

Marine Fisheries Reinstates Opposition To Lockwood Marina

BY DOUG RUTTER
Despite earlier statements that it would drop its formal opposition to a proposed marina on the Lockwood Folly River, the state Division of Marine Fisheries last week submitted its second set of comments against the project.

The comments were received last Monday by the state Division of Coastal Management, which will grant or deny a major development permit for the project after reviewing marina plans and comments of 14 state and federal agencies.

Although Marine Fisheries comments are considered vital in permit application reviews for marinas, it is the only agency commenting on the project to oppose it. The state Division of Environmental Management submitted the last of the outstanding comments last Friday.

Channel Side Corporation, developer of the 500-acre Lockwood Folly golf and water community, plans to build the 50-slip marina on the Lockwood Folly River south of Varnamtown near the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway.



"I just felt like we weren't doing our job unless we did object to it."

William Hogarth
Director of Marine Fisheries

Shellfishermen, however, have objected to the proposed marina, claiming that it will pollute and close down one of the few remaining productive shellfish areas in the river.

According to William Hogarth, director of the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, there are 1,400 shellfishermen in Brunswick County and 40 percent of their harvest comes

from the area of Lockwood Folly River where the marina is planned. The proposed marina is also about 200 feet upstream of a shellfish area the state has used in its oyster relocation program. This program pays fishermen to move shellfish from polluted areas to unpolluted areas where they can later be harvested.

Lockwood Folly River is a sensitive body of water, said Hogarth, that is frequently closed to shellfishing after heavy rainfall when run-off carries bacteria into the river. He said the state needs to concentrate on what's causing the temporary closures and correct it rather than adding to the problem.

"We are just concerned that any additional impacts will cause more closures," he said. "We're concerned about Lockwood Folly, period."

Although all comments on the proposed marina have been received, John Parker, major permits coordinator with Coastal Management, said a decision may be delayed because there is some question whether a sewage treatment plan (See MARINA, Page 2-A)

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Catch It If You Can

Paul Durchuck of Raleigh flings a disc across the waves to his cousin, Steve Barry of Paoli, Pa., as the pair romp in the surf at Ocean Isle Beach. The boys recently spent an afternoon at the beach with their grandfather, Joe Barry of Brick Landing Plantation.

STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

GOP Picks Tom Pope To Challenge Baxley

BY SUSAN USHER

With the general election three months off, Brunswick County Republicans have replaced their candidate for the District 1 seat on the Brunswick County Board of Education.

Thomas (Tom) Pope, a 48-year-old building contractor who lives at Thomasboro, will replace Grissett on the November 8 ballot. It will be his first bid for public office. He will run against Douglas Baxley of Tarheel Acres, who will be seeking his second term in office.

Diane Grissett had filed for the seat to insure a spot on the District 1 ballot for the Republican party, according to Chairman John Doshier, "warming the seat" until a candidate could be found.

Pope said Monday that he had been approached by party leaders and asked to run, agreeing to do so about three weeks ago.

Grissett dropped out and the Brunswick County Republican Party's Executive Committee submitted Pope's name to the Brunswick County Board of Elections, which approved the party resolution at its meeting last Friday morning in Bolivia.

Pope, whose daughter enters the seventh grade at Shallotte Middle School next week, said he wants to serve on the school board because he's concerned about the continuing drug problem in the schools and from a desire to see "authority and respect" put back into the schools.

Pope said he'd like to see more for-

cible action taken to rid the schools of drug use.

While as a board member he could not single-handedly accomplish those goals, Pope said he can speak up on those issues and try to arouse the interest of other board members and the public in 1) seeing appropriate policies adopted and implemented then backing up faculty and administrators; 2) enlisting the community as a whole in addressing those problems such as drugs that stem from the students' homes, rather than the classroom; and 3) encouraging greater accountability by parents for their children's school performance.

Pope, a former missionary, sees himself as a "peacemaker, with no ax to grind."

"I think we've got to build up, not to tear down the system. We've got some good employees in the system and they're moving in the right direction. They just need more respect and authority."

Among his credentials, Pope said his 20 years of building experience and management would be helpful to the school board in overseeing its construction and maintenance programs and in working with employees.

After attending high school in Greenville, S.C., he earned his diploma while serving a three-year stint in the U.S. Army as a military policeman. His time was divided between the occupational forces in Korea and West Point Military Academy.

He attended Bob Jones University for one year and then attended New Tribes Bible School Mission in Oviedo, Fla. He worked as a missionary, building churches in Mexico with the Evangelical Church of Mex-

ico and the Bethel Mission of Roma, Texas, before settling in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas where he went to work as a builder.

He moved to Brunswick County in 1976 and in addition to construction is involved in land development.

"We're a rural county. There's no reason students can't go to school and come out with an education," he noted, expressing a concern about the county and nation's illiteracy rate. "Everyone, every taxpayer must be concerned about that. Everyone is affected," he added.

The District 1 seat is among to be filled during the November election. The others are District 4 and District 3. The incumbents, James Forstner and Marvin McKeithan respectively, were defeated in the May primary.

Wine Sales Make Ballot

It's official. Shallotte voters will decide the future of off-premises sales of unfortified wines in town with a referendum this fall.

The Brunswick County Board of Elections approved the town's request for a referendum during its meeting last Friday. The vote will be held Nov. 8 at the same time as the general election.

Shallotte Aldermen petitioned for the referendum at the request of four town grocery stores, which are now permitted to sell fortified wines but not the less potent unfortified wines.

Town voters last addressed this issue in 1985. At that time, 66 percent of those voting opposed it.

Postal Service May Have Site For South Brunswick Station

BY DOUG RUTTER

Postal service officials aren't saying much, but all indications are that they have selected a site for the proposed South Brunswick Islands Station of the Shallotte Post Office.

"We never announce sites until we finish closing and then make them public record," said John Gordon, real estate specialist with the U.S. Postal Service in Greensboro.

According to local developer Bill Benton, however, the postal service has an option to purchase one piece of property at Seaside. The 120,000-square-foot tract of land is located on N.C. 904 between Bill Benton Realty and Ocean Isle Fashions Inc.

Benton, one of four owners of the property, said the postal service has an option to purchase the land which will expire in January. The option has been in effect for more than a year, he said, and it was renewed on one occasion.

Although postal officials would not confirm a site selection or option to

purchase any land, Gordon said progress is definitely being made with the proposed South Brunswick Islands office, which would serve the towns of Ocean Isle Beach, Sunset Beach and Calabash.

Selection of a site was expected last year but was delayed when the federal government passed legislation requiring major spending cutbacks from the postal service. These cutbacks affected almost all capital projects as well as retail service hours at existing offices.

The federal Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act passed last December required the postal service to save \$815 million in capital expenses over the next two fiscal years. As a result, Gordon said many planned offices in this region had to be abandoned.

"One of the few which did survive, because of the need in that area, is the Brunswick station," he said. "It is our intent to move forward with that project."

Gordon said the postal service will

probably have money in its capital account this fall, either October or November, with which it can secure land for the office. The actual purchase, he said, will take several months to complete after the money becomes available.

Benton, however, said he was told the purchase should be completed in October. He declined to discuss the purchase price of the property in question.

Once the land is purchased, the postal service will accept bids on construction of a planned 13,000-square-foot office. Actual construction should take about one year.

The South Brunswick Islands station was proposed to handle growth in that area of Brunswick County. The office, which is not expected to affect mailing addresses or the ZIP code, will centralize the delivery area for Ocean Isle Beach, Sunset Beach and Calabash.

The site selection process began last April with the postal service act- (See POSTAL, Page 2-A)

Convention Trip Costs Taxpayers Over \$8,000

Seven Brunswick County officials attended the annual conference of the National Association of Counties in Anaheim, Calif., Aug. 5 through 11.

According to County Manager John T. Smith, the local delegation included himself, Commissioners Benny Ludlum, Chris Chappell and Jim Poole, Clerk to the Board Regina Alexander, Finance Director Lethia Hahn and Register of Deeds Robert Robinson.

The conference consisted of meetings and workshops that involved current problems facing counties

across the nation, Smith said, noting that one topic of particular interest to the local delegation was solid waste disposal.

Although all of the bills hadn't been tallied as of Tuesday, total cost of the six-day trip was more than \$8,185.50, excluding meals, according to figures supplied by Smith.

The seven officials' airfare from Wilmington to Orange County, Calif., amounted to approximately \$3,184. Lodging for five nights at The Hilton in Anaheim cost at least \$3,426.50, based on a single room rate of \$97.90 per day. Also, registration for the

conference totaled \$1,575 or \$225 per person.

The county manager said the trip will be paid for out of travel line items in the officials' respective budgets.

He added that his wife and the wives of Chappell and Ludlum also attended the conference. Smith said Tuesday that he did not know if county policy requires that the three men reimburse the county for additional expenses incurred by their spouses, but he said he plans to reimburse the county for expenses incurred by his spouse.

Commissioners Do Their 'Homework;' Name Williamson To Airport Board

BY RAHN ADAMS

When members of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners promise to do their homework, they mean what they say.

Despite an earlier pledge to openly debate the controversy over the Brunswick County Airport Commission's lease with its fixed-base operator, county commissioners last week needed no outside input and no



Williamson

open discussion even among themselves to appoint Ocean Isle Beach developer Odell Williamson to a key vacancy on the seven-member airport board.

The action was taken during a four-minute-long special meeting last Thursday night in Bolivia. All five county commissioners were on hand, as were the six other airport commissioners and about 10 interested citizens.

The 68-year-old Williamson, who manages the Ocean Isle Beach Airport and also owns 277 acres adjacent to the county airport on Long Beach Road, was not present at last Thurs-

day's meeting.

He was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Albert Parker Jr., who resigned last month due to the strife-torn airport board's inability to work together. Parker was appointed in January to a three-year term.

The airport commission was scheduled to hold its regular monthly meeting Wednesday night (Aug. 17) at the airport. The board was faced with taking action concerning its lease with Airport Enterprises before an Aug. 26 deadline set by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Other airport commissioners include county appointees Richard

Conrad, Harold Hartwig and Burton K. Myers, Southport appointee John Walters, Long Beach appointee Lavern Tagge and Boiling Spring Lakes appointee George H. Lanier Jr.

Resolving The Dispute

Prior to Williamson's appointment, the airport board was evenly split on its position toward Airport Enterprises' 15-year lease, which has been a point of controversy ever since it was initially approved last December. Conrad, Myers and Lanier have supported the lease, while Hartwig, Walters and Tagge have opposed it.

Williamson said in a telephone interview last Thursday night that he has an "open mind" concerning the lease. He noted that he had not yet seen the document, although he had read media accounts of the controversy.

At the request of individual board members, the FAA completed a review of the lease in May and indicated that the commission was leasing too much land to the fixed-base operator. Under federal law, the lease must allow enough space at the airport for more than one operator if the facility is to be eligible for future federal funding.

In a July 29 letter to Brunswick County Commission Chairman Grace Beasley, Samuel F. Austin of the FAA regional office in Atlanta, Ga., stated that the airport commission "needs to cancel or renegotiate the lease" to delete portions of a 6.6-acre tract that Airport Enterprises does not need.

Airport Enterprises Director Harry Gale told the Beacon Friday that his company has agreed to renegotiate the lease. "I have personally assured the FAA that we will comply," he said, adding that he notified the airport commission of

(See WILLIAMSON, Page 2-A)