



A LATE-AFTERNOON SUN dropping over a wintry Brunswick County beach is the subject of this photographic study by Whiteville photographer Dan Sears.

Two Quit, Then Return; Charter Is Unchanged

By BILL ALLEN

Long Beach Commissioners Ellis Dudley and Russell Morrison announced their resignations publicly during a heated board meeting Monday night.

However, Morrison announced Tuesday morning that he had withdrawn his resignation from the board "to hang on a while longer."

Morrison said he wrote his letter of resignation and delivered it to Town Hall at 10 a.m. Tuesday morning as he said he would do at the meeting Monday.

But Morrison said he withdrew his letter of resignation at the last minute. "No one influenced me," he stated. "It was my own decision. I will stick it out the last 11 months of my term if I can make it."

Long Beach Mayor Harold Crain announced just before presstime that Dudley has withdrawn his written resignation.

Dudley, however, did resign Tuesday. He submitted his letter of

resignation to Mayor Harold Crain Tuesday morning.

When contacted by The Pilot, Dudley said he believed that Mayor Crain should release his letter of resignation. But he said he resigned because his "motivation, integrity and objectivity" were questioned in the eyes of the public at the meeting.

The two announcements made Monday night came shortly after the board turned down on a 3-3 deadlock vote

an ordinance to amend the town charter.

"My effectiveness as a commissioner has been questioned and you will have my resignation," Dudley told Mayor Crain.

"My resignation will be in the office also due to personal and business reasons," Morrison declared shortly after Dudley made his announcement.

Mayor Crain urged the two commissioners to reconsider since he said the two

resignations at one time could leave the town without a government while the vacancies are being filled by the board.

"It is my opinion, Mr. Mayor, that you don't want any government," Morrison responded.

Dudley and Morrison made their surprise announcements during the discussion after the board had turned down amending the charter on the deadlock vote.

Most of the discussion before the vote was centered around one of the duties of the town manager if the charter change was adopted. It said that the manager could hire and fire town employees "in accordance with such general personnel rules, regulations, policies or ordinance as the council may adopt."

Mayor Crain expressed concern that if the general statement was placed in the charter, the "council would have undue influence over the manager."

Mayor Crain pointed out that Dudley said at a public hearing on the charter changes that he planned to introduce an amendment that the manager will be required to "consult" with board members on hiring and firing but could make the final decisions himself. But he said the matter was not being considered at the meeting.

Dudley, who has been pushing for the charter changes, said he was concerned because the town manager has "unquestionable" power to hire and fire without telling board members why the action was taken.

If the manager makes a decision that the board opposes, Mayor Crain said the "remedy is to fire the manager."

Dudley said he would not want to fire a manager over such an issue because the town would have to pay him three months' salary under the contract.

Dudley said the board was unable to provide any information when residents

Judgment In Favor Of Doshier Hospital Tax

The county commissioners "are entitled to proceed to levy a four-cent tax on property in Smithville Township for 1976 for hospital purposes," according to a ruling by Superior Court Judge Henry McKinnon.

Judge McKinnon, in handing down his decision last Wednesday, said the commissioners "are the proper 'governing body' to act for Smithville Township in actions to establish and support a hospital" under the General Statute which authorizes the petition, election and tax.

Also, Judge McKinnon ruled that "This article and the steps taken to date are not unconstitutional on any

grounds alleged by the plaintiffs."

Arguments were heard last Monday from the plaintiffs, represented by attorney J.B. Lee of Whiteville; the county, represented by attorney James R. Prevatte, Jr.; and three "intervenor defendants" — the City of Southport, the Doshier hospital trustees and individuals — represented together by attorney Carter Lambeth. Judge McKinnon had ruled earlier that the city, the trustees and individuals had a "real interest" in the outcome of the case.

The plaintiffs alleged that the original defendants — the county commissioners — had acted im-

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County Will Supplement Leland School Funding

By ED HARPER

County commissioners will provide \$78,059 to match the bids for construction of Leland Middle School, but have restated their belief that a bond issue is the answer to the need for new educational facilities.

The board granted the amount equal to the difference in what the Board

of Education said last week it needed and the amount the school board found in its own coffer. But a change was made during the past week in what the school board was asking for.

"They have given us the run-around," Commissioner Ira Butler said of the Board of Education after reviewing the fund request.

Last Monday night in a

joint meeting of the Board of Commissioners and the school board, school officials said they needed almost \$400,000 for a "turn-key" job at Leland Middle School. But they said enough of the project could be deleted, or postponed (playground, paving, curbing, landscaping, food service) from the original bids to bring the required extra funding down

to \$142,509.

The remaining items could be funded next year, school officials agreed, because estimated construction time is 570 days and the items were not needed in original construction.

On instruction from the school board, Supt. Ralph King presented commissioners with information that the school board could provide \$64,450 of the necessary balance. This would leave \$78,059 to be provided by the county commissioners.

But Monday night during their special meeting the commissioners were asked for \$148,643. After much figuring — no school officials were present to explain — the commissioners determined that the school board had put the paving and curbing back into the request.

Commissioner Franky Thomas said the school board had come asking for \$6,000 more than they did the week before "without their \$64,000 even in there. It don't balance out with what they had last week."

He suggested that the board take the figure presented last week, deduct the school's \$64,000 and pay the difference.

And Thomas suggested that the amount be repaid to the county's general fund from the pending lawsuit concerning the school roof leaks.

Where the school board found the \$64,450 was not explained in the letter from Supt. King to the commissioners. At the joint meeting last Monday night, and in the Board of Education

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School Officials 'Find' Way For Leland Work

By ED HARPER

The Board of Education, with the help of a \$78,057 supplement from the county commissioners, has awarded bids for construction of Leland Middle School.

But the contract includes paving and curbing of the parking lots — something the commissioners believed would be delayed in the interest of economy. (See related article, this issue of The Pilot.)

The Board of Education, which held a brief meeting Tuesday night prior to attending an open house at Bolivia school, accepted the recommendation of Supt. Ralph King that \$70,584 be taken from "contingency" funding and be applied to the paving and curb work. The transfer reduces the contingency fund to less than \$14,000, which Asst.

Supt. John Hicks said is "probably not going to be enough" to last through the current budget year.

Architect L.R. Evans said the fund would require "at least" \$7,000 more between now and next July 1, the start of the new budget year.

"It is a smart move we are making," Evans said, in awarding bids for the complete building, except for the kitchen.

The Board of Education met with the county commissioners on November 22 and said it needed \$142,509 to award bids for construction of the Leland area facility. Upon the request of county commissioners, school officials "scrutinized" their budget and found \$64,450 that could be applied to the need amount. Monday night, the county Board of Commissioners

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Watson Resigns Yaupon Beach Mayor's Position

By BILL ALLEN

Mayor Marvin Watson resigned his positions during a special meeting of the Yaupon Beach Board of Commissioners last Tuesday morning.

"It is with great pleasure and humbleness this morning that I announce my

resignation as mayor and council member of Yaupon Beach," Mayor Watson declared.

Mayor Watson, who has been a Yaupon Beach board member for the past three years, resigned since he has been elected a Brunswick County commissioner from Smithville Township. He has

served as mayor for the past year.

Mayor Watson said he considered it "a distinct honor" to have served on the Yaupon Beach board. "I am grateful for the cooperation and support most of the citizens have given me," he declared.

He said he was "also

honored" to be elected a county commissioner and "will always remember the solid support of my hometown people."

"I love the Town of Yaupon Beach and Oak Island and hope to live the rest of my life here," he continued. "May God bless all of you and I ask for your prayers and support as I become a county commissioner."

After voting unanimously to accept Watson's resignation, Mayor Pro-Tem Louise Corbett took charge and presided over the rest of the meeting.

Joe Wiggs, a CPA, was unanimously selected to replace Watson on the Yaupon Beach town board.

Commissioner William McDougale first suggested that the board take no action at the meeting to fill the vacancy since all members were not present.

Commissioner Ted Wood said he had discussed his nomination (of Wiggs) with Commissioner Bill Smalley, who agreed with the selection. McDougale said it was true that Smalley agreed.

Wiggs, a native of Fayetteville who has lived in Yaupon for the past eight years, is a CPA in Southport. He is the brother-in-law of Town Clerk Judith Wiggs.

Board members said after

Entertainment, Ideas Are Holiday House Features

Committees for Holiday House, scheduled this weekend at the Southport Community Building, have been announced by co-chairmen Mrs. Julia Coan and Mrs. Jean Fairley.

Holiday House is a display of ideas for decorating for the holidays. Registration for items to be exhibited will take place on Friday from noon until 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 until 11:30 a.m. The show will be held Saturday and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m. each day.

The Sea Notes, a local choral group, will perform on

Saturday at three o'clock. On Sunday afternoon, the entertainment will begin at 2 p.m. with a singing group, The Melodaires, of St. James AME Zion Church. The group is directed by Mrs. Cora Davis with Mrs. Lillian Clemmons, Mrs. Mary Anderson and Mrs. Mary Jackson. Miss Romia Gore, also of St. James, will be a performing soloist.

From three until four o'clock the Dixieland Trio consisting of Bill McDougale, Dick Conrad and Jack Burnish on piano, clarinet and bass, will perform.

Beginning at 4:15 the Tillie Sugg's Bell Choir will play. Mrs. Cindy Sellers will direct the Trinity United Methodist Church Children, Youth and Adult choirs.

Committees for Holiday House are Registration — Miffie Johnson and Barbara VanDerslice; House — chairman Marty Dodd, Grace Ruark, Mary Young, Mary Allen Bailey, Elinor Handler, and Josie and Bill McDougale; Placement — chairman Jinx Rideout, Cecilia Franck, Betty Sias and Leola Pickerell; Hostesses —

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