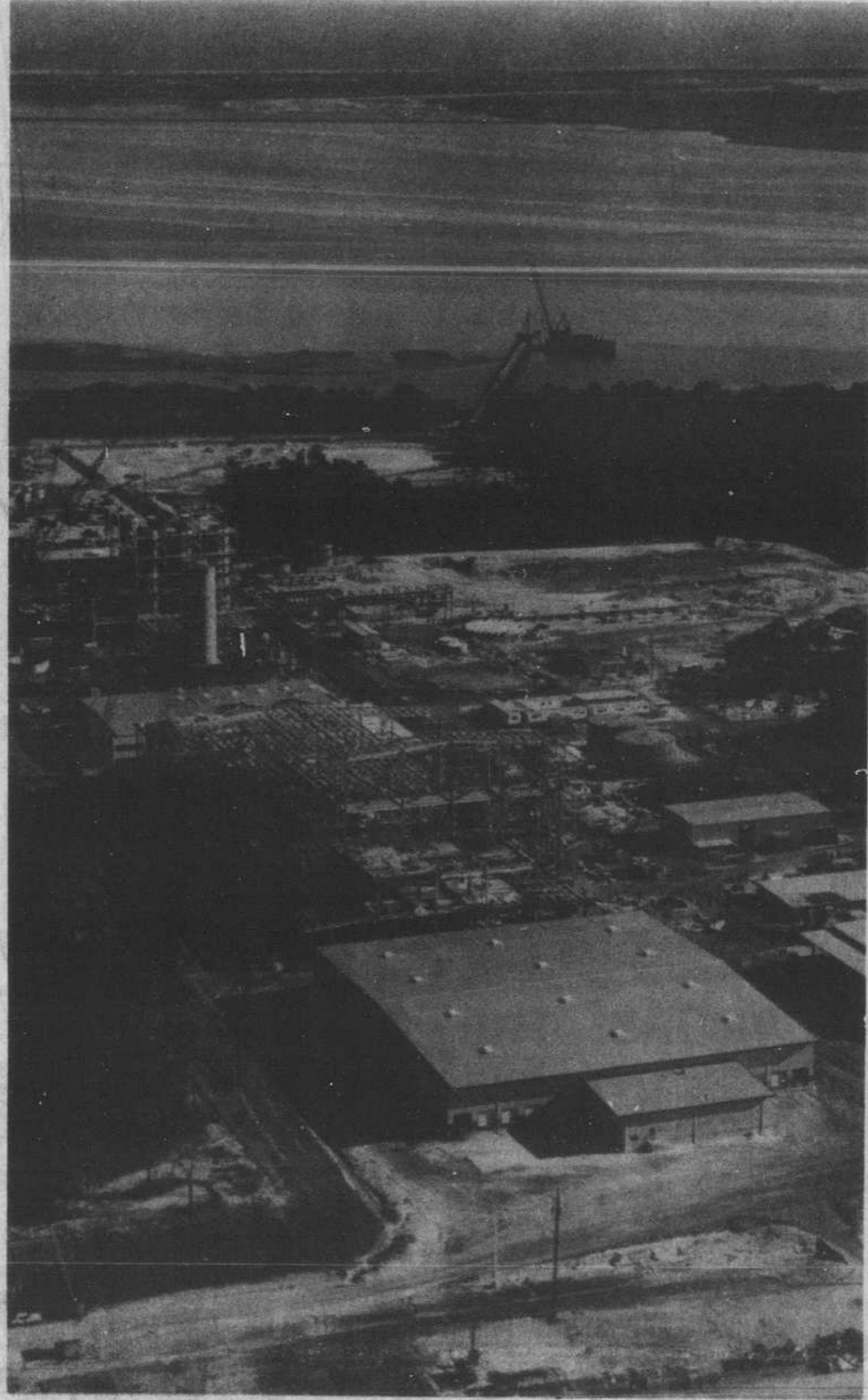
Island Protest Signed By 850

Petitions signed by Oak Island residents protesting higher electric rates will be presented to the North Carolina Utilities Commission on Thursday.

Troy Davis, an Oak Island businessman, will present the petitions signed by a total of 850 residents to the Utilities Commission during a meeting in Raleigh.

A spokesman for the campaign at Oak Island said she considered the number of names signed to the petitions "a great response." The drive was conducted over about a two-week time period.

The petitions call on the Utilities Commission "for relief" from the cost of electricity charged by Carolina Power and Light Company and Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation. It "requests the repeal of the automatic fuel adjustment clause granted to North Carolina electric utilities."



THE FIRST LOOK most folks will have of the Pfizer, Inc., plant under construction near Southport is presented here. The aerial photograph, taken Monday, shows the major part of the industrial complex looking eastward towards the Cape Fear River.

Island Marina Still An Issue

Environmentalists opposed to the development of Bald Head Island can continue their case in court, Federal District Judge John D. Larkins, Jr., has ruled.

Judge Larkins ruled that the Conservation Council of North Carolina and the Sierra Club have demonstrated sufficient use of public land on the island and sufficient injury to that use by the proposed development to sue under federal law.

In the latest ruling, Judge Larkins said he believed development "will eventually take place even if the Corps denies all applications for dredging permits."

The National Environmental Policy Act requires a demonstration of use and injury before a suit may be filed under it. Judge Larkins initially denied standing in court to the environmental groups because he said they could demonstrate no use of the publicly owned land.

"Our position has been vindicated," said a spokesman for the two environmental groups. "We are going to study the opinion before

determining what further steps to take."

It is believed that the environmental groups will seek a court ruling on whether an environmental impact statement is needed for the Bald Head development.

The Army Corps of Engineers granted Carolina Cape Fear Corporation, developers of the island, a permit last May to dredge a marina at Bald Head. The environmental groups filed suit in early June contending the permit should not have been issued without an environmental impact statement. They also asserted their standing in court to sue under the act.

The two groups obtained an injunction blocking construction of the marina, but Judge Larkins dissolved it after numerous hearings were held.

After Judge Larkins denied the two groups' standing in court to sue, the decision was reversed by the U.S. Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals in November. The case was sent back to Judge Larkins.

Manpower Grants

More Jobs For 5 County Towns

The towns of Southport, Long Beach, Boiling Spring Lakes, Shallotte and Ocean Isle Beach will receive additional positions under the Manpower grant funds administered by the county.

Personnel Director Steve Hughes reported to the county commissioners during a special Friday night meeting that an additional \$17,372 had been appropriated for Brunswick County, based on December unemployment. The supplemental funding, said County Manager Nel Mallory, reflected "A typical state or federal program done in a hurry-up fashion."

More funds are expected next month, he noted.

He suggested an additional five positions at \$3.00 per hour for the six-months employment period. Of the four originally proposed for the municipalities, Commissioner Rusty Russ asked one each for Southport, Long Beach and Shallotte — the three largest towns in the county — and Ocean Isle Beach, the latter where a daylight rape recently occurred.

Additional county requests were noted, while commissioners settled on four positions: school

maintenance worker, landfill attendant, court officer and secretary for FHA director Ed Johnson. A fifth position, which Commissioner Steve Varnam termed in opposition "a secretary's secretary," was rejected.

Varnam and Thomas asked employers to favor the hiring of rural applicants in the county positions. Also, some preference for heads of households was suggested.

Commissioner Willie Sloan objected to the "Heavy emphasis" on municipal employment, but Thomas responded that the county

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Final Plans Requested

County Dog Pound Closer To Reality

A simple, 38' by 26' structure with a "simple and direct purpose" will serve as the Brunswick County dog pound.

The Brunswick County board of commissioners took the most affirmative step to date on the long-delayed project in a special Friday night meeting by calling for final specifications and blueprints. The board approved a location three-fourths mile north of Supply on NC 211.

Plans for the dog pound were presented to county board members by Dr. Richard Walker, director of the Brunswick County Health Department. He said the facility would have 12 "runners" for dogs — capable of 3 or 4 dogs each, depending on size — an of-

fice, a laboratory and wash basin, a storage and feed room and possibly an euthanasia chamber.

The building would be fenced-in, but there would be no outside area for the keeping of dogs. Animals would be kept 5 days; if no one wanted the animals then, they would be disposed of.

Asked if the euthanasia chamber met "humane standards," Walker said he knew of no regulations of this sort. "There are no state regulations," he noted. The proposed facility was based on dog pounds observed elsewhere, Walker told the board.

The health director said there were between 5,000 and 7,000 dogs in the county. "We don't know how many are running loose," he com-

mented.

In a question-answer exchange with the commissioners, Walker said there is a dog tag ordinance, but there is "not a tag program for the county." He said he hoped the pound would start people buying tags, which according to the ordinance would be sold by the tax collector.

How much money is in the budget? asked county board Chairman Franky Thomas. \$20,000 for the building, \$41,690 total for the current fiscal year, he was told. According to the blueprints, the building would cost an estimated \$18,000 to \$20,000 but commissioners doubted it. Said Thomas: "I can't see where all the ex-

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Tax Listing Among Friday Night Topics

Several matters relating to the collection of Brunswick County taxes were discussed during a special Friday night meeting of the county board of commissioners.

1. the tax listing period was extended to April 2;
2. tax listers will be used again this year, primarily because of expected problems with revaluation;
3. an "efficiency study" of the tax department will be conducted by the Institute of Government at a cost to not exceed \$500; and
4. officials were asked to seek additional tax office space in Southport, where some rents were called "ridiculous" and "absurd."

Most of the tax-related conversation dealt with tax

listers, a service Tax Supervisor Charles Mills suggested to be stopped. He said the department was not required to have listers in the field, but sought the advice of county commissioners.

Mills said that persons with tax problems should come to the office of the Tax Supervisor, where clerks and handy records were available. He said that because this was the third year tax abstracts were to be mailed there was no great need for listers — tax helpers — in each township. Rather, additional staff could be placed at the Southport office.

Commissioner Willie Sloan said his area (Leland) was concerned about tax listers, while Chairman Franky

Thomas suggested "maybe a roving tax lister" to help where needed throughout the county. Mills noted that a small percentage of taxpayers sought the help of listers.

Citing the current revaluation of county property, Mills said, "We're going to have some people complaining." Commissioner Rusty Russ cited this as a reason for keeping tax listers. "It is a service," said Commissioner Steve Varnam, "that we should offer if they want them."

One of the major potential problems, said Mills, is that reappraisal firm Allied Appraisal was using records updated as of 1973, while tax-

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Long Beach Applying For Series Of Groins

The Town of Long Beach has applied for a Department of the Army permit to construct 13 sandbag groins along a 4,800-foot section of the Atlantic Ocean, according to LTC Pleasant H. West of the Corps of Engineers in Wilmington.

Town Manager Frank Kivett said the town board wants to construct the groins along the oceanfront between 40th and 58th streets east as the first phase of a beach ero-

sion control project.

The 13 groins, which are each 150 feet in length, will be spaced 400 feet apart in the project area. Since each groin contains 31 nylon bags, a total of 403 bags will be used in the work.

The town proposes that the 13 groins extend from the toe of the dunes to a point below mean low water. A single bag arrangement will be used from the toe of the dunes to mean high water. A pyramid

of three bags will be used from mean high water seaward.

The bags will be hydraulically-filled in place with available beach sand by a five-inch centrifugal bilge pump equipped with a wire screen to allow only sand and water to enter the bags. A total of 1,050 cubic yards of material will be obtained from the area to fill the bags.

In addition to the applica-

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Dosher Transfer Bill Heading Towards Passage

The bill changing the status of Doshier Memorial Hospital appears to be heading toward quick approval in the North Carolina General Assembly.

The bill to transfer the operation of Doshier to the Brunswick County Hospital Authority was approved by the State House of Representatives four days after it was introduced by Rep. Allen Ward of Thomasboro.

The Local Government Committee in the State Senate was scheduled to hold a public hearing on the bill late this afternoon (Wednesday). Both supporters and opponents of the

bill were expected to express their views during the committee hearing.

Rep. Ward introduced the bill — called House Bill 21 — last Monday, Jan. 20. It was sent to the house Local Government committee before it was approved by the house Friday after passing second and third readings.

The identical bill — called Senate Bill 23 — was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Edd Nye of Elizabethtown. It is expected to move to the senate floor following the public hearing Wednesday.

Some Brunswick County

residents have expressed concern because Rep. Ward's bill calls for the transfer of the operation of Doshier hospital to the Brunswick County Hospital Authority.

They pointed out that the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution asking Rep. Ward and Sen. Nye "to cooperate together to procure the legislative action necessary to convert the Doshier facility into a trauma center as an integral part of the total Brunswick County health care delivery system."

They pointed out — correctly — that the board

resolution does not mention having Doshier transferred to the Brunswick County Hospital Authority.

Board Chairman Franky Thomas told The Pilot this week that it was the intent of the commissioners to have Rep. Ward effect the transfer of the Doshier property to the county Hospital Authority. "That's what the resolution asked for," Chairman Thomas stated.

The board chairman said the transfer was the only way Doshier hospital could be made a trauma center.

Chairman Thomas reported that the bill in-

troduced in the General Assembly by Rep. Ward was drafted by members of the staff in the office of the North Carolina Attorney General. "They assured us it was legal," Chairman Thomas said, to rescind the creating act and then adopt a new one. "Of course, I'm not an attorney, though."

He reported that a staff member in the Attorney General's office said the transfer had to be made in order for the county Hospital Authority including what is now Doshier — to receive state and federal funds, such as Hill-Burton money.

Concerning the 50-percent ownership of Doshier by the city, the chairman said Southport should be well-represented on the county Hospital Authority. He said the trauma center could be expanded later as Southport grew.

Smithville Township, however, does not have a representative on the county Hospital Authority at the present time. Two residents of the township were appointed when the authority was established last fall, but they declined to serve. No effort has been made to appoint any other Smithville

Township resident to the county authority.

Chairman Thomas said he had received no definite word that the people of Smithville Township don't want a trauma center. "I don't know that they don't want a trauma center," he declared.

He said he believed the board would be "willing to give the Doshier building back to the city" if the people don't want a trauma center. "If the people of Southport can build a hospital, fine," the board chairman declared. "I'm sure the county would relinquish any rights and claims (to the facility)."

The chairman said he favored allowing the people of Smithville Township to establish their own hospital district "as long as it doesn't stand in the way" of the proposed Brunswick County Memorial Hospital.

He said that as far as the Medical Care Commission is concerned, a county can have as many operating - licensed hospitals as it wants. But he said the commission has recommended that Brunswick County only have one operating license "to be feasible."

Rep. Ward provided The

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