

Northern Library Project May Stall Until Election

BY TERRY POPE

A committee charged with building a northern Brunswick County library has broken off negotiations with the town of Leland, which wants to oversee the project.

The Brunswick County Library Board of Trustees will be asked by the committee on Oct. 7 to delay turning the project over to the town to build until after the municipal elections Nov. 5.

Committee Chairman Edith Tillman said she hopes Brunswick County Commissioners will eventually step in to take over ownership of the controversial library. At a Leland Town Council meeting last Thursday, council members declined to move in that direction.

"To me, this would be a step in the right

direction," said Ms. Tillman. "We want the county in time to take it over. It's not going to go forward with the trustees, the way it is now."

The controversy began last week when State Library Director Howard McGinn informed trustees that they could not own land on which a library is built. The land donated by the town of Leland has already been deeded to the trustees.

Leland Mayor Russell Baldwin said in the confusion the committee lost its \$50,000 state grant to build the library. Town officials convinced the state to give it back provided the town assume ownership of the land and building, he said.

"I've done nothing at all to hurt this library," Baldwin said. "The only politics in-

involved has been to make sure it fits in with future plans for the town hall."

The new Leland Town Hall will be built on a lot adjacent to the library.

Ms. Tillman asked the council to accept the land back from the trustees and then sign it over to the county.

"That way, it will be in neutral hands," said Ms. Tillman. "I think the council should take a grant step, a leadership step."

She said the trustees should wait until after the Nov. 5 election before taking action on the deeded property. The committee needs to know who the town negotiator in Leland will be, she said.

Baldwin said a plan was accepted by the state library system that doesn't involve the county. Leland would assume ownership of

the land and construction, be responsible for major repairs, contribute annually to its upkeep and advance money for furniture and equipment, he said.

The library needs to raise an additional \$25,000 to \$35,000 to buy furniture for the building, said Ms. Tillman. The committee had planned another fundraiser to get that money while the \$217,000 project was under construction, she said.

"Everybody's saying they will not give a penny if it goes back to Leland," said Ms. Tillman. "This has truly become a political football."

But McGinn said the money for furniture should be in hand prior to groundbreaking, said Baldwin.

Last week, the Belville Town Council

voted to ask trustees to freeze the \$21,500 it has contributed to build the library until the ownership issue is resolved.

At least one Leland councilman believes county ownership of the library system is the best solution.

"There are several good reasons," said Leland Councilman George Yates. "I'm already concerned about our (Leland's) funds."

County ownership would relieve an additional burden from the town, said Yates. The board should stand behind and support the committee, if it wants to seek county ownership, he said.

"It would also serve to heal a lot of animosity," said Yates. "Right now, everyone seems to be in control of this project except for them (building committee)."

Local Man Charged With Taking Truck

A Shallotte area man remained in Brunswick County Jail Tuesday in lieu of \$25,000 bond after being arrested Sunday for allegedly stealing a truck.

James Andre Davis, 28, of Airport Road, was charged with driving without a license, breaking and entering larceny of a vehicle and possession of a stolen vehicle, said Shallotte Police Chief Rodney Gause.

Gause said Officer Keith Croom stopped a truck on N.C. 130 West early Sunday morning that was traveling left of the center line and did not have tags on it.

The police chief said the 1978 Chevrolet pickup truck had been stolen from R.E. Bellamy Hardware store Saturday night, along with about \$2,000 worth of tools.

Besides the truck and tools, Gause said police recovered two microwave ovens and two color televisions that had been stolen from Sea Village near Seaside Saturday night.



Sand Sculptors At Work

Alan Koons of High Point and his daughter, Megan, sculpted this monstrous alligator in the sand at Holden Beach last week. They also teamed up to create a sea turtle and battleship.

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Handgun Class Aimed At Women

Brunswick County sheriff's deputies will teach a handgun safety course for women Saturday, Oct. 12, at 10 a.m., at the Brunswick County Firing Range near Bolivia.

The class will provide instruction in the use of deadly force, handgun

safety procedures and range firing, said Crime Prevention Officer Don Gates.

Participants must provide their own firearms and ammunition. The sheriff's department will provide targets and coaches.

The class is limited to 30 students who must register before Oct. 9, said Gates.

Call the sheriff's department, 253-4321, 457-5101 or 763-7401, to register. Maps showing directions to the firing range will be mailed to those registering, said Gates.

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