



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS members from Post 10226, (Oak Island) and Post 10400, (Boiling Spring Lakes) honored their comrades in a Memorial Day ceremony, held Monday at the old Southport cemetery.

No Bargain Hunt In 'Tissue Issue'

By BILL ALLEN
Staff Writer

Why are Brunswick County taxpayers being charged a higher price for toilet paper in Wilmington when a better grade can be purchased for a much lower price in the county?

That is the question Sheriff Herman Strong raised after seeing prices the county was being charged for toilet paper and other cleaning materials used at the county jails.

After seeing the invoice for the supplies, Sheriff Strong said he compared prices in the county and was "shocked" at what he found.

Sheriff Strong said his

check showed that the county was being charged 34 cents per roll for the same type of toilet paper that can be purchased in a grocery store here for 18 cents per roll. The best grade toilet paper can be purchased off the shelf for 21 cents.

He said the same comparison found that the county was also paying higher for trash can liners (25 cents vs. 10 cents) and furniture polish (\$2.20 vs \$1.75).

"There is no sense in the world paying those kinds of prices when you can buy it from local county stores cheaper than that," Sheriff Strong declared.

Brunswick County Pur-

chasing Director David Swain said he believed that the company — Spirritine of Wilmington — made a mistake on the billing charge to the county for the toilet paper.

Swain, who lives in Wilmington, said he had been to the company headquarters and seen samples of the toilet paper. "The man showed me a toilet paper which was dual ply," he stated. "It is a good grade toilet paper."

However, the toilet paper that Spirritine delivered to the Sheriff's Department was one-ply. Sheriff Strong showed a roll to The Pilot.

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44 Seek Elected Offices In County

Brunswick County voters will have a wide choice of candidates when they go to the polls this year in both the primary and general elections.

A total of 44 candidates, including Democrats, Republicans and non-partisans, signed up to run for public office before the deadline at noon Friday, Executive Secretary Linda Babson of the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

All the present incumbent office holders — with one

exception — will be running for re-nomination and -or re-election to their posts in county government. Commissioner W.T. Russ, Jr., of Shallotte had announced earlier he would not be a candidate for re-election.

The largest number of candidates — a total of 18 — will be running in the Democratic primary for the five seats on the board of commissioners.

Ten candidates, including the two incumbents, have entered the race for the two

seats at stake on the school board in the county.

Democrats also will hold primaries to nominate candidates for the General Assembly, coroner and register of deeds. Two candidates are running for each of the three elected posts.

Republicans will be involved in primary voting only to nominate candidates for two seats on the board of commissioners.

A total of 18 candidates,

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Would You Believe . . . 85-Cent County Rate?

By BILL ALLEN
Staff Writer

Brunswick County taxpayers face a tremendous 47.37 cent tax increase on top of last year's revaluation if the proposed 1976-77 county budget is approved without change.

The proposed \$12,254,387 budget, which was presented during a special meeting of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday, called for a tax rate of 85.87 cents per \$100 property valuation. It is based on a \$1.2 billion tax base.

Last year, Brunswick County only had a tax rate of 38.5 cents per \$100 property valuation while operating with a \$7,371,279 budget. The tax base was \$1.5 billion last year.

The major reason for the increased tax rate, according to information provided by County Manager Don Flowers, Jr., is the \$6,577,531 request made by the Board of Education which is included in the proposed budget. The school request alone represents 60.91 cents of the proposed tax rate.

Incidentally, the proposed budget contains no additional money for the construction of the new courthouse-complex. The \$1,687,537 already on hand for the project will be placed in the budget before it is adopted.

After hearing Flowers, who is the budget officer, give the budget message, commissioners indicated that the tax rate will be cut before it is approved.

Commissioners immediately began their department-by-department review of the budget. They cut less than two cents off the proposed tax rate after spending about four hours reviewing the budget. Some of the major requests for funds were not heard Tuesday. (See related story in this edition of The Pilot.)

Flowers told the Board that \$9,273,484 is needed from ad valorem taxes, based on the estimated tax base of \$1.2 billion, to supplement other revenue to total \$11,445,591 and balance the proposed 1976-77 as required by state law.

He said that one penny of the tax base valuation represents \$108,000 in revenues. "Therefore, an increase or decrease in the proposed budget in the amount of \$108,000 will increase or decrease the tax rate by one cent," he pointed out.

Flowers said the proposed 85.87-cent tax rate is based on the revenues requested for the departments in county government. The levies required by the proposed tax rate include general fund, 10.02 cents; debt service, 5.20 cents; public health, 3.22 cents; revaluation, .58 cent; social services, 3.39 cents; Resources Development, .76 cent; school fund, 60.91 cents, which includes 21.20 cents for current expenses and 39.71 cents for capital outlay; capital improvement, .93 cent; and hospital authority, .76 cent.

The percentages of the total includes general fund, 11.79 percent; debt service, 6.06 percent; public health, 3.75 percent; revaluation, .68 percent; social services, 3.95 percent; resources development, .89 percent; school fund, 70.94 percent, including current expense 24.69 percent and capital outlay 46.25 percent; capital improvement, 1.08 percent;

and hospital authority, .89 percent.

Flowers broke down the general fund requested expenditures by departments. The breakdown, including budgeted for 1975-76 and recommended for 1976-77, follows:

Governing Body, \$49,300, \$49,000; Administration, \$39,642, \$38,443; Personnel & Purchasing, \$25,947, \$36,190; Board of Elections, \$53,550, \$144,760; Planning, \$87,811, \$114,342; Finance, \$91,524, \$79,158; Bicentennial, \$31,550, \$7,487; Tax Supervisor, \$205,002, \$207,039; Safety & Housing, \$116,579; Tax Collector, \$82,078, \$86,727; Legal, \$10,000, \$10,000; Register of Deeds, \$147,790, \$144,901; Shoreline Protection, \$14,441, \$12,788; Public buildings & Grounds, \$46,330,

\$58,282; Sheriff, \$386,228, \$612,825; Jails, \$121,250, \$118,024; Veteran's Service Officer, \$11,291, \$13,515; Outside Poor, \$600, \$600; Civil Preparedness, \$23,379, \$25,414; Soil & Water Conservation, \$17,849, \$20,746; Agriculture Extension, \$45,098, \$50,040; Sanitary Landfill, \$132,407, \$193,976; Medical Examiner, \$5,375, \$8,500; Non-Departmental, \$246,700, \$326,100; and Donations, \$237,940, \$371,033.

According to the expenditure information provided by Flowers, general fund spending will increase only \$733,417 if the new budget is approved. The figure is based on the \$2,113,052 budgeted last year and the \$2,846,469 requested this year. The general fund expenditures include \$116,579

in the Safety and Housing department through all the money is grant funds.

Reasons for the general fund increases, Flowers said, are: Elections, voting machine request; Planning, increase in personnel; Sheriff's Department, request for new cars and personnel; Agriculture Extension, increased costs; Non-Departmental, increases in Social Security and retirement insurance; and Donations, airport authority, SENCLand, and hospital no longer funded by Revenue Sharing.

He said that departments showing a decline include Governing Body, Administration; Finance; Bicentennial; Register of Deeds; Shoreline Protection, Jails and Recreation.

The county manager said total change in non-grant departments in the general fund amount to \$616,838. The general fund changed 30 percent, he noted.

The percentage of change over three per cent in non-grant departments of the general fund included Elections, 14.79 percent; Planning, 4.31 percent; Sheriff's, 36.75; Sanitary Landfill, 9.99 per cent; Non-Departmental, 12.88 per cent and Donations, 21.59 per cent.

Flowers also broke down the expenditures of other funds beside the general fund in the requested budget. The breakdown, including budgeted for 1975-76 and recommended for 1976-77, follows:

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43-Cent Tax Rate Proposed At Beach

The Long Beach tax rate will drop to 43 cents per \$100 valuation if the new 1976-77 budget is approved.

The "good news" about the decreased tax rate — down from 61 cents last year — is contained in the proposed new budget which Town Manager John Berry delivered to commissioners last week. The board was scheduled to hold its first meeting Wednesday night to review the document.

Berry said the tax rate can be cut to 43 cents because of an above - normal fund balance.

He said the higher fund balance resulted from not expending the full appropriations from the 1975-76 budget, receipt of revenue

other than taxes not anticipated and surplus tax money from a low estimate of property valuation during the eight - year revaluation.

"This low rate is in lieu of a suggested rebate for 1975-76," Berry stated. "Court costs and administration costs, plus any rebate, would require a significantly higher rate for 1976-77. The portion of the fund balance to be appropriated is required to achieve a balance. This allows us to maintain a level of service equal to prior years, and in essence, provides a rebate for the 1975-76 surplus."

Last year's tax rate of 61 cents has been a topic of much concern among Long Beach taxpayers. The rate

was based on information from the county which showed that the town has a tax base of \$50 million. Revised figures later showed that the town had a total tax base of \$80 million.

Berry said in his message that the total budget is proposed to be \$482,082 for the coming fiscal year. The total includes \$482,082 budgeted for the general fund, \$35,000 for the water fund, and \$72,957 for the Powell Fund. "This is a decrease from last year's total budget of two percent," he pointed out.

He said revenue estimates have been based on last year's experience and projections presented by the League of Municipalities on state - shared revenue. Ad -

valorem revenue anticipated is based on an \$80 million valuation with a collection rate of 90 percent.

Expenditures of all funds in the \$604,407 budget include: General Fund — (\$82,082) — Governing Body, \$14,756; Administration, \$90,433; Election, \$1,000; Planning, \$2,600; Police, \$181,300; Fire, \$17,138; Rescue, \$6,640; Inspections, \$14,574; Street, \$37,975; Streetlights, \$8,232; Sanitation, \$64,012; Mosquito, \$10,691; Recreation, \$19,502; Non - Departmental, \$13,229; Water Funds (\$35,000) — Operations, \$25,638 and Capital Outlay, \$9,317; Powell Bill — (\$72,957) — Operations, \$48,127 and

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Aldermen Propose City Tax Reduction

By ED HARPER
News Editor

City of Southport taxpayers will pay a rate between 50 and 53 cents per \$100 valuation, following a Board of Aldermen budget - trimming session Tuesday night.

A proposed rate of 58 cents had been presented by the Budget Committee but \$17,572 — about 8 cents levy — was eliminated. The final rate could increase to 52 or 53 cents, it was noted, because police department salaries may have to be increased.

The 1975-76 tax rate was 68 cents. The major cut was \$9,000 taken from the Health and Sanitation budget by a 5-1 board decision to pay for a

new trash truck over a two-year period. Also, \$3,572 was stricken from the Administration budget (earmarked for City Hall painting), and an "erroneous figure" was corrected by adding \$5,000 under ABC revenue.

The public hearing on the proposed budget will be held June 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Revenues expected by the city total \$450,819, including \$121,220 in ad valorem taxes, \$157,249 to be derived from the sale of electricity, and \$40,000 in unexpended electricity - sale funds from the 1975-76 fiscal year. Other major sources of revenue include ABC funds \$19,000, Revenue Sharing \$28,000 and sales tax refunds \$25,000.

The Administration budget will total \$113,095, up slightly from the \$112,736 budgeted for the previous year. The only change from the proposed budget was the reduction in City Hall painting funds from \$8,572 to \$5,000. Administration salaries total \$71,913.

The Police budget totals \$101,853, up from \$97,280 this current year. Most of the line items are standard, except for \$3,500 earmarked as capital outlay. The budget is subject to change, following investigation by Budget Officer Alvin Konegay and Finance Officer Harold Aldridge to determine if pay hikes are mandatory.

The Fire and Rescue department budget of \$21,650

(up from \$12,525) includes \$15,000 for the purchase of two ambulances.

The decision to pay for the new trash truck over a two-year period reduced the Health and Sanitation budget to \$58,812, down from the \$61,061 budgeted for the current fiscal year. Of the total, \$34,301 is designated for salaries.

The Street department budget is proposed to be \$48,043, up from \$41,674 this year. Of the total, \$29,849 will be salaries.

Under General Government, which includes donations, major expenditures include Doshier hospital (including legal

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