

Utility Board Recommends Three New Water Projects



LANDING TWO RESIDENT Jim Smart questions UOB members Monday about plans for SAD 8.

BY RAHN ADAMS
After hearing mostly positive comments from property owners Monday night, the Brunswick County Utility Operations Board voted to recommend that the county proceed with three special assessment district (SAD) water projects located in the Calabash area.

The projects include SAD 8 (Shady Forest, Landing Two and Landing Three), SAD 10 (Calabash Acres south of N.C. 179) and SAD 11 (Pine Bur Acres and Carlyle Acres).

More than 100 property owners in the three SADs turned out for the three 30-minute public hearings Monday night in Bolivia. UOB members Ed Gore, Ernest McGee, Alfonza Roach and Robert Nubel were present, while Bill English, Morris Crouch, Jimmy Oldham and Frankie Rabon were absent.

The UOB's unanimous decision to recommend the projects came during a 30-minute special meeting following the public hearings. The meeting included a 15-minute executive session requested by Planning Director John Harvey to discuss "possible land interest acquisition."

After the closed session, the board voted to recommend to commissioners that UOB Attorney Mike Ramos be authorized to make offers for several water line easements in SAD 6, which is located in the Whispering Heights/Water Wonderland areas.

In other action taken Monday, the utility board voted to recommend that commissioners award the contract for the SAD 5 (Ocean Pine Acres) project to low-bidder W & S Underground Inc. of Florence, S.C.

W & S Underground's \$82,725.60 bid was almost \$29,000 below the second lowest bid. Engineer Jay Houston also stated that the company's bid was considerably lower than an original \$107,000 estimated project cost.

All three UOB recommendations will be presented to commissioners at the county board's Sept. 6 meeting.

During the public hearings Monday, property owners had mainly two questions: When will the water be available, and how much will it cost? Only two of the 26 speakers expressed outright opposition to the water projects. Both were residents of Pine Bur Acres.

Board members and the UOB staff explained that the projects will take at least six months to complete before their final costs are known and assessments can be tallied.

However, officials noted that the respective assessment rates in the county's first two SADs were \$6.64 and \$6.51 per foot of frontage.

If the commissioners decide to proceed with the new projects, a second public hearing will be held for each district after the projects are completed and before assessments are finalized.



MOSQUITO CONTROL SUPERVISOR Rick Hickman (right) talks with truck driver Charles Long, who sprays the Waccamaw, Sea Trail and Seaside areas.

Mosquito Problem Depends On Rain

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the most common species here, he said.

Hickman said mosquitoes can lay anywhere from 100 to 400 eggs at a time. The eggs hatch five to 10 days after they are exposed to warm water. If uncontrolled, two mosquitoes can turn into more than 2,000 in only a matter of weeks, he said.

What they need to reproduce, besides water, is food. "Along the coast—our most populated area—there's nothing else for them to eat but people," Hickman said. "The more food that's available, the larger the mosquito population is." Some 40 dredge spoil islands along

the Brunswick County coast are prime breeding spots for mosquitoes. Hickman spotchecks all of the areas, and when they contain water, he treats them with Malathion to kill mosquito larvae.

"If you miss one of them (spoil areas), you're going to populate a much larger area," he said, remembering a Friday afternoon earlier this month when his truck broke down before he could treat a spoil island near Holden Beach. By the following Monday, his office was swamped with complaints from Holden Beach area residents. Six mosquito control trucks began

spot-spraying the county in April. The two full-time and four part-time truck drivers began making regular rounds of the county in mid-June.

Hickman said his department this year has sprayed 880 gallons of a 91-percent Malathion solution and 175 gallons of a 57-percent Malathion solution, at a total cost of about \$19,825 for the chemical alone.

He noted that residents can help his department out by getting rid of old tires or other objects that often hold stagnant water. Also, individuals should be sure to empty buckets and other containers where mosquitoes can breed.

More Rainfall Expected Here

Above average rainfall but seasonable temperatures are expected over the next few days in the Shallotte area, according to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady.

Canady said rainfall through the weekend should measure about an inch, which is about one-quarter of an inch above normal. Temperatures should range from around 70 at night to the upper 80s during the day.

During the period of Aug. 16 through 22, the daily average temperature was 81 degrees, which Canady said was two degrees above normal. The daily average high temperature was 90 degrees, and the daily average low temperature was 73 degrees.

The maximum high temperature during the period was 93 degrees, occurring on Aug. 18. The minimum low temperature was 70 degrees, occurring on Aug. 16 and 22.

Canady measured 1.33 inches of rainfall during the seven-day period.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

MOTORISTS on Ocean Boulevard at Holden Beach found the going a little difficult Sunday afternoon when a severe thunderstorm dumped 1.1 inches of rain on the Shallotte area in just under an hour. Stormwater stood several inches deep between Boyd and Roger streets, where this photo was taken.

Judge Rules Lot Is Public

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The developer filed a second withdrawal of the property shortly after last November's trial, due to questions that were raised concerning the 1958 plat and whether or not the 1970 withdrawal was premature. Law requires a 15-year waiting period for withdrawal.

However, Briggs' ruling states that both withdrawals "are void and without legal effect in that the property in question was not unused or abandoned for a period of 15 years or more..." The public used the lot for beach access through 1987, the judge said.

Briggs also dismissed the company's claim of ownership through adverse possession. "That other than putting up the fence (for stabilization) as required by governmental agency in 1976, the defendant has not 'used' the property subject of this

lawsuit since 1976."

The judge pointed out that Gore's federal application in 1976 to stabilize the lot listed "to provide much-needed additional public and business parking" as the purpose for the stabilization work.

In addition, Briggs answered the defendant's claim that dedication of the street right-of-way was never officially accepted by noting that "the plaintiffs were purchasers of lots at Sunset Beach... by reference to the 1958 plat, and they, therefore, accepted the offer of dedication of Sunset Boulevard to the ocean south of Main Street." Briggs did not mention the town council's 1970 resolution in his ruling.

The ruling stated that Sunset Beach and Twin Lakes "shall immediately and forthwith remove any and all barricades or other impediments restricting in any way the use by plaintiffs or other members of the public of Sunset Boulevard to the ocean." However, Trest said Monday that no changes would be made on the property "until there's been a final ruling (after appeal) or another trial."

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