



**Patty Pawlak**

1976 Miss N. C. Fourth Of July

## July 4th Extravaganza Begins Here Saturday

Southport's annual N.C. Fourth of July Festival begins Saturday to continue for three celebration-filled days.

Highlights of the many activities planned include Heritage House, performances of "Revolution!" and "I Love America," the parade and the fireworks display.

Several events continue throughout the festival. The USS Fortify, an oceangoing minesweeper, will be tied up at the municipal pier Saturday through Monday. The ship will open to the public at 10 a.m. and will be open all day.

Two art shows are planned for the weekend. A sidewalk art show in front of Leggett's Store will open at 10 a.m. Saturday, at noon Sunday and at 11 a.m. Monday.

The Junior Woman's Club art show will begin at 11 a.m. Saturday, at 1 p.m. Sunday and at 9 a.m. Monday. It will be at Trinity United Methodist Church.

Heritage House, to be in the Community Building, opens at 10 a.m. Saturday, at 2 p.m. Sunday and at 1 p.m. Monday.

Live entertainment is scheduled for 1 to 5 p.m. all three days at the Indian Trail

Tree. Puppet shows will be given at 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. Saturday and at 2 and 3 p.m. Sunday at the Southport - Brunswick County Library.

The Cape Fear Water Skiing Club will perform at 2 p.m. Sunday and Monday on the waterfront.

Finally, performances of "Revolution!" will be given at 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Kachada Indian dances are set for 8:30 p.m. Saturday and 9 p.m. Sunday at the Whittier's Bench on the waterfront.

Other events scheduled for

Monday include children's colonial games at 10 a.m. on the Garrison Lawn, go-cart races at 2 p.m. and semi-finals in the tennis tournament at 3 p.m.

The Southport Little Leaguers will play an all-star ball game at 4:30 p.m. at the

primary school field. The Jaycee Donkey ball game is set for 7:30 p.m. at Taylor Field, and a Blue Grass festival will begin at 9 p.m. at the Whittier's Bench.

Ecumenical church services will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday in the "Revolution!" amphitheatre. At 2 p.m. citizens are urged to come out of their homes and ring a bell in commemoration of the nation's 200th birthday.

Other Sunday events are as follows: small sailboat races at 2 p.m., "I Love America" at 3:30 p.m. in the "Revolution!" amphitheatre, air show at 4:30 p.m. on the waterfront; shrimp boat races at 5 p.m. and finals of the tennis tournament at 6 p.m.

A gospel sing will be held at 8 and at 9 p.m. Sunday at the Whittier's Bench.

Monday's big celebration begins at 10 a.m. with a flag raising and a 50-gun salute on the waterfront. At 11 a.m. the 1976 N.C. Fourth of July parade will begin to move down Moore and Howe streets.

The Clinton High School Band will give a concert at 1 p.m. on the Garrison Lawn, followed by U.S. Marine Corps flag pageant, at 1:30 p.m., also on the Garrison Lawn.

Other waterfront events scheduled for Sunday are two exhibitions to be given by the U.S. Navy. A parachute demonstration is set for 2:15 p.m. and an underwater demolition exhibition for 3 p.m.

The parachute exhibition will also be given at 5:30 and at 8 p.m.

At 3:30 Sunday afternoon Shrine units will present live entertainment at the Whittier's Bench. And at 4:30 visitors may enjoy the third annual "Happy Birthday,

(Continued on page 3)

## County Tax Rate Set At 42 Cents

By BILL ALLEN  
Staff Writer

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners increased the tax rate three cents to 42 cents to finish funding the Leland school before adopting the 1976-77 budget Thursday night.

The board voted on a split decision — 3 to 1 — to increase the tax rate from 38.5 cents last year to 42 cents this year to raise taxes needed to fund the new budget.

The last three cents were added to the tax rate to complete the funding of the Leland Middle School. Supporters of public education in the county urged that the school be funded during a public hearing held Thursday morning. (See related story in this edition of The Pilot.)

Commissioner Ira Butler, Jr., pointing out that the construction of the new Brunswick County courthouse-complex was adding to the tax rate, proposed several times that it be reduced to 40.5 cents.

He said the rate could be reduced the 1.5 cents by delaying for one year the construction of the county administration building at the complex. The administration building has been budgeted to cost the county \$188,000.

Commissioner W.T. Russ, Jr., said the board was "under an obligation" to build it because of the 2 to 1 vote on the referendum to move the courthouse-complex to a central site.

"We have an obligation to build it come hell or high water," Commissioner Franky Thomas declared. "Very well said," added Russ.

Butler said he agreed the board had an obligation to build the complex. But he said the administration building could be delayed one year to lower the tax rate to 40.5 cents. "It (the difference between the two tax rates) will make a big difference," he declared.

Butler made his proposal several times before the budget was adopted. But he never put it in the form of a motion requiring board action.

After a long delay Thomas, who had said at one point that he would go along with the majority on the question, made the motion to approve the budget with the 42-cent tax rate. Butler seconded it.

Russ, voted in opposition to approving the new budget. He said he favored a 39-cent tax rate with funds for the Leland school included in a bond referendum for school construction in the county.

Chairman Steve Varnam, Jr., was not present at the meeting when the budget was

approved. Under state law, Chairman Varnam is credited with an affirmative vote since he was not present.

Before the meeting ended, however, Chairman Varnam telephoned the other com-

missioners and the press and announced that he approved the new budget with the 42-cent tax rate.

"I felt the Leland people (Continued on page 20)

## 11th-Hour Cut Upsets Public

By BILL ALLEN  
Staff Writer

Brunswick County public education supporters strongly protested massive reductions in the school budget during a public hearing Thursday that had to be held in the Courthouse because of the large crowd on hand.

"Is it more important to have another jail, or new

schools?" was the question asked time and again during the public hearing.

Cuts in the Health Department, high salaries for county employees and other items were brought up by taxpayers during the hearing. But most of the people expressed concern about the reduction in the school budget.

"I ask on behalf of the 7,500 Brunswick County school (Continued on page 3)

## City's 50-Cent Rate Okayed By Aldermen

By EMILY HIGHTOWER  
Staff Writer

The Southport Board of Aldermen approved the 1976-77 budget last Wednesday night, setting the tax rate at 50 cents per \$100 valuation.

Three citizens attended the public hearing which preceded unanimous approval of the budget.

The new tax rate is 26 percent lower than the 1975-76 rate of 68 cents per \$100 valuation. The 50-cent rate was based on a property valuation of \$22 million and an estimated rate of collection of 94.5 percent, Mayor Eugene B. Tomlinson said.

Joe Walton asked the board to give Recreation Director Gary Walker an \$850 raise in salary. He said that Walker is working more hours than anticipated and that this is not reflected in his salary.

Walker now makes \$8,500 per year.

Walton said Walker is supervising three employees and is responsible for the upkeep of the Little League field and Taylor Field. "This is the largest (recreation) program Southport has ever had," he said.

Alderman Conley D. Koontz said that Walker now may use a city vehicle for Recreation Department business.

Koontz proposed that the increase be made a bonus because no city employee received a salary increase this year.

He moved that Walker be given an \$850 "meritorious bonus," to be awarded \$425 on July 1 and \$425 on Jan. 1, 1977. Tomlinson added that the board would expect Walker to continue to put in as many

hours as the job demands. The motion passed unanimously.

The final budget reduced the Recreation Department appropriation \$9,000 by eliminating two items — \$6,000 for two tennis courts and \$3,000 for landscaping

along the waterfront. During the public hearing, C.D. Pickerrell said, "I'm a taxpayer and I just wonder if this is the point in time to cut taxes."

"I'd like to see some of the things we started to brought up to the future," he said. He

gave as examples of unfinished projects the Frying Pan Lightship and the gymnasium.

City Attorney Carter Lambeth pointed out that if the Doshier Memorial Hospital referendum passes the tax rate would rise as much as four cents, effective immediately.

Residents of Smithville Township will vote in the referendum, to be held August 17, on whether \$2.5 million of bonds may be issued to finance improvements and additions to the hospital.

Pickerrell also inquired whether the city could not set up a program to assist persons living in substandard housing.

The mayor and City Manager Alvin Kornegay, Jr., said they would investigate what could be done.

Koontz and Walton expressed concern about modifications the "Revolution!" staff has made to the gymnasium.

Walton said they have built stagings and drilled holes through the cinderblock walls. They have removed the windows, causing the walls to crack from the windows up to the ceiling, he said.

Walton questioned whether the Recreation Committee has enough money to renovate the gym after the (Continued on page 3)

## Water OK By Beach Voters

Long Beach residents approved expansion of the town water system, 275 to 59, in voting Tuesday.

Town manager John Berry said Pierson & Whitman, Inc., the engineering firm which designed the project, would begin laying out the system immediately.

The town probably will receive bids for construction of the project within six months, he said.

The vote authorizes the sale of \$2.9 million of General Obligation bonds. The revenue from the bond sale will finance construction of water mains and lines, a water tank and installation of meters and valves.

The system will be constructed in stages, with the most populous areas of Long Beach being served first.

Minimum water bill will be \$8.92. Property owners will be assessed \$1 per running foot once construction of the system reaches their street.

- 'Revolution!' opening night on page 2
- Festival events, schedule in second section

## Leland School Will Be Built

By EMILY HIGHTOWER  
Staff Writer

The Brunswick County Board of Education struggled Monday night to cut an additional \$761,616 from its budget, finally choosing to fund the Leland Middle School rather than the maintenance and garage facility.

Brunswick County commissioners approved a \$3,485,343 total appropriation for the schools June 24. The Board of Education originally requested \$6,577,531 and received a tentative appropriation of \$4,246,959 on June 2.

The 1975-76 school budget

was \$3.9 million.

Board members expressed a desire to fund both the school and the maintenance and garage project. They decided, however, that there is money enough to build only one of them.

"We're going to have to cut," chairman Wilbur Rabon said. "We cannot build the school bus garage and build Leland Middle School."

Feeling committed to build the school, the board decided to go ahead on that and allocated \$2.8 million for that purpose. The board authorized school personnel to accept bids for the entire construction of the school and "appropriate alternates."

An alternate plan for building the school might consist of constructing most of it minus, for example, a group of classrooms or part of site development.

The board also re-affirmed its intent to air-condition six elementary school cafeterias at a cost of \$70,036.

Transportation supervisor Herman Love and maintenance supervisor Thomas Allen appeared before the board to present letters from their staffs.

Love's letter cited staff concerns about working conditions at the present school bus garage. The garage floor becomes wet when humidity is high, the letter said, and when it rains the floor floods.

The letter also said the parking area is too small, a heating system is non-existent and the wiring system is poor.

Allen's letter said that "to keep modern buildings going we (maintenance staff) need a shop and modern equipment." Present facilities are (Continued on page 3)

## \$72,447 Is Collected

Collection of the one-percent sales and use tax in Brunswick County totalled \$72,447 in May, according to the monthly report by the N.C. Department of Revenue.

The total is the highest this calendar year, above the \$68,432 collection reported in April.