

# Sunset Beach To Consider Gore's Parking Offer Again

BY TERRY POPE

With both developer Ed Gore and fellow council members expressing a willingness to compromise, Sunset Beach Town Council Monday moved one step closer to accepting an offer that would give the town 35 acres for parking on the island's west end.

The board also reviewed a plan that would provide up to 89 parking spaces at three locations on the island. Rights-of-way owned by the town would be converted into parking spaces while elevated crosswalks would be built to the beach, said council member Minnie Hunt.

Julia Shambough, coordinator of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development public access program, told the board that each of the proposals would be considered for state funding through grant applications from the town. However, she warned that funds would be limited since only \$500,000 is expected this year from the N.C. General Assembly for the beach access program, which includes 20 counties.

Councilman and developer Ed Gore asked the board Monday to reconsider his offer to donate 35 acres to the town for parking. Gore offered to donate the land last year provided the area be used for parking by the town, but board members could not agree on the wording of the deed. The matter was tabled again at the November meeting.

Gore asked the board Monday to go into executive session, if necessary, to discuss the deed with Town Attorney Mike Isenberg.

The board did not go into executive

session, but did agree to have Isenberg reword the deed to eliminate a clause that would allow the land to revert back to the Gore family under certain conditions.

Ms. Hunt said it was the "feeling of the council that they wanted a fee simple deed" with no reversion clause. "When the parking lot is there, it is there," she added. "Once there is a parking lot there, I want to make sure the town has it forever."

Isenberg was instructed by the board to reword the deed to state that if the town begins construction on the parking lot within a certain number of years, then its ownership would go to the town. If the town fails to begin construction during that time, then the land would revert back to the Gore family.

Gore said he is willing to give the town more than three years to begin constructing the parking lot since it may take years before funds are available.

Members had been hesitant to accept Gore's initial condition that the property revert back to his family at any time it was no longer being used for parking.

The board is expected to vote on the revised deed at its February meeting.

Ms. Shambough advised the town to "get some experience with smaller projects before working on this larger project." She said the plan to construct 89 parking spaces and crosswalks to the beach at various locations may have to come in phases since the entire package might cost \$500,000, the agency's entire budget. Providing parking on the 35 acres

may be as far as five years away, Ms. Hunt said. The town would have to purchase an oceanfront lot to provide access to the area.

"That's three years at the minimum of having any parking along the Main Street right-of-way," Ms. Hunt said, "and I don't think we can wait that long."

The plan compiled by the town's parking committee, which met in early December, shows available land at the end of 12th Street, at the east end of Main Street and on a second row lot which the town owns, Ms. Hunt said.

A workshop will be conducted in February, Ms. Shambough said, for towns interested in filing grant applications to receive funds for public beach access. The grants are awarded in late June or early July.

### Other Business

In other business Monday: Town Administrator Linda Fluegel reported the Sunset Beach bridge was out-of-order on ten occasions in December. "From school children not arriving at school, I believe it," said council member Kathy Hill, a Shallotte Middle School teacher.

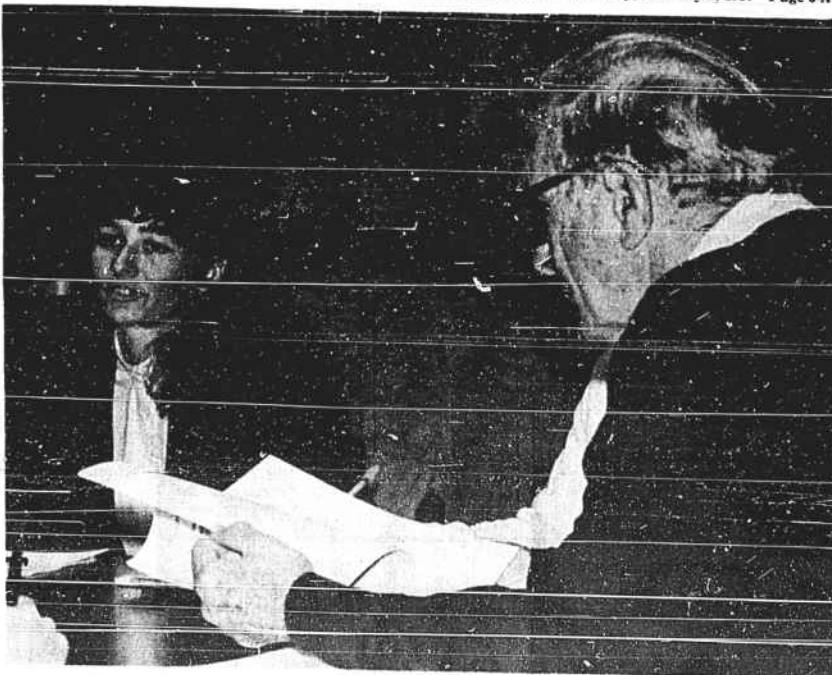
•Voted to delete the old house moving ordinance from the zoning codes. The board adopted a new ordinance last month, but failed to delete the old one from the records, Ms. Fluegel said.

•Voted to eliminate the need for building permits for home repairs that do not exceed \$500. In the past, a permit was needed for all repairs.

•Reported one larceny, one breaking and entering, two disturbances of the peace, five uses of fireworks, three messages delivered and eight assists made to the county on the December police report.

•Reported purchase of a motor grader from the N.C. Department of Transportation in Durham for \$7,500. Costs include \$621 for delivering the grader to Sunset Beach and \$129 for oil and filters, Ms. Fluegel said.

•Reported issuance of two home building permits in December for construction valued at \$130,000 and five permits for repairs. One CAMA permit was also filed, Ms. Fluegel said.



JULIA SHAMBOUGH, left, of the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development public access program, advised the Sunset Beach town council Monday to apply for grants to help the town construct public parking areas on the island. Looking over her suggestions is Mayor Jim Gordon.

STAFF PHOTO BY TERRY POPE

# First Highway Fatality Of Year Is Motorcyclist

Brunswick County's first highway fatality of 1987 was a motorcyclist from Wilmington, who died when thrown from his 1985 Honda cycle at 5:50 p.m. Saturday, nine miles west of Belville.

Curwood Haynes Inman, 56, was traveling east on U.S. 74, at a speed estimated by Trooper T.W. Caulder as 90 miles per hour.

Failing to make a curve, Inman ran off the road and onto the median, where he overturned several times.

He was then thrown from the vehicle and came to rest in a ditch on the median.

The cycle sustained about \$3,000 in damages.

New Year's Day saw two highway accidents in the county, both resulting in Class A or incapacitating injuries.

William Glenn Harrison Jr., 61, of Burlington, N.C., was traveling east on N.C. 211 at 2:40 p.m., 13 miles west of Shallotte, driving a 1986 Chevrolet van.

According to Trooper B.D. Bar-

nhardt, he was driving too fast to negotiate the curve (about 75 mph) and ran off the roadway, out of control. Careening back across the road, Harrison struck a pine tree on the other side.

He was charged with driving too fast for conditions, and was taken to Brunswick Hospital for treatment. He was not wearing a seat belt, said Barnhardt.

The vehicle sustained \$10,000 in damages.

About 5 a.m. that day, Martha Babson Fowler, 30, of Ash, was driving a 1976 Chevrolet on rural paved road 1330, about ten miles west of Shallotte.

Trooper B.C. Jones said she ran off the right side of the road and struck a driveway culvert, suffering Class A injuries. She was taken to Columbus County Hospital in Whiteville.

Fowler, who was wearing a seat belt, was charged with exceeding safe speed.

Damages to her car amounted to about \$2,000.

# County Waters Still Closed

All shellfishing waters in Brunswick County were closed Friday by the Division of Marine Fisheries, N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development.

Rich Carpenter, southern regional manager for Marine Fisheries, said the action was taken following the turbulent weather of Jan. 1 and 2. "The rain and overwash made it

necessary to close all waters for taking of oysters or clams," he said.

Some area waters are re-opening, following last week's high tides and storms. Notably, from Carolina Beach to Surf City, waters open Jan. 7.

Carpenter said he had no idea how long the closing will be in Brunswick County.

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