

# CHOWAN HERALD



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## Mid-Oakum site 'preferred' for new police station

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

The town council at its March 11 monthly meeting voted 5-1 to approve Option 1 as the preferred site for the Edenton Police Department's new location.

Councilman Steve Biggs cast the lone dissenting vote.

The site, one of four under consideration, was the same one recommended to the council by town staff as its choice last month. It also was the first choice of the

citizens advisory committee that ranked each of the four potential sites using criteria developed during a community meeting last summer.

Option 1 includes parts of the North Oakum Street and East Albemarle Street neighborhoods.

Biggs said prior to the vote that he was not willing to express a preference for a particular site without knowing how much expense would be involved.

"I can't vote in good conscience for any of them," Biggs said. "I think we're

kind of jumping the gun."

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton explained that the reasoning behind identifying a preferred site was so that the process of hiring an appraiser could move forward without the expense of all of the sites having to be appraised. Should the projected cost be excessive or other issues develop with the Option 1 site, other sites that remain in the running could be considered, she said.

Option 2 was eliminated from consideration at the council meeting, an ac-

tion that freed Councilman Sambo Dixon — a property owner in the neighborhood covered by that option — to once again participate in the discussion and subsequent vote on a preferred site. Dixon had asked to recuse himself due to a potential conflict of interest if that site was chosen.

The council has yet to vote on a definite site where the new police station would be built.

Public Works Committee chair Jimmy Stallings, whose committee brought

the matter before the council, emphasized that the action they were taking was not a permanent selection. That vote will come later.

"We're not saying this is a permanent site," he said.

Biggs responded that he still was concerned about whether approving an appraisal for just one site was a good use of funds.

"We should be prudent with our money," Biggs said.

With Option 2 eliminated and Option 3 not receiving much support from citizens

that have been in touch with town officials, it appears that Option 4 is the only strong remaining contender for the new location site. Option 4 includes the North Oakum Street and Walker Street neighborhood.

Dixon urged the council not to delay taking action on declaring Option 1 the preferred site, saying the project needs to move ahead.

"I think it's time to move on this," he said. "I think the committee is ready for this to be done. I think it's time to roll."

## Jones speaks to local GOP

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

Rep. Walter Jones brought his message of non-interventionist foreign policy and controlling federal debt to the Chowan County Republican Convention Saturday.

The keynote address by Jones, a Republican who has represented the state's 3rd District in Congress for nearly two decades, addressed focus topics: Foreign policy, debt, Obamacare and presidential executive orders.

Jones opened his speech with an insistence he would never again support sending America's men and women to war unless it was done according to the Constitution. He would spend a great deal of time on that point and returned to it near the end of his address.

Jones said most of the spending on the war in Afghanistan has been "off-budget" but eventually will have to be paid for by future generations.

Some \$1.5 trillion has been spent in Afghanistan, Jones said, and Afghan President Hamid Karzai has been trying to negotiate an agreement to keep the United States in that county for 10 more years.

Karzai is a "crook" and

See JONES, 4A



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R.-N.C., speaks to the Chowan County Republican Convention, Saturday.



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## IN CASE OF EMERGENCY...

### Emergency helicopter available around the clock

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

A 24-hour emergency medical helicopter is now based in Chowan County.

Air Methods began operating the emergency helicopter service out of Northeastern Regional Airport on a part-time basis last month.

But on Monday the company went 24-hours-a-day at the local airport.

The EC-135 twin-engine helicopter is housed in a hangar at the airport, ready to take to the air in an emergency.

The helicopter provides the potentially lifesaving service of enabling a patient to get to a high-level treatment center within the one-hour critical period for emergency response.

Jim Huffman, a flight medic with Air Methods, said the helicopter carries "everything our big critical care trucks have, but condensed down to a little bit smaller."

Jon Berge, an Air Methods pilot, said the helicopter typically will fly a patient to a nearby trauma center — either in Norfolk, Va., or in Greenville depending on factors such as weather and distance.

The helicopter operates independently.

"We are not tied to any particular hospital area," Berge said.

The Air Methods crews currently are staying in temporary quarters. But the



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Air methods flight medic Jim Huffman displays some of the emergency medical equipment on the helicopter stationed at the Northeastern Regional Airport.

company plans to build an office building to house the staff.

The crews work 12-hour shifts.

The on-duty staff at all times consists of three crew members and a mechanic. The crew includes a pilot,

nurse and paramedic.

Air Methods also has a base in Rocky Mount.

In an emergency situation, the helicopter is requested by ground personnel such as emergency medical technicians and then is dispatched through

a regional communications center.

Berge said word is just beginning to get out that the helicopter is now based here.

"People are learning that we are here," Berge said. Air Methods is headquar-

tered in Englewood, Colorado.

According to the company's website, it has operations from Alaska to Key West, Fla.

The company has more than 300 bases of operations in 48 states.

## Plans underway for emergency dive team

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

The Chowan County Sheriff's Office is in the process of organizing a local Emergency Response Dive Team to assist in water-based rescue efforts both here and in the area.

James Bell of Edenton, who will lead the team, said Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin has been working with him for several months to draw up

plans for how the team will be organized to best assist in emergency situations.

"Dwayne just came to me and said, 'James, I want you to take the lead on this,'" Bell, who has been diving since age 14, recalled.

The team that Bell — who in



BELL



GOODWIN

2007 was named North Carolina Teacher of the Year and is now a virtual learning consultant for the N.C. Department of Public Instruction's N.C. Virtual Public School — has put together includes five experienced divers from the community including Steve Taylor, Worth

Rinehart, Greg Shackelford, Edward "Scooter" Basnight and Alan Stulick. The team is also expected to have one alternate, Bell said.

Goodwin said that he was very pleased Bell had agreed to lead the team.

"I've known James since he was teaching my kids at Chowan Middle School, and I knew he was a diver," Goodwin said.

See DIVE TEAM, 3A

## Looks like 'green light' for Hotel Hinton project

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

The historic Hotel Hinton building could be open as a restored hotel and restaurant in the fall of 2015.

That was part of the upbeat report presented by Bob Howsare and Fred Vollat of SAGA Construc-

tion and Development at the meeting Monday night of the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.

SAGA Development is in the process of purchasing the structure from the county. The historic building on East King Street most recently was used by the county as a govern-

mental office building.

Chowan Board of Commissioners Chairman Keith Nixon said during the meeting Monday night that he believes the project will be successful. He explained that the project still has to go through the town's planning and permitting process.

Nixon said he hopes to close the deal out in the next two to three months.

Howsare said what SAGA is planning is 60 hotel rooms and a restaurant.

"We're very excited about this project," Vollat said.

Howsare said the plan is to begin construction in

late summer, with a 10-12 month construction period to follow. That should put the hotel ready to open in the fall of 2015, he said.

Historic preservation specialist Heather Fearnbach is helping the developers secure historic preservation tax credits for the project.



Rocky Hock Lions Club Providing  
FREE VISION SCREENING - NO APPT. NEEDED  
MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup> 10AM - 4PM  
at the Edenton United Methodist Church  
Brighter-Vision Mobile Screening Unit



MARCH 29<sup>TH</sup> 7:00 P.M.-10:00 P.M.  
The Original Rhondels at The Red Barn, Edenton  
Proceeds for Visually impaired  
Advance Tickets Only \$15.00 each - Call 333-0723