

Calabash Wades Through Trash Proposals Before Budget Time

BY TERRY POPE

Calabash Commissioners braced themselves for the 1992-93 budget Tuesday by wading through proposed garbage collection deals from three firms.

They also learned that the town may have to fund anywhere from \$50,000 to \$75,000, or 25 percent, to match two proposed grants to build a boardwalk and boat ramp along the Calabash River as part of Gov. Jim Martin's N.C. Coastal Initiative Program.

The board discussed at length a waste management study prepared by the planning board, which met with representatives from three garbage collection firms to reach "hypothetical figures" for proposed 1992-93 services.

However, commissioners declined to reveal the identities of the three firms, referring to them only as A, B, and C during the entire meeting.

Commissioner George Anderson explained that the figures presented by the planning board were not actual bids for service. "There's no doubt in anyone's mind that the whole garbage issue is going to be a hassle," added Commissioner Jon Sanborn. "There's no reason to keep pussyfooting around."

He suggested that the board reach a decision on which route to take with the town's garbage service by the May 12 meeting.

Chambers of South Carolina is under contract with the town until Nov. 15 for curbside collection in District 1, which includes the main business district and its 50 or more residences, said Town Clerk Janet Thomas.

Chambers also collects at four green boxes in District 2 on Persimmon Road (S.R. 1167) where residents take their garbage. That contract expires June 30.

The company is paid \$2,000 a month for District 1 service and \$470 a month for District 2 service. The town also pays M & J Plastics of Bolivia \$250 a month to operate a recycling station at the green box site. The total cost per year is around \$50,250.

The report indicated that garbage firms were "requested to provide estimated costs" based on the following: 1) total residential curbside and commercial on-site pickup with and without containers or dumpsters; 2) total residential curbside pickup only, with or without containers provided; 3) for the 50 residences in District 1 curbside service, with and without containers; and 4) to operate a green box site for up to 700 homes to include dumpsters, compactor, recycling bins and yard debris collection.

Three of the four companies responded with informal quotes. The figures did not include any tipping fees for dumping trash at the Brunswick County landfill, which would ultimately affect the prices. The county may charge up to \$35 per ton to dump garbage in the Supply landfill starting in July.

The three companies indicated they would charge \$89,460, \$84,000 and \$58,800 per year to collect twice weekly from the 700 or more homes inside District 2 with containers provided. Without containers, the figures would be roughly \$75,180, \$73,500 and \$46,200.

For twice-weekly service at the 50 homes in District 1, the figures range from \$6,030, \$5,700 to \$3,300 per year without containers. Presently, containers are not provided for District 1 residents.

The companies estimated it would cost \$10,111, \$7,464 or \$6,300 to maintain five green boxes for the District 2 residents. The planning

board also accepted proposals for placing a trash compactor at the green box site, but commissioners agreed Tuesday the area is not large enough for a concrete slab that would have to be built.

Quotes to maintain recycling bins ranged from \$8,900, \$7,200 to \$4,800 per year.

Grants Estimated

Commissioner Stuart Thorn told the board the town may be asked to come up with \$50,000 to \$75,000 to pay for its share of two proposed grants being sought under the Coastal Initiative Program.

Estimated costs would be \$150,000 for a boat ramp and \$101,000 for a waterfront walkway along the Calabash River. The board asked Mayor Doug Simmons to talk with town business owners, to set a date for a public hearing on the pro-

posal and to report back to the board.

Town Building Inspector Ed Schaack said chances are good that a grant for the walkway will be approved. Property owners or businesses along the waterfront may be willing to help pay part of the town's share, said Thorn, thus saving on residents' tax dollars. Business owners could use the donation as a tax write-off, said Thorn.

"Some of them will object to it," said Simmons, "but some of them will go along with it. When they get down to the brass tacks, it opens arguments."

The walkway would extend from Marsh Harbor to the waterfront restaurants. Schaack said it would be built on the land side of the bulkhead and can not extend over the water.

"It's a great looking plan if you see it," he said.

Other Business

In other business, commissioners: ■Set a fire inspection fee at \$15 per hour for labor plus a \$10 administrative fee. Calabash Volunteer Fire Chief Jerry Prince will do the fire inspections for the 56 businesses and restaurants in the main business district and will be paid \$15 per hour by the town. Businesses will be billed by town hall.

By state law, all towns and counties must have fire safety inspection programs by July 1 and all businesses are required to have an inspection each year.

■On a motion by Ed Rice, voted 4-3 to reject four bids received for the mowing of shoulders, ditches and main ditches within the town limits and to advertise for new bids. Bids were accepted in three sections: for roadside mowing, for mowing beyond the ditch and for mowing along main ditches.

Some members were ready to accept a bid from one firm for part of the job. Simmons Landscaping of Shallotte, Wayne Edwards of Ash, Dew Grading Co. of Ocean Isle Beach and Tucker Culley of Brick Landing submitted bids.

"We've got one more shot before it's July, when we're going to need service," said Commissioner Ray Card, who along with Sanborn and Thorn voted against rejecting the proposals.

■Met in executive session briefly with Town Attorney Mike Ramos to discuss pending litigation.

■Agreed to table proposed changes in the ordinance to establish a town planning board until the May 12 meeting. Changes were reviewed by Ramos and a final draft presented Tuesday. It would require six of 10 planning board members to be present to make a quorum.

Alderman Cheers Plans To Deliver Petition To Congressman

Shallotte Alderman Roney Cheers won't ask the postal service to deliver a copy of his petition to U.S. Congressman Charlie Rose.

The Shallotte native and former mayor plans to make a special delivery of his own Friday when Rose attends a pre-election function in Fayetteville.

"I'm going to try my best to get in touch with him," Cheers said Tuesday. "Most of the time it hasn't been a problem. It's not like he's standoffish."

For the last few weeks, Cheers has been circulating a petition asking the postal service to keep the Shallotte Postmaster and postal functions at the Main Street office.

Postmaster Frank Bringoli plans to move his office and most mail-handling operations Saturday from the downtown facility to the new South Brunswick station at Seaside. The office is scheduled to open for business Monday.

Cheers said Tuesday he has collected 232 signatures on his petition and noted that more people have signed petitions at town hall and businesses in the community.

Shallotte officials oppose the postmaster's plans to move most of the postal operations to the larger

station on N.C. 904 at Seaside. They say the move will hurt local businesses as well as ending a tradition.

Cheers said the town had previously sent a letter to Rose, as well as U.S. Senators Jesse Helms and Terry Sanford.

In each case, the elected officials confirmed that they had received the town's complaint and would pass it on to the postal service.

"There's a great possibility that since this has been an ongoing thing we don't have a chance," Cheers said. "But I don't plan to give up just yet."

The South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce indicated its viewpoint in a letter sent to the postmaster last week.

President Terry Barbee stated in the letter that the chamber wants the post office to continue offering the services it has provided in the past.

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