

Study Targets Eight Best Industries For Brunswick County

BY ERIC CARLSON

Inadequate education, an unskilled labor force and low worker productivity are among "serious concerns" limiting Brunswick County's ability to attract new industry, according to a study recently completed for the Economic Development Commission.

On the other hand, the county's location, climate, lifestyle and wage scale make Brunswick an attractive place for companies looking to expand.

The study identifies eight types of manufacturing industries as the most likely to locate in Brunswick

An "operations manager" was quoted as saying Brunswick County has "too many people on unemployment and social services" and that employers "cannot get them to work."

County, including metalworking equipment, machinery, electrical equipment, automotive equipment, fabricated metal, rubber and plastics, furniture and fixtures, and chemicals.

Tom Monks, director of the Brunswick EDC, told commission members Monday night that the results of the study will be used to select manufacturers in the Northeast for a direct mail and telemarketing campaign

aimed at encouraging them to locate here.

"This will make us more effective in our marketing efforts," Monks said Tuesday. "It will allow us to do more of a rifle than a shotgun approach."

Next month, consultants Walter Harper and Associates of Greensboro will explain the findings of their \$12,000 study to the EDC board. Although it will not be formally released until after the presentation, the *Beacon* was able to examine a copy of the 115-page study briefly Monday night.

(See INDUSTRIALISTS, Page 2-A)

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P.O. BOX 162
SPRINGPORT MI 49284

BRUNSWICK BEACON

Thirty-First Year, Number 38

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Shalotte, North Carolina, Thursday, August 12, 1993

50¢ Per Copy

34 Pages, 3 Sections, 2 Inserts

Health Board To Consider County-Wide Smoking Regs

BY ERIC CARLSON

Smoking would have to be phased out in all restaurants and prohibited in other enclosed public places throughout the county under a strict smoking control ordinance being considered by a committee of the Brunswick County Board of Health.

The seven-member committee hopes to have regulations ready for the full board to adopt before a new state law prohibits counties from allowing smoke-free businesses and workplaces.

Legislation recently passed at the urging of the tobacco industry specifically requires that smoking be allowed in at least 20 percent of the enclosed areas in all state controlled buildings.

The state law further states that after Oct. 15, local governments cannot enact any ordinances of their own that "contain restrictions regulating smoking regulations that exceed those established in this article," except for buildings owned or controlled by those governments.

Since the law's passage, counties and municipalities across North Carolina have been scrambling to get smoking regulations on the books before the state law prevents them from doing so. New Hanover County and several towns in Brunswick County already have passed laws in an effort to beat the deadline.

"The only thing good about the bill is that it sets a statewide standard," said Dr. Harry Johnson at the Brunswick County Health Board's regular meeting Monday night. "The only trouble is, it sets the wrong standard."

(See PROPOSED, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY ERIC CARLSON

New Tournament Record

Anglers from the *Honey 1* are dwarfed by the 937-pound tiger shark they landed Thursday afternoon to win the 12th annual Poor Boy Shark Tournament. The 23-foot boat was dragged nearly three miles out to sea during the two-and-a-half hour fight to bring her in. Shown with the shark are (from left) Lonnie Stone of Narrows, Va., and boat owners Robert and Ronald McKenzie of Fayetteville. Story, Page 9-B.

School Board, Commissioners Agree To Budget Compromise After 14.5 Hours' Mediation

BY SUSAN USHER

Agreements reached late Tuesday night after 14 1/2 hours of negotiation between the Brunswick County Commissioners and Board of Education provides for the school system's immediate financial needs and for continued communication between the two boards.

"It was a long and fruitful day for both boards," was school board attorney Glen Peterson's assessment of the session.

As a result of the understandings reached Tuesday, he added, "I think I speak for both boards in saying that we hope we never have to go through this process again."

The road to Tuesday's marathon session formally began when the Brunswick County Board of Education appealed its \$9.4 million budget allocation for the county for the 1993-94 school year, asking for another \$4.8 million to meet operating expenses and to build a new school in the Leland area. When commissioners denied that request at a joint meeting, the school board appealed to Brunswick County Clerk of Court Diana Morgan, who in turn referred the matter on to Brunswick County Superior Court, where mediation is being attempted as a routine means of resolving all civil suits.

If the boards had not been able to resolve their immediate differences through mediation, the matter would have automatically been referred to Brunswick County Superior Court for trial during the Aug. 16 session.

However, by unanimous votes the two boards authorized their chairpersons to enter into a consent judgment order to be signed by Superior Court Judge D. Jack Hooks Jr., which spells out terms of the resolution of the immediate funding dispute; and adopted a joint resolution declaring their mutual intent "to continue the dialogue begun by the dispute resolution process, which successfully resolved the immediate problem between the boards."

The consent agreement provides that:

■The schools' current expense allocation will be increased by \$556,672 to cover an anticipated shortfall in the 1993-94 budget. The additional funds will be taken out of two categories in the schools' capital outlay budget—\$446,672 from furniture and equipment, leaving a balance of \$700,000; and the entire \$110,000 budgeted

for replacing maintenance trucks and purchasing two yellow school buses.

The commissioners' \$1 million special allocation for computer technology will remain intact, said Board of Commissioners Chairman Don Warren.

■Commissioners will allocate \$500,000 from the county's general fund balance for the planning and construction of Leland Elementary School to cover the acquisition of a 40-acre site, engineering and architectural fees. Warren said commissioners reserve the right to approve the site acquisition.

The two boards plan to explore various options from lease-purchase to long-term bonds for financing construction of the Leland Elementary School as well as addressing other pending capital outlay needs of the school system. Should the two boards agree on a method of financing the Leland project and actual construction can begin before the end of the fiscal year, then commissioners will advance the school system an additional \$365,000 for that purpose.

The joint resolution agreed upon by the boards directs school and county officials to "initiate staff contacts" immediately to discuss ongoing educational needs in the county, provides for joint board meetings to be held "from time to time," and directs each board to appoint its chairman, finance officer and executive officer to act as official liaisons "to meet and communicate to each other" between joint board meetings.

Members of both boards cited a breakdown in communication during the budget process this spring as a factor leading to a budget confrontation that neither wanted.

A liaison committee of representatives of the school board and county commissioners did not meet this year, Board of Education Chairman Donna Baxter said Tuesday, blaming herself. That meant the schools' substantially larger budget request was a surprise to commissioners.

In turn, county commissioners, working to develop a budget with its acting county manager, didn't schedule the school board for the usual formal presentation of its request. Instead the school board defended that request

(See SCHOOLS, Page 10-A)

Candidates File For 73 Seats; Few Are Left Uncontested

BY SUSAN USHER

Filing has closed in Brunswick County with few seats uncontested in 17 municipality and three special district elections.

In elections Tuesday, Nov. 2, 73 municipal and special district offices will be filled. Voters countywide will also vote on a state referendum to issue bonds for education construction, state park improvements and the clean water fund, and proposed amendments to the state constitution.

The close of filing at noon Friday, found four South Brunswick area mayors unopposed for re-election—Betty Williamson in Ocean Isle Beach, Wally Ausley in Holden Beach, Sarah Tripp in Shalotte and Judy Galloway in Varnantown. Two other mayors do face challengers: Commissioner George Anderson is

challenging longtime Mayor Doug Simmons of Calabash, while former commissioner Minnie K. Hunt is challenging another longtime mayor, Sunset Beach's Mason Barber.

Forrest King, who is seeking the District 1 seat on the Calabash board, is the only candidate for town board in the South Brunswick Islands with no competition.

With more than two candidates filing for every available seat in Long Beach, a primary election will be held Tuesday, Oct. 5, to narrow the field, said Lynda Britt, supervisor for the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

In Sandy Creek, voters will get to elect the mayor directly this year, following approval of a petition submitted to the N.C. Secretary of State's to change the town's charter. Previously the five-member town board elected

the mayor from its membership every two years following the election. Effective this year, the mayor will be elected directly by the voters every two years. Four commissioners will be elected to staggered four-year terms. Nine candidates have filed for the two commissioners' seats available this year.

In Northwest, Brunswick County's newest town, Jerry Munn is seeking election as mayor and seven candidates have filed for the five-member board of commissioners. The three candidates with the most votes will receive four-year terms, the next two will receive two-year terms, to create staggered four-year terms in the future.

Below is a run-down of all the seats available and the candidates seeking election:

Calabash (mayor, three District 2 commis-

sioners, one District 1 commissioner): George Anderson and incumbent Douglas Simmons, mayor; incumbent Stuart B. Thom, town building inspector Edward Schaack and Alvin L. Leisey and Theodora "Teddy" Altrueter, District 2 commissioner; Forrest King, District 1. Incumbents Ray Card (District 1) and Ed Rice (District 2) did not seek re-election.

Sunset Beach (mayor, three commissioners): Minnie K. Hunt and incumbent Mason Barber, mayor; Paul E. (Ed) Hughes, Herb Klinker, Therese Regan and incumbents Edward M. Gore Sr., D.G. "Bud" Scramton and Julia Thomas, council.

Ocean Isle Beach (mayor, two commissioners): incumbent Betty Williamson, mayor; Ken Proctor and incumbents Bill Benton and

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Bond Is Reduced On Man Charged In Taxi Shoot-Out

BY ERIC CARLSON

Despite a prosecutor's objections, District Court Judge David Wall has reduced the \$155,000 bond on the Shell Point man charged with hijacking a taxi, attempting to rob a Winnabow couple at gunpoint and firing more than 80 pistol shots during a three-hour standoff with police last May.

Speaking through his court-appointed lawyer, defendant Stephen Lewis Willoughby, 18, of River Hills subdivision agreed Tuesday to forego a preliminary hearing and proceed to a jury trial on the 11 felony charges against him. A district court trial on nine misdemeanor charges was scheduled for Sept. 7.

Judge Wall agreed to reset bond at \$87,000 after attorney Sheila McLamb argued that Willoughby would not pose a threat to himself or to the community if released. McLamb said Willoughby's mother had agreed to take him into her home and asked the judge to free him on a \$25,000 bond.

Assistant District Attorney Rick Green disagreed, noting that Willoughby could be imprisoned for 267 years if the maximum sentence was imposed in all

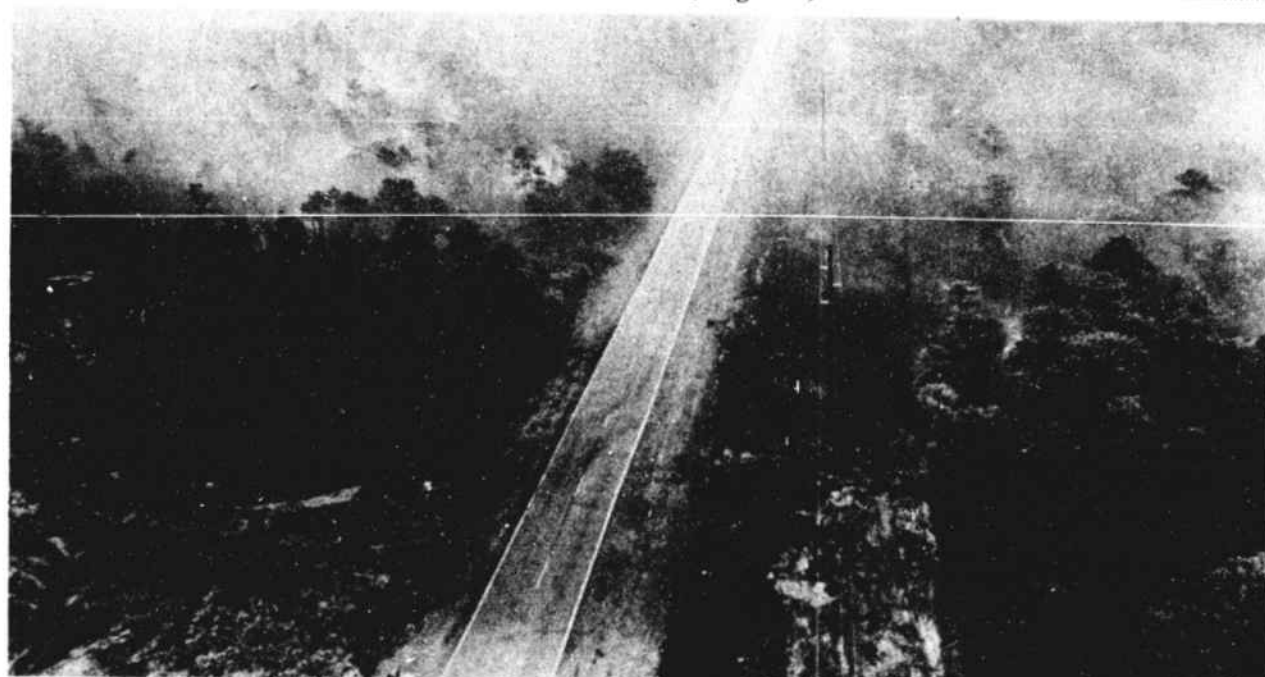
cases.

"We have a number of officers who were shot at, and a number of civilians here today who were shot at," Green said. "To say that Mr. Willoughby would not be a threat to the community flies in the face of what he probably did. I was going to ask that his bond be doubled."

Willoughby is charged with armed robbery, attempted armed robbery, discharging a weapon into occupied property, breaking and entering, injury to personal property, two counts of second-degree kidnapping, four counts each of assault with a deadly weapon and assault by pointing a gun and five counts of assault with a deadly weapon on a government official.

Police say that on May 27, Willoughby held a gun to the head of a taxi driver and demanded that he be taken to Vermont to see his father. After agreeing to free the driver and another hostage, Willoughby allegedly drove to Winnabow, where the car overheated and stopped.

(See JUDGE, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

Still Smoldering

Smoke spiraling from either side of N.C. 211 (viewed looking south) Thursday signaled hot spots with potential for flaring up. State and local firefighters worked throughout the weekend to create safety zones along the perimeter of the contained, but still smoldering 1,750-acre fire. More fire photos and story, Page 7A.