

P8/C8*****CAR-RT LOT**C 002 A0095
 SHEPHERD PRUDEN LIBRARY
 106 W WATER ST
 EDENTON NC 27932-1854



Winslow wins McGee 50¢
 FCA award — 6B

County budget work could be tall order

BY REGGIE PONDER
 Editor

As county commissioners began work Tuesday on the 2014-15 Chowan County budget, they were facing a significant decline in assessed value of real property as well as \$263,000 more in requests from county departments than was funded in the current budget.

County Manager Kevin Howard provided the county commissioners their first look at departmental budget

requests at a meeting Tuesday afternoon.

"These are very, very preliminary numbers," Howard said this week.

Howard pointed out the assessed values of property won't be final until the appeals process is over later this spring.

So it's only a guess right now, Howard said, that a 10-cent increase in the county's property tax rate would be required to generate the same amount of property tax revenue as in the budget

for the current fiscal year.

"We're hoping our guess is worst case scenario," Howard said.

As stands now, though, the revenue picture shows a "deficit" of \$1.3 million in property tax revenue based on the declining property valuation, and also a decrease of \$134,000 in vehicle tax proceeds.

When the \$263,000 in additional money requested by departments is factored in, the hypothetical "deficit" stands at \$1.76 million.

The preliminary budget "deficit" is really a theoretical construct, since state law requires counties to adopt balanced budgets. The deficit is a gap that must be closed before the budget is adopted for the fiscal year that begins July 1.

The single largest budget increase requested this year is a \$188,838 increase for current expense requested by Edenton-Chowan Schools.

The amount of budget increases requested by other county departments

are a \$10,066 increase for the Tax Office; \$19,788 for Elections; \$24,630 for Register of Deeds; \$25,529 for Information Technology; \$48,834 for Central Maintenance; \$45,820 for Central Communications; \$80,973 for the Sheriff's Department; \$17,200 for School Resource Officer; \$50,642 for Jail; \$56,562 for Library; \$22,281 for Recreation; and \$45,434 for transfer to Department of Social Services.

Those requested increases total nearly 637,000, but

proposed reductions in some areas offset that total — leaving the net figure of \$263,000.

One big area of savings is in Emergency Medical Service, which has a preliminary request for a transfer from the General Fund of only \$36,000 in the upcoming fiscal year — compared with \$338,000 in the coming year.

The shift to the self-supporting status for EMS is being driven by an upgrade to paramedic level EMS.

Schools plan summer camp

BY REBECCA BUNCH
 Staff Writer

Plans for a Read to Achieve summer camp for Edenton-Chowan Schools third graders were outlined for the school board at its April 7 monthly meeting.

The camp will offer remedial help for third graders not reading at grade level on state testing standards by the end of the current school year and give them an opportunity to transition into fourth grade next year.

A team of presenters gave the update including Katina Waples, interim principal at D.F. Walker, Jennifer Thach, instructional facilitator, Carisa Copeland, third grade teacher/chairperson, and Linda White, elementary director for the school system.

White said that under state law the current plan calls for the summer camp to last a minimum of six weeks, three hours a day, four days a week. However, she said, State School Superintendent June Atkinson has sent a memo to the General Assembly recommending each school system should be able to have its own summer camp plan. White said that content could be tweaked depending on which schedule is implemented this summer.

"We do know that we have to provide transportation

See CAMP, 2A

Jackson values community involvement

BY REBECCA BUNCH
 Staff Writer

Rob Jackson wasn't exactly a stranger to Edenton when he agreed last week to become the local school system's new superintendent.

Jackson, who currently serves on the Union County Public Schools Superintendent's Executive Cabinet as the chief communications officer, will begin work in Edenton on July 1. He will be paid an annual salary of \$120,000.

But he said during an interview Friday afternoon that he and his wife Rene had made a couple of weekend visits to the community before he decided to say yes to the job. Once they did, he said, they were sold on the idea of making Edenton their home.

"Everybody was so friendly, they helped us with directions, whatever we needed," Jackson said. "That really resonated with me and my wife."

Jackson said that while they were here he also drove to each of the county's four public schools. Even though they were closed because it was a weekend, he said, he was impressed with how well maintained they were.

Things like that told him more than words could about how much the people connected with the school system valued it, he said. And, he said, he knows a little something about being a maintenance man, and a teacher, so those are occupations he values highly.

"I think one of the most important things I bring to this job is probably a bit unique and that is, I'm someone that has worked my way up," Jackson said. "As I was working my way through college I held jobs as a custodian, a school secretary, a



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Casey Atstupenas, director of secondary education for the Edenton-Chowan Schools, greets Rob Jackson, new superintendent, during a reception in his honor held April 8 at the Public Safety Center. Jackson will begin work here on July 1.



New Edenton-Chowan Schools Supt. Rob Jackson, second from left, is flanked by his wife Rene; three sons, Dennis, Joshua and Elijah; and daughter, Madelyn, as he addresses the crowd at the Public Safety Center on April 8 during a reception in his honor.

bus driver ... I did a little bit of everything on my way to becoming a teacher. I think that gives me a unique perspective on how each of those roles contributes

to the education of a child." Jackson and his wife have four children — Dennis, Joshua, Elijah and Madelyn — so he also knows firsthand the importance

of reaching out to parents and getting them involved in educating their children, he said. Growing that partnership between teachers, the school system, and parents is critical to the academic success of students, he said.

"I believe together we can achieve just about anything," Jackson said. "I also want the community to know that if I may be of service, that's my job."

In 2011, Jackson was named

See JACKSON, 2A

Lighthouse furniture search drawing near

BY REBECCA BUNCH
 Staff Writer

As the gathering of interior furnishings for the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse on the downtown Edenton waterfront nears completion, some items are still needed.

Gregg Nathan, executive director of the Edenton Historical Commission which has been accepting furnishings from the public for the historic structure, said those items include,

"People have been very generous in sharing things from that time period with us ... So there's been a lot to choose from."

Gregg Nathan
 Executive director, Edenton Historical Commission

by room, (kitchen) dish towels with classic ticking; (lighthouse keeper's office) a roll top desk and small hanging bookshelf to hold account books and journals; (entry hall) cast iron hooks; (bedrooms) iron or wood beds and ticking bag mattresses, rag rugs; (lighthouse parlor) bookcases and a rag rug.

"People have been very generous in sharing things from that time period with us," Nathan said. "So

there's been a lot to choose from."

Nathan said that curator Elizabeth Reign from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources has been assisting with the selection process.

With the search for furnishings nearly complete, the EHC is now seeking volunteers to fill several key roles.

One of the needs is for a seamstress who could make two ticking bag mat-

tresses or other linens.

According to Nathan, two bag type mattresses made of period looking striped ticking cotton material are needed for the two bedrooms in the lighthouse that would have been used by the lighthouse keeper and the assistant keeper. The mattress will be stuffed with cornstarch "peanuts" that are inert and do not break down over time, he said.

Able-bodied volunteers also are needed to help move furnishings into the lighthouse and set them up.

And starting in May, the Historic Edenton State Historic Site (Visitor Center) staff will begin training

See FURNITURE, 4A

Policy on teacher contracts finalized

BY REBECCA BUNCH
 Staff Writer

The school board agreed at its April 7 monthly board meeting to follow a previously developed strategy for the selection of 25 percent of eligible teachers to receive four-year contracts.

Implementation of the policy will begin next month, school officials said.

That strategy was developed last December by a committee consisting of principals and members of the Teacher Advisory Committee. The committee reviewed a number of options before coming up with a selection process that was presented to the board for

its approval on January 23.

During a review of the plan held at the April board meeting, school board members were offered the chance to suggest any changes they might have as the process moves closer to implementation.

"Is any action needed or is the board satisfied in moving forward with what we have?" board chair John Guard asked.

No board members responded with any changes they felt necessary.

The policy calls for the number of teachers meeting two specific criteria to be multiplied by 25 percent to

See CONTRACTS, 4A



©2009 The Chowan Herald
 All Rights Reserved

ROCKY HOCK Opry FRIDAY, APRIL 25TH, 7:30 PM E.A. SWAIN AUDITORIUM
 Tickets \$10.00 SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH, 7:30 PM EDENTON, NC
 Sponsored by the Rocky Hock Ruritan's Relay for Life Team
 Tickets Available at various locations or call 252-221-4875 or 252-340-3438. Email rockyhockopry@live.com