

It's that time again... for strolls along the Oak Island strand, for enjoying the beach, for summer.

## ▶ Long Beach

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Island Corridor Development Plan. County commissioners have not yet approved the memorandum. (See related stories, page 1).

But, the council meeting of Tuesday night clearly was a meeting of great meaning to emergency services. In addition to authorizing the recruitment of professional rescue personnel, council agreed to take proposals to purchase a new fire pumper at an anticipated cost of between \$177,000 and \$220,000. Also authorized was use of the rescue squad radio frequency by newly

formed Oak Island Water Rescue Inc. Dispatch will provide that service at a cost of \$1 per year as soon as it can provide proof of insurance. The town also will allow the new water rescue unit to utilize surplus town equipment.

Under Walters' plan to employ professional rescue personnel, four persons would be hired to cover one 12-hour shift seven days per week in teams of two. Walters said the professionals would work their 12-hour shifts days, when volunteers have trouble covering rescue call demands because of their work schedules. Long Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad personnel are supportive of the addition of paid per-

sonnel to their ranks, the town manager said.

Also, under Walters' plan, expected to cost an additional \$75,000 per year, the rescue squad building above the town police station will be renovated to provide dormitory space and other needs of paid personnel. Staff was also authorized to begin discussions with Brunswick County EMS personnel to coordinate the activities of professional emergency medical staffs in the town and county.

In response to councilor Horace Collier's contention the Shannon Fire Station should be up-fitted to house paid emergency medical personnel, Walters said the paid duty crews were better housed near the police department.

"We are limiting, for now, paid personnel for rescue," Walters said. "At a later time there will be a need for paid fire personnel and then we will up-fit the fire station."

After council's meeting, Walters said he would seek to hire emergency medical personnel trained at either the EMT level or at paramedic level. He said the town's option to establish a unit capable of paramedic level response should be held open. To provide the advanced life support capabilities of a paramedic level response team would require participation of Doshier Memorial Hospital in a formal EMS program, much like the professional EMS service Brunswick County provides.

Although Long Beach will move to add paid professionals to the rescue squad roster, volunteers' service will remain the backbone of the organization, the manager and council said.

"In my discussions with them, the volunteers have been very supportive and we see them as playing a very vital role in the operation," Walters said.

Mayor Joan Altman agreed.

"We understand most of our members are working folks," Altman told two rescue officers in attendance. "If providing paid personnel helps keep your rescue squad strong, we are happy to do so."

Council also directed staff to review fees for rescue services. Walters said, under his funding proposal, it would be essential to charge those able to pay for rescue services they receive.

## Rec department seeks volunteers

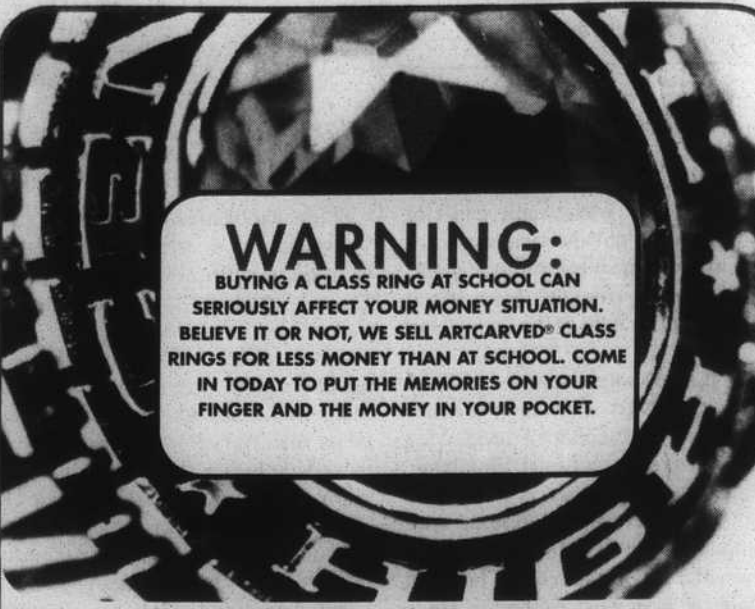
Volunteer and instructor positions are available for programs offered through the Long Beach Parks and Recreation Department.

For further information, persons may call the Long Beach Recreation Center at 278-5518.

## Rec info

Deep-sea fishing trips, sunrise and twilight canoe and kayak excursions, dolphin and turtle-watch boat trips and bike rides are among events and programs scheduled in May by the Long Beach Parks and Recreation Department.

For a complete schedule of upcoming events, persons may call the Long Beach Recreation Center at 278-5518.



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