

Utility Board Recommends \$5 Million Water Project

BY RAHN ADAMS

After being told the county can get "more bang for the buck" by looking beyond immediate water needs, utility officials this week endorsed a proposed \$5 million project to put additional water in southwestern Brunswick County.

The recommendation, which will be forwarded to county commissioners later this month, was unanimously approved at Monday's two-hour Utility Operations Board

meeting in Bolivia.

UOB members Robert Nubel, Ed Gore, Ernest McGee and D.V. Jones were present. Commission Chairman Frankie Rabon, who also is a non-voting utility board member, and Commissioner Kelly Holden sat in on the latter portion of the meeting.

Prior to the board's vote, consulting engineer Jay Houston briefly reviewed three alternatives presented by his firm to the utility board last September. The county

authorized Houston to do the \$7,500 study to find short-term solutions to increasing water needs between Shallotte and Calabash.

According to the study, short-range needs can be met if the county builds a one-million-gallon elevated storage tank off Ocean Isle Beach Road near N.C. 179 and an 800-gallon-per-minute booster pump station near the intersection of N.C. 904 and N.C. 179. Cost is estimated at about \$1.5 million.

However, Houston indicated that by the time the tank and pump station could be in operation, the water system would face additional growth-related needs that would require attention. When the study was released last September, the projected operation date for the "immediate phase" was June 1989.

The alternative recommended by Houston and endorsed Monday by the UOB involves construction of a water line from Shallotte to Grissetown

along Old Shallotte Road, then to a proposed one-million-gallon elevated tank on N.C. 904 at Old Georgetown Road.

Also, a 2,200-gallon-per-minute booster station would be built near the intersection of N.C. 904 and N.C. 179, and line would extend along Old Georgetown Road to the Calabash area. Estimated cost is \$5,070,000.

Houston said the main difference between that plan and two other alternatives, which share the same

immediate phase, is that the recommended proposal puts water closer to current growth areas, mainly along Old Georgetown Road. To get similar results with the other two alternatives—both of which take the Ocean Isle Beach Road route—the county would spend between \$5,050,000 and \$5,510,000.

The engineer said the first phase of the recommended alternative would take about two years to design and (See WATER, Page 2-A)

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SANDY SPOIL flowing from this pipeline is expected to help rebuild the erosion-battered east end of Holden Beach. A dredge boat is pumping the sand from Lockwood Folly Inlet.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Dredging Project Rebuilding Holden Beach

BY DOUG RUTTER

For years, residents and property owners at the east end of Holden Beach have watched their precious beachfront erode and disappear into the ocean.

But now they are watching the beach grow.

A dredging project that began last week in Lockwood Folly Inlet is helping rebuild the island's vulnerable tip. The project should result in approximately 200,000 cubic yards of sand being added to the east end of the strand, an area where erosion consistently threatens to undermine or damage Ocean Boulevard and a number of cottages.

The sand is being sucked from the bottom of Lockwood Folly Inlet and piped across the island to the strand by a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contractor, Cottrell Engineering Corporation of Chesapeake, Va.

Employee Wendell Davis said the company is dredging around the clock, transporting approximately 4,500 cubic yards of sand from the inlet to the beach in a good day. The

work should last about two months, he said.

At the beach end of the pipeline, the spoil sprays directly onto the beach. As the water runs into the ocean, Davis said the sand settles on the beach.

"It's a settling process all of the time," he said. "You lose some sand, but I'm sure you don't lose too much."

The dark material being added to the beach is exactly like the sand typically found on the strand, said Davis, and will be white once it is cleaned and dried out.

Holden Beach Mayor John Tandy said the sand being added to the beach is probably some of the same sand lost to erosion over the years. "That sand that they're putting in there came from there. We're just putting it back to a certain extent."

The local work is part of a \$2.3 million U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintenance dredging project in the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway.

Davis said the contractors com-

pleted a beach renourishment project at Carolina Beach before arriving at Holden Beach last Wednesday.

"What we did up there didn't do any good," he said, adding that a northeaster eroded the sand as fast as it was put down. "It blew it away as fast as we were pumping it out."

Davis said a storm from the southeast or southwest could have the same effect at Holden Beach. "There's no way of telling how long it will last," he said. "There's so many things that can alter it."

Mayor Tandy added, "It is one of those things where you have to keep your fingers crossed. A giant storm could get it in a couple of days."

Once the work is completed in Lockwood Folly Inlet, the dredge will move to Shallotte Inlet where more sandy spoil will be pumped onto the eastern strand of Ocean Isle Beach.

The project estimate calls for about 24,000 cubic yards of sand to be piped from the inlet to the beach near Shallotte Boulevard. The actual amount of sand could be higher.

The corps of engineers estimate at

Holden Beach was only 130,000 cubic yards. Davis said the inlet had apparently shoaled in more between the time the estimates were made and the project was begun.

Ocean Isle's eastern end has experienced erosion problems similar to those at Holden Beach.

Last fall, two homes on East Second Street were condemned by the town and later destroyed by order of the owner after erosion had caused rear steps and porches to collapse and also had exposed both septic tanks. Since then, at least one other east-end property owner has indicated an interest in moving his beachfront home.

Other areas in Brunswick County scheduled to be dredged as part of this project are the Shallotte Inlet crossing and the mouth of the Lockwood Folly River.

Corps of Engineers estimates call for the removal of 11,000 cubic yards of sand from Shallotte Inlet crossing and about 5,000 cubic yards from Lockwood Folly River.

(See DREDGING, Page 2-A)

Planners Will Hold Series Of County Zoning Forums

BY RAHN ADAMS

Why is county zoning necessary? Why is zoning desirable?

Brunswick County planning officials will pose those two questions to local residents—and try to supply convincing answers—at nine public meetings in March and early April.

The Brunswick County Planning Board last Wednesday set a schedule for the forums, which county commissioners ordered early last month to gauge public sentiment before the county pursues the often disputed issue further.

Last Wednesday night's 1½-hour planning board meeting also included discussion of road-naming and house-numbering projects that are necessary before the county can implement a proposed 911 emergency telephone system.

Alan Holden was the only planning board member absent from the session, which had been continued from the board's Feb. 15 regular meeting.

Forums Scheduled

The idea to put the zoning issue before the public originated at a Feb. 1 commissioners' meeting in which Commissioner Kelly Holden said work on an ordinance—in conjunction with a public education program—should begin as soon as possible.

However, other commissioners—including Gene Pinkerton, who supported zoning in his election campaign last fall—indicated that citizens should have input on the subject even before a proposed ordinance is drafted.

At the suggestion of Commissioner Benny Ludlum, a non-voting planning board member, two zoning meetings were slated for four of the county's five districts. The board decided to hold only one forum in District 3 (Southport-Oak Island area) after officials noted that only about 20 percent of the district's residents live outside municipalities.

County taxpayers and residents can attend the forum that is most convenient to them. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

•March 9—Sea Trail Clubhouse;

•March 10—Lockwood Folly Community Building;
•March 16—Shallotte Town Hall;
•March 17—Leland Community Building;
•March 27—CP&L Nuclear Plant Visitors Center;
•March 28—Town Creek Community Building;

(See PLANNERS, Page 2-A)

Kids To Pay For Snow Day

Local students can thank Mother Nature for making them lose what would have been a day off from classes this week.

To make up classes that were missed last Friday due to snow, Brunswick County Public Schools will operate on a regular schedule this Friday (March 3), instead of holding the teacher workday that had been planned.

Outlying sections of Brunswick County received from one to three inches of snow last Friday, while the rest of the county saw relatively little accumulation in the area's first significant winter storm of the season.

Residents in the Calabash, Sunset Beach, Seaside and Ash areas woke up to about an inch of frozen precipitation. Approximately three inches of snow fell in northern Brunswick County, slowing traffic on U.S. 74-76, according to law enforcement agencies.

Local school officials initially delayed the start of school for two hours last Friday, then cancelled classes altogether when it appeared that weather conditions were worsening.

With mainly flurries in Bolivia, the Brunswick County Government Complex opened on schedule last Friday but closed at 3 p.m., due to concern that wet roads would ice up and become treacherous, said Sheriff John C. Davis.

Brunswick Community College closed at noon.

Drug Trafficker Is Fined, Placed On Probation

A Shallotte man who pleaded guilty to cocaine trafficking charges in September 1987 received a probationary sentence Monday in Brunswick County Superior Court.

Judge Henry V. Barnette Jr. sentenced Joseph Sullivan, 27, to a \$5,000 fine and a suspended seven-year prison term with five years of supervised probation, according to the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office.

Also, Sullivan was ordered to per-

form 500 hours of community service work and pay \$1,750 in court-appointed attorney fees.

Sullivan was one of 37 individuals indicted on cocaine trafficking charges in June and July 1987 as a result of work done by the first investigative grand jury in the county and state.

Court records show that the defendant pleaded guilty Sept. 10, 1987, to conspiracy to traffic in more than 28 grams of cocaine and trafficking in more than 28 grams of cocaine. His

sentencing was continued from term to term of Superior Court until it was called this week by the district attorney's office.

Following testimony from an SBI agent Monday, Judge Barnette found that Sullivan had provided "substantial assistance" to investigators—a finding which permitted the judge to impose less than the mandatory minimum sentence of seven years in prison and a \$50,000 fine for each count. The charges also were consolidated.

County Officials To Put On 'Ritz'

Three Brunswick County Commissioners and County Manager John T. Smith leave Friday to attend a five-day national conference in Washington, D.C.

Smith said Monday he will accompany Commission Chairman Frankie Rabon, Vice Chairman Grace Beasley and new Commissioner Gene Pinkerton to the National Association of Counties' Annual

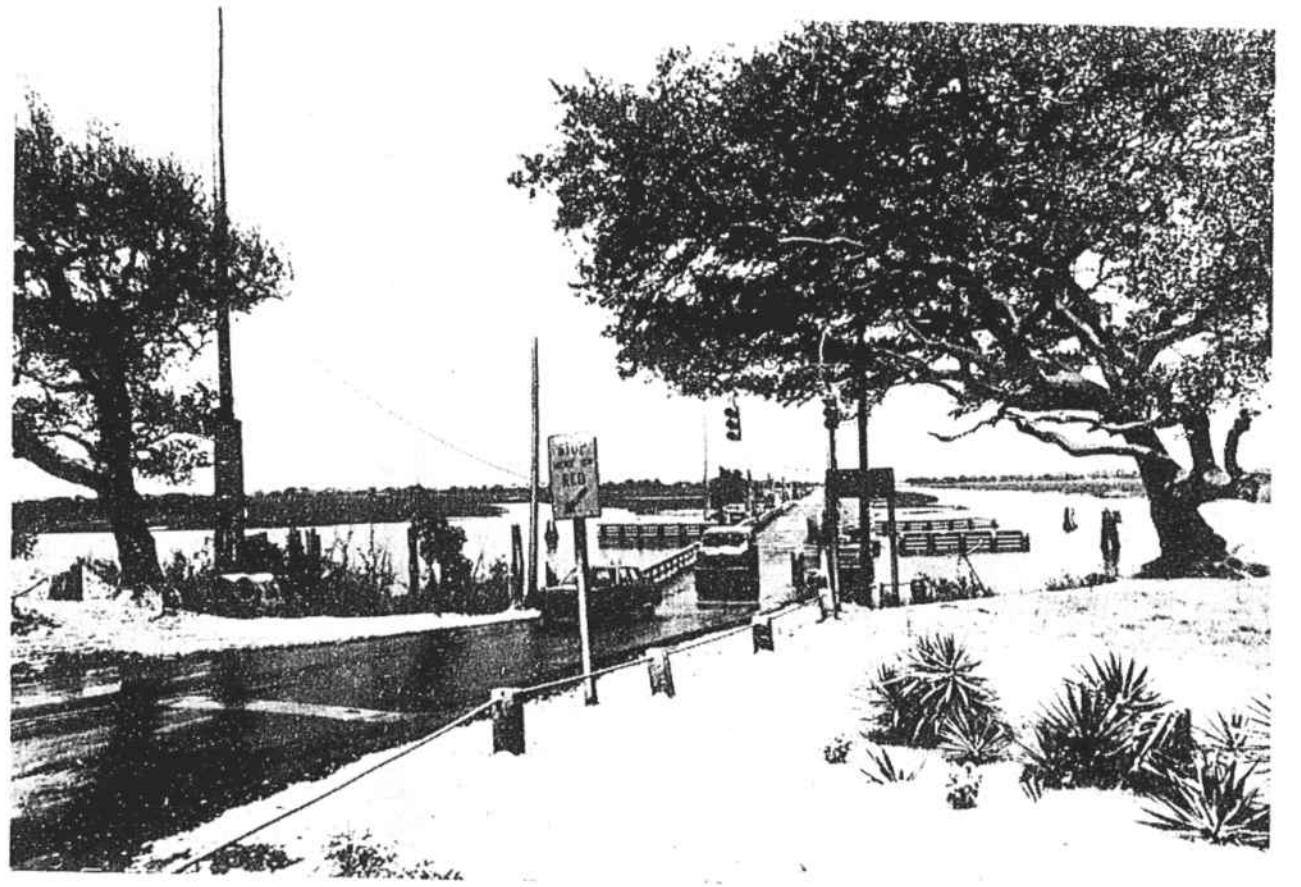
Legislative Conference.

The group will leave from the New Hanover County Airport Friday morning and return Wednesday afternoon. They will stay in Washington at the Hotel Ritz Carlton, Smith said. The conference will be held at the Washington Hilton.

Smith indicated that he and the commissioners plan to attend various committee meetings and

workshops, as well as meet with the state's legislative delegation. He said he was unaware of any specific lobbying efforts the commissioners may undertake.

Excluding meals, the trip will cost county taxpayers \$3,892. Smith said roundtrip airline tickets are \$178 per person; hotel rooms are \$120 per person per day; and conference registration is \$195 per person.



STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

DRIVING WAS NO PROBLEM for Sunset Beach motorists Friday after daylight, although the one-inch

snowfall created some unusual roadside scenery in southwestern Brunswick County.