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THE STATE PORT PILOT

A Good Newspaper in a Good Community



Sports – 1C

Tall order



Photo by Morgan Harper

Those with patience—and time on their hands—got to see N.C. State Ports Authority's third neo-Panamax crane pass by the Southport waterfront Monday morning on its way to the Port of Wilmington following a three-month journey from China. The 766-foot-long heavy load carrier Zhen Hua 25 had been anchored off the coast since Saturday afternoon, and made its way upriver once heavy fog cleared. The crane is identical to the previous two received in March 2018, all purchased for \$33.8 million. The addition of the cranes enables the port to operate 14,000 TEU vessels – the largest ships currently calling on the East Coast.

Oak Island hears concerns

Town seeks \$5M grant

State assistance for sand replacement

By Lee Hinnant
Staff Writer

apparent that the town had made up its mind ahead of time. Wilson said residents
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Oak Island Town Council heard residents' thoughts on topics crossing from chickens and road rights of way to the new splash pad and pier during a "town hall-style" meeting Tuesday. Council also applied for \$5.3-million in state assistance for sand lost during recent hurricanes.

Tony Morgan and George Wilson said council made the wrong call recently by rejecting their competing proposals to operate the town-owned 801 Ocean Drive event center. Council decided to use town staff to run the facility, located next to Oak Island Pier.

Wilson said the town didn't adequately consider his offer to progressively increase rent for a restaurant at 801. He said his good-faith offer got "short shrift" and it was

Bridge set to reopen Monday

As of press time, the N.C. Department of Transportation intends to reopen the G.V. Barbee Sr. Bridge to two-way traffic sometime on Monday, April 15.

Engineer Wayne Currie said late Tuesday that work was progressing on time, although the contractor will still be working on the metal railings along the east side. This work will mean shifting traffic to the west. Bicycle and pedestrian traffic will not be allowed until the railing is finished, expected to take
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Gov. Cooper announces new company in Navassa

Pacon brings 300 jobs to county

By Renee Spencer
Staff Writer

Governor Roy Cooper visited Navassa last Friday to announce that Pacon Manufacturing had selected the town for its new plant.

The company is expected to create 299 new jobs and invest \$37.6 million in Brunswick County. While salaries for those jobs will vary by position, the average income will be \$31,273.

During a press conference, held at the former U.S. Marine boat manufacturing facility, Cooper said he has a mission for North Carolina.

"I want a North Carolina where people are better educated, where they're healthier, where they have more money in their pockets, and they have opportunities to live lives of abundance and purpose," he said.

He said he felt the location of Pacon Manufacturing's
See Jobs, page 7A



Photo by Renee Spencer

Gov. Roy Cooper presents a commemorative plate with the State of North Carolina seal to Mike Shannon, chairman of Pacon Manufacturing Board of Directors, in recognition of the company's new plant in Navassa.

St. James

One-cent tax hike would start disaster relief fund

By Phillip Giles Jr.
Pilot Correspondent

St. James Town Council is considering a one-cent tax increase to help build a disaster relief fund.

Town manager Gary Brown discussed the town's preliminary budget for 2019-20 at council's regular business meeting April 2. The town's tax rate is currently five cents per \$100 of property valuation, and the town is proposing to increase it to six cents.

"For people who live in St. James, your tax bill will be for Brunswick County, St. James and maybe for Doshier Hospital, depending on where you live," Brown said. "If you own a \$400,000 house, you pay \$200 a year in taxes to the town of St. James at five cents. If we go to six cents, you'll pay \$240."

Although there are some remaining numbers to be finalized in the budget, the impact of what may change should not significantly alter the overall budget.

"The budget does include a one-cent tax increase with those funds specifically dedicated to a disaster relief fund," said Brown. "The Town of St. James spent nearly \$600,000 in associated costs removing debris from Hurricane Florence."

"The council has directed that this tax increase be dedicated and identified for the specific purpose with a goal of
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Cape Fear Regional Jetport at Oak Island

New terminal takes shape

By Lee Hinnant
Staff Writer

The new terminal at Cape Fear Regional Jetport has taken shape and is expected to be in service by this summer, officials said.

Work on the \$3-million project started a year ago and Paragon Building Corp. expects to turn over the keys by mid-June. It will probably take about a month to completely move in, said Howie Franklin, general manager.

With 5,500 square feet downstairs and 1,700 square feet upstairs, the terminal will have two spacious meeting areas, offices, two break rooms, a pilots lounge with a sleeping room, an exercise room and three separate offices that can be leased out. Real estate broker Jack Hamilton has leased the first office, Franklin

said.

The terminal will replace an outdated, cramped building next to a fishing tackle shop that lacks even a single meeting room.

Designed by Talbert & Bright of Wilmington, the building has a low country look with concrete columns, a silvery metal roof, dormers and large windows. Broad roof overhangs and large porches complete the appearance. Another touch is the addition of sea shells imbedded in the concrete flooring outside.

The walls are covered with a composite Sierra siding that's fire-resistant and never needs painting, said Keith Morgan of Paragon Building Corp. Franklin said the building was rated for winds of up to 200 mph. He's particularly proud of the six inches of foam insulation in
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Photo by Lee Hinnant

Cape Fear Regional Jetport Manager Howie Franklin point out some of the details of the new terminal under construction.



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