



MAYOR EUGENE TOMLINSON was honored Monday during a dinner and program at the Community Building in Southport, and was presented a watercolor of the old pilot tower. Left

to right are the mayor, his wife and Harold Davis, who made the presentation on behalf of those present.

Individuals Pay Bigger Share Of Tax Burden

By Bill Allen
Staff Writer

Brunswick County property owners will have to pay a higher percentage of the ad valorem taxes in the 1975-76 budget than in previous years.

The important point was made by Commissioners Ira Butler, Jr., Steve Varnam, Jr., and Willie Sloan during the final scheduled budget

hearing with department heads Wednesday.

The three commissioners pointed out that industries, which are revaluated each year by the state, have been paying a higher rate of the ad valorem taxes than individuals. This has occurred because individuals have been paying taxes based on the last revaluation eight years ago, they explained. Varnam and Butler said the

taxes paid by the corporations will go down this year since the rate will be reduced because of revaluation. But the percentage paid by individuals will increase because of revaluation, they said.

Commissioners spent over two hours reviewing the proposed school budget line-by-line with school officials and members of the Board of Education last Wednesday

afternoon.

The Board of Education requested \$5,896,859 next year, but the budget committee reduced the figure to \$4,745,570. The schools received \$4,745,570 last year.

Chairman Wilbur Earl Rabon said the Board of Education has developed comprehensive, long-range plans for the systematic improvement of the instructional program and school facilities in Brunswick County. The plans have been reviewed and approved by the State Board of Education, he said.

"The revenues requested for the 1975-76 fiscal year are consistent with the priorities as set forth in these plans," Chairman Rabon stated. "Also, revenue to meet the increasing inflationary cost of operation of the school system has been included. It is the belief of the Board of Education that the resources reflected in this proposal budget would greatly improve the system of public education in Brunswick County."

Chairman Rabon said the proposed budget "reflects the

Taxpayers Group Created In County

A group of Brunswick County citizens, expressing concern over recent developments in the financial structure of Brunswick County and some of the possible future strain on the tax dollar, have formed the Brunswick County Taxpayers Association.

Mrs. A.P. Henry, Jr., of Winnabow has been elected chairman and Thomas J. Harrelson of Southport has been elected vice chairman.

The immediate cause of concern is the special election scheduled for July 19 to decide if the county seat is to be moved from Southport to a location in the Supply - Bolivia area. This would necessitate the construction of a new courthouse, a new jail and facilities for housing all county offices now situated in Southport.

Great concern for the cost members of this association, who have obtained cost figures recently from other counties which recently have been involved in governmental complex construction.

In a meeting Monday night, a steering committee representing all sections of Brunswick County was set up with provision being made to

expand the organization in every community. The voter registration deadline is Saturday and major emphasis is being given this week to getting every eligible voter properly registered.

"Regardless of how they feel," said Mrs. Henry, "everyone should be urged to vote on July 19. This very well may be the most important election any of us ever have been involved in."

During a discussion period, concern was expressed over the fact that citizens are being urged to vote to incur further indebtedness when Brunswick County still is paying on bonds which were sold during the early 30's - 45 years ago.

"When you consider our bonded indebtedness for construction of our high schools, the authorization for \$2.5 million for the new hospital and our other existing bonded indebtedness I think we should take a good look at any proposition which will lead us deeper into debt," Mrs. Henry said Monday. "It also is a fact that any bonds we now sell will be at the highest interest rate we ever have paid on any bonds," she added.

The Taxpayers Association

plans an educational campaign which will furnish realistic facts and figures relating to the construction of a major governmental complex. "We will not put out a bunch of unsubstantiated figures," declared the chairman. "We are going to gather the facts and get them before the people."

Present for the meeting

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Finances Are Not Good As Beach Budget Aired

Commissioners learned that the Town of Long Beach "might not be in very good financial condition" during the first work session for the 1975-76 budget Friday night.

The figures were brought to the board's attention by Commissioner Ellis Dudley, who said he took it upon himself to investigate the town's money situation. Last year the town carried forward \$96,000 to the current fiscal year, but Dudley showed figures that indicate only \$39,000 might be available now.

"I doubt we're going to have that much," said Dudley. "I doubt we're going to have \$30,000."

The problem, which could make tax - anticipation notes necessary for the town, would occur the first few months of the new fiscal year when

receipts are low but expenses such as salaries are the same as any other month. A carry-over from the previous fiscal year is imperative, commissioners were informed.

Dudley said if the town's financial obligations are the same the last part of this summer as they were last year, "We will be in serious financial condition." He said

he has brought the matter to the attention of the League of Municipalities, which suggested and offered cooperation in solving the problem.

Acting Town Manager Carole Greene said some money may be received if an individual buys the tax liens for \$19,000. "There is some revenue there," she said,

telling the board she may know something by Tuesday.

She noted the town would receive some funds during July and August, but not enough to put the town on what Dudley called "a good, firm financial status." Mayor H.E. Joyce indicated he would contact the League of Municipalities concerning the

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Salary Increases Are Nixed In Beach Budget

Long Beach commissioners indicated they will grant very few salary increases during the first six months of the new budget year during a meeting Monday night.

Commissioner Nancy Leggett said she did not believe salary increases were "justified" at this time except in rare cases. She pointed out that all town employees making less than \$10,000 a year were granted a five-percent increase in February.

Other commissioners in-

dicated that they agreed with Mrs. Leggett. Commissioner Ellis Dudley suggested that the board indicate in the 1975-76 budget that employees will be considered for raises in February. He also pointed out that the budget can be amended at any time to provide salary increases.

Interim Town Manager Carole Greene told the board that she did not believe her salary should be increased at this time due to the "poor financial condition" of the town.

"If the interim manager remains in this capacity after the financial situation improves, consideration should be given by the board to an increase in salary at that time," Mrs. Greene said.

Mrs. Greene, who is making \$10,400, originally recommended that her salary be increased to \$17,500.

Dudley commended Mrs. Greene for the stand she took in the matter. "It is a very commendable approach," he declared.

Mrs. Greene said that she planned to ask the board for a few days off this summer when friends visit since she had not been on the job long enough to earn vacation time. Board members indicated during the meeting that more money must be found to be placed in the budget to pay streets. They said they felt that citizens "demanded that more than one mile of streets be paved each year."

Mrs. Greene said she had to cut the Powell Bill contract services for paving to \$28,500 to purchase the needed tractor with mower and make the motor grader payment. The question will be discussed with Sam Dees at the next budget meeting Friday night.

Mrs. Leggett said she believed the board needed to work to cut the proposed tax rate of 67 cents per \$100 valuation. She said she had found that residents are more concerned about the rate than with what is in the budget. "The 'average Joe' taxpayer

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Water Rates Up At Beach

Cost of water at Long Beach will be raised from \$60 to \$100 a year, the board of commissioners agreed Friday night.

No vote was taken, but an individual poll of commissioners indicated they were in favor of the suggestion by Interim Town Manager Carole Greene. She said she would like to send out the billing in July - to be paid within three months - to help alleviate a tight money problem at the beach.

Ms. Greene said the town needed a detailed map and study of the existing water system because some beach strand homeowners may be using water without charge. "And using all they want," she added.

Bills for \$60 were sent out the first of the year. It was suggested that the new bill include \$20 additional for the remainder of the current year, plus \$50 for the first six months next year. "It seems fair," said Commissioner Nancy Leggett. "I don't think it's excessive."

Bills not paid within three months would result in water cut-off and a \$10 charge. It would cost an additional \$10 to have the service resumed, the board noted.

Values Unfair, Owner Claims

Like the green grass on the other side of the fence, water at Ocean Isle Beach supposedly is a brighter blue.

That, according to Ocean Isle Mayor LaDane Williamson, is what an Allied Appraisal representative told her when she asked about higher land values in her home town. "I thought I would die laughing," she said. "I couldn't wait to get home and tell everybody what he told me!"

LaDane and her father, Odell Williamson, are upset about land values - about beach property in general and their own in particular. Williamson has charged discrimination against Ocean Isle Beach, has hired a

private detective and has threatened a \$1 - million lawsuit against Allied Appraisal - "and anybody else involved."

In a prepared statement released Friday, Williamson said "it looks like possibly Allied Appraisal might have joined in a political conspiracy of making (Williamson's) land values so high that he would be forced out of business." Party to the alleged conspiracy, he charged, is the former Republican board of commissioners that hired Allied.

"They pointed Allied to the beaches and said, 'There's your value. Go get it.' They are taxing the people upstate

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US 17 Work Under Study

The Planning and Research branch of the North Carolina Division of Highways has begun planning studies to determine the needed improvements to US 17 between NC 87 at Bell Swamp and NC 211 at Supply, a distance of approximately 14.0 miles.

This project is included in the North Carolina Highway Improvement Program, with right-of-way acquisition scheduled for fiscal year 1978 and construction scheduled for fiscal years 1979, 1980 and 1981.

The project is in the early planning stage and widening the existing roadway to a four-lane divided facility as well as other types of improvements to existing US 17 will be studied. The northern end of the project will tie into the proposed four-lane divided section of US 17 at NC 87. Right-of-way acquisition for this project is currently underway.

The southern end of the project will tie into existing US 17 at NC 211.

The project study is being conducted in accordance with the guidelines established in the North Carolina Highway Action Plan. A public meeting to obtain ideas and comments from the public is tentatively scheduled for August, 1975.

Tax Appeals End June 30

Brunswick County property owners who don't like their new valuation have only until June 30 to file notice of appeal with the county.

The announcement was made by Acting Tax Supervisor K.T. Bellamy following another meeting of the Brunswick County Board of Equalization and Review on Tuesday.

Bellamy said that all property owners who wish to appeal their valuations must contact his office before 5 p.m. on July 30 to appear before the E and R board. The June 30th cut-off is required by state law.

Property owners who appeared before the E and R board Tuesday include R.E. Crisp of Wilmington, George Graves of Asheboro, J.R. Simmons of Ash, J.A. Purvis of Ash, T.C. Lennon of Rt. 1 Bolivia, C.P. Plaster of Winston-Salem, George Ennis Swain of Rt. 2 Supply, S.W. Lancaster of Rt. 2 Supply, Samuel McCannless of Southport, Floyd Ray Coburn of Boiling Springs Lakes, J.O. Sellars of Ahoskie, Glenn Hendrix of Winston-Salem, Paul Hendrix of Winston-Salem, David B. Carmichael of Shallotte, and Charles W. Keller of Southport.

Bellamy, who serves as clerk to the board, said no

action will be taken on the appeals until his staff can check the complaints voiced at the hearings.

Beach, Southport Get Extra County Funding

Long Beach and Southport will be given surplus Manpower funds, the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners decided during the regular meeting on Monday.

The board voted unanimously to give Long Beach \$1,296.88 to hire a summer recreation director and Southport \$2,200 to continue four Manpower employees until the end of the month. Both towns requested the additional funds in letters to the board.

Personnel - Purchasing Director David Swain told the board that the county had \$3,496.80 in surplus Manpower funds allocated to the Brunswick County Board of Education. He said the county could use the surplus either to honor the two requests or to hire additional

employees for the county.

Swain reported that the county and other municipalities have enough Manpower funds to continue their program employees until July 31. Although the funds will run out on July 31, he said he hopes the county will receive additional funds to continue the Manpower employees.

Swain said he wanted the county to spend all the Manpower funds allocated to help reduce unemployment. He said Shallotte may end up with a surplus if the town does not hire another Manpower employee with the money on hand.

Long Beach requested \$1,800 in Manpower funds to hire the recreation director. Swain said the request could be reduced to \$1,296.88 since Long Beach could not spend

the \$1,800 in salaries under the program guidelines before July 31.

"In accordance with the discussion between you and the board, the board by unanimous vote hereby requests that you do not withdraw the \$1,800 in order that this amount may be used to employ a recreation director for the Town of Long Beach," Interim Town Manager Carole Greene said in a letter to County Chairman - Interim Manager Franky Thomas.

"Of course, these funds are already being used and a total of \$176 has been drawn from these funds to pay a carpenter who was employed."

Mrs. Greene requested on behalf of the Long Beach board that the money which has been allocated for a

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