

## Why was Planning chair shown the door?

BY SEAN JACKSON  
*The Chowan Herald*

Edenton's top planning official says town leaders acted with cowardice in how they called for his resignation.

Stephen Lane, chairman of the town planning board, said Edenton councilors should have invited him to their July 11 meeting.

Councilors unanimously called for Lane's resignation, saying he was hostile towards the developers of a Farm Fresh-anchored shopping center during a planning session the night before.

"I view the actions at the very least (as) heavy-handed,"

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In a 1 1/2-page letter, Edenton Planning Board Chairman Steve Lane fires back at Town Council members who've asked for his resignation.

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Lane said in a letter to the town, "if not an act of cowardice."

Councilors have strongly criticized Lane's actions during a July 10 planning meeting.

"They were treated rudely," Councilman Steve Biggs said of the developers. "It was an embarrassment to me."

Biggs said he had received a number of phone calls about

Lane's actions during the planning session, and his persistent questioning of the developers and town staff.

Councilwoman Phyllis Britton, who represents the district nearest the proposed shopping center, also said she'd received calls critical of Lane.

"We had a lot of very upset

people last night," she said. "It was most embarrassing."

Reached last Thursday, Lane declined to comment, saying he had not been formally contacted by town officials and had not listened to an audiotape from the meeting.

"It's hard to comment yet," Lane said.

Lane said he was disappointed that he was not invited to the council meeting.

"If you want to talk to me," he said, "talk to me."

In his July 17 letter to councilors, Lane said he had listened to a tape from the council meeting.



*'I view (Council's) actions... (as) heavy-handed if not an act of cowardice.'*

Steve Lane, Chair Planning Board



*'I've never seen such showboating in my life. Enough is enough.'*

Steve Biggs Councilman

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## Dixon describes 'surreal' events during shooting

BY SEAN JACKSON  
*The Chowan Herald*

Sambo Dixon arrived to court early in Jackson last week. He had one standard hearing going before the judge.

His day would turn out to be anything but standard. In less than an hour news helicopters were buzzing overhead the Northampton County Courthouse and Dixon's client would lay dying on a gurney.

"It was a wild ride," the Edenton attorney said Friday from the comforts of his West Edenton Street law office.

"It was just so surreal."

### A good start

Dixon walked into the Greek Revival courthouse at 8:45. He and fellow attorney A. Jackson Warmack went with their client, 37-year-old Willie Forrest, before Judge Alba Hinton.

Forrest, facing the death penalty if convicted on a first-degree murder charge, had a motion hearing set to begin at 9 a.m. He wanted to remove Dixon and Warmack as his

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Local officials are expanding efforts to make Chowan courthouse safer.

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counselors.

"I think I was the fourth lawyer he'd been through," Dixon said.

Forrest was escorted in by a pair of prison guards, who were armed. He was handcuffed and wearing leg shackles, which were both connected by chains. He was acting normal.



Dixon

"He was rational. He was calm," Dixon said. "He called us by our first names."

Forrest also wanted his case to be heard that day.

Hinton also told him he would not have his case heard that Wednesday since his motion for an attorney change was his only business in court.

In fact, Forrest had an old law book with an entry about North Carolina's speedy trial act. That act was repealed a few years ago.

"The district attorneys set court calendars," Dixon said. "It doesn't have anything to do with me."

### A turn for the worst

Forrest began to get bothered.

"He was angry that our (law) book didn't have what his book had in it," Dixon, dressed in a casual, lime-green polo shirt mid-afternoon on Friday, said.

Everyone headed into the courtroom. Inside, amongst what Dixon described as "beautiful woodwork" and tall

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Forrest

## SWEATIN' IN THE SUMMER HEAT



Earline White/The Chowan Herald

James Kee of Barnhill Contracting gestures toward a heavy equipment operator on his crew as sweat glistens on his body in the hot summer sun Monday morning. Kee and his co-workers from the Elizabeth City-based company were taking care of some road paving along Sandy Ridge Road in Edenton. Highs in the 90s are expected for most of the week, with the heat index driving temperatures into the triple digits for the next few days. Some expected rainfall could bring relief as the weekend rolls in, according to the National Weather Service.

## School daycare program under scrutiny

BY EARLINE WHITE  
*The Chowan Herald*

What has served as a safe haven for latchkey kids since the late '80s may be closing its doors.

The before and after school daycare operated at White Oak School on a pay-as-you-go basis is no longer self-sufficient, Superintendent Allan Smith told the Board of Education during their July meeting. In fact the daycare which serves K-5 is \$22,000 in the hole, Smith said.

The program initially received government funding,

with close to 80 students a day in attendance. Years later funding dwindled, as did attendance.

In the 2004-2005 school year, 41 students attended the five-day-a-week daycare. In 2005-2006 the numbers continued to drop to approximately 30.

"The program has not broken even since 2002-2003," Smith said.

The total cost of the program last year was \$66,000. Only 30% of the operation budget for the year was collected.

Glenda Jakubowski with Edenton-Chowan Schools has been asked to collect data, talk

with other school districts and determine how the program can continue to serve students.

"At this point we are not talk-

ing about closing the program, we are talking about keeping the program open, if possible,"

Jakubowski said.

## Crummey to be honored at public reception

The Mayor and Town Council are hosting a reception to honor longtime Electric Utilities Director Hawk Crummey. The reception will be held Tuesday at the Barker House on Edenton Bay, from 4 to 6 p.m.

The public is invited to come express their appreciation to Hawk for devoting 50 years of service to looking after the town's electric system. Hawk will celebrate his 50th anniversary with the town on July 3; he will officially retire July 31.

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