

Commissioners Begin Series Of Meetings

By BILL ALLEN

Newly elected Brunswick County commissioners spent all day Tuesday learning about county government at a school conducted in Southport.

The meeting was open to the public and press despite the fact it had been announced it would be closed.

Commissioner-Elect Cletis Clemmons announced before the meeting started that he wanted it open to the public and press. "The new government will be open to the people and the press as far as I am concerned," he declared.

Commissioner-elect Marvin Watson, agreeing with Clemmons, said he had no intention of attending a close session. He said the article and editorial in The Pilot last week about the meeting being closed was "misleading" because the new commissioners were not asked to express their opinions.

County Manager Don Flowers, Jr., who organized the sessions, opened the school by trying to give the new commissioners an "overview" of county government.

After explaining about the organization of county government, Flowers said he favored increasing the pay commissioners receive. Commissioners are paid \$35 plus expenses when they attend meetings or represent the county. "That is a losing proposition," he declared.

Flowers told the new commissioners that he believed salaries paid county employees are "fair and in line with the state."

Most of the complaints are about the person holding the job rather than the salary, he said. "For the most part, we have the right people in the right jobs," he declared. "But we do have some who are overpaid."

Flowers, who told the new

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NEW TRAFFIC SIGNALS have been installed at the intersection of NC 211 and 87 at Sawdust Trail, completing the project that also includes turning lanes at the busy junction. The lights presently are flashing yellow, giving motorists a chance to become accustomed to the signals before switching to red and green.

1 Dead, 8 Saved In Yacht Mishap

A dramatic sea-air rescue by the U.S. Coast Guard and the U.S.S. Exxon Chester saved the lives of eight persons afloat in a raft on the stormy Atlantic Ocean about daylight this morning.

One man died in the mishap.

All were crew members or passengers aboard the pleasure craft Lady Margaret, a 101-foot yacht owned by Global Communications of East Lansing, Mich.

According to BM 1-C Daniel Styrone of Oak Island Coast Guard Station, a call was received from the Lady

Margaret at 1:45 this morning saying the craft was taking on water and preparations were being made to abandon the vessel. The location given was 15 miles south of Frying Pan Light Tower and approximately 35 miles offshore.

Immediately the 44-footer from Oak Island was dispatched and a call was made to Elizabeth City, air station which dispatched the Coast Guard C-130 amphibious rescue plane and a Coast Guard helicopter. Also joining the search was the Point Martin from Wright-

Beach and the Coast Guard cutter Chilula from Morehead City. The U.S.S. Exxon Chester was in the area and joined in the search.

At about 6 o'clock this morning the helicopter crew spotted the raft with eight people aboard and these were transferred immediately to the aircraft. Meanwhile, contact had been made with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department to have the Southport Rescue Squad units go to the Brunswick County Airport to convey the survivors to Doshier Memorial Hospital. Another call was made to the Long

Beach Rescue Squad.

Coast Guard personnel from Oak Island also were dispatched to the airport to assist in the transfer from the helicopter to the ambulances.

The helicopter arrived at the airport a little before 7 o'clock and the eight survivors were transferred to the local hospital where four doctors were standing by and where additional staff had been assembled to take care of the emergency. All were examined and given emergency treatment and two were transferred to New Hanover Memorial Hospital by the Southport and Long Beach rescue squads. Four others were released and the other two remained as patients at Doshier. About mid-morning Dr. Gene Wallin reported them to be in stable condition.

At 8 o'clock members of the crew of the 44-footer and the U.S.S. Exxon Chester spotted a body afloat in the search area and presumed it to be the ninth member of the yacht passenger list. The body was transferred to the Coast Guard helicopter for removal to New Hanover County Airport.

The dead man has been identified as Kenny Morgan of New York, who was wearing a cast following a recent operation. His mother, Mrs. Jean Morgan, was one of the two patients transferred from Doshier Memorial Hospital to Wilmington.

At noon today no list of names of survivors had been released. However, it was learned that the captain of the distressed vessel was Richard Stevenson, whose wife also was aboard. There were four crew members and three passengers.

It also was learned that Gary Tobias, age 18, was a member of the crew. Tom

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We're Number One... In State Unemployment

Brunswick County is number one in the state!

Brunswick County had the highest unemployment rate in North Carolina in August according to the preliminary state survey, reports David Holden of the Employment Security Commission branch office in Southport.

Brunswick County, which was second in the state in July, took first place in August despite the fact that the unemployment rate dropped during the 30 days.

Holden said he knew of no reason why the county should have the highest unemployment rate in the state during a summer month. He said vacation- and farm-related employment should have combined to reduce unemployment in the county.

The ESC preliminary labor force estimate shows that

Brunswick County had an unemployment rate of 11.2 percent during August. The August figures are the latest statistics available since the survey runs two to three months behind.

The preliminary survey showed that the county had 14,340 persons in the work force in August. A total of 12,740 held jobs while 1,600 were unemployed.

Chowan County had the second highest unemployment rate in August at 10.5 percent while Martin County was third at 10.4 percent and Bladen County was fourth at 10.3 percent. The four are the only counties in the state that experienced double-digit unemployment in August.

Brunswick County continues to have an unemployment rate higher than

both the national and state averages. The national rate stood at 7.9 in August while the state rate was 6.7 percent.

The preliminary survey showed a decline in the labor force, employment and unemployment in Brunswick County between July and August.

The labor force in the county dropped 290 persons from 14,630 to 14,340. The number of persons holding jobs in the county declined 60 from 12,800 to 12,740. Joblessness fell 230 from 1,830 to 1,600.

Brunswick County has been in the top five in unemployment in the state since March of this year. The county was second only to Martin County in July with a 12.8-percent unemployment rate.

Construction Start On Complex November 23

By BILL ALLEN

Construction on the Brunswick County courthouse complex should begin November 23.

Friday Hodges of LBC&W, architects and engineers on the project, made the announcement after the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners awarded contracts totaling \$1,962,164 for Phase I construction.

"We expect the contractors to be on the site within ten days (ten working days starting November 9)," Hodges told the board at the special meeting Monday night.

After hearing Hodges recommend the low bidders the board voted unanimously to take action to award the four contracts which total \$1,962,164.

He said LBC&W officials had been working since the bids were opened on October 26 to cut a total of \$72,000 out of the bids without reducing the complex.

But he said the bid total was still \$132,000 more than the funds budgeted for Phase I construction. He recommended that additional funds be found rather than cutting back on the Phase I project.

In truth, Hodges said, the county was not \$132,000 over the Phase I estimate. Some of the work that will be done in

Phase I will cover both Phase II and III, he explained.

Chairman Steve Varnam, Jr., said he had discussed the matter with County Finance Officer Regina McKeithan and found "we have adequate funds to cover that."

Mrs. McKeithan, when called into the meeting room, told the board that revenue sharing funds to be received between January and June of 1977 could be used.

County Attorney James Prevatte, Jr., told County Manager Don Flowers, Jr., that the revenue sharing funds could be used since they have been obligated by the federal government. "I feel pretty safe using them," he added.

Hodges said he believed

that the county would spend only \$1,200,000 "at the most" on Phase I construction by the end of June, 1977.

Security Building Company, Inc., of Chapel Hill was awarded the general contract with a bid of \$1,424,900. Other contracts awarded included Steve Black, Inc., of Pennsylvania, \$132,989, plumbing contract; Southern Piping Company of Kinston, \$200,000, mechanical contract; and Robeson Electric Company, Inc., \$204,275, electrical contract.

Hodges said he had conducted investigations of all contractors and found they had high ratings. "I think we have an excellent bunch of prime contractors," he declared.

The board unanimously approved a budget amendment to move \$150,000 in Revenue Sharing to contracted services to pay architect and engineering fees at the complex.

Commissioner Franky Thomas suggested that Flowers and Hodges contact the contractors and urge them to hire Brunswick County residents. Hodges said the contractors he had discussed the matter with plan to do it.

In other business, Chairman Varnam told the board he believed that Brunswick County's application for Public Work funds for the complex will be given a favorable review at a meeting of the Council of Governments on Thursday night.

"I am sure it will get a favorable review," said Chairman Varnam, who is the vice-chairman of COG. "I see no problem with that."

The chairman said he wanted to urge commissioners and county officials to attend the COG meeting since it will be held at Calabash on Thursday evening.

The board instructed Prevatte to draft a lease to allow the Board of Education to use selected land at the complex for a maintenance

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Travel Grants Awarded

"Revolution!" received \$2,500 and the Resources Development Commission for Brunswick County \$5,000 in matching grants for travel promotion and development.

They were among 34 grants totalling \$90,299 awarded by the Department of Natural and Economic Resources. Purpose of the program, according to Secretary George W. Little, is "to encourage communities to initiate promotional programs that would increase travel and tourism to their areas and supplement the state Travel Development Section activities."

CP&L And Pfizer Oppose Annexation

Officials of both Carolina Power and Light Company and Pfizer, Inc., are opposed to their firms being annexed into the City of Southport.

President Shearon Harris of Carolina Power and Light Company and Plant Manager Stanley W. Ensminger of Pfizer, Inc., have expressed their opposition to the proposed annexation.

"Thus the result of annexation would be that Southport, through taxation, would charge the Brunswick plant for services the plant does not need and cannot use," President Harris stated. "Our total body of electric customers should not be required to bear this unnecessary expense."

The Southport Board of Aldermen has scheduled a public hearing on November 22 to consider a proposal to extend the city limits to take both the Brunswick nuclear plant and Pfizer, Inc., into the city limits.

"In reviewing this proposal," President Harris stated, "we do not see any possible benefit that could accrue to the company and its consumers as the result of such action."

President Harris pointed out that the Brunswick nuclear plant has its own water, sewerage and security systems. In addition, he said arrangements have been made with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department to provide more police protection and with Sunny Point to

provide more fire control assistance in case of an emergency.

"Southport simply has no service to offer which is required by or which would be useful to the plant," the CP&L president declared in the letter.

President Harris called the proposal to annex the nuclear plant "totally inconsistent with the economic development attitude expressed to CP&L by Southport and Brunswick County officials when we were considering the location of the Brunswick plant at its present site."

"Therefore, I urge you and the Board of Aldermen to reject the proposal to extend the city limits to include our Brunswick plant," President Harris concluded.

Pfizer Inc., "disturbed and disappointed" by the proposed annexation of industrial plant areas by the City of Southport, opposes the move.

Ensminger, who made the announcement, said the proposal would saddle Pfizer with heavy new taxes while contributing very little benefit to the company or to the residents in the area that would be annexed.

While conceding that the present Board of Aldermen is not bound by prior administrations, Ensminger said the proposal, if enacted, would

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