

# Holden Beach Working On Septic Tank Management Program

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach homeowners would have to have their septic tanks pumped out on a regular basis if town officials follow through on plans for a wastewater management program.

Town Manager Gary Parker said an ordinance requiring preventive septic tank cleaning will likely be part of a maintenance program being developed by the town.

Septic systems would have to be pumped out each year or every few years depending on the size of the tank, the number of people who live in the home and whether the house is used year-round or only during the summer.

Parker, who has been working with several residents on the program since he started work two months ago, said at Monday's town meeting that it will take longer to work out details of the program than he first thought.

Town officials will need a lot of time to gather information about each septic tank on the island. Developing a schedule for pumping out the tanks also will take time.

"Just the documentation's going to take quite a lot of

work," said Sid Swarts, a former planning board member who has been working on the management program.

Commissioner Gay Atkins said the county health department doesn't have records for some of the older septic tanks on the island. She said records weren't kept before the early 1970s.

Based on current plans, Parker said homeowners would receive a notice from the town when they need to pump out their septic tank. Homeowners would have to send the town an invoice proving that the work was done, or the town would have it done and bill the owner.

Parker indicated Monday that, at this point, there are more questions than answers about the program.

Town officials have to decide if they should handle conventional septic systems and low-pressure pipe systems the same and how the town could tie its program into one being developed by the county.

Parker also said there are legal issues to resolve, such as the town's authority to enter private property to monitor septic tanks.

## Other Business

In other business Monday, commissioners:

■Met in executive session for 20 minutes to discuss personnel and real estate matters. Mayor John Tandy said no action was taken.

■Heard from Parker that street lights at every intersection in town would cost about \$13,440 per year. Lights at intersections on Ocean Boulevard would cost \$8,568.

■Authorized the town manager to sell or otherwise dispose of a 1986 pickup truck that had been used by the public works department. Parker said it was an extra vehicle.

■Agreed to give \$525 to the Greater Holden Beach Merchants Association to honor local troops who served in Operation Desert Storm and who will be in town for the N.C. Festival By The Sea. The board voted earlier this year to give \$750 for a "Salute to the Troops" and spent part of the money for a Fourth of July observance.

■Approved white as the color of vinyl siding for the new metal public works garage. Town board members also discussed the overall plan for the town complex.

They agreed to gas up town vehicles at a service station until the location for a new gas storage tank is approved and agreed to move the house being used as police headquarters once the police move back to town hall.

■Heard from Commissioner Judy Bryan that volunteers with the community's turtle watch program helped 3,549 baby turtles into the ocean this year, with two nests remaining. This year's turtle count was about 300 more than last year, even though there were fewer nests this year.

■Discussed possible ways to fund the paving of Burlington Street. Parker said the town has \$6,000 left in the paving budget, but the cost of paving Burlington will be around \$12,000.

■Took no action on a proposal by Commissioner Bryan to limit the harvest of live sand dollars at Holden Beach. Visitors often fill bags with sand dollars, unaware that the animals are alive, she said. Parker said the town could adopt a local ordinance restricting sand dollar harvests, but probably wouldn't have the authority to enforce it.

## Holden Beach Picks Stretch For Sidewalk

Walkers, joggers and bicyclers who have been dodging cars for years at Holden Beach shouldn't have to wait much longer for a sidewalk along Ocean Boulevard.

The town board voted Monday to take bids for a concrete walkway on the north side of the boulevard between Neptune Drive and Greensboro Street.

Town Manager Gary Parker said Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. has promised to have a crew in town in late October or early November to finish preliminary underground wiring work as far west

as Greensboro Street.

BEMC hadn't planned to return to the island until next year, but the lack of conduit for underground cables between Sanford and Greensboro streets was holding up the town's plans for a sidewalk.

Parker said Bobby Gore, manager of operations with BEMC, agreed to the town's request to speed up the project. "He said he could work with us. He could get a crew in here."

The manager said the \$40,000 that the town budgeted this fiscal year for sidewalks should cover the one-mile stretch between Neptune

and Greensboro.

However, Commissioner Gay Atkins, a long-time proponent of sidewalks, is looking past Greensboro Street to Sand Dollar Drive.

On her suggestion, commissioners voted Monday night to appropriate the \$40,000 that was earmarked for sidewalks last year but never spent. Holden Beach has budgeted \$40,000 for sidewalks each of the last three years.

Ms. Atkins said the town should ask Gore to complete conduit installation to Sand Dollar Drive so the sidewalk could be extended farther

west.

"If the funds are appropriated and sitting there, Bobby might be able to move faster," she said.

To accommodate the first mile of sidewalk, Parker said some homeowners will have to move fences, garbage racks and vegetation out of the street right of way. The five-foot-wide sidewalk will be built near the property line.

Parker said he plans to send letters to property owners telling them to clear the area next to the street. If they don't respond, town crews will do the work.

## Truck Crashes Into Bolivia Area Home

Three people were injured last Thursday when a driver failed to stop at an intersection and crashed into a house near Bolivia.

Charles Russell Watson III, 21, of Long Beach, was charged with driving while impaired and driving with no operator's license after he crashed into a home owned by Goley Glenn Sr., of Route 1, Bolivia, reported State Trooper J.V. Dove.

The accident occurred at the intersection of Midway Road (S.R. 1500) and Brown Road (S.R. 1507) about 3.3 miles east of Bolivia.

According to Dove, Watson passed a stop sign, ran off the road and struck the house around 9:35 p.m.

Watson and a passenger, Brian Keith Ray, 16, of Long Beach, were seriously injured and taken to New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington. A third passenger, Brian Springs, 16, of Long Beach, received minor injuries.

Damage was listed at \$35,000 to the Glenn home and its contents and \$1,500 to Watson's 1974 Ford pickup.

### Pickup Overturns

In another accident Saturday, two people escaped serious injuries when a pickup truck slid off of U.S. 17 and overturned about four miles south of Shallotte.

Barry Wilson Byrd, 17, of Carolina Beach, was charged with exceeding a safe speed by State Trooper W.H. Thompson.

According to the report, Byrd was traveling south on U.S. 17 in heavy rain when his 1989 Isuzu truck ran off the right shoulder, struck a ditch and overturned around 3:50 p.m.

A passenger, Selig Plapp, 20, of Carolina Beach, received minor injuries. Damage was listed at \$4,000.

### DWI Charge Filed

A Bolivia man was charged with driving while impaired and improper passing after his pickup truck struck another car head-on about three miles north of Bolivia on U.S. 17.

Andrew Taft Lewis Jr., 58, was charged following the 7 p.m. accident that happened as Lewis was attempting to pass a car making a left

turn, State Trooper T.W. Caulder reported.

Lewis' 1986 Ford pickup, traveling south on U.S. 17, struck a 1986 Ford station wagon driven by Ronald Matthew Smith, 23, of Wilmington, head-on.

Both drivers received minor injuries and were taken to Cape Fear Memorial Hospital in Wilmington.

Damage was estimated at \$1,500 to the Lewis truck and \$2,500 to the Smith car.

### Runs Into Driveway

A Shallotte man lost control of his vehicle Saturday evening and crashed into a yard near Ash.

Harold Elias Hickman, 65, was charged with driving while impaired and traveling too fast for conditions after his 1988 GMC pickup skidded out of control on Ash-Little River Road (S.R. 1300) and struck a driveway pipe and railroad ties, State Trooper B.D. Barnhardt reported.

Hickman was rounding a curve when he ran off the right shoulder, spun across the road sideways and hit the driveway owned by Harry

Blackwelder of Ash, about 13 miles southwest of Shallotte.

He received minor injuries in the 7:30 p.m. accident. Damage was listed at \$4,000 to the truck and \$100 to the driveway.

### Driver Charged

A Holden Beach man was charged with driving while impaired after his 1985 Chevrolet traveled out of control on Stone Chimney Road (S.R. 1115) about seven miles east of Shallotte Sunday.

Glen Randle Harris, 27, was traveling north at a speed too fast to negotiate a curve when he ran off the road, spun around and crashed onto the north shoulder, reported Barnhardt.

His car knocked down an N.C. Department of Transportation sign and hit a bridge post.

Damage was estimated at \$250 to the bridge and sign and \$650 to the car in the 6 p.m. accident.

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A special Meet-The-Candidates Night meeting will be held on October 22 at 7:00 PM at Town Hall in Holden Beach. Candidates for Mayor and Commissioner will respond to both prepared questions and to questions from the audience on various matters of concern to the people of Holden Beach. The public is invited.

This event is sponsored by the Holden Beach Property Owners Association, Inc.

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