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Wednesday, November 27, 2013

## Board backs new allowances for wind turbines

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Chowan County Planning Board last week endorsed an amendment that would more than double the permissible height for wind turbines in the county.

The proposed amendment to the Chowan County Wind Energy Ordinance

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

The text amendment has been proposed by Apex Clean Energy Inc., a Charlottesville, Va.-based renewable energy company.

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the proposed

text amendment during its 7 p.m. regular meeting on Dec. 2.

At the Nov. 19 planning board meeting, a motion by board member Allen Nixon to recommend approval of the amendment by the county commissioners passed with board member Patti Kersey casting the lone vote against it.

Asked later about her opposition to the proposed text amendment, Kersey said anything — not just a wind turbine — that is built 600 feet high is contrary to the county's vision and land use plan.

"A 600-foot anything is just not consistent with what we talk about," Kersey said. "All of a sudden we throw

out everything that we have talked about in terms of our vision," she said.

Landin Holland, planning director for Chowan County, explained at the beginning of the discussion at the Nov. 19 meeting that the matter before the board was not specifics of the project but rather the proposed ordinance amendment that

would bring Chowan's wind turbine regulations in line with the rules in neighboring Perquimans County.

"First and foremost we're talking about height," Holland said, noting the amendment allows wind turbines up to 600 feet high.

The existing ordinance

See WIND, 3A

## Citizens hopeful for bike path

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
 Staff Writer

Edenton resident Steve Lane said he is happy with the county commissioners' decision to revisit the issue of supporting a planned bicycle path through the Albemarle area.

"Everybody I've talked to seems to be pleased that they are willing to reconsider," Lane said.

Lane said he hoped that after reviewing the idea once again the commissioners would feel the benefits of the planned path were significant enough to warrant their support.

Lane and fellow Edentonian Bill Miller addressed the commissioners during their Nov. 19 work session asking them to rethink their recent vote not to support the proposed path running through Chowan County. The Nov. 4 vote was split with two of the seven commissioners voting in favor of supporting the plan and five against.

Miller said that he like Lane was pleased with the commissioners' decision to keep an open mind on the subject.

"I really appreciate their willingness to look at it again," Miller said.

The Edenton Town Council has already announced that it would wholeheartedly support the Albemarle Regional Bike Plan that would include the town.

At its Nov. 12 meeting the town council voted unanimously to endorse the plan and have Edenton become a part of it. Councilman Bob Quinn was absent.

The vote followed an Oct. 8 presentation of the plan before the council by Steve Lambert, planning director for the Hertford-based Albemarle Commission.

Lambert said that the plan was developed by the Albemarle Rural Planning Organization with the support of towns and counties across the Albemarle area. He said the process started with a kick-off meeting held in the summer of 2012. The plan was finalized in the fall of 2013, Lambert said, guided by the principles of incorporating health and wellness, and safety, into the family-oriented initiative.

See BIKE, 3A



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## KIDS MEAL



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Local Boys & Girls Club kids showed their best table manners during a free sit down Thanksgiving dinner they were treated to at the Nothin' Fancy Cafe & Market co-owned by Gail Sing and Shannon Andersen. The club members were treated to the meal in memory of Singh's father Worth Hare who died recently.

## Vigil planned for missing teens

From staff reports

The community has been invited to gather for prayer tonight for two Edenton teens who have been missing since the weekend.

The prayer vigil for Nicholas Beaman and Rob Bunch will be held today (Wednesday) at 7 p.m. at the Parish Hall at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

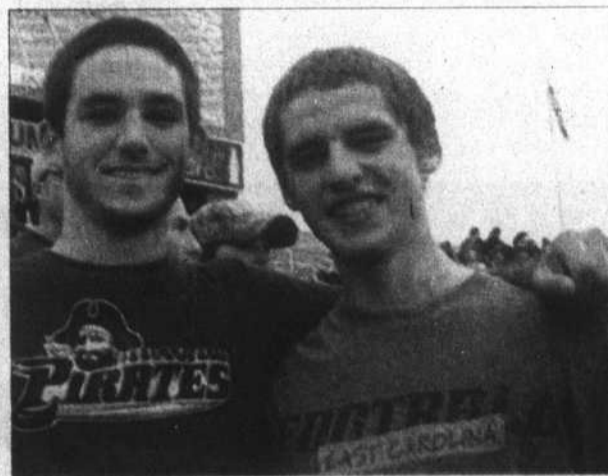
Edenton police are seeking information from anyone who may know the whereabouts of the two teens.

Information received so far is leading police to believe that the boys may be in Texas, according to Edenton Police Chief Jay Fortenbery.

"We have no reason to suspect foul play," the police chief said. "Right now, we're treating this as a runaway situation."

Fortenbery has asked that anyone with information that could help his office locate the two boys please call 482-4444 immediately.

See TEENS, 2A



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Missing Edenton teens Rob Bunch (left) and Nick Beaman.

## Edenton joins in marketing effort

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
 Staff Writer

The town council voted unanimously at its Nov. 12 monthly meeting for Edenton to participate in a marketing initiative with several other smaller North Carolina communities.

Councilman Bob Quinn was absent.

"I think everybody is in agreement for us to move along with this," said Councilman Steve Biggs, who chairs the administrative committee.

Known as an "umbrella marketing" plan, the program would link Edenton with towns like Warrenton and Tarboro.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said she first learned about the idea during a meeting of managers and tourism directors from the communities of Warrenton, Murfreesboro, Hillsboro and Halifax.

"The concept being put forth by the town of Warrenton is one that would create an umbrella branding effort for the purpose of bringing additional tourism and business to these respective small towns," Knighton said.

Knighton said that the idea was the result of Warrenton's participation in the North Carolina Main Street's Step Program, whose mission is to help small towns create opportunities for economic development.

"(Chowan Tourism Director) Nancy Nicholls and I attended the meeting in Warrenton and came away impressed with the concept being presented," Knighton said.

Knighton said that the joint effort would focus on

See MARKETING, 3A

## Manufacturing holds hidden job promise

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

One of the most frequently expressed concerns around Edenton is that there is no place here for young people to find good jobs.

But speakers at a gathering of business and education leaders last week at College of the Albemarle's Edenton-Chowan Campus insisted the reality is much different from the perception.

The forum focused on manufacturing, worker training, and the role of the local public schools and College of The Albemarle in preparing students for jobs that are available. Organizers of the event included COA and the Education Commit-

tee of the Edenton Chowan Partnership. The committee is chaired by Frank Palm.

Hal D. Burns Jr., general manager of Hampton Farms Jimbo's Jumbos, said recruiting skilled workers can be a challenge. Even though people who live in Edenton recognize it as a special place with a great quality of life, it's hard to persuade a 22-year-old from Raleigh, Greenville or Richmond, Va., to relocate here, he said.

Burns said the situation leads to an obvious answer: Why not train people locally?



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"There are a lot of good opportunities here," Burns said.

There are good jobs available for skilled workers at Jimbo's Jumbos, Olam, JLA labs, Colony Tire, Regulator Marine and other companies in town, Burns said.

Training and education not only would help with finding skilled workers for local companies, but it also would provide a boost for the recruitment of new industry to the area, he said.

COA can be a driving force in helping local kids make a living

here, Burns said. It also can start as early as the STEM program at Chowan Middle School.

The STEM program at CMS — STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics — introduces middle school students to careers and topics in science and technology.

Burns said the local food processing industry can help students make the connection to local jobs by, for example, providing assistance with experiments that deal with peanuts.

Burns said, so that students realize if they don't want to cook peanuts they can cook tires at Colony

See JOBS, 2A

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