

City discusses legislative agenda

Body cams, elections, juvenile justice, gender equality on list

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The ability to release police body camera footage, moving local municipal elections back to odd-numbered years, juvenile justice and gender equality were among the things considered for the city's current legislative agenda.

During its meeting on Monday, Nov. 21, the City Council considered the legislative agenda it'll ask state lawmakers representing Forsyth County to champion. The proposal contained:

- An act that would once again make the body cam and dash cam footage of Winston-Salem Police Department officers public record. The proposed legislation would allow for requests for an officer's footage to be released or reviewed. It would give the local district attorney's office and the officer five days to get a court order to prevent its release if it jeopardized a legal proceeding. Once that legal proceeding is over, the footage would have to be released. This is

in response to a state law passed this year that prohibits the release of police body and dash cam footage without a court order.

- An act to move the city's mayoral and City Council elections back to odd-numbered years. The next election would be 2020, with it returning to its old schedule in 2023. This was the first year these races were held on an even-numbered year, because of action by the General Assembly.

- A resolution asking for the age of juvenile court jurisdiction in North Carolina to be raised to 18 years old. North Carolina and New York are the only two states in the country where teens 16 and older are tried as adults.

- A resolution asking the General Assembly to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guarantees equal rights for women. In the late 1970s, it passed both houses of Congress, but failed to be ratified by the 38 states it needed to become an amendment.

- Legislation to allow the city to recover the cost of publishing housing code complaints and orders in local newspaper if the owner doesn't pay by making it a lien on their property that could be collected through tax foreclosure.

- A resolution eliminating



Adams

part of the city charter that requires unaffiliated candidates to get signatures equal to 25 percent of residents eligible to vote in that contest. A state requirement that unaffiliated

candidates need signatures equal to 4 percent of eligible voters already overrides this provision.

Council members said the body cam legislation would let the city release footage when the public has questions about police conduct. This is what happened locally after Travis Page died in police custody. Body cam footage of the incident was released earlier this year to help alleviate public concerns after it had been investigated. City Council Member Denise "D.D." Adams said the current body cam law would've prevented that.

"The way the state has written the law, we would have had no ability at all to release the tapes to a community that may be on edge," she said.

Robert Clark, the sole Republican on the council, said most of the items would be "dead on arrival" and said that moving the City Council elections back to odd-numbered years, when far less people vote, was "voter suppression."

Many other council members took exception to the words "voter suppression," saying it evoked Jim Crow laws and the recently overturned state voter ID law. They said the City Council race got drowned out by the presidential race and other contests on a lengthy ballot. Adams and City Council member Dan Besse, who have had challengers in previous elections, said they had none this time, something they attribute to it being a presidential year.

Ultimately, the legislative package was divided. At the request of City Council Member James Taylor, the resolution on juvenile jurisdiction was voted on separately in order to get unanimous consent on it. The item on election timing was sent back to committee to consider a suggestion by Clark that the election should be moved to mid-term years. The rest of the package, along with sending that one item back to committee, passed 6-2. Council members Vivian Burke and Molly Leight voted against it. Leight didn't think the election item should have been removed and Burke felt Clark's issues should have been brought up originally in committee.

WSSU receives \$400,000 NSF grant to create psychology program

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Winston-Salem State University (WSSU) has received a \$400,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) that aims to increase the number of underrepresented minority students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) graduate programs and professional fields.

The three-year grant, under the NSF's Targeted Infusion Project (TIP), will establish an honor's curriculum in the Department of Psychological Sciences (DPS) for psychology undergraduate majors.

Dr. Naomi Hall-Byers, assistant professor of psychological sciences, said this will be only the second program of its kind at a historically black college and university (HBCU).

"The project is designed to keep underrepresented students engaged in scientific discovery, provide an avenue for focused student-faculty interaction, and expose students to current and emerging technology," said Hall-Byers. "Meeting these goals and objectives will create a paradigm shift within the DPS and improve the preparation and success of underrepresented students entering into STEM graduate programs and/or professional fields."

The program will create three new research-focused courses and a summer cultural neuroscience institute that will immerse students in mentored research.

The first cohort of honors psychology students will begin taking courses in spring 2018, and the institute will

begin in summer 2017.

In addition, the grant also will fund:

- * Renovations and upgrades of lab spaces at Coltrane Hall.

- * The establishment of a psychology colloquium series, which will bring a diverse group of researchers and scholars to WSSU, helping to encourage interest in psychology on campus, Hall-Byers said.

According to NSF statistics, African-American students make up only about 5 percent of STEM graduate enrollment nationwide.

According to a White House report, the United States will need to add 1 million more STEM professionals by 2022.

HBCUs, engines of economic growth and ladders of advancement for generations of African-Americans, are seen as critical to help meet the need for STEM professionals.

A 2011 report from the National Science Foundation found that 24 percent of Black doctorate recipients received their bachelor's degree from an

HBCU.

Hall-Byers is the principal investigator (PI) on the grant; Dr. Michele Lewis, associate professor and chair of Psychological Sciences Department and Dr. Nelson Adams, professor of behavioral sciences and social work, are co-PIs.

Senior personnel are Dr. Jill Keith, associate professor of life sciences, and Dr. S. Maxwell Hines, professor of education.

Students who are interested in the program should contact Dr. Hall-Byers at 336-750-8800 and or hallna@wssu.edu.

WSSU's Department of Psychological Sciences offers a structured curriculum that helps students develop a thorough understanding of concepts and principles that attempt to explain human behavior and mental processes.

For more information, please visit www.wssu.edu/casbe/academics/departments/ps/.



Hall-Byers

Piedmont Wind Symphony to expand program involving youth

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Piedmont Wind Symphony (PWS) announces the expansion of its Wachovia Winds youth ensemble program to include the Wachovia Winds Youth Symphonic Band.

The top-tier, highly competitive ensemble was developed to meet the need of ever-increasing interest in youth music ensembles.

Wachovia Winds youth ensembles will be offering a unique experience to serious music students, where they will receive expert instruction and appealing performance opportunities.

The development reflects the significant growth and change that has occurred in PWS since Maestro Matthew Troy became the music director. Troy is recognized across the country to have a significant background in music education and arts advocacy for young people.

The new top-tier Youth Symphonic Band will be an auditioned group that brings together the best wind, brass and percussion students in the Triad. It will be led by Artistic Director Danny Green and 2016 Grammy Award Winning Music Educator Phillip Riggs, who was also a co-founder of the group.

The intermediate group

is going to be led by Patricia Hughes Ball, who is currently the band director at West Forsyth High School.

Of this expansion Troy said, "I am so excited to build on the incredible success of the Wachovia Winds and help reach more



Troy

of the youth of our community, with a meaningful and exciting musical experience. This speaks to the great work the Piedmont Wind Symphony and the Wachovia Winds have been undertaking to make a significant contribution to the city of arts and innovation."

Students will be able to easily submit audition videos online. Go to www.wachoviawinds.org for audition requirements or contact Danny Green at wachoviawinds@gmail.com.

The Wachovia Winds was founded 13 years ago

to provide young musicians from throughout the community with an opportunity to come together and learn through the experience of an ensemble where quality music could be made, and wholesome fellowship could be enjoyed. The Wachovia Winds has also

provided conducting opportunities to several educators throughout the community.

For 27 years the Piedmont Wind Symphony (PWS) has provided excellence in the performance of symphonic music for the Piedmont of North Carolina, continuing this tradition for the 27th season under the leadership of the new music director, Maestro Matthew Troy.

For more information about the Piedmont Wind Symphony, visit www.piedmontwindsymphony.com.

Did You Know ?

- 1 Hospice is not about giving up hope. It's about embracing hope and living longer with exceptional care.
- 2 The majority of families say "We wish we had called sooner." We can help sooner than you think.
- 3 You have already paid for hospice care. It is an entitlement your tax dollars earn you. Hospice care is most often paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, or donations. Therefore, in addition to easing physical and emotional burdens, using hospice at end of life can ease financial burdens.
- 4 Volunteers are a vital part of our compassionate team. Visit our website to learn more about being a part of our remarkable mission.

Hospice & Palliative CARECENTER

HospiceCareCenter.org

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