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Long Beach Regional wastewater plan sought

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Opening yet another door to development of a regional wastewater management system, Long Beach Town Council Tuesday night voted unanimously to adopt a resolution calling on Brunswick County to establish a central sewage treatment plant to serve the region.

The same resolution states the town's intention to participate in capitalizing a central treatment plant and to build a municipal wastewater collection system to provide flow to a county-operated treatment plant.

"The Town of Long Beach shall participate with Brunswick County in the planning of a wastewater treatment facility located in an area of mutual choice," the resolution begins.

Earlier Tuesday, county commissioners authorized Brunswick County's stormwater and wastewater committee to begin drawing lines for wastewater service districts, councilor Horace Collier reported.

In other business brought before Long Beach Town Council, members disappointed a number of residents who supported a temporary rescission of a ban on burning yard debris. Commissioner Jim Locke's motion to interrupt the burning ban while the town awaits delivery of a leaf vacuum was defeated by a 5-1 margin. Though Locke would not name another councilor, he implied one or more councilors might have reneged on a campaign promise to ease burning restrictions. Mayor Joan Altman said council had discussed the burning issue at a recent retreat and had decided then to keep the ban in force.

Councilors also Tuesday night set workshops or public hearings on proposed ordinance amendments to regulate the removal of trees on private property, to control animals and to regulate establishment of adult entertainment businesses. The tree preservation ordinance will be discussed with the planning board and recreation advisory board on March 4. The animal control ordinance will be the subject of a public hearing before council's regular April 21 meeting and the adult entertainment ordinance will be the subject of a public hearing to be held before council's regular March 17 meeting.

Wastewater proposal

Councilor Kevin Bell said the wastewater resolution to county commissioners was a product of the county's stormwater management and sewage treatment oversight committee he has served for over a year. The committee has decided the best approach to wastewater management is to divide Brunswick County into sewer service regions.

The committee envisions -- and the resolution seeks -- Brunswick County ownership and operation of one or more regional wastewater treatment facilities, fed by county population centers.

Bell said each of Brunswick

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Dune repair has been a critical part of town response to a series of nor'easters which struck Oak Island and the Brunswick County shoreline last week. The effort at Long Beach has included use of the town's wheel loader. Long Beach crews are now doing beachfront maintenance work the town previously had to hire contractors to do.

Photo by Jim Harper

Brunswick County

Board proceeds with trash collection plans

By Terry Pope
County Editor

At least one county commissioner is not pleased with the way a six-year, countywide garbage disposal contract that may be approved February 23 is taking shape.

After meeting in closed session for more than an hour Monday, the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners voted 4-1 to assure Waste Industries Inc. it wants to negotiate a deal that will pay the hauler \$5 million during fiscal year 1998-99. Commissioner Bill Sue's motion stipulates the 18 towns and municipa-

lities in the county will get a chance this week to read the contract before it is voted on next Monday.

District 3 commissioner Leslie Collier of Long Beach says she is not pleased with the way negotiations have gone, and she cast the only dissenting vote to Sue's motion. The contract would provide curbside, once-a-week pickup throughout the county, even inside towns where garbage collection is offered.

"As I've stated before, I have felt uncomfortable with this process of negotiating and working out the solid waste proposal," said Collier. "I would like to have seen a more formal bid process from the beginning. I

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Digging permit criticized

By Terry Pope
County Editor

County officials fear a state permit issued February 5 to Bell Construction Co. to mine sand from 23 acres adjoining Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point north of Southport will damage groundwater in the area.

The N. C. Department of Environment, Health and Natural Resources issued the permit without holding a public hearing and apparently before a 30-day comment period had expired. County attorney Huey Marshall was instructed Monday to pursue a hearing on the borrow pit. County commissioners say they

want to be heard and warn they will take "appropriate legal action if needed."

The permit includes conditions that prohibit pumping water off-site to prevent sedimentation problems. There are no restrictions, however, to keep the company from pumping water to one area of the property while digging continues in another. The company will use the sand to build a protective berm at the edge of the military depot to deflect the impact of an accidental explosion. Sunny Point is the nation's largest military ammunition port.

The project involves a 19-acre borrow pit, a plot of

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Oak Island

Bridge still on schedule

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

A state probe of alleged wrongdoing by former Board of Transportation member Odell Williamson will not delay completion of a second bridge to Oak Island scheduled for late 2000 or early 2001.

In fact, \$6.5 million recently was added to the second bridge to Oak Island project to keep it on track for timely completion, said Michael Mills, a N. C. Board of Transportation member-at-large.

Mills, of Wilmington, who has strong family ties to Brunswick County, has carefully monitored the second bridge to Oak Island project since Williamson's November 7 forced resignation as District 3 representative.

Williamson has been accused of using his position as a transportation board member to influence the siting of a road corridor to the bridge through land he or his family owns. The State Bureau of Investigation is said to have focused its investigation, however, on Williamson's role in improvement of Old Georgetown Road in

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County supports project

By Terry Pope
County Editor

As far back as 1959 there was talk of a bridge that would one day link Oak Island with the mainland at Sunset Harbor.

Now, nearly 40 years later, with the project stalled by a "recent controversy" over plans, the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution Monday it hopes will keep the project E. F. Middleton first envisioned on the front burner.

"I hope this resolution will send a strong message to the state and a few who are fighting this bridge," said District 3 com-

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County schools

New facilities, fresh outlook

By Holly Edwards
Feature Editor

Settling into their new office building at the Brunswick County Government Center this week, school administrators said it wasn't the elegant furniture, lushly carpeted floors or freshly painted walls that impressed them most.

After moving out of dilapidated trailers and a 65-year-old building with rotting floors and ceilings, these employees said they most appreciated problems they will no longer have to endure, like flying termites, leaky

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Superintendent of schools Marion Wise unpacks in the new central office building at the Brunswick County Government Center. Wise said he expects the new facility to improve employee morale, enhance the school system's public image and improve its recruitment effort.

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