

Shalotte Welcomes State Plans For Overpass

BY DOUG RUTTER

A feeling of satisfaction spread through Shalotte last week—the kind of feeling that can only be found in a community that pulls together and achieves a common goal.

Most area residents were relieved and content after learning of the state's plans to construct an overpass where N.C. 130 crosses the U.S. 17 Shalotte bypass.

Shalotte Mayor Sarah Tripp said she was "delighted" by the news, but not really surprised with the state's decision. "I felt like if it was approached in the right way and they saw the need they would come through."

Marilyn Williams of Wilmington, the area's representative on the state

transportation board, announced plans for the overpass at a news conference last Thursday at the Southeastern Welcome Center.

An interchange will be included in the draft Transportation Improvement Program presented to the N.C. Board of Transportation in July.

Mrs. Williams said she expects approval of the \$3.4 million project at that time, although construction won't begin until early 1994.

Community residents have been calling for an overpass at the intersection since a wreck last November which killed a West Brunswick High School student and a well-known Shalotte businessman.

There have been at least two other

serious accidents at the intersection since the double-fatality, which prompted the state to make safety improvements and study the need for an overpass.

"I am elated for the people of this area who made their voices heard about their concerns for the safety of this intersection," Mrs. Williams said. "I assure you that those voices were heard."

State officials who studied the intersection cited several factors in concluding that an overpass is justified, including accident history since the bypass opened last May.

Other reasons are the intersection's proximity to West Brunswick and downtown Shalotte, which are on opposite sides of the bypass.

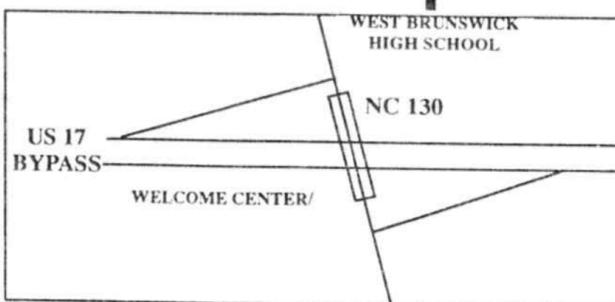
Inexperienced drivers from the high school cross the bypass almost every day.

Mrs. Williams added that N.C. 130 has more traffic than any other road that crosses U.S. 17 between the South Carolina state line and U.S. 74-76 near Wilmington.

She said state officials considered all of the public support for an overpass in making their decision.

"I've had over 100 letters from the students over at the school...I'm a big believer in citizen input," said Mrs. Williams.

Since losing classmate Misty Dawn Carmichael last fall, West Brunswick students have been supportive of an overpass. They sent letters to officials and held a demon-



stration when the welcome center was dedicated in February.

Hilda Smith, a high school teacher whose husband, Steve, was also killed in the wreck last fall, said

Friday that students were pleased with the state's decision.

"We talked about it today and

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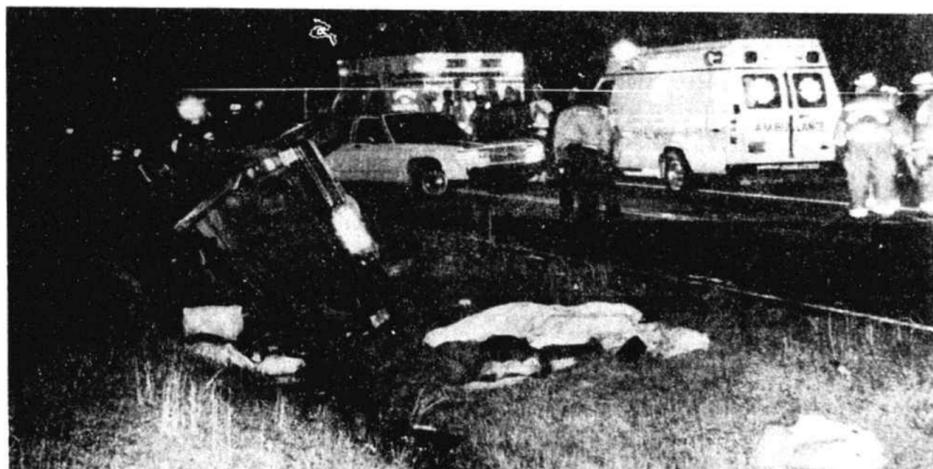
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STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

THREE TEEN-AGERS were inside the Bronco (left foreground) when it overturned in a shallow ditch along N.C. 179. All escaped serious injury.

Two Teen-Agers Charged With Unlawful Speed Competition

Two teen-agers were charged with unlawful speed competition by the State Highway Patrol following an accident late Friday night in which one vehicle overturned and another burned beyond recognition.

None of the four teen-agers involved in the 11:15 p.m. accident on N.C. 179 near Brick Landing received serious injuries.

Mark Douglas McKeithan, 17, of Shalotte, driver of a 1987 Bronco, was charged by Trooper B.L. Wilkes with unlawful speed competition and speeding. Adam Abbott, 16, of Ocean Isle Beach, was driving the second vehicle, a 1978 Nissan. He was charged with unlawful speed competition, speeding and driving while impaired.

According to Wilkes' report, the two vehicles were racing side by side, northbound on N.C. 179, when they went around a curve and the Nissan ran off the road and then returned to the road, striking the Bronco.

The Bronco ran off the right-hand

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Calabash Dumps Commercial Pickups

BY TERRY POPE

Calabash Commissioners voted 3-2 Tuesday not to pay for trash pickup for its restaurants and other businesses when part of the town's current garbage contract expires in November.

Saying commercial pickup has gotten too expensive, the board voted to fund residential pickup twice weekly within District 1 and to continue providing green boxes for residents in District 2 under the 1992-93 fiscal year budget.

District 1 includes about 50 homes, 17 restaurants and 30 other businesses within the main business district and riverfront community.

"District 1 residents get little or nothing for the tax dollars they put in," said Commissioner Ed Rice. "They really do not."

Rice and Commissioner Keith Hardee voted against the motion. It

was approved by George Anderson, Robert Noe and Jon Sanborn, all from District 2.

"Do you think you're treating your commercial people right?" asked an angered Hardee, who owns a Calabash business. "If you all don't need us, then we don't need you."

Residents in District 2 carry their garbage to four green boxes on Persimmon Road (S.R. 1167). Chambers of South Carolina is currently under contract to operate the green boxes until June 30. Its contract to collect garbage at homes and businesses inside of District 1 expires Nov. 15.

According to a Calabash Planning Board study presented to commissioners last month, the estimated annual cost of picking up garbage from businesses and restaurants would be \$57,759.

The town's combined garbage expenditure for both districts is currently \$52,750 per year.

"I see no reason why we should continue with commercial pickups," said Noe. "You can see from the figures that it's going to be more and more expensive to do so."

Hardee and Rice said it was another example of District 1 taxpayers getting shortchanged on services. Rice said that of \$1,759 spent by the town in April on street lights, approximately 90 percent of the services benefits District 2 residents.

"It's puzzling why you voted to join the two neighborhoods together," interjected Anderson, referring to the merger of Calabash and Carolina Shores.

Carolina Shores, which has more than 600 homes in District 2, has

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Foster Forgoes Runoff Race

BY TERRY POPE

Steve Foster of Long Beach said Monday he would not call for a runoff election in his bid for the District 3 Republican nomination on the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners.

"The expense would be prohibitive," said Foster. "Also, for the party's sake, I've chosen not to go for a runoff."

Candidates had until noon Tuesday to make that decision. No other county races were close enough to warrant a runoff.

In last week's primary, Foster came within 135 votes of Bob Slockett of Yaupon Beach, who will now be declared the Republican nominee for the seat. He will face Democrat Wayland Vereen of Long Beach, a former county commissioner trying for a comeback, in November's general election.

Slockett had 1,022 votes to Foster's 887 but came up just four votes shy of capturing the necessary 40 percent to avoid a second primary, which would have been held June 2.

Slockett, who sits on the Brunswick County Board of Education, chose to file for the commissioners' race instead. In addition to Foster, he outdistanced three other candidates—William "Bill" Sisk, Joseph Tyler

Lenins and Tom Yeagle.

Following canvass of the votes last Thursday, no changes were noted in the county's unofficial results, said Lois Baccary of the Brunswick County Board of Elections office.

"Everything stayed the same," she said.

Foster said the county's expense of having a runoff election to decide just one race played a role in his decision to forgo a second primary.

"If it had been just one more race involved, then maybe," he added. "But the thought of having to gear up for another campaign played a role, too."

In another local race, the State Board of Elections is expected to hear a candidate's complaint in the two-member District 14 State House election. Democrats picked incumbent E. David Redwine of Ocean Isle Beach and Dewey Hill of Lake Waccamaw in last Tuesday's vote over Michael Mills of Bolton and Shirley T. Greene of Robeson County.

Greene complained to the Columbus County Board of Elections last week that Hill did not live at his Lake Waccamaw home for a year before the general election as the state constitution requires. Greene also alleges that Hill's filing application misrepresented where he lived.

On advice from the state attorney general's office, the Columbus County board dismissed the complaint, saying it did not have jurisdiction. The case is expected to be heard Friday by the state board in Raleigh.

\$1.1 MILLION ALLOCATED

Hearing Monday On DOT, County Road List

BY TERRY POPE

State Department of Transportation officials will hold a joint public hearing with Brunswick County Commissioners Monday, May 18, to gather input on its 1992-93 county roads improvement program.

The county's allocation for paving, improved drainage and grading of secondary roads for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1993, is \$1,157,040, according to Marilyn Williams, member of the N.C. Board of Transportation.

That figure is based on unpaved roads measuring 144 miles in Brunswick County, compared with unpaved mileage statewide. The hearing will be in the commissioners' chambers at the Brunswick County Government Center in Bolivia at 6:30 p.m.

Commissioners must approve DOT's priority list, which was posted with a map at the Brunswick County Courthouse on May 4.

The Board of Transportation has approved a paving priority rating system with two lists in each county, one for rural roads and another for residential or subdivision streets. It expects to take action on the list in July.

Following are proposed DOT secondary road improvement expenditures, which includes the paving of 9.7 miles, for the period through June 1993:

- Spot stabilization, paved road improvements, safety improvements and bridge replacement, \$221,078;
- Right of way signatures, surveys and resolutions for road additions, \$50,000;
- Green Hill Road (S.R. 1410) at Winnabow, grade,

drain, base, surface and erosion control from Maulsby Road (S.R. 1409) to Town Creek Road (S.R. 1413), 4.40 miles, \$429,650;

■ Green Bay Road (S.R. 1317) at Grissetown, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, from U.S. 17 to Old Shalotte Road (S.R. 1316), 1.30 miles, \$100,000;

■ First Street (S.R. 1275M) at Shell Landing, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, from Shell Landing Road (S.R. 1208) to end of street, .40 miles, \$30,000;

■ Sea Aire Circle (S.R. 1236) near Holden Beach, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, 1.10 miles off of Sea Shore Road (S.R. 1139), \$73,000;

■ Lockwood Folly Drive (S.R. 1229M) at Sunset Harbor, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, from Sunset Harbor Road (S.R. 1112) to end of .63 mile road, \$62,000;

■ East Tanglewood Drive (S.R. 1261) in Tanglewood Subdivision, Holden Beach, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, from Sea Shore Road (S.R. 1139) to a dead end, .33 miles, \$28,000;

■ Egret Road (S.R. 1814M) at Goose Creek, Shalotte, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, from Goose Creek Road (S.R. 1155) to include all roads, 1.04 miles, \$70,000;

■ River Street (S.R. 1286) in Fisherman's Village, grade, drain, base, surface and erosion control, from Boone's Neck Road (S.R. 1137) to end of system, .50 miles,

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Sunset Beach, Calabash Seeking Funds For Regional Sewerage

BY SUSAN USHER

Two southwestern Brunswick County towns agreed this week to jointly pursue a regional wastewater system.

Resolutions adopted unanimously by the Sunset Beach Town Council and Calabash Board of Commissioners call for a joint effort to seek funding approval for such a project from the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA). The resolution also authorizes a consulting firm to complete a Phase I preliminary engineering report and a comprehensive wastewater study for the proposed regional wastewater collection, treatment, disposal and management system.

Both Calabash and Sunset Beach had hired the firm Powell and Associates and Piedmont Olsen Hensley to conduct studies for their respective towns. The cost of the joint preliminary engineering report is expected to cost each town between \$8,000 and \$10,000.

Consultants Joseph Tombro and Billups said a regional approach would be the most cost-effective and most feasible system for the towns.

Also, they said regionalization is also being encouraged by state and federal agencies wherever possible, including FmHA, which is considered the most likely source of funding for the project.

Following the regional scenario will do more than re-

duce the upfront money needed now and saving of money in the long run, the consultants said. It should also hasten service to the high-priority areas while "buying time" to identify additional funding sources and to develop a larger customer base, possibly involving additional communities in the regional effort.

Three Stages Proposed

As proposed, the system would be implemented in three stages.

Stage A would involve buying the Carolina Blythe system that now serves part of Calabash, and extending service to each town's priority service area: the downtown business district in Calabash and the Sea Trail area of Sunset Beach. The island of Sunset Beach would not be served in this first stage.

Expected cost of this segment of the project is about \$6 million.

"You're talking about a pumping station and a force main and you're in," Billups told Sunset Beach Council Monday night.

Stage B would involve expanding the Carolina Blythe plant to its maximum treatment capacity of 925,000 gallons per day, allowing extension of the system to additional customers from Calabash to Sunset Beach and points in between. While the plant is actually treating about 130,000

gallons of wastewater per day now, Billups said its actual capacity is greater, but that much of it has already been allocated to future users. However, he said the state will allow some of that capacity to be freed up for use if another treatment is under construction.

Stage C, construction of a central treatment plant to serve additional customers and area, would take place over a five- to seven-year timetable, said Tombro.

"If you take a look at the regional (sewer) map, you can see that it just makes sense," Calabash Commissioner Jon Sanborn told fellow commissioners Tuesday night.

With the votes this week, Billups said the towns should receive a determination of eligibility for funding from FmHA within 60 days, clearing the way to actually apply for funds in the form of low-interest loans and/or grants. Because of the number of residents in each community on fixed incomes, both Calabash and Sunset Beach should qualify for grants to help bring monthly user fees to a "reasonable" level in the \$16 to \$18 range.

Each town board will appoint a five-member Wastewater System Citizens Advisory Committee of voting residents, as required by FmHA, to work with the consultants in the preapplication and application phases to ensure that "all known citizen concerns" are addressed

Each town will designate two representatives of its committee to meet and work together in the overall development of the joint system program.

Still to be worked out is what structure would be created to govern the regional sewer efforts.

"This is just the start of a long, long summary of steps," said Sunset Beach Mayor Mason Barber.

Survey Responses Mixed

Results of a mail survey conducted in April by the Town of Sunset Beach indicated mixed support for a central sewer system among property owners within the town and its extraterritorial area (ETA). Of 200 surveys mailed out, 124 were returned.

Of the 109 respondents who answered a specific question about sewer, 44 percent supported implementing a central sewer system and 40 percent did not. Another 16 percent expressed no opinion.

In a related question, 35 did not view lack of a system as a problem, while 23 considered it a major problem and 31 considered it a minor problem.

Many respondents, said consultant Margaret Hayes, stated that a new public sewer system had to be contingent upon the town requiring a referendum in order to change the 35-foot building height requirement.