

BCC Board Wants Auditorium Construction Back On Schedule

BY SUSAN USHER

Work on the Odell Williamson Auditorium is off to a slow start and Brunswick Community College trustees want contractors to know they're not happy with that.

Meeting last week, trustees directed Chairman David Kelly to write Hatcher Construction Co., Inc. of Fayetteville, general contractor, "with a letter to everybody in the world," expressing their concern that the project is a month behind schedule.

"Tell them the board would like the project back on schedule," suggested Al Wooten of Calabash, chairman of the Building and Grounds Committee.

Wooten said BCC's concerns would be emphasized also at a meeting with the architect, contractors and subcontractors.

The lagging schedule is the latest in a series of time-related problems with the project, which was to be paid for with part of the proceeds of an \$8 million BCC construction bond issue approved by voters in November 1985.

Work began on the 1,500-seat, \$3.2 million community auditorium last fall, several years after construction was first expected to begin. It is to be completed near the end of this year.

Committee member Lewis Stanley said he visited the work site, where workers are laying foundation and completing site preparations.

"But there weren't many people working; that's what bothers me. They just don't seem to be putting enough people on the project," he said, with fellow committee member Jim Rabon concurring.

At a meeting in December contractors blamed the

slowdown on delays in steel drawings, Wooten said, but that doesn't appear to be the entire problem.

While expressing displeasure with job progress on the one hand, trustees later agreed to award a series of bid alternates to the general contractor at an added cost of \$228,953, an elective provided for within 180 working days of receipt of the bids, and approved a \$3,526 change order.

Ben DeBlois, vice president for administrative services, said the college has enough money from the bond issue approved by voters for the auditorium to cover the cost of the additional work. Included will be an upgraded sound system, stage rigging and curtains, paving of an access drive and 100-car parking lot west of the auditorium and lighting for the walkways and parking area.

Board members approved the change order to provide a backflow valve to keep antifreeze from the sprinkler system entering the county water line, but expressed concerns that there might be "many more to come" on the project.

Wooten would like one person designated to handle approval of change orders. While not wanting to slow work on the project, Kelly said the board needs to be aware of the nature of and necessity for any change orders sought. On some previous jobs, change orders have been submitted after-the-fact in some instances and in others have added substantially to the final cost of the project, something he wants to avoid this time around.

"I hate to be driven by their paperwork," he said. "I have a real fear we're going to have a lot of these."

Except for changes needed to bring the project into compliance with laws, said Kelly, "We need to let them

know we expect the building to be built according to the plans and specifications."

Funds to cover this and future change orders will be drawn from a line item set aside to cover replacement of any unsuitable soils. Soils didn't prove to be as much of a problem with this building as it did with the last, leaving \$22,000 that can be spent on other needs.

Budget Eased

DeBlois also reported that the state revenue picture has improved and BCC will get back a portion of the \$71,660 it had to give up at the start of the year. The \$36,000 will be used to offset insurance expenses that this year had to come from the college's own budget rather than the state Department of Community Colleges budget.

Committees Appointed

Kelly made committee assignments for the year as follows: Building & Grounds—Al Wooten, chairman; Jamie Milliken, vice chairman; James Rabon and Lewis Stanley, members; Finance—Donna Baxter, chairman; Malcolm Grissett, vice chairman; Eugene Hewett and Chuck Lanier, and Legislative—Lynda Stanley, chairman; Jimmy Hobbs, vice chairman; Jerry Munn and Ken Perrone.

Studies Under Way

Brunswick County high school students are being surveyed this month regarding interest in various programs Brunswick Community College is interested in adding to its curriculum.

These include recreational grounds management, aquaculture and several allied health programs.

A consortium, made up of the Wilmington Area

Health Education Center, and Brunswick, Cape Fear, James Sprunt and Southeastern community colleges, is seeking \$3.5 million in grants to implement programs on the various campuses to meet current and/or anticipated worker shortages in allied health fields.

Concurrently, BCC is submitting early proposal applications to the state board seeking approval for two of the allied health programs targeted for its campus, phlebotomy and medical records technology.

Other Business

In other business, trustees approved an updated accountability plan for the continuing education department and heard that:

■Area fire departments are set to burn a building at the Southport campus Jan. 25. "We're going to extreme ends to make sure other buildings are unharmed," said BCC President Michael Reaves. "They're not going to just torch it and try to fight it. They're going to burn it in sections and put it out several times."

■Also at the Southport campus, heating and air conditioning improvements to selected classroom areas should be completed by the end of the month, opening the way for local groups and businesses to begin renovating classrooms on an "Adopt-A-Room" basis starting Feb. 1.

■Boney & Associates Architects are to present the college's long-range plan for the campus at the March 18 meeting.

■Its members still aren't 100 percent in financial support for the BCC Foundation, according to Rabon, unlike the college's staff and faculty.

Calabash Still Mulling Sewer System Options

BY DORI COSGROVE GURGANUS

Calabash commissioners continue to explore alternatives for providing sewer service to the town.

Tuesday night, six out of seven board members met with Jim Billups and Joe Tombro, engineers with the consulting firm of Powell Associates of North Myrtle Beach, S.C., in a workshop session to review the latest draft of preliminary figures and scenarios for the system.

Present were Commissioners Ray Card, Jon Sanborn, Stu Thorn, Bob Noe, Ed Rice and Mayor Douglas Simmons.

A second, similar meeting is tentatively planned, most likely after an upcoming public hearing, Billups said.

Commissioners plan to set the date for that hearing at their regular

board meeting Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7 p.m.

At the hearing, commissioners want to find out what residents think about the addition of a sewer system to non-sewered areas such as Hunter's Trace, Calabash Acres and Acreage Estates. Currently only a large section of Carolina Shores is served, by a private utility.

"Testing the waters, you might say," Card said of the forum.

Once that hearing gives the commissioners more evidence to consider, they plan to meet again with the engineers to further discuss the town's options.

After that meeting, Billups said he and Tombro would be ready to make their recommendation to the town.

So far the commissioners haven't

finished culling the options available to the town. Billups and Tombro outlined five scenarios Tuesday night, which are:

■Purchasing the existing treatment plant in its entirety from Carolina Blythe Utilities;

■Building the town's own plant and system;

■Tying into the existing Carolina Blythe system;

■Tying into a regional system to be considered with Sunset Beach; and

■Not doing anything.

Billups is encouraging the town to keep open options for tying into a regional system at some point.

"We can't 'not do anything,'" Sanborn said of the town's options.

Under the current proposal presented in November, the down-

town/waterfront business area is rated as top priority for receiving service. But the engineers maintain that their figures are by no means final, and that public comment will influence which avenue is chosen.

Calabash hired the same consulting engineers as Sunset Beach, which also plans to build a sewer system, starting with service to the island. The towns have discussed, along with several major landowners and development representatives, strategies for developing a regional system as a means of holding down costs.

Billups said he thinks Calabash will qualify for the Farmer's Home Administration loan for which it has applied. He and Tombro will continue researching other means of funding.

Varnamtown Offers \$500 Reward To Deter Vandals

BY DORI C. GURGANUS

With all but three street signs up now in Varnamtown, aldermen there are taking steps to deter vandalism.

Monday night aldermen voted unanimously to offer a \$500 reward from the town to anyone identifying a person who defaces, removes or destroys town property, said Paul Vealey, town clerk.

Introduced by Alderman John David Dawson, the resolution is intended to help protect the new street signs and other items purchased by the town.

Vealey said Mayor Judy Galloway is pleased with the new signs and the near completion of their installation.

Aldermen also voted unanimously to install a wheelchair ramp by the front door of the town hall, he said.

Necessary business such as obtaining permits still remains, but the job should be undertaken with few problems, said Vealey.

In other business, the board unanimously to contract with the county for regular fire inspections, instead of the town hiring an inspector of its own.

Mayor Galloway announced this year's annual town birthday festival and parade will be Sept. 5, over the Labor Day holiday.

Erecting Road Signs A Challenge, Keeping Them Up May Be The Next

BY SUSAN USHER

Erecting road signs at every intersection in Brunswick County sounds like a large enough task, but the most challenging job for the county's sign crew may be keeping the signs up and in good repair.

That will be a top priority once the county's enhanced 911 emergency response system is up and running later this year.

"We're trying to get the word out that this important," said Doug Ledgett, assistant county manager and 911 project manager. "It is critical to good service delivery by the county."

The sign project, like structure numbering, is under way in conjunction with the county's move to an enhanced 911 emergency response system later this year.

When an emergency call comes in, the location will appear on the computer terminal display for dispatchers' use. Street signs and house numbers make it easier for emergency crews to find their destinations quickly, without any loss of time.

When the sign erectors are done, between 2,000 and 2,500 signs will dot Brunswick County

rights-of-way, horizontal blades of green reflective material with white lettering, mounted on aluminum poles set in concrete. One will stand at the intersection of any two roads, streets or even cartways that lead to structure.

By the time the first 700 signs were up, about 100 already were in need of repair, said Tommy Birmingham, a planner and sign project coordinator with the Brunswick County Planning Department.

"We haven't really lost that many," he said. "It's just that people hit them or bend them, or bend the blades over."

Cost of replacing a sign runs about \$60, he said.

Ledgett, who is also an attorney, said removal, theft or malicious damage to the signs are "chargeable offenses."

Birmingham said the county was warned to expect a loss of between 20 percent to 30 percent of all signs each year.

"I don't think it will be far off from that," he said.

County employees already are asked to report

damaged or missing signs to Ledgett. Fire and rescue workers will be doing the same, and Ledgett would like the cooperation of other county residents as well.

Every sign that's removed or damaged not only costs taxpayers money, but also increases the risk of an emergency vehicle being delayed, he said.

"The biggest thing is to get notice," he said. "If we don't know a sign's missing we can't replace it."

Once 911 is in operation the county's goal is a 48-hour turn-around time on all repairs or replacements. Any longer and the county could face potential liability as residents and service providers come to rely on the signs.

Said Birmingham, "Once 911 is in effect, we will have to take it and run as soon as we get a call."

Signs are up in the Calabash, Ocean Isle, Sunset Beach and Leland areas. Next on the list is Shallotte, followed by Supply, Southport and the rural areas.

County Studies Noise Control Ordinance

BY TERRY POPE

A comprehensive noise ordinance drafted two years ago finally made it to the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners' agenda Tuesday.

Commissioners agreed to study the ordinance written by County Attorney David Clegg in 1990, a document that covers everything from car horns, barking dogs, chain saws and stereos to the cries of peddlers.

"I'd like a week or two to digest this," said District 4 Commissioner Frankie Rabon.

"It's talking about how you can't have dogs or chain saws," he added. Rabon, an avid hunter, keeps hunting dogs on his property at Town Creek.

A public hearing is required before adoption. Board Chairman Kelly Holden had asked that a hearing date be set Tuesday.

"For the past two years, we have heard a number of complaints," he said.

Most recently, Holden Beach area residents asked for a noise ordinance at the Jan. 6 commissioners' meeting. They told the board that neighbors play their stereos so loudly that pictures fall off the walls inside of adjacent homes.

But with no ordinance in place, the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department is powerless to make neighbors turn down the sound.

"It's a shame that we, as neighbors, can't get along so that we don't need these guidelines," said District 2 Commissioner Jerry Jones.

The rules would prohibit excessive or unnecessary noises from a person, firm or corporation that disturbs, injures or endangers the quiet, comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of any other person.

It also outlaws:

■Horns or signaling devices on automobiles, motorcycles, bicycles or other vehicles on any street or public place except when used as a danger warning;

■Stereos, televisions or musical instruments audible at a distance of at least 50 feet from the building, structure, property or vehicle from

which it is emitted;

■Keeping of noisy animals that disturb, injure or endanger the quiet, comfort, peace or safety of any other person;

■Discharging of exhaust from any non-commercial steam or diesel engine, chain saw, power motor, motorboat or motor vehicle except through a muffler;

■Cars, motorcycles or other vehicles that are out of repair and creating loud, grating or grinding noises of duration or frequency that disturbs others;

■Shouting or crying of peddlers, hawkers and vendors; and

■Drums or musical instruments used to attract attention to any performance, show or sale.

It would not apply to fire, rescue, police, sheriff, ambulance or other emergency vehicles. Also, parades, sporting events and other public functions held in churches, gyms, arenas, theatres, amphitheaters, stadiums, rifle ranges and gun clubs would be exempt.

Other Business

In other business Tuesday, commissioners:

■Accepted petitions with the names of an estimated 1,500 residents opposed to a five-year solid waste disposal contract with Waste Industries of Raleigh. Burness Hewett told the board the contract would not save the county money.

Waste Industries may start garbage collection and open recycling stations by March 1, said Clegg. The county will still operate the landfill in Supply.

■Accepted the annual town and county valuations and tax levies from Tax Administrator Boyd Williamson. The 1991 valuation of Brunswick County is \$4.1 billion, creating a levy of \$29 million. Valuation for the Doshier Hospital District is \$1.7 million for a levy of \$685,747.

■Changed the name of Somerset Drive in Calabash to Shady Forest Drive following a brief public hearing.

■Tabled a request from the 5th District Civic Association to revise its lease agreement with the

county on a building at the old Leland school park. Four-County Head Start wants to hold classes in the building and is willing to renovate it for free, said Commissioner Donald Shaw. The board wants representatives from both groups to explain the deal at its Feb. 4 meeting.

■Approved budget amendments to prepay a \$24,808 lease on a solid waste truck; to accept \$131,202 for a capital project at Telechron at the Leland Industrial Park; to accept \$750 in state funds for environmental health services.

■Took no action on a policy request from the Brunswick County Resources Development Commission that asks for blanket approval for grant applications to private industries.

■Heard from Clegg that the county may need to cut the number of people who serve on the Keep America Beautiful Board from 13 to seven because it is having problems getting quorums for meetings.

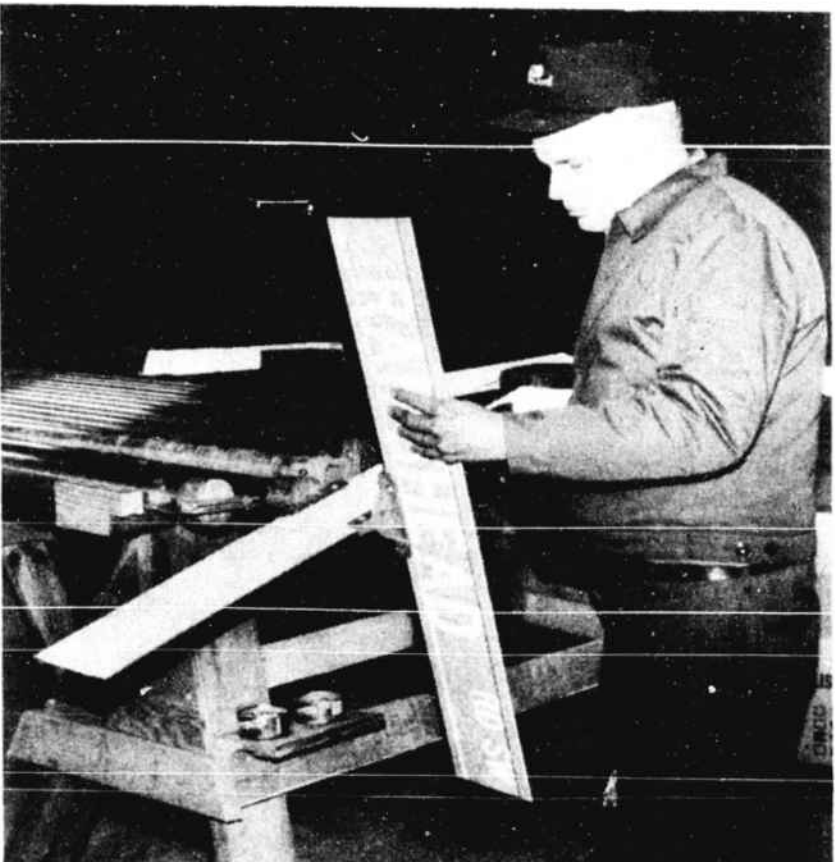
■Accepted, by a 4-1 vote, a bid of \$153,100 from Waste Industries of Raleigh to purchase two rolloff trucks, two tractors, two trailers and a transfer trailer from the solid waste department. The county must advertise for upset bids. Shaw voted no.

■Set a public hearing for Feb. 4, 6:20 p.m., on a request to change the names of six county roads.

■Extended for six months the position of 911 program planner, Lee Hitchcock. The 911 program was originally scheduled for completion in January, but will not be ready until April.

■Appointed Earl Andrews to the Brunswick County Utility Operations Board to replace Richard Trexler, who resigned.

■Voted to pay \$100 a month to any municipality now coordinating a recycling program until the county can bring its program under Waste Industries in March. Sunset Beach and Calabash had asked that the county keep funding recycling trailers in place there. Bush Recyclers of Florence, S.C., charges \$200 to pull away a full trailer.



PLANNER TOMMY BIRMINGHAM, county sign project coordinator, assembles a sign in a temporary workshop set up at the government center in Bolivia.

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