

## Business wants to open Internet gaming here

### Application targets Edenton Village

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

Internet gaming could soon be coming to Edenton.

On May 15, a company submitted an application for a business privilege license to open an Internet sweepstakes café in the Edenton Village Shopping Center as early as July 1. Edenton officials initially denied the application be-

cause the town's Unified Development Ordinance does not allow such a business, said Anne Marie Knighton, town manager.

She informed the applicant, Richard Chapman of Past Times of RP, LLC, of the town's position in a May 30 letter with an option that he could petition the Town Council to amend its UDO. A text amendment would be required to add Internet cafes to the table of uses to be permitted as use by right or by a special use permit.

Sweepstakes video games offer players a chance to win prizes based on the purchase of phone or Internet time.

Less than a week later Knighton received a letter from an attorney representing Chapman whereby it was argued that the town has the obligation to amend its zoning to accommodate a legal business.

"What the Town has done is, in effect, create an absolute ban or moratorium on all Internet cafes by refusing to issue privilege

licenses on the basis that the current Unified Development Ordinance does not list Internet cafes in its table of uses. This the Town of Edenton cannot do," attorney Seth R. Cohen wrote on June 4.

Cohen added that based on the town's current zoning omissions, Chapman could legally open his business anywhere he chooses.

Knighton has since been investigating appropriate conditions for Internet



DAILY ADVANCE FILE PHOTO

Carla Corbett plays a game called Caribbean Crumble at Triple Internet Cafe in Elizabeth City, January 2011.

See **INTERNET**, 4A

## Airport eyes fielding solar farm

Duke Energy to conduct study

By **REBECCA BUNCH**  
Staff Writer

The Edenton Town Council could decide at its July 10 monthly meeting whether to approve a plan that would allow the town to lease 35 acres of land for a proposed new solar farm at the Northeastern Regional Airport.

The lease agreement would require that the developer, Duke Energy Renewables, pay the cost of a required feasibility study, one of three that would be required for the project. The other two studies would be a system impact study and a facilities study.

The feasibility study would identify the estimated cost to upgrade the town's electrical distribution system, a necessity of the project.

Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton said that, "a very preliminary cost of upgrades appears to be in the neighborhood of \$400,000 to \$500,000."

Knighton noted that the town would not fund any required upgrades to its system, "An agreement (with Duke) will be necessary ensuring that the developer will pay for the upgrades," she said.

The Utilities Committee referred the proposal to the full council for its consideration and a vote during the council's committee meetings night on June 25.

The town is negotiating with the Ohio-based firm to lease a 35-acre tract at the airport on Sound-side Road. Terms of the proposed lease include a \$350 per acre yearly fee that would be paid to the airport for 15 years. After that, the lease payment amount would increase to \$450 per acre per year for the next 15 years.

Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton said that Duke Energy Renewables has agreed to reimburse the town up to \$10,000 to fund a necessary interconnection feasibility study that is necessary.

See **FARM**, 3A

## Lighthouse loses renovation funds

### Money to offset Medicaid shortfall

State guts \$92M fund

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

A budget shortfall led state legislatures last week to cut the \$455,000 designated to renovate the interior of the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse.

After recently moving the Lighthouse back over a watery home overlooking Edenton Bay and in anticipation of becoming the town's latest tourist attraction, state lawmakers siphoned \$92 million out of the Repairs and Renovation Fund to offset the shortfall in Medicaid. Proceeds for the Lighthouse renovation were coming from Repairs and Renovation.

Timing of the loss funds couldn't have come at a worse time. Plans called for the renovations to be completed before Edenton launches its 300th anniversary celebration in November and in time for fall when holiday visitors embark on tours.

"We were all fat and happy that it (Lighthouse) was going to be ready by October 15," said Anne Marie Knighton, town manager.

Just days before learning of the funding loss, the N.C. Division of Coastal Management announced a \$125,000 grant approval for the building of an access system that would bridge visitors

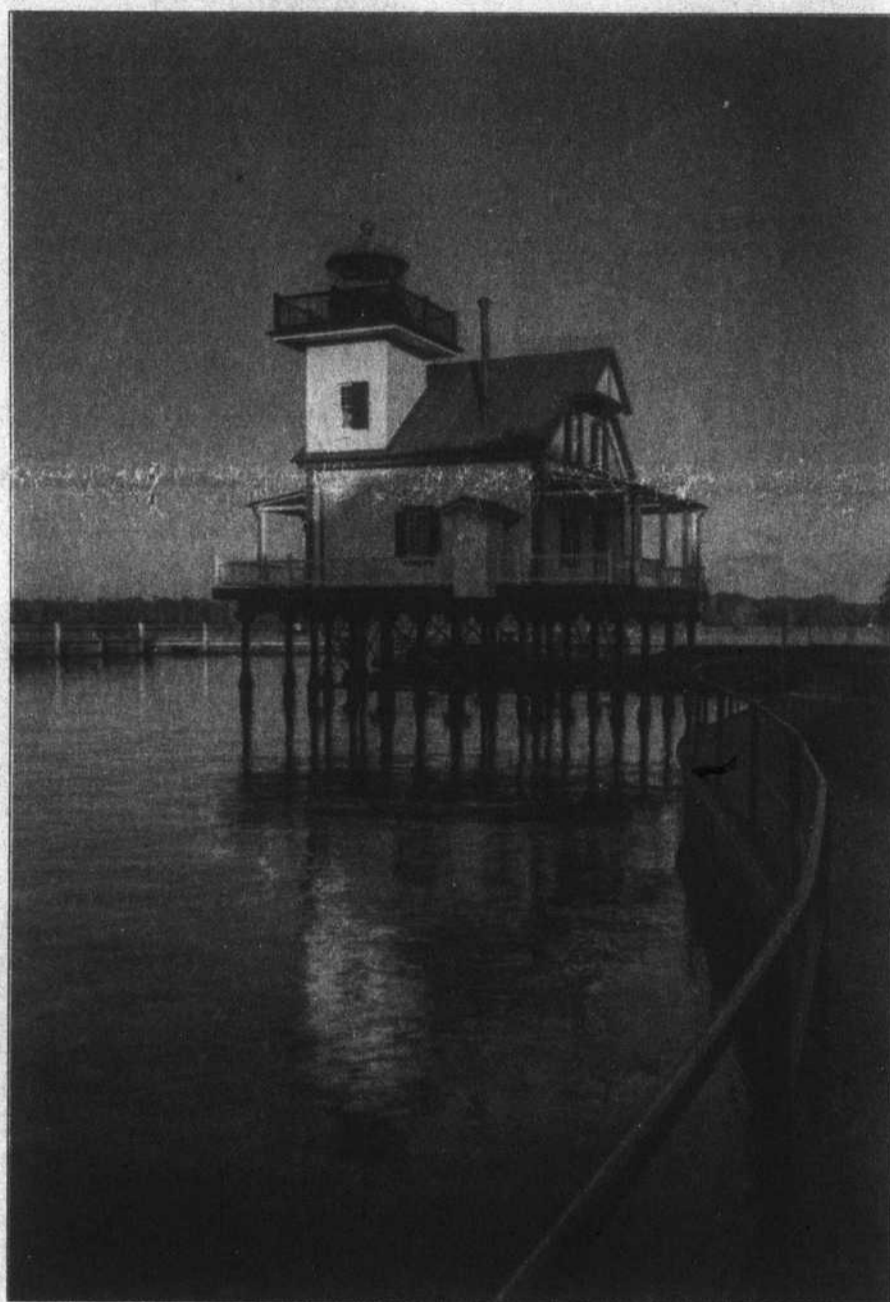


PHOTO BY MARK RIDLEY

The 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse hovers over its new site, perched on pilings and above the waters of Edenton Bay.

from land to the Lighthouse, Knighton said. That grant calls for a 10 percent match, whereby renovation funds were also going to cover the balance.

If there is any money leftover from assisting Medicaid, proceeds will be returned to Repairs and Renovations and pooled for high-priority projects, Knighton said.

The Lighthouse remains a top priority among the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources.

"Competition will

See **LIGHTHOUSE**, 3A

## 'Big brother' could be watching

Police chief wants video surveillance

By **REBECCA BUNCH**  
Staff Writer

Town officials will be considering a plan developed by the police department that would allow video surveillance at five pockets of town.

Edenton Police Chief Jay Fortenberry briefed town leaders on the proposed new system at the June 25 committee meeting night.

Fortenberry

At the conclusion of the briefing the Public Works Committee recommended that the matter be placed on the agenda for the council's July 10 monthly meeting.

Initially the proposal would consist of the purchase and installation of five Wildfire Connections cameras by Albemarle Sound and Security in Edenton, as well as a network video recorder that would be provided to the police department free of charge.

Cost per camera, including installation, is expected to be approximately \$2,749.20 plus tax.

Fortenberry said that while the system would help officers testifying in court by providing clear visual images of those committing illegal acts, its main purpose would be to help prevent crime.

"They (cameras) act as a deterrent to crime," Fortenberry said, although

See **'BIG BROTHER'**, 3A

## State legislature honors Edenton's founding

Resolution kick starts 300th anniversary

By **RITCHIE E. STARNES**  
Editor

Edenton's impending 300th-anniversary celebration got a jumpstart last Wednesday when the N.C. General Assembly passed a joint resolution recognizing the town's founding and significance in state history.

Only four months away from launching a yearlong anniversary celebrating the town's 1712 founding, Edenton received a legislative endorsement for its historical contributions toward the state's early development.

Councilman Bob Quinn, who

along with Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton, rushed to Raleigh Wednesday morning for the reading of the resolution on the House floor. Quinn, who is among those spearheading the 300th anniversary celebration, said the recognition signals the event's significance to a broader audience than just those in Edenton.

"It authenticates the real meaning of the event," Quinn said. "It endorses what we're intending to do. Edenton is being recognized as an exceptional place and the seed for our state government."

State Rep. Tim Spear, D-Washington, introduced the resolution that was read aloud in the House's chamber where Quinn and

See **FOUNDING**, 3A



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Edenton Town Manager Anne Marie Knighton, (l-r) and Councilman Bob Quinn and Melanie Soles, chief deputy assistant secretary N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, stand inside the General Assembly with a copy of a resolution passed by the Legislature honoring the town's upcoming 300th anniversary.

