

Holden Beach Police Chief Can Now Reside Off Island

BY DOUG RUTTER

Holden Beach will no longer require its chief of police to live on the island.

Town commissioners changed the residency requirements Monday, giving the chief the option of living in town or within five "road miles" of town hall.

Chief Robert Cook, who was hired effective Dec. 12, doesn't live on the island but resides just across the bridge within two miles of town hall.

Town Manager Gary Parker said he didn't request a rule change to suit the new chief, but Cook's hiring brought to light the need for a revision.

Parker said recruiting a police chief will be easier in the future

with the new residency rules in place.

Mayor Wally Ausley noted that even though the chief doesn't live on the island, he lives closer to town hall than several of the commissioners.

Town board members discussed setting the limit at six miles and three miles before settling on five.

Officials said the new rule will give prospective candidates for the chief's post a larger area in which to look for affordable housing.

The words "road miles" were included in the ordinance amendment as a technical precaution.

Holden Beach businessman Alan Holden warned that someone living on a boat at Long Beach could be residing within five miles of town hall.

Commissioners did not change the residency requirements for any other town employees.

The manager is still required to live on the island. The town code also "encourages" other town employ-

ees to live in town, but doesn't require it.

Other Business

In other business Monday, commissioners:

■Approved preliminary assessment rolls for the paving of Shrimp, Salisbury and Burlington streets. People who own lots that have eroded at the end of Salisbury and Burlington streets will be assessed based on the actual width of their lots instead of platted width.

■Accepted the preliminary assessment roll for work completed on the underground utilities project from High Point Street east. Parker said the town paid approximately \$48,000 for the work, and landowners will be billed about \$39,000 in assessments.

■Voted to pay \$1,700 to Henry Von Oesen and Associates of Wilmington for extra work done on the land use plan update since it was first adopted by the town board last August. Commissioners adopted a

revised plan last month.

■Deleted a section of the town code which allowed the building inspector to charge \$10 for return trips and \$5 for re-inspections. Parker said the charges were included in the code but had not been collected in the past.

■Met in closed session for 1 1/2 hours to discuss a personnel-related issue and attorney-client matters with Town Attorney Ken Campbell. Builder Jeff Lee met briefly with the board to talk about two homes he's had to raise to meet flood code requirements. They were each eight inches too low.

Mayor Ausley said no action was taken.

■Postponed further discussion of street lights until the town manager finds out if Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. will install sample lights for town commissioners and residents to observe.

■Authorized Parker to dispose of a surplus 1988 police vehicle.

Speed Limit Stays, For Now

The speed limit along the westernmost portion of Holden Beach's Ocean Boulevard is 35 mph, period.

But it might not survive the new year by the looks of things.

The speed limit on Ocean Boulevard west of Greensboro Street was 35 mph during the tourist season and 45 mph the rest of the year until last February.

That's when the previous town board decided to change the policy and set the limit at 35 mph year-round.

But Commissioner Gil Bass, one of four newcomers to the board, raised the issue again at Monday's town board meeting.

He said several residents told him they want the off-season limit back to 45 mph. Four people in the audience Monday also said they support a change.

They said there's not enough traffic or people on the island during the winter to warrant the 35 mph limit.

Commissioner Sid Swarts, who lives at the far west end of the beach, came to the meeting armed with facts and figures to support the 35 mph limit.

Among other things, he pointed out that motorists save only 1 minute, 16 seconds if they drive the 3.3 miles at 45 mph instead of 35 mph.

"We've spent more time here tonight than we'd save all winter if we changed it," Swarts said.

Meanwhile, word of last year's policy change at Holden Beach apparently hasn't gone through the N.C. Department of Transportation chain of command.

Building Inspector Dwight Carroll said an N.C. DOT worker showed up at town hall Monday to put up 45 mph speed limit signs.



COOK

Holden Board Adds Extra Meeting

BY DOUG RUTTER

In an effort to cut down on special meetings, Holden Beach Commissioners are adding a second regular monthly meeting to their calendar.

The board will continue to meet the first Monday of each month.

The second meeting, later in the month, will be used primarily as a work session. That meeting will be held on the Wednesday 12 days prior to the next regularly scheduled Monday night meeting.

This month, the workshop meeting will be held Wednesday, Jan. 22, which is 12 days prior to the next business meeting on Monday, Feb. 3.

Mayor Wally Ausley devised the

schedule so the workshop isn't held more than two weeks in advance of the regular business meeting.

For those who forget the system, commissioners have promised to announce the date of each workshop meeting at each regular business session.

All meetings will start at 7 p.m., but the Jan. 22 meeting will begin at 4 p.m. so commissioners can tour the town hall complex.

Board members will consider at their next meeting where to locate an above-ground gas storage tank and whether to proceed with plans to convert the old public works garage into a police station.

Town Manager Gary Parker said the two bids the town received for the renovation project were about double the \$30,000 bids he anticipated.

Commissioners made no decision Monday on a proposal to pay off the \$175,000 the town borrowed from Southern National Bank last year to buy the Davis Street house and pay for renovations.

Parker said the town still owes \$130,000 and can save \$5,100 by paying off the loan three years early.

The manager said the money to pay off the loan could be taken from the town's general fund balance, or savings, which totals about

\$455,000.

"It may sound silly, but it makes a heck of a lot of financial sense," Parker said.

Commissioner Jim Fournier said he supports paying the loan off early. "The loan should probably have not been taken out to start with. This is an opportunity to correct that mistake and save \$5,000."

However, Commissioner Gay Atkins said she wants to make sure the town has enough money in its fund balance before paying off the loan.

She said the town has other areas where the money can be used, and needs to save as much as it can for emergencies such as hurricanes.

North Brunswick Band May Win Spot In Capital Parade

North Brunswick High School's marching band has a betting chance of being selected to appear in the 1992 National Independence Day Festival and Parade this July 4th in Washington, D.C.

The band is one of five from across the Seventh Congressional District nominated by Rep. Charlie Rose for the honor; one will be chosen to represent North Carolina in the event.

Rose nominated one high school band from each county in his district, said Brian Benton, North's band director. Others nominated are Hoggard, New Hanover; Whiteville, Columbus; Lumberton, Robeson; and South View, Cumberland.

"The competition is very stiff," said Benton. "We are extremely honored by the recognition of the congressman and by the nomination itself."

Even if not selected, he said, the nomination is an honor to the band program at North Brunswick High.

Said Lance Koonce of Rose's Washington staff, "They're all strong bands. They were culled from the district offices and their contacts with people who are familiar with the band scene."

"I think North Brunswick has a good chance of being selected."

Annually attended by about 300,000 people and televised nationally, the parade along Constitution Avenue is a highlight of the two-day celebration, which typically has an "Americana" theme, according to Gene Quirk, marketing director for the non-profit organization that sponsors all of the festivities except the national fireworks that evening, which the federal government pays for. Other major events include a pop music concert and a performance by the National Symphony Orchestra.

Quirk said that a band from one congressional district in each of the 50 states is selected to participate in the parade.

"It usually goes to someone with an outstanding record of constituent services and participation, who recognizes the value of the trip to Washington for the students," he said.

The office asks for three to five bands from the district to be submitted for consideration. While the bands have been prescreened by local congressional district offices, the nominees must each submit applications that include a photograph, program description, audition tape and biographical sketch outlining honors and activities. Past distinctions and honors increase the odds of being selected.

The field narrows almost immediately, as several bands usually eliminate themselves from consideration because of either prior commitments or an inability to raise the funds necessary for the trip.

According to Benton, if North Brunswick High's band is selected, the trip would cost several thousand

dollars, all of which must be raised by the band and its local community.

Said Quirk, "To some extent selection does depend on which band can be ready."

Asked if having the money for the trip would increase the odds for the North Brunswick High School Band, he said, "No doubt about it."

Town of Holden Beach FAREWELL PARTY FOR JOHN H. TANDY

The Town of Holden Beach will honor former Mayor John H. Tandy with a party at Town Hall on Friday, January 17, at 4:00 P.M.

The Tandys will be relocating to Chapel Hill, NC.

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'88 Buick Century Custom, V-6, 4-door, charcoal, full pwr.	\$6,464.
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