

SUNSET BEACH

Chief Buell Asks For Sixth Officer For Busy Town

Between controlling traffic at the Sunset Beach Bridge and keeping up with a growing town, Sunset Beach Police Chief J.B. Buell says his department needs help.

A month after the town adopted a 1994-95 budget with no money set aside for more officers, Buell has asked the town to add a sixth officer to the town's four officers plus chief force.

Nearby Ocean Isle Beach has seven officers plus a chief.

"We're very busy," Buell told council members at a meeting in late July, "and we're having a problem keeping reserve officers. On the weekends all we're able to do is take care of the bridge."

"We're walking a tightrope," he said.

In a later memo, he added, "I would not ask for an additional officer if I did not feel very strongly that one is needed, not only for the added areas, but also for officer safety."

Buell proposes to work the new officer on an overlapping shift primarily, giving the town two officers on duty during critical hours.

An additional officer could also cover vacation and sick leaves, investigative time and meetings, eliminating some use of reserve officers.

That way, Buell indicated, "our reserve officers can be used in the capacity for which they were intended unless an emergency should arise."

Through a series of annexations in recent years, Buell said the town has grown considerably and now includes two banks.

At present there are times when a single officer is on duty with no reserve on back-up. That means when an officer transports a prisoner to the county magistrate's office and jail in Bolivia for booking or testing, the

town is left without police protection.

"We're going to have to take a long look at that because they have been very, very busy," Mayor Mason Barber told council members Monday.

Buell has also asked council to consider increasing the fines levied for violation of town ordinances such as its leash and parking laws. Current fines don't cover the cost of processing the violation, he said.

Council plans to discuss the police department's personnel needs at a workshop set Tuesday, Aug. 16, at 4 p.m. at the town hall.

They also plan to talk about a town recycling program, water tank painting, restriction of shoulder parking on busy mainland streets, specifically Shoreline Drive East at N.C. 179, and a request from Councilman Herb Klinker to follow Calabash's example and restrict use of town letterhead stationery.

Klinker said he is concerned that personal opinions aired by town employees, council members or committee members on town letterhead may be interpreted as the town's official position on various matters.

Other Business

In other business Monday council: met in closed session with attorney Michael Isenberg to discuss a lawsuit filed against the town by The Seaquest Co. Inc. seeking the right to conduct their jet-boat rental business on the island. The board took no action in open session afterward.

subcontracted with Jim Billups of Piedmont Olsen Hensley engineers to act as planner-in-charge in developing the town's stormwater management ordinance.

adopted a formal resolution to

exchange, for more than a fair value for its property, the current town hall site, valued at \$113,000, with a site provided by Sea Trail Corp. valued at \$210,000.

contracted with Andrew & Kuske consulting engineers for stormwater and drainage work on the new town hall site, for \$3,937.50 from the town stormwater budget, of which \$437.50 goes to architect Joe Johnson, and to have a survey of the site done for \$450.

agreed to sell a military surplus pickup truck to Harvest Fellowship Pentecostal Church for \$1; and to advertise for sale a Chevrolet car with 90,000 miles.

Coastline VRS Makes 91 Calls

Coastline Volunteer Rescue Squad responded to 91 calls during June, according to the squad's monthly report.

Eight calls were for fire stand-by, nine for transports, five mutual aid and 65 emergencies.

"Coastline always needs and welcomes new members," said Sharon Martin, squad spokesman. For more information about becoming an emergency medical technician, call (910)253-5383.

Program Offers Training, Loans To Prospective Business Owners

Direct help for individuals with an idea for a small business and plenty of determination, but a lack of know-how. That's what the North Carolina Microenterprise Loan Program (MLP) offers locally and across the state.

An information meeting for persons who are interested in starting a business, or who want to learn more about the Microenterprise Loan Program, will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 22, in the multipurpose room of Brunswick Community College's ALS Building.

Due to limited space, participants

are asked to reserve space by calling the BCC Small Business Center at 754-6900, 457-6329 or 343-0203.

Locally, the program has benefited business people in Brunswick, Columbus and Bladen counties through its "how to" hands-on instruction for starting a business, writing a business plan, sales forecasting, preparing a cash flow statement, bookkeeping, marketing research and more, at no cost to participants.

In addition, MLP provides financial assistance with business loans starting at \$500 and going up to as much as \$8,000.

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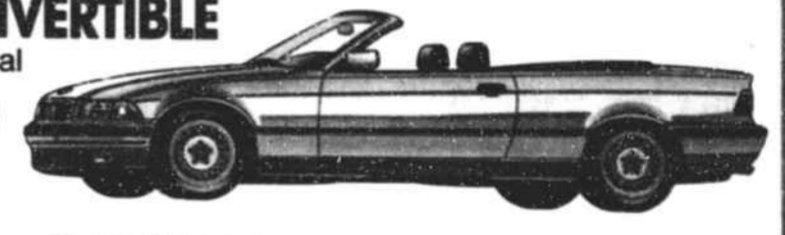


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