

County

Continued from page 1

Varner and Ms. Horne will confer with department heads about their requests before estimating available revenues for the upcoming year and trimming the lists. Last year's budget was \$72.6 million, including all funds from state and federal agencies and an estimated \$39.4 million in ad valorem taxes. It was based on a \$5.9-billion valuation and 95.25-percent collection rate.

Commission chairman JoAnn Bellamy Simmons said the board left the retreat and didn't agree on everything. But keeping the tax rate the same was one item on which all seemed to be in agreement, despite demands for additional services made by departments and interest groups.

Varner and Ms. Horne plan to confer with department heads on the proposed budget the week of April 15-18, to hear final pleas and present the recommended version to commissioners at a special meeting May 12.

The board must hold a public hearing on the proposal and adopt a final version before July 1.

What's different this year may be approaches taken to fund the county water system and fire and rescue departments. Varner has been asked to present the best approach to make the county water system self-supporting, to bring more water customers on line and to make the system profitable. It is now supplemented by ad valorem tax dollars of up to \$3 million annually.

A committee, headed by District 2 commissioner David Sandifer of Holden Beach, is also expected to recommend alternate funding sources for volunteer fire departments and rescue squads. County fire marshal Cecil Logan and emergency medical services director Tracy Jackson are also on the committee along with chiefs from county volunteer fire and rescue squads. They will study possible tax service districts to boost the volunteers' annual budgets.

The committee will hold a public hearing Thursday, March 6, 7 p.m., at the Lockwood Folly community

building on Stanbury Road near Holden Beach to gather public comments. Commissioners say they want to develop a better plan to fund the units. Growth has placed increased demands on the departments, said Ms. Simmons, but the county hasn't been able to increase its contributions over the years.

Also, this board of commissioners will study construction needs as requested by the schools and court system.

A facility review of Brunswick County's courthouse conducted by the N. C. Administrative Office of the Courts recommends a plan to almost double the current size of the courthouse at the county government center near Bolivia to relieve overcrowded conditions of the courtrooms, waiting areas, judges' chambers, clerk of court's office and district attorney's space.

The county has been under pressure by state officials to either renovate or expand the facility to avoid disrupting the judicial system. Four other counties in North Carolina were also examined last year for facility needs under a grant from the State Justice Institute.

And school officials want to build a new elementary school in the western district with \$7.8 million in state revenue bonds. However, some commissioners say first they want to tackle other building needs during the upcoming fiscal year.

"We would also like to look at other alternatives, too, in enlarging some of our schools we have already," said Ms. Simmons.

Ms. Collier has specifically said she wants to study the immediate needs of two schools -- Bolivia Elementary and South Brunswick Middle -- and their problems with overcrowding in the upcoming budget. After those problems are resolved, commissioners may feel better about going to work on new schools.

Cafeteria

Continued from page 1

costs -- a fryer and a combination oven and steamer.

This will allow the staff to prepare more foods from scratch and purchase fewer expensive prepared foods. Equipment had restricted the menu and often forced staff to prepare four different entrees each day because there was not enough equipment to produce the required amount in the allotted time.

As with any restaurant, customer satisfaction determines the financial health of the business, states the plan prepared by Continental Management Consultants of Greensboro. The agency recommends an annual customer satisfaction survey, a committee of campus employees that meets periodically with the food service manager, new menu items, theme and holiday meals on a regular basis, items to draw new customers and retain current ones and new dining space colors, decor and table configuration.

During the current 1996-97 fiscal year the county cafeteria will operate on a \$408,945 budget based on \$101,913 in sales for public meals, \$170,000 for jail meals, \$66,632 for homebound meals and \$70,400 for congregate meals delivered to senior citizen centers.

Debris

Continued from page 1

shipping lanes to Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, north of Southport, were being dumped around the clock on the over-used disposal site, the shrimpers said.

Debris floating from the ODMDS snagged and tore shrimp nets in this prime harvesting area, depriving county shrimpers of their living. The debris was moving ever closer to area beaches and would leave them cluttered and unattractive to tourists who

annually flock to the area to vacation, the shrimpers warned.

Initially, the corps denied the debris had migrated from the ODMDS, but it commissioned studies of the debris in an effort to identify its source. In a February 18 memorandum, corps operations project manager Brian F. Moore said the shrimpers were right.

"In the past months, the Wilmington District (of the corps) has monitored the composition of dredged material from the Military Ocean Terminal at Sunny Point, completed a debris sampling contract, completed side-scan sonar work and collected wood samples for carbon dating," Moore summarized. "While not all work is complete, the Wilmington District has sufficient evidence to indicate that wood debris has been transported to the ODMDS by dredging operations and that, while properly placed within the ODMDS, wood debris has migrated out."

Moore said it was impossible to determine just how much wood had migrated from the disposal site and said the two hurricanes and two tropical storms which struck the Cape Fear region in 1996 might have exacerbated the problem.

"The corps will conduct a general clean-up of the site," Moore wrote. A contractor will be required to retrieve wood debris from the affected area and the debris will be deposited in a land-based disposal area. Clean-up is to be completed by June 1.

The corps said it will also seek alternate spoil disposal sites for its upriver dredging activities.

"Development of a sufficient number of disposal sites may significantly reduce the amount of material placed in the ODMDS," Moore wrote. "This is the preferred course of action."

If bucket and barge dredging is required in the Cape Fear River in the future, the Wilmington District says it will require screening of dredged material and removal of wood debris before spoil is transported to the off-shore disposal area.

Semans said local shrimpers and the N. C. Fisheries Association were aided in their effort to force a clean-up of the Cape Fear River mouth by assistant Army secretary Martin Lancaster, of North Carolina.

"Martin Lancaster was essential," Semans said. "He basically told the corps to get in there and clean it up."

Wreck

Continued from page 1

While airborne, the right side of the truck struck a telephone pole, but continued to travel another 20 feet before striking an oak tree. The vehicle came to rest in a yard in the 3000 block of East Yacht.

Occupancy

Continued from page 2

short-term lodging. City manager Rob Gandy said aldermen feared the proposal by the task force would not be adopted and Southport would be left without the option to raise its municipal occupancy tax.

Even if Southport wins the General Assembly's approval to raise the city accommodations tax, it may not do so immediately.

"They said, 'We want the option, but we are not going to act on it yet,'" Gandy said of the board of aldermen's action.

Aldermen also refined the resolution they will send Redwine. An original proposal tied the request for a higher accommodations tax to a need to rebuild the burned Southport Community Building. Tuesday night, aldermen decided the resolution would not mention earmarking occupancy tax money for that project, but would indicate that tax proceeds would be used to promote tourism, promote economic development and waterfront improvements and for "other public purposes."

In a memorandum to aldermen this week, Southport Community Building Reconstruction Committee chairman Ken Mabe warned the board against using occupancy tax funds for building construction.

"... I am somewhat concerned about the message we will send to the individuals, organizations and businesses who have already pledged their financial support to rebuild the Community Building," Mabe wrote. "The committee's goal has always been to renovate/reconstruct the Community Building without using tax dollars, utilizing contributions from the citizens of Southport and the surrounding communities."

Aldermen Delaney and Adams opposed the proposal to raise the municipal accommodations tax also.

The Flower Shop

Home of the \$2.00 Fresh Cut Bouquet
ROSES - \$15.00 dozen this week
Stop in today and register for our monthly drawing give away (with purchase)
Discounts for churches, schools & civic organizations

4561 LONG BEACH ROAD 457-9303

Stow-A-Way Mini Storage

Units available for rent.
457-0881
Bethel Church Rd., Southport.

CSIG Carolina Security Insurance Group

Since 1973 457-6373

Beach Homeowners! Now Available

Home • Auto • Flood • Boat • Business
Worker-Comp • Medical-Group • Life Accident
Agents: Bill Kirby
Bob Childs, Brenda Rabon
Competitive Rates! Discounted Rates for Points.

120 E. Moore St., P.O. Box 11518
Southport, NC 28461

PROFESSIONAL Tax Service

You Deserve A Professional Income Tax Preparer This Year.

Be sure you have all your information to prepare your 1996 tax return. Call for a customized tax organizer at no cost or obligation.

Hilton Soba
(910) 278-1792

Personal & Business Tax Returns prepared by a N.Y. State C.P.A.

HELP!

There has been an accident!
Someone please call 911.
Can You Help This Man? YES.

As a member of the Southport Rescue Squad.
Emergency Medical Technician
Classes start March 3.
Brunswick Community College
Southport Annex
457-7916 Leave Message

Just for you...

Spring Dreams

FREE Gift With Purchase of two or more products*

Our Spring Dreams gift worth \$33 includes travel sizes of:

- LUXIVA® PREVENTAGE® Daily Defense Creme
- Powder Rich™ Eyeshadow Duo! in Taupe and Eggplant
- LUXIVA® Ultra Thick Mascara in Black
- Liquid Makeup SPF 16 in Creamy Beige

MERLE NORMAN
COSMETIC STUDIOS
The Place for the Beautiful Face®

Mon.-Fri. 10-5:30 Sat 10-3 Beach Road Plaza, 457-9009

Boutique New Spring Fashions Arriving Daily

Tired of being at home? Interested in making some extra money?

Stop by Western Sizzlin today and apply for a Part-time Waitress position.

River Run Shopping Center, Southport

Compare and Save with MBE's

NO FINE PRINT™

Long Distance Phone Rates

- ✓ No Annual Commitment
- ✓ No Cost To Sign-Up
- ✓ No Monthly Minimums
- ✓ No Hidden Charges
- ✓ Great Low Rates

Ask Us How To Start Saving Today!

4930 S Long Beach Rd., Southport, (910) 457-0772, Fax (910) 457-0773

KB's Beach Bar

Big St. Patrick's Day Bash

- Corn Beef Cabbage All Day!
- Drink Specials - Watch the Race on Sunday
- Featuring Your Mix Mister Enid
- Best Rendition of "O'Danny Boy" Contest

705 Ocean Drive
Yaupon Pier Complex
278-1825

Learn what Long Beach Town Officials and the news media is not telling you!

If you think the sewer was a big rip off, you need to know about...
BEACH RENOURISHMENT, Town Water System, etc.

For more information call
278-3636 278-9536

PAID FOR BY LONG BEACH UNITED FOR PROGRESS