

Push continues for preservation funding

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

With the N.C. Senate back in Raleigh and the House expected to return Thursday, supporters of historic preservation funding are still holding out hope for the program's prospects this legislative session.

Although the existing historic preservation tax credit program did not make it

into the final version of the state budget, N.C. Department of Cultural Resources Secretary Susan Klutz this week sent a message to supporters of historic preservation legislation: "It's not over. The legislature



KLUTZ

is not officially adjourned. You can still make a difference."

Local leaders have stressed how important historic preservation has been to Edenton. Mayor Roland Vaughan made the case in an op-ed this spring in the Raleigh News and Observer.

Klutz encouraged legislators to consider supporting historic preservation in any

economic development or financial bill.

Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, has pushed for the historic preservation tax credits and said this week he believes it still might be possible to get the existing tax credits extended through the end of the current fiscal year - June 30, 2015 - which would give lawmakers time to consider new ways to support historic preserva-

tion. Klutz said grassroots stories about the importance of historic preservation to towns and cities across the state are making an impact.

"Everyone agrees that historic preservation brings jobs and economic development into small towns and urban downtowns," Klutz said. "It has been shown many times over that saving one building has a ripple ef-

fect for a whole community in so many positive ways. Let's capitalize on our agreements and work together on finding a solution."

Since 1976, historic preservation incentives provided by the state and federal governments have helped bring in more than \$1.7 billion in private investment to the state while preserving

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LIGHTHOUSE MEMORIES



JOHN COLLINS PHOTO

Jerry Calhoun, left, son of the late Emmett Wiggins, talks with retired Edenton airline pilot Jim Baker, right, on Sneak Preview Day at the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse. Wiggins owned the lighthouse for many years maintaining it as a private residence. For more about the reopening of the Roanoke River Lighthouse, see story, photos, 4B.

Hospital eyes costs, revenues in wake of cuts

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Vidant Chowan Hospital continues to look for ways to trim expenses and grow outpatient services as it faces a tight squeeze from a second consecutive year of Medicaid reimbursement cuts in the state budget, hospital officials said this week.

The recently adopted state budget cuts more than \$45 million from Medicaid reimbursements to hospitals, bringing the total reduction over the past two years to more than \$200 million, according to data compiled by the N.C. Hospital Association.

Vidant Chowan Hospital President Jeffrey Sackrisson explained that Medicaid is an important source of revenue for the hospital.

Sackrisson said about 55 percent of the revenue at Vidant Chowan Hospital comes from Medicare and about 20 percent comes from Medicaid.

The hospital's concerns regarding the state budget have to do with Medicaid, which is partly funded by the state.

The hospital is facing a reduced rate of reimbursement through the Medicaid program. The hospital receiving less money for each Medicaid-funded patient it treats.

Sackrisson pointed out the reductions this year are on top of steep reductions last year.

The hospital is taking a close look at expenses. "We're looking very hard at cutting our expenses," Sackrisson said.

The hospital continues to look for savings in purchasing and is able to take advantage of volume discounts by being part of the Vidant system.

Sackrisson said the hospital is always looking at the cost of supplies and at the cost of service contracts.

In fact, Sackrisson pointed out the hospital is doing a case-by-case evaluation for each piece

See Hospital, 2A

Jackson updates school board on facility improvements

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Superintendent Rob Jackson gave school board members an update on the status of capital outlay projects during his Aug. 4 monthly meeting.

Jackson said that carpet replacement in six class-

rooms at White Oak Elementary School is nearly complete. Furniture has been ordered for John A. Holmes High School. Jackson said he was especially pleased that additional chairs and racks would be available in the Holmes band room when students return to school.

"I'm especially excited

about that item because it means the band is growing," Jackson said.

Jackson said the news was not as positive regarding another project, one that would have replaced cafeteria windows and doors with counterparts that were safer and more energy efficient.

That project, Jackson

said, has been put on hold due to the width of the existing windows, he said.

The type of windows the school system had hoped to purchase are not available in the dimensions they need, Jackson said.

The capital outlay budget also calls for the school system to spend \$20,000 for replacement

lighting in the schools.

Board member Gil Burroughs asked whether replacing existing lighting with LED lighting was being made a priority. He said he strongly believed that it should be.

Jackson said he was uncertain as he only came on board as superintendent in early July.

But, he said, his strong preference if he had been in on planning the budget would have been for LED lighting.

Fellow board member Gene Jordan concurred that the school system needed to carefully consider its purchases.

"We need to make wise decisions," he said.

Officials consider southern fire station possibilities

Substation, new fire tax district among ideas

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

As Chowan County officials consider how to fund a fire substation that could ease insurance rates in the southern part of the county,

one idea that keeps floating to the top is the prospect of a separate fire tax district for the area that would benefit from the substation.

For some time now, county officials have been talking about the possibility of building a substation to enhance fire coverage, and improve homeowners' insurance rates, in the southern part of the county.

A committee of county commissioners studying the issue met last month and is slated to meet again during the first week of Septem-

ber. County Manager Kevin Howard said this week that providing fire coverage that could improve insurance rates for homeowners as far out from Edenton as Drummond's Point would require either two substations or a rural volunteer fire department.

If enough volunteers come forward to operate a rural department and citizens of the area support a referendum to create a

See STATION, 3A

Former Edenton Police Chief C. Harvey Williams dies at 78

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

When former Edenton Police Chief Charles Harvey Williams Sr. died Aug. 7 at age 78 he left behind a lot of good memories in the hearts of those who worked alongside him.

Among them is Rosa Bunch, who was hired as a records clerk for the Edenton Police Department in the early 1990s and continues in that role today.

"He was a great man and a great boss," said Bunch.

"He was honest, and firm when he needed to be."

Bunch said that the former police chief's granddaughter played in a lot of sports-related activities with her daughter, so that gave her the chance to see and talk with Williams for many years after he retired from active duty with the depart-



WILLIAMS

ment. "He was a kind man who loved his family and cared a lot about others. I really enjoyed the chance to see him and talk with him at the games," Bunch said. "I will miss him."

Retired Edenton Police Officer Rhonda Copeland said during an interview earlier this year that Williams hired her and supported her work as a patrol officer and later as the first female detective on the

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