

Squabble Over Superintendent Opens School Board Meeting

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

Brunswick County Board of Education member Robert Slockett attempted an end run Monday night to change the procedure for hiring a new superintendent, but Board Chairman Donna Baxter and Board Attorney Glen Peterson called a foul on the play.

The board meeting opened, as always, with the segment for public comment. Slockett took the opportunity to read a comment he said came from people who had spoken to him about the process of securing a superintendent to succeed P.R. Hankins, who recently announced he will retire in September.

"People are concerned that we take time to find the very best person possible," he said, "so I move that we appoint Mose Lewis as temporary superintendent, effective October 1, to be followed by a national search to fill the position by June 1, 1993."

Ms. Baxter quickly responded, "We'll take this under advisement," but Slockett persisted, saying he had made a motion that required action.

Peterson got in the act, ruling that his motion was out of order because it was made during public address. Slockett argued that this action was allowed by *Robert's Rules of Order*, from which he showed underlined por-

tions. The attorney advised that Brunswick County Board of Education rulings prohibit a motion during public comment, and that these rulings supersede Robert's Rules.

As they argued, Ms. Baxter finally spoke up firmly. "I'll have to rule you out of order and we'll move on," Slockett muttered, "I'm not out of order, I'm sorry to tell you," but he subsided.

During a two-hour executive session on personnel at the close of the meeting, the subject of the superintendent's search arose again, Slockett said later.

"I chose not to press the issue further," he said, "because we decided to go through the eight in-house applications received and then we can reopen the process to a state or national scope."

He said a few of the eight applications are from outside the system, as information reached outsiders who then applied before the 5 p.m. Monday deadline.

The short agenda that followed Slockett's exchange included brief reports and little board action. Approval was given a proposal by Frank Blackman, chairman of the Math/Science Alliance Committee, to add one teacher and two businessmen to the coordinating board.

James McAdams, social studies/ communication co-

ordinator, said summer school, scheduled to start July 7, will conclude August 7. (See story elsewhere)

Assistant Superintendent William Turner reported on Supply Elementary School progress (see story elsewhere) and said 20 to 25 new white-top buses will be received this summer.

Rudena Fallon, finance officer, got board approval to set up a new account with N.C. Cash Management Trust for the holding of various deductions from employee wages.

Her request for an insurance consultant to be hired at an initial compensation of \$8,900, however, was turned down in a 3-1 vote. "I'm not an insurance expert," she said, "and I'm getting a lot of calls from parents who want their kids' bills paid for injuries. We have a large area of liability here."

Fallon explained that the N.C. School Boards Association recommended such a consultant to help review student accident forms.

She added, "I'm told 90 percent of all insurance policies contain errors."

Board member Polly Russ was reluctant to spend the money.

"We don't know about our funding for next year," she

said.

Doug Baxley, another board member, noted that, "Maybe we'd get a better rate from a comparable provider, if this is a competitive thing."

Only Slockett voted to hire the consultant.

Following the executive session, the board approved personnel transfers to Supply School (see story elsewhere) and the following additional actions:

■ Teachers hired included Elene Busch of Charlotte, math, West Brunswick High School; and Steven Moore of Wilmington, Jennifer Johnson of Yaupon Beach, and Leslie Laning of Burke, Va., Bolivia Elementary.

■ Extended employment was approved for: Juliane Moon, Sandra Humphrey and Sally McMillan, all preschool diagnosticians, central office, and William Mosley, driver/warehouse food service.

■ Leave of absence was granted Susan Reeves, Union Primary, and Hazel Holden, South Brunswick High School.

■ Resignations were accepted from Darrell Henderson, Leland Middle and Judy Cowan, SIMS Operator.

■ Paula Hopper of Tarboro was hired as a substitute teacher.

County Not Apt To Help Fund River Study

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

The Brunswick County Board of Commissioners likely won't make a contribution to a \$71,250 study contracted by area industrial leaders to avoid a High Quality Water (HQW) designation on the Cape Fear River.

Commissioners' Chairman Kelly Holden said area governmental bodies were not part of the decision made in 1990 to pursue the study, an investigation of data on the condition of the Lower Cape Fear River basin.



HOLDEN

The object of many area industrialists, all of whom discharge into the river, was to find a strategy to avoid the upgraded designation for the Cape Fear, which they believed would restrict future expansion of their industries.

"In my opinion, the county shouldn't contribute a penny to it," said Holden. "To come forward now and ask for money for a study that we didn't have anything to say about is a violation of protocol. When you consider all those industries discharging into the river, it's hard to believe they can meet present standards. I'm not in favor of even more pollution."

Commissioners received copies of a letter requesting the county's assistance in paying for the study but did not discuss the request at their last meeting.

Holden pointed to the Leland Industrial Park as a more environmentally safe way to handle development.

"We deal with new industries that don't discharge anything into the waters here," he said, adding that other commissioners felt as he did about the request.

The letter asking for financial help came from J.A. Henriksen, president of Takeda Chemical Products in Wilmington, one of more than a dozen industries along the river who were informed, in November 1989, that the N.C. Environmental Management Commission (EMC) intended to reclassify the Cape Fear and Northeast Cape Fear rivers to a high-quality water designation (HQW).

These waters had previously been classified C-Swamp Water, meaning that their best usage was for aquatic life propagation, fishing, wildlife, secondary recreation and agriculture.

The change was prompted by a decision on the part of the Marine Fisheries Commission to designate the river a primary nursery area, which automatically requires a HQW designation.

Wilmington Industrial Development, (WID) was approached at its January 1990 board meeting by Herb Strickler and Dick Hargitt, environmental officials at General Electric and E.I. DuPont de Nemours, respectively, and Henriksen. The EMC proposal was explained as a move that would require industry to discharge according to new, more restrictive requirements, so as to improve the quality of the river. Effluent toxicity might have to be cut.

It was concluded that redesignation would have a definite economic impact on the region and WID Director Wayne Zeigler requested that the N.C. Department of Economic and Community Development study it.

As a result of a meeting of industry, port and city officials with WID members, the Wilmington representatives held an organizational meeting in April 1990 to investigate the issue. Other leading industries participating included Oxy-Chem, Federal Paper, Cape Industries, ADM, CP&L, Arcadian, Wright, and Koch, all of whom ultimately contributed up to \$10,000 each for the study commissioned by an 11-member committee appointed by WID.

The committee included Hargitt, Andy Wood, N.C. Aquarium at Fort Fisher; Gene Renzaglia, Occidental Chemical; Chuck Wakild, Federal Paper; Preston Howard, Dept. of Natural Resources and Community Development; William Squire, First Union National Bank; Rich Barnes, WID; Steve Ross, N.C. National Estuarine Research Reserve; George Booth, CP&L; Jim Merritt, Center for Marine Science Research; Rich Carpenter, Division of Marine Fisheries; and John Bower, public utilities director, Wilmington.

E.A. Engineering of Atlanta was contracted to conduct a study. Results are expected to help the group establish a plan that would maintain water quality while allowing for additional in-

dustrial growth.

Industries feel the proposed reclassification is inappropriate because the Cape Fear is tidal and connected to swamps and wetlands which naturally discharge high levels of organic matter.

Howard called the Cape Fear River "unique, in that it's the only body of water in the state that empties into the ocean and already receives a lot of waste. We had public hearings, beginning in 1989, in which a lot of concern was voiced about water quality."

However, he disagrees with the prevalent public opinion that the Cape Fear River is polluted.

"The only problem identified by the state or by environmental groups—by anybody—is the level of dissolved oxygen, which consumes waste. The level is depleted in summer, but we don't know how serious this is. We can't even remember when we had a fish kill because of oxygen levels."

The report from the engineering study, scheduled for completion in April, will not be ready until July, Howard said. When results are made known, the committee will use them to propose a new strategy, if that seems feasible, or to make recommendations to the EMC about reclassification.

Howard said the industries involved in this project are equally committed to maintaining water quality and that their future expansion is an important factor in the final solution.

"The EMC is supposed to take into account economic considerations, as well as environmental ones," Howard pointed out. "If industry had wanted to control the Cape Fear River, the first thing they would have done is challenge the primary nursery area designation proposed for it, and they haven't done that."

Meanwhile, governmental bodies asked to contribute to funding the study include New Hanover and Brunswick counties, the City of Wilmington and the state Department of Economic and Community Development. No specific amount was mentioned, just "whatever you consider the worth of avoiding development stagnation for your area."

As of last month no governmental agency had contributed to the cost of the study.

Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry Extends Crossing Schedule

As of Wednesday, passengers on the Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry have the option of leaving Brunswick County earlier and returning later.

For the next two months, the state Department of Transportation will be testing a new schedule aimed at providing more flexibility for tourists and for commuters who might use the ferry to cross the Cape Fear River, said Bill Jones, DOT spokesman.

The first ferry leaves Southport at 6 a.m., about two hours earlier than in the past, while the last ferry departs Fort Fisher at 7:20 p.m.

During the summer season two ferries work the crossing; this year they are the *Sea Level* and the *Emmit Winslow*, accommodating 20 and 24 cars respectively. A new larger-capacity ferry for the run, the *Governor Russell*, named for a former governor from Brunswick County, will be dedicated later this month.

College students serve as tour guides on the ferries during the tourist season, distributing brochures on popular destinations and answering questions about sites viewed in crossing and about the two-county area.

The Southport-Fort Fisher Ferry is the most direct route to several

Revised SUMMER SCHEDULE	
Leaves Southport	Leaves Ft. Fisher
6:00 AM	6:50 AM
7:40 AM	8:30 AM
8:30 AM	9:20 AM
9:20 AM	10:10 AM
10:10 AM	11:00 AM
11:00 AM	11:50 PM
11:50 AM	12:40 PM
12:40 PM	1:30 PM
1:30 PM	2:20 PM
2:20 PM	3:10 PM
3:10 PM	4:00 PM
4:00 PM	4:20 PM
4:50 PM	5:10 PM
5:40 PM	6:00 PM
6:30 PM	7:20 PM

popular state-operated tourist attractions at Kure Beach, including Fort Fisher State Historic Site and the North Carolina Aquarium.

The two ferries accommodate cars, bicyclists and pedestrians. One-way fare is \$3 for a car or other vehicle 20 feet in length or less; \$6, vehicle or combination of vehicles from 20 feet up to and including 32 feet in length; \$1, bicycles; and 50 cents, pedestrian.

To double-check on the schedule or to find out about accommodations /fees for larger vehicles, call the ferry office, 919-457-6942.

WILL BE OPEN FROM JUNE 15-JUNE 26

Registration Opens Monday For New Wetlands Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced that the sign-up period for the new Wetlands Reserve Program will be open from Monday, June 15, through Friday, June 26.

Under the program, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service can spend money to purchase permanent easements from eligible landowners who agree to re-

store farmed and converted wetlands with some adjacent lands dependent upon the wetlands.

"Wetlands are critical for the protection and enhancement of habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, improving the hydrology of our water supplies and storing waters," said Richard Toler, ASCS director in Brunswick County. "It is more important now than ever that our

wetlands be preserved for future generations."

To enroll in the program, landowners must visit the ASCS office in the Agriculture Building at the county complex in Bolivia during the sign-up period and complete form ASCS-890, Intention to Participate in the WRP.

An informational meeting on the WRP will be held in the auditorium above the Columbus County Cooperative Extension Office in Whiteville Monday, June 15, at 7:30 p.m.

Additional information on the WRP is available from the ASCS, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or the Cooperative Extension Office.

Calabash EMS Picks Officers

New officers for the Calabash Volunteer Emergency Services Board of Directors were installed at the group's June 2 meeting.

Chosen to serve for 1992-93 were Kathy Morfit, president; Sharon Benton, vice president; Grace Rattigan, treasurer; and Maryn Hall, secretary.

Two-year board members include Robert Correll, Alan Howarth and Lina Angstadt. Holdovers on the

board are Joan McMahon and Jeannie Cameron. Mark Christy is chief of the squad.

The squad responded to 473 calls between June 1, 1991, and May 31, 1992. Members worked 1,630 man hours and traveled 19,111 miles.

Purchased this year were a new ambulance, two semi-automatic defibrillators and a simulator pack.

This year marks the squad's 10th anniversary.

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