

Our Town

Southport

City aldermen committed \$12,000 over the next two years in applying for a Single-Family Rehabilitation Program grant of up to \$200,000. T. Dale Holland, president of Holland Consulting Planners Inc., said Thursday night his firm will submit the application on behalf of the city for no fee and no promise of contract should the matching grant be received. If funded, the project would involve approximately eight owner-occupied dwellings in no defined project area.

No public comment was offered at the brief Thursday night session and alderman Paul Fisher was the only board member with non-agenda items for board consideration. He suggested a meeting be held with Mark Johnson of Southport Marina to update the city on work being done at the facility. Fisher also asked that city police and recreation departments come forward with suggestions on skateboard safety regulations, and proposed that if safety gear is required that the city purchase some such equipment for loan. He said he had heard that Long Beach "may be building" a skateboard facility, and expressed interest how the Oak Island community might be dealing with the question of liability.

A workshop on wastewater management issues facing the city was scheduled Thursday, April 23, 7 p.m.

Yaupon Beach

Commissioners conducted a first budget workshop Tuesday to decide on a schedule for completing the task of funding local government for the fiscal year to begin July 1. Board members also received from staff budget information relative to the town's water and sewer funds.

Finance officer Jean Yates and town clerk Nancy Wilson will attend a risk management conference at Southport City Hall this week. Officials of the N. C. League of Municipalities' interlocal risk management group are to update area officials on insurance services offered by the league.

Commissioners are to meet in regular monthly session Monday and will review a draft land use plan update from consulting planners with T. Dale Holland and Associates. Commissioners will add their comments to the draft plan which will be the subject of a public information meeting to be held at a later date. Land use plan updates are required every five years of local governments in North Carolina's 20 coastal counties.

Mayor Dot Kelly, commissioners Bill Smith and Roy Johnson and town clerk Wilson will attend a regional League of Municipalities meeting in Wrightsville Beach April 21. Infrastructure development is the topic of the regional meeting.

Caswell Beach

Commissioners are expected to ratify an interlocal agreement with Brunswick County, signing on to the county's roadside refuse collection agreement with Waste Industries Inc., when they meet in regular monthly session Thursday. Commissioners have already agreed "in principle" to become part of the countywide trash pickup formula, but commissioners are now free to formalize their position since a final contract was approved by county commissioners.

Also Thursday, commissioners will act on an ordinance amendment which will set new and higher base rates for water service. An operations and maintenance contract with Brunswick County may also be ripe for approval. The contract, under which the county will run a consolidated Caswell Beach water delivery system, has been negotiated for several months.

In other business, commissioners are to consider asking Brunswick County Airport Commission to accept Caswell Beach as a sponsoring local government and grant it a representative to the airport board. The town's beach erosion control committee will present a report and seek approval of a resolution in support of beach nourishment.

An alternate member of the town's planning board is needed. Those willing to serve are asked to submit a letter of interest to town clerk Linda Bethune at Town Hall.

Bald Head Island

Cyber correspondents take note: The e-mail address for village government at Bald Head Island reported here last week was incorrect. You may e-mail your favorite councilor or staffer at villagebhi@aol.com. URL for the village website was correct as printed: <http://www.greendog.com/villagebhi>.

Spring has definitely begun on the island. Bald Head Island police are scheduled to begin bicycle patrol this weekend.

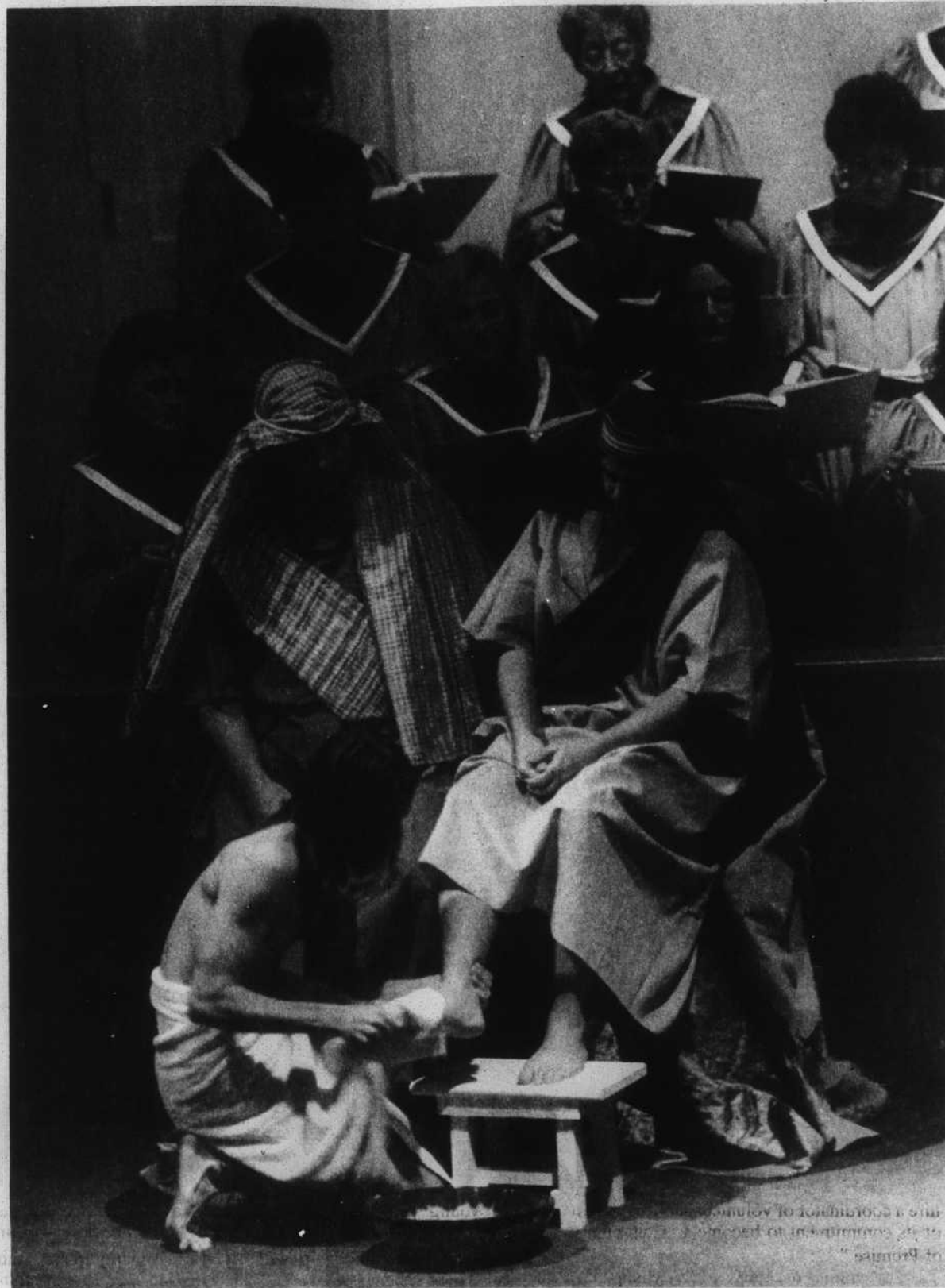
Lots of meetings to keep track of at Bald Head Island in the next week. The village planning board met at 2:30 p.m. today (Wednesday). The village finance committee will meet at 3:30 p.m. Thursday. The village transportation committee will meet at 10 a.m. Friday to continue its look into how homeowners and visitors will access the island when, in the future, the developer no longer provides ferry service. Lighthouse Landing Homeowners Association will meet at 10 a.m. Saturday. All meetings will be held at Village Hall.

SBSD

Commissioners Monday okayed a revised site plan for Live Oak Village Shopping Center. The only changes made in a plan approved earlier by commissioners involved an alteration of square footage of one building. The new site plan shows commercial units of 1,200 square feet and 2,400 square feet to be built behind the KFC building.

Construction of the district's 500,000-gallon-per-day treatment plant and its wastewater collection system are on schedule, consulting engineer John McLaughlin told commissioners. It is expected collection system construction on N. C. 211 and on Long Beach Road will be completed before the tourist season begins. A crew has already begun collection system installation in the Sea Pines community.

Despite numerous time extensions, Pizza Hut operators have failed to install external back-to-back grease traps. Commissioners will shut-off water service to the restaurant if the traps are not installed by May 1, they said. The traps are needed to assure quality of flow to the Southport wastewater treatment plant, as outlined in an agreement between the city and the district. "We cannot afford to have anything in that line going to Southport that is not supposed to be there," district chairman James R. (Bubba) Smith said. "It will destroy our relationship with the City of Southport." The agreement allows the district to deliver up to 100,000 gallons of wastewater per day to the city for treatment.



The Southport Baptist Church choir and dramatists celebrated Holy Week in their presentation of "Who Do You Say I Am?" with highlighted episodes in the ministry of Jesus Christ on Sunday and Monday nights. Information on upcoming services will be found on the church page of the "Neighbors" section.

Photo by Jim Harper

Appeal process to be reviewed

An amendment to Southport's subdivision ordinance that would allow board of aldermen review of planning board decisions will be considered at a May 14 public hearing.

City aldermen voted 5-1 Thursday night, with Paul Fisher opposed, to schedule the hearing. The action follows a controversial planning board decision to reject a River Drive resident's request to subdivide his large tract into lots. The applicant claimed the rejection was due in part to his being black. Since hearing his complaint earlier this year, aldermen have viewed some of the reasons for denying his request as valid, but consider others to be arbitrary.

Under the present subdivision ordinance, rulings on preliminary plats by the planning board cannot be appealed to the city board of aldermen -- only to the courts. That's not why aldermen are elected, Ward II representative Nelson Adams said Thursday night.

"The public should be able to come before the board of aldermen if they've got a problem with the See Appeal, page 8

City delays signing on trash agreement

By Ed Harper
Pilot Editor

Brunswick County made a pitch for city involvement in its countywide garbage collection program Thursday night, but Southport aldermen put a lid on a decision until at least their May meeting.

The county last month signed a six-year, \$30-million contract with Waste Industries Inc. that includes roadside collection for each household and hauling of garbage to a regional landfill in Sampson County. The \$5-million-per-year pricetag is based on a \$10.98-per-month fee for each of 40,000 Brunswick County households -- including those in incorporated areas -- payable from ad valorem tax collections. The package includes once-weekly collection, but supplemental collections -- and recycling efforts -- would be left for the city to negotiate separately with Waste Industries. That firm serves the City of Southport now.

The Brunswick County contract calls for service to See Signing, page 8

SOUTHPORT

Chili a hot item

Whether you like chili hot and spicy or sweet and tangy, you'll enjoy the ninth annual Robert Ruark Foundation Chili Cookoff scheduled Saturday at Franklin Square Park.

Some of this area's finest chili recipes will be featured in the competition. Chili-tasting tickets will be available for \$4 beginning at 11 a.m. and will be sold as long as chili supplies last. Chili tasting will begin at noon.

Disc jockey Tommy Robbins will provide entertainment and the Easter Bunny will make appearances throughout the day. A variety of arts and crafts exhibits will be on display in the park and a petting farm and pony rides will be available for children.

Other features include a 15-minute ride through downtown Southport aboard the "Southern Choo-Choo," NASCAR remote-control cars, a performance by the Sea Coast Cloggers at 10:30 a.m., and a line dance performance at 1 p.m. by the Cowboy Round-Up group from Charleston, SC. Area queens will perform from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Awards for the chili contest will be presented at 3 p.m. Prizes are \$500 for first place, \$250 for second place, \$100 for the People's Choice Award and \$100 for the best-decorated booth.

The chili cookoff is the primary fund-raiser for prizes awarded in the Robert Ruark Foundation short fiction, poetry and art contests held in the fall.

'Brunswick County has already made a commitment, but we all have to play a role in that commitment.'

David Sandifer
District 2 commissioner

Sanitary district meeting

Board member role questioned

By Richard Nubel
Municipal Editor

Debate among Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District commissioners grew contentious Monday when commissioner Ginger Harper charged a fellow commissioner had aided the location of a district concrete plant just as SBSB commissioners sought to zone the plant out of a residential area.

As commissioners discussed conditions of Airport Road and Sky View Lane, commissioner Lucille Laster said her business, Oak Island Landscaping, had installed a septic tank for the concrete plant located at the end of Sky View Lane. Heavy trucks going in and out of the plant site have been blamed for the poor condition of the two roads.

"Then you knew a concrete plant was going in there before we zoned it out," Harper told Laster.

For the first time Monday, commissioners received a computer print-out of all checks paid in the month

"At the time I got the septic permit? No," Laster responded.

Most complaints about the concrete plant have come from residents of the Airport Road area. Commissioners Harper and Tommy Bowmer both reside on Airport Road.

Earlier in the meeting, Harper and Laster sparred over language to be contained in an agreement that will allow Sacred Heart Villas, a planned 44-unit retirement village on Doshier Cutoff Road, to pass 5,000 gallons of wastewater daily into a district-owned line to the Southport wastewater treatment plant.

While Harper contended Sacred Heart should only be limited to 5,000-gpd flow, Laster insisted the flow be tied by contract to the 44-unit retirement complex, preventing use of the allocation by the church itself or other buildings.

"Without it being said, it is done," Harper told Laster.

"I want it said," Laster responded angrily. From discussion of Sky View Lane and the concrete plant, Harper turned debate to payments she See Sanitary, page 8