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CHOWAN HERALD



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Wednesday, October 30, 2013

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Wind energy company mulls site on county line

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

A Charlottesville, Va.-based renewable energy company has proposed an amendment to the Chowan County Wind Energy Ordinance that would more than double the permissible height for wind turbines in the county — paving the

way for construction of a major utility-scale wind energy facility.

The heart of the proposed amendment is an increase in the maximum height allowed for wind turbines in the county from 250 feet in the current ordinance to 600 feet.

The text amendment proposed by Apex Clean Energy

Inc. is slated for consideration by the Chowan County Planning Board at the board's Nov. 19 meeting.

Dahvi Wilson, a spokeswoman for Apex Clean Energy, said few details are available right now since the company has only recently begun to assess the feasibility of a wind energy project

in Perquimans and Chowan counties.

"We are in the early stages of studying the wind energy potential of an isolated tract of timberland that straddles the Perquimans and Chowan County line," Wilson said. "Initial studies show that this expansive timberland may be ideal for wind energy produc-

tion due to its wind resource, remote location, and existing electrical transmission and railroad lines."

Wilson said the proposed amendment to the Chowan ordinance would put the county "on equal footing with Perquimans County."

The ordinance would allow a wind farm to be con-

structed only in the A-1 zoning district and only with a conditional use permit.

The proposed amendment also would increase the amount of flexibility that a company has in constructing a wind energy facility in the county.

See WIND, 3A

Officials want info on ag museum

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Bob Harrell's plans for a museum celebrating traditional horse- and mule-based agriculture in Chowan County are moving slowly, but still moving — not unlike the draft animals themselves.

The Planning and Enterprise Committee of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners on Monday tabled — that is, delayed action for the time being — Harrell's request for the county to set aside 10 acres near the former Albemarle Learning Center in northern Chowan County.

The land was owned by W.A. Harrell, then was under ownership as Harrell Farms, and later was donated for the Albemarle Recreational Learning Center. The property was deeded to Chowan County in 2009.

Harrell told the commissioners during the meeting Monday that W.A. Harrell was his uncle. Harrell has been in discussion with county officials in recent months about the possibility of setting up an agricultural museum on a portion of the property.

During the meeting Monday, Commissioner Jeff Smith said he had received an email from the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service referring to plans for an agricultural museum in Currituck County.

Harrell said the plan for the Chowan museum is different from the Currituck proposal in that the idea for the Chowan site is to have a team or horses or mules and provide live demonstrations of traditional farming methods using either horses or mules.

Harrell said his plan is to plant a small area with cotton, peanuts and other traditional crops.

Although there is a similar museum in the western part of North Carolina, Harrell said he isn't aware of any other agricultural museum in this part of the state with plans for ongoing live activities using horses or mules.

Chowan Board of Commissioners Chairman Keith Nixon said he is wary right

See MUSEUM, 2A



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SETTING SAIL



PHOTO COURTESY KERMIT LAYTON

The Elizabeth II sails into Edenton Harbor, Thursday. See more on the ship's visit to Edenton on pages 6A and 1B.

Animal shelter to reopen Friday

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

This Friday the Tri-County Animal Shelter in Tyner will reopen. Necessary repairs to the building that houses homeless animals from Chowan, Gates and Perquimans counties are expected to be completed in the days leading up to the resumption of services.

"It's going to be a crunch," said Friends of the Shelter spokeswoman Barbara Yates, referring to the work that will need to happen for everything to be finished. "There are still some bits and pieces to be done."

Yates said that flooring sealed with epoxy to prevent the spread of disease is now present at the shelter. The interior of the facility has been

repainted too, she said.

"We've also relocated the washer and dryer so when people come out they don't have to walk through the laundry room to get to where the animals are," Yates said.

Shelter Manager Dana Goheen said that she was looking forward to seeing the facility reopen this week.

"I'm anxious to get the shelter back up and running and I apologize for any inconvenience the closure has caused," she said. "I'm excited about the improvements and hope citizens will feel more comfortable about coming to the shelter to adopt



GOHEEN

their next pet."

Goheen and Yates praised the managers and commissioners from the three counties for supporting the project that she said is expected to come in below its \$25,000 budget. A \$2,500 grant from the N.C. Veterinary Medical Association in Raleigh is also helping to defray the cost of the project, she said.

Yates said that help from personnel from the three counties — and inmate labor provided by Chowan County Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin — helped keep the costs associated with the project down. Goodwin also assisted with the project by securing a large storage bin from the Northeastern Regional Airport that

See SHELTER, 3A

County eyeing athletic complex

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Chowan County officials decided Monday to form a committee to explore long-term options for recreational facilities in the county — including a multi-use athletic park with fields for baseball, softball and soccer.

County commissioners have discussed the possibility of using the Red Banks Farm property the county owns along Pembroke Creek for a multi-use facility that could host baseball and softball tournaments. The idea is to construct a facility similar to the South Park complex in Elizabeth City and athletic complexes in Windsor, Williamston and Tarboro.

Recreation Director Jason Petersen said four fields could be the right size facility for Chowan County. Many of the newer fields are constructed so that they can be modified for use as baseball or softball fields.

Commissioner Greg Bonner said there was a question at the Recreation Advisory Board meeting about whether Red Banks is the best location for an athletic complex.

Chowan Board of Commissioners Chairman Keith Nixon said he, too, wonders whether Red Banks is the best location for an athletic complex. He said he would like the county to explore all options, including acquiring a different piece of property to develop as a recreational facility.

Commissioner Jeff Smith said the county also needs to look at the feasibility of getting rid of the other fields before moving too far on a new athletic complex. It won't be possible to sell the existing fields right away, Smith said.

County Manager Zee Lamb said he believes the county should begin by developing a plan for completing critical upgrades such as updating

See COMPLEX, 3A

Wasp nest causes fire in council chamber

From staff reports

A large wasp nest caused a small electrical fire in the Edenton Town Council Chamber at the Chowan Arts Council Building last week.

The unusual incident occurred last Wednesday.

According to Edenton Fire Chief Craig Forlines, a wasp nest in the back wall of the coun-

cil chamber — behind where Mayor Roland Vaughan and Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton sit during council meetings — had grown to about two feet by two feet.

The large nest pressed against the electrical wiring and caused a small fire, according to Forlines.

There was smoke from the fire but no dam-

age other than having to drill a hole in the wall to remove the wasp nest, fire officials said.

Firefighters drilled a two-inch hole in the wall and removed the entire wasp nest.

Knighton said town officials briefly considered contacting an exterminator but decided town staff had the equipment and expertise to handle the situation.

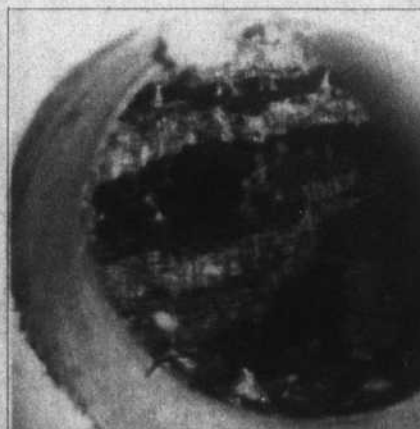


PHOTO COURTESY CRAIG FORLINES

Part of a wasp's nest visible through a hole drilled in the wall of the council chamber last week, which caused a small electrical fire in the Chowan Arts Council building.

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