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# Part-time tax administrator approved for short term

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners approved Monday a plan to use a part-time assistant tax administrator during the upcoming maternity leave for the tax administrator.

Melissa Radke, the county's tax administrator, told the board Monday she expects to go on

maternity leave sometime in May and anticipates the leave will last a minimum of seven weeks and a maximum of nine weeks.

The plan approved by the commissioners calls for Pete Rodda, who served last year as the county's interim tax administrator, to serve as a part-time assistant tax administrator at a total cost of \$15,796.

The figure is based on a pay rate of \$33.35 an hour and a term beginning sometime in April and lasting possibly until July.

Radke pointed out there will still be roughly \$17,929 remaining in the tax office's budget at the end of the fiscal year after paying Rodda.

Board of Commissioners Chairman Jeff Smith remarked that Rodda is very knowledge-

able did an excellent job when he was serving as the interim tax administrator.

In another matter, the board appointed Dr. Alex Kehayes as a physician and citizen appointment to the Community Child Protection Team and Community Child Fatality Protection Team.

The appointment was made at the recommendation of Letecia Loadholt, director of the Chowan

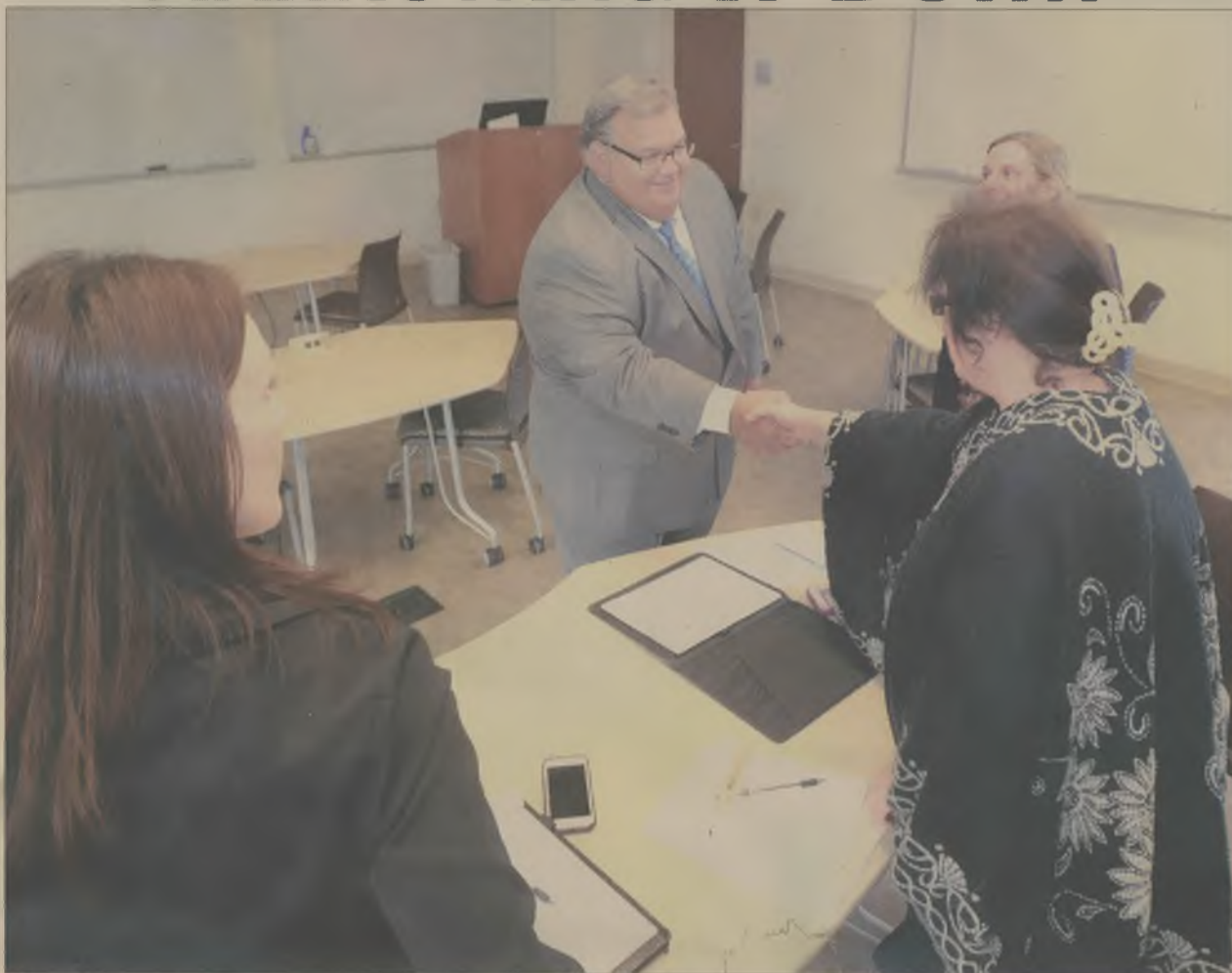
County Department of Social Services.

Loadholt said Kehayes brings a wealth of knowledge to the work.

A motion by Commissioner Patti Kersey to appoint Kehayes passed unanimously.

Kehayes, a retired physician, was a member of the county's board of commissioners from 2012-2016.

## NARROWING IT DOWN



STAFF PHOTO BY THOMAS J. TURNEY

One of the College of The Albemarle presidential candidates Gene Smith greets some of the COA faculty on Monday at the Currituck Regional Aviation and Technical Training Center.

# Candidates for COA president field questions from residents, officials

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
 AND WILLIAM F. WEST  
 Staff Writers

Students and others interested in the future of College of The Albemarle have been taking the opportunity to meet the college's finalists for president as the candidates have visited Edenton-Chowan and COA's three other campuses.

Gene Smith, vice president at Wayne Community College in Goldsboro, spoke at the campuses on Tuesday, Feb. 28. On Thursday, March 2, local citizens and officials had the opportunity to hear from Russell "Keith" Mackie, Ed.D., the executive vice president of Catawba Valley Community College.

Deborah Grimes, senior vice president of instruction and student services at Lenoir Community College, visited the campuses Tuesday, and the

remaining finalist, Robert Wynegar, is scheduled to tour and speak at COA's campuses Thursday. Wynegar is a vice president at Western Nevada College in Carson City.

Wynegar will be at the Edenton-Chowan Campus Thursday at 9 a.m.

The four finalists are seeking to succeed Kandi Deitemeyer who resigned at the end of 2016 to become the new president at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte.

Smith said he'll take a unified approach to student success if COA trustees choose him to lead the four-campus community college.

"As president of COA, I can't have a favorite," Smith said at a forum at COA's Regional Aviation and Technical Training Center in Currituck County last week. "We are one team working for one goal — and that's student success."

Smith said he especially sees great opportunity in Currituck, where he

was impressed with the facility but noted it's not the most important thing for helping students succeed.

During a forum at the main campus in Elizabeth City, Smith told approximately 60 attendees that he has a situational leadership style.

"I will work with you on an as-needed basis," he said.

Smith said some staff may need to be left alone to do their jobs. For others who need more direction, he's prepared to provide it, he said.

Smith said he's a big believer in all staff — from the top down — having a great attitude about what the college is doing.

"That's the first thing that students see, is the attitude of the person that's in front of them," he said.

Smith made clear his leadership style isn't authoritarian, though he noted he'll make the hard decisions when

See CANDIDATES, 2A

# Town moves closer to bulkhead replacement

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
 Staff Writer

A public hearing on the proposed plan to finance a bulkhead replacement project at the downtown waterfront drew no citizens wishing to speak on the issue.

The public hearing was held prior to the start of the town council's Feb. 27 work session.

Prior to the hearing, Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton gave a summary of the project's history including the fact that the town has received a \$100,000 grant from the NC Division of Coastal Management (CAMA) to help pay for the work.

"When the grant was awarded, CAMA required the town to hire an engineer to design the specifications and bid document for the construction of the bulkhead," Knighton explained. "The engineer tested the soils in the project area and the samples taken revealed that the soil was 'peat' which is not a strong, binding soil."

"He therefore recommended the pilings be driven 45 feet deep instead of 25 feet, which was our budget estimate for the grant," she added. "The extra 20 feet for the pilings impacted the cost of the project dramatically."

At that point, Town Finance Officer Jennifer Baldwin solicited proposals from banks and received two proposals, Knighton said.

"Southern Bank's term offer is 15 years at 3.8 percent with an annual payment that starts at \$25,000 and decreases each year," Knighton said. "BB&T's term offer was for a 10 year note at 3.08 percent. The interest paid on the BB&T proposal totals \$41,000 as compared to \$73,000 for the Southern Bank proposal."

Knighton and Baldwin recommended approval of the BB&T proposal.

"There were no comments from the public," Knighton said. "The town council then adopted the resolution authorizing town staff to submit the application to the NC Local Government Commission for approval of the financing agreement with BB&T."

Knighton said the application should be on the commission's April meeting agenda.

"The town council would have to authorize the contract for the work, which would happen at their April 11 regular monthly meeting," Knighton added. "The contractor then has 100 days to do the work."

See BULKHEAD, 3A

# Man charged with attempted murder

From staff reports



Dwayne Goodwin. Good was placed under \$350,000 secured bond, the Sheriff's Office reported.

A Chowan County man has been charged with assault and attempted murder in connection with the stabbing Saturday night of a Pasquotank County man.

William Clarence O'Neal Jr., 60, of 1500 River Road, Elizabeth City, was listed in fair condition at Vidant Medical Center in Greenville.

Mark Louis Lamar Good, 34, of 214 Yeopim Trail, Edenton, was arrested Saturday at 11:35 p.m., charged with attempted first-degree murder and assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill, inflicting serious injury, according to Sheriff

The incident occurred around 10:50 p.m. Saturday in the yard of a home at 3232 Rocky Hock Road, Edenton, according to the Sheriff's Office.

The stabbing occurred during an altercation that reportedly stemmed from an ongoing dispute going back to an incident late last year.

# Additional groundwater work approved

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners on Monday approved \$28,950 for additional work by Greenville-based Groundwater Management Associates Inc. as part of GMA's comprehensive site

assessment for the county's Valhalla Water Treatment Plant.

The county has entered into a special order by consent with the state's Division of Environmental Quality that requires extensive testing and planning leading to action that will redirect discharge away from the pond where the effluent from the treatment process is currently discharged.

County water meets all state standards for drinking water. The issue that has been flagged by state environmental regulators is

the relatively high mineral content of the water being discharged into a stagnant pond near the plant.

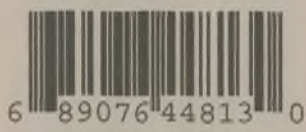
The county is setting aside about \$300,000 a year for water system capital needs as a result of water rate increases implemented a couple of years ago. But the state-mandated remediation of the discharge issue is expected to cost anywhere from \$3 million - \$5 million, so state officials also are looking for grants to help fund the work.

The county commissioners voted Monday to ap-

prove additional work by GMA, including the drilling of two additional monitoring wells. GMA reported that the additional wells were determined to be needed in light of a recent review of monitoring results from 13 new groundwater monitoring wells and a discussion with officials from the Division of Environmental Quality.

The biggest part of the cost for the new work is a combined \$16,400 for drilling services and supervi-

See GROUNDWATER, 3A



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