

OPINION

Laymen, not lawyers

Last week a commissioner of the Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District asked in a Long Beach public hearing what the purpose and plan of the town's exercise of extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) in the sanitary district was, and was twice rebuffed.

Initially councilman Jeff Ensminger said, "We are not at liberty to discuss that because it is the subject of a lawsuit."

Later mayor Joan Altman said, "Because of litigation we cannot discuss it."

Those responses are remarkably similar to private remarks by sanitary district chairman James W. Smith that "when you hire a lawyer, you are wasting your money if you don't let him handle it."

Those statements won't wash, and they bespeak a leaning toward truculence at a time when neither town nor district needs to be embroiled in a lawsuit.

The town has good reason to zone a bridgehead for a new approach to the island, but the sanitary district section is not that bridgehead; on the other hand the district needs to focus on getting approval for a district sewer system and installing it, not on fighting a high-principled but low-priority battle in court.

Of course the council and mayor can discuss anything they want. And we hope Smith doesn't seriously propose to relinquish his right to shape and implement district policy just because he's hired a lawyer.

The fundamental question in the district-town dispute is how to best serve the interest of constituents while avoiding needless conflict with neighbors. If the public hearing last week wasn't a forum for that discussion, we hope one can be found.

By laymen, not lawyers.

Tidying up our town

All of us are familiar with the miraculous cleanup job the city crew performs overnight following the N. C. Fourth of July Festival. We never cease to be amazed, and usually say so.

This week we are reminded that these men have an equally important, and somewhat tedious, responsibility to help get everything in readiness for the big day. That includes cleaning up the town and hauling away trash.

Tuesday morning we saw Kenny Price of the public services department overseeing a job here on our block. "We're not waiting around until the last minute to get all this stuff moved away," he said. "We're starting on it this week because there will be a lot of other things to do next week."

There's a lesson in there for all of our citizens. If there are vacant lots which need clearing, lawns which need mowing, hedges which need clipping and walkways which need edging, now's the time to do it. Not next week. Take a lesson from Kenny and his crew: Do it now.

Island passage

The announced cancellation of a tram fee as part of transportation service to and on Bald Head Island will be hailed by patrons but it is not a landmark decision. Earlier this year the price of tickets -- which included the tram service -- rose, then fell, then rose, then fell. It stands at \$10 in bulk lots for property owners now, but the issue is in flux. The developer is still seeking a way to operate at a profit. Indications are that he will continue to urge a subsidy either from the property owners association or the village government.

The Bald Head ferry and tram system -- an excellent service -- has always been provided by the developer, and property owners have been pleased to accept it. But by logical extension, transportation to the island is a part of the village's governmental responsibility; the tram system obviously is so.

Rather than rely on a powerless committee appointed by the association to hear what kind of transportation system the developer wants, the village council should appoint its own committee to tell the developer what kind of transportation system the people will have. Then and only then will there be a transportation system on the island that is safe, reliable and courteous -- and provided at a rate users can rely on week after week.



Not exactly news

Sunday was the official first day of summer but Monday morning felt like the first day of fall. The cool days the first of this week may be the last we'll see until September... Hydrangeas now are in full bloom and we are impressed with how many homes in Southport have one or more of these colorful flowering bushes in their front yard.

We were traveling eastward on I-40 last Wednesday when we saw a big sign announcing "Brunswick Beaches and Castle Hayne". It was the first time we had seen it, then we realized why. A couple of miles down the road a work crew had the right lane blocked while they erected a second sign giving the identical information. We turned left on Highway 117 at Castle Hayne and where the highways divide there was a smaller sign telling the direction to Brunswick beaches. We like the idea of letting travelers know Interstate 40 leads to places other than Wrightsville and Carolina beaches.

On Highway 133 just this side of Olde Point Golf Club an impressive two-story home is nearing completion. This was the site of Piney Grove School, which was abandoned in the 1940s...

Robert Jones, a building contractor of that era, salvaged some of the material when the school was demolished and a residence on Atlantic Avenue in Southport has two of the big windows from that building on its front.

The Braves-Cincinnati baseball series last weekend in Atlanta provided a good way to make the transition from NBA basketball. They played like it was the last week of the season, and the Braves were right on target. They won three of the four games... Golf also was big on the weekend sports menu and Tom Kite's victory in the U. S. Open was a popular success which was long overdue.

There's a substantial sandbar building up at the end of Lord Street between there and the Intracoastal Waterway and last week we saw people swimming in that area. This is reminiscent of the days before the canal was dug and this was the second most popular place in town for bathing in the river. "Little Coney" in front of the Garrison was the favorite... Believe it or not, the Old Southport Burying Ground is one of our most popular tourist attractions.

Frequently we have visitors who wish to look

up some news report in an old issue of the Pilot and we arrange for them to look through one or more of our bound volumes. We are continually amazed at how often their attention is diverted to other things and how they stay a while to take a peep at things they never knew before... It is even worse when they shift through a box of our old photographs that have been used in "The Way It Was". These pictures really are fascinating. And that reminds us, we need some help to keep this feature going. If you have old photos of places in Southport and the surrounding area we need to borrow them. We will not damage them, and you will get them back.

Bake sales used to be a popular Saturday morning attraction in downtown Southport, the most strategic location being next door to the post office. Times have changed, but we have a feeling there could be a successful revival of volunteer, cooperative plan to raise money for worthy causes... Some of the best cooks we ever knew participated and if someone showed up with a baking product that wasn't a "scratch cake" they wouldn't put it out for sale.

Public opinion

Outside town

To the Editor:

The percentage of out-of-town fire calls and assist calls with the rescue squad for the year 1990-91 was 66 percent. The percentage of firemen that belong to the department that live outside town is 35 percent. And as far as the city paying for everything, the county funded a full radio base station with the capability of paging fire and rescue in case the city's system defaults, which it has on occasion. With the system the county also funded two mobile units and six handheld walkie-talkies; the amount for this was \$10,000.

Truck 4 was purchased with donations and county money. It was titled to the city. Engine 3 was purchased through donations and county money. It also was titled to the city. Later it was updated to a Class A pumper, with \$30,000 coming from the county.

ADM donated a 300 gpm truck to the Southport Fire Department. It is also titled to the city. After some work had been done to the truck, it is now valued at \$50,000.

CP&L donates \$12,500 a year to the city, a portion of these funds going for payments on the pumper

and the ladder truck Engine 2. Again money from outside the city.

Approximately \$55,600 for the year 1990-91 came from outside the city to help run the City of Southport's volunteer fire department.

Billy Drew
Assistant chief

'Hometown'

To the Editor:

We enjoy the newspaper very much and consider it to be our "hometown" news as we plan to move to Boiling Spring Lakes in the future to live. You have a very informative newspaper -- keep up the good work!

Sincerely
Mr. and Mrs. James Walters
Bay City, Mich.

To The Editor:

The State Port Pilot invites its readers to share their views on subjects of public interest. Comments should be addressed to The Editor and mailed to The State Port Pilot, P.O. Box 10548, Southport, N.C. 28461. Letters should be limited to 250 words, longer letters will be edited for space, or will be returned to the writer if editing would significantly alter the content. Please include the writer's address and/or telephone number so he or she can be contacted by the Editor if necessary. Addresses and telephone numbers will not be printed.

Old pictures

To the Editor:

I would like to renew my subscription to the paper. I was living in Southport when the first copy was published by Mr. W. B. Keziah.

I keep most of the pictures of "The Way It Was". I have one of the class of 1927, the one I was in.

The picture in "The Way It Was" edition January 16, 1983, was the old Orton Plantation dock. The old steamer *Wilmington* used to stop there on the way to Southport.

Keep the old pictures coming.
Thanks,
George H. Autry
Beaufort.

Animal care

To the Editor:

Please folks, just picture a hot

day, the animal control truck, a small cage, a little brown dog with the sweetest brown eyes.... That's what I saw the other day, and I wish other folks could see this just once.

Before you decide to get a puppy or kitten, please remember that they need a lot of tender loving care. Take care of the animals that you have.

Thank you,
Jane Mathers
Long Beach

Thank you

To the Editor:
Brunswick County Knights of Columbus, Council #9039, wishes to thank all the merchants, businesses and individuals who supported our recent seventh annual golf tournament at Sandpiper Bay, which was a great success. All net proceeds are designated only to approved local charities in Brunswick County.

Andy Bopp
Southport

Exemplary

To the Editor:
My mother lived at Ocean Trail
See Opinion, next page



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