THE STATE PORT PILOT

Up, up a[...]

Miss Brunswic[...] [...]ong high
flyers at Satu[...]

Junior-[...]
Local golfe[...] [...] Carolinas
tournament at Panther's Run - 1C

Wastewater treatment
District system draws interest of Oak Island

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

With Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation legally jilted, Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District has a new suitor — the Town of Oak Island.

Long Beach town councilors and Yaupon Beach commissioners voted unanimously Thursday to direct staff to prepare a proposal by which the Town of Oak Island would assume responsibility for the Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District wastewater management system. The Town of Oak Island will be created July 1 by the consolidation of Yaupon Beach and Long Beach.

The idea that the new town should offer to take over in some manner Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District's wastewater system came from Yaupon Beach town attorney Roger Lee Edwards, Yaupon Beach mayor Dot Kelly said.

"(Edwards') thought was that they were under the gun from USDA," mayor Kelly said. "It might help the annexation to go down a bit."

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has loaned or granted SBSD virtually the entire $11.3-million cost of wastewater management system construction. The federal agency has

> 'I think it's time to get down to specifics and explore what we can do. And, that can be a combination of a lot of things.'
>
> **Joan Altman**
> **Long Beach mayor**

threatened to call loans to the district if management is not improved, SBSD chairman Gene Formy-Duval said recently.

A substantial portion of Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District served by its wastewater management system will become part of the Town of Oak Island in September. Yaupon Beach initiated annexation of about 500 acres bounded by Long Beach Road, Airport Road and Fish Factory Road in September, 1998, and a court upheld

Festival to 'rest' Sunday, July 4

North Carolina will save its biggest Fourth celebration 'til the fifth this year, as Southport hosts the official state observance of Independence Day.

The N. C. Fourth of July Festival will hold its parade and fireworks display on Monday, July 5, preserving a more solemn atmosphere on the Fourth. Events on Sunday will include gospel singing on the Southport waterfront, ceremonial activities at Old Smithville Burying Ground and a wreath-laying at The Moving Wall, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on display at the city waterfront. There will be children's entertainment in Keziah Park, and the art and craft exhibits will remain open in Franklin Square.

Festival-goers may need that day of rest.

The festival officially begins Thursday with the opening program and naturalization ceremony, then accelerates Friday with the opening of art and craft exhibits in Southport and Beach Day in neighboring Oak Island. Saturday activities will include the 5K Freedom Run and children's events in the morning, exhibits and tours throughout the day, and a street dance that evening.

Monday, July 5, is a full day.

The festival parade begins at 11 a.m., to be followed by a regatta on the Cape Fear River, entertainment throughout the afternoon on two park stages, a Sea Notes Choral Society and Brunswick Concert Band program, continued art and craft exhibits, and a beach music concert featuring The Embers. The fireworks display over the river at dusk will bring the 1999 festival to a close.

The Moving Wall will continue on display through July 8.

ISLAND GIRLS

Caribbean sounds pleased young and old alike Monday evening as Sons of Steel entertained the Memorial Day crowd in Waterfront Park. The Greensboro group will appear again June 12 in a Beach Day celebration at the Long Beach cabana.

Photo by Jim Harper

County spending evaluated

Brunswick faces 25-percent hike

By Terry Pope
Staff Writer

Somewhere in the county's proposed $104-million budget, there might be areas to cut spending and reduce the 60-cent tax rate.

Maybe.

Brunswick County commissioners on Tuesday began trying to do just that while sifting through the sheriff's department and emergency medical services budget requests. That's where 23 of the 62 new full-time employees that county manager Jim Varner wants to hire would go to work.

"Each time you cut out a little bit of money, you cut out a little tax," said commission chairman JoAnn Bellamy Simmons. "You can look at the larger items, but there are a lot of smaller items that have increased, too."

So page by page, commissioners are questioning how last year's $83.3-million budget has suddenly grown to $104 million in one year. Varner's proposed 1999-2000 budget would increase spending 25 percent, he says, in an effort to get a handle on the county's substantial growth. Very few full-time workers have been added to departments during the past four years.

A public hearing will be held on the budget this Thursday, June 3, at 7:30 p.m. in the commission chambers in the public assembly building at the county government center near Bolivia. The board has also scheduled three more workshops for June 8, 10 and 14, all at 3 p.m.

It will meet with the Stormwater Management Oversight Committee and chairman May Moore at 6 p.m. on June 14. Commissioners can adopt a budget anytime following Thursday's public hearing but must do so before July 1.

Brunswick Community College officials plan to address commissioners June 8, when the board also will review the budgets for operation services, solid waste management and the county landfill.

The budget is based on an assessment of 60 cents per $100 valuation and on an estimated tax base of $8.9 billion. A revaluation earlier this year increased property values an average of 57 percent countywide over last year, when the tax rate was 68.5 cents per $100 valuation.

Brunswick County sheriff Ronald Hewett requested $3.83 million to run his department while Varner has recommended that amount be trimmed to $3.53 million, a reduction of about $298,000. Hewett told commissioners Monday he needs four more deputies, a bailiff, secretary, domestic violence

Budget review continues
New town still looking at 36-cent rate

By Richard Nubel
Staff Writer

A proposed $113,000 program by which the Town of Oak Island street department would acquire equipment and personnel to do street widening and new paving "in-house" was nixed by Long Beach town councilors and Yaupon Beach commissioners at a joint budget planning workshop Thursday.

The Town of Oak Island will be created by consolidation of the towns of Long Beach and Yaupon Beach on July 1, also the first day of the new fiscal year for local governments in North Carolina.

Public works director John Olansen said the paving proposal was aimed at expanding the ability of the town workforce to create bicycle and pedestrian paths and to widen streets. That "in-house" ability would cut down on the amount of paving work for which the town must contract

with private firms. He estimated the in-house paving capability would save Oak Island between $400,000 and $500,000 over the course of ten years.

Though the expensive program was scrapped by budgetmakers, Olansen said the proposed $990,649 street department budget could not be pared by a like amount. Contract costs of doing the paving work he anticipated the town workforce would do must now be plowed-back into the street department budget.

Commissioners and councilors said they were dissuaded to begin an in-house paving program this year, as they were not sure how much paving would have to be done in the 500-acre mainland annexation area which is to become part of Oak Island on September 30.

The axing of the "in-house" paving capability was commissioners' and councilors' first major policy decision in this second of six anticipated budget workshops. Elected officials

Photo by Diana D'Abruzzo
Brunswick Learning Center graduate Shaun Brown gives mom Mary Daniels a kiss after the graduation ceremony Thursday. Area graduations are reported extensively in the Neighbors section this week.

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