

Varnamtown Seeks Contract For Fire Protection

BY DOUG RUTTER

Varnamtown officials want to continue the community's good relationship with Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department, but a required contract between the town and the department remains up in the air.

The contract was presented to town aldermen by the department last month and discussed again Monday night during the board's regular monthly meeting.

Aldermen voted to try and work out a contract with the department under which the new town would continue to receive firefighting services, but would not have to make any donation to the department until next year. In turn, the department would be allowed to solicit donations in town as it has in the past.

A committee consisting of Mayor Tracie Varnum and Aldermen Ennis Swain and John David Dawson will take the town's counterproposal to fire department officials before any contract is signed.

The document is required to show fire insurance companies that homes within the town limits are covered by a local fire department, according to Mayor Varnum. Although the town is not required to pay for fire protection, a contract proposed by the department includes a blank space for the town to commit funds on a quarterly basis.

Aldermen considered starting payments to the department next fiscal year, which begins in July, but hope to put off the payments until the town receives its first tax property tax revenues next January.

Board member Ada McDonald said the request for financial support was premature. "They're asking for quarterly payments, and we don't have any money," she said.

Alderman Marion Davis also pointed out that the department already receives donations from town residents and that part of the county tax collection is given to the department each year. With a portion of the town tax going toward fire protection, he noted, "They're going to be taking three shots at our people."

Grant Sought

Varnamtown will be among a number of coastal municipalities in the North Carolina applying for state funding of a CAMA land use plan in 1989.

Aldermen agreed this week to apply for a matching grant which would finance most of the cost of the plan. Mayor Varnum said the state grant would be for \$5,600 and the town would be required to pay \$560 toward development of the plan.

Varnum said the town had to apply for the grant no later than March 31. He said the town board can decide whether to accept the grant or turn it down when grants are awarded this fall.

The Town of Holden Beach has also applied for a state grant to update its land use plan. Ocean Isle Beach officials are considering applying for a similar grant.

Numbers On The Way

Official house numbers will soon be coming to Varnamtown.

Alderman McDonald said Monday that county officials are expected to start numbering property in the Supply area in approximately six months in preparation for a 911 emergency telephone system.

Once in place, the house numbering system will provide permanent addresses for all town residents.

To prepare for the numbering, Mrs. McDonald said the town will have to name all of the streets in town—a project she will continue to work on with residents.

Festival Planned

The town may receive some needed revenue through a town festival tentatively planned for May 6.

The community celebration is being organized by the women of Varnamtown, according to spokesperson Tonya Robbins.

She said it may include a parade and will also feature the sale of food and crafts.

Board members were receptive to the idea and asked coordinators to contact the mayor once details have been worked out. A special meeting may be called to set the date of the celebration.

"If we can get our ladies involved in our town, we can get things done," said Mayor Varnum. "That is the kind of citizenship that will build our town into a good town and a strong town."

To prepare for the festival, residents have also planned a road-side litter cleanup for Saturday, April 22.

Search Continues

The search continues for land and a building for a Varnamtown Town Hall.

After hearing this week that no progress had been made on the project, Mayor Varnum made an appeal to landowners in town. Aldermen hope

Varnamtown Seeks Boundary Change

After only six months as an incorporated community, the Town of Varnamtown is seeking a change in its municipal boundary line.

Aldermen voted this week to authorize state Rep. David Redwine to change the town limits to run along the western right-of-way line on Stone Chimney Road and the northern right-of-way line of Sabbath Home Road. The corporate limits presently run down the center of those streets.

Mayor Tracie Varnum said the revision would not bring in any more property, but would allow the town to pass a speed limit law within the town limits. Municipalities cannot control the speed limit on a road if the corporate limit line runs down the center of that road, he said.

to either purchase or lease a building with an option to buy.

"We need to get out of our churches," said Varnum. "We need to get into our own office and town hall."

Since incorporation last fall, the town board has met alternately in the town's two churches. The next meeting will be Monday, April 17, in Dixon Chapel United Methodist Church at 7:30 p.m.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

MAYOR PRO TEM Ennis Swain, standing, points out a proposed change in the Varnamtown town boundary Monday night as Mayor Tracie Varnum reads a description of the town limits.

Report Refuted

At the close of this week's meeting, Alderman Roger Robinson refuted a recent report in the Wilmington Morning Star that he had failed to pay county taxes for 1988. A correction

was later published in the newspaper, but Robinson said some people may not have seen it.

Referring to the error, he said, "There happened to be more than one Roger Robinson."

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