



County seeks site, cost info for substation

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners on a split vote Monday directed the county manager and Edenton's fire chief to identify a potential site for a fire substation in the southern part of the county and

to report to the board on the cost of building a minimal standard substation.

Although a first step toward the possible construction of a substation, the action at Monday's meeting did not amount to a commitment to actually building the facility.

The action followed a

public hearing on the proposed substation.

Commissioner Alex Kehayes's motion passed with Commissioner Keith Nixon and Commissioner Emmett Winborne voting against it.

Southern Chowan residents Tom Credle, Marvin Strzyzewski, Fred Powers and John Dunn spoke dur-

ing the public hearing in favor of the substation.

Credle also asked that the committee that studied the fire substation issue also consider the prospect of eventually going to a countywide professionally staffed fire service.

Dunn said a substation could improve response

time, reduce insurance premiums for some homeowners by hundreds of dollars a year, and improve property values in southern Chowan County.

Powers said a substation could benefit a number of employers in the vicinity of the Northeastern Regional Airport. Homeowners also

would benefit, he said.

After the public hearing was closed, Chairman Jeff Smith asked Edenton Fire Chief Craig Forlines to clarify the point about response time.

"Response time will truly not change much," For-

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HARRIS TAKES OATH OF OFFICE AT HISTORIC COURTHOUSE

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Meader Harris took the oath of office Friday as the 1st Judicial District's newest district judge in a special session of court at the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse.

Judge Chris Bean administered the oath in his final official act as a district court judge.

Harriss was elected in November in an uncontested race.

Bean said it was nice change of pace to have a brief and pleasant session of court.

"It is very nice that we can have a relatively short session of court and a happy session of court," Bean said near the conclusion of Friday's ceremony.

About 125 people - mostly representatives of the legal and law enforcement communities from across the district and business and civic leaders from Edenton - packed into the Colonial-era courtroom to witness Harriss's oath of office.

"This is a position of honor and trust and this is something that I do not take lightly," Harriss told the crowd after taking the oath.

Bean, citing an article written by a district court judge in one of the state's other districts, noted the range of cases heard by a district court judge, including criminal, juvenile, and family cases.

Harriss stressed the importance of fairness.

"The bottom line is being fair and impartial," Harriss said during an interview Friday. "The law is the law. My job is to find the facts from what has been presented to me."

It is the responsibility of a judge to apply those facts to the law without any sway from anybody else or any consideration of personal opinion, Harriss said.

"I aim to find the truth," Harriss said. "I pray to find

See HARRIS, 4A



STAFF PHOTOS
BY REGGIE PONDER

New District Court Judge Meader Harris (above) is administered the oath of office Friday by retiring District Court Judge Chris Bean. The ceremony was held inside the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse and at Harris' side is his wife, Jennifer.

Members of the audience show their support for new District Court Judge Meader Harris after he completes his oath of office.

Next move on local grocery front unclear

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

A spokeswoman for Food Lion said this week that the company was unable to comment on public speculation the grocery chain is trying to "lock out" potential competitors from the Edenton market.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton mentioned the speculation in recent remarks to the Chowan Herald.

"It is suspected, based on

rumor, that Food Lion is taking steps to lock out another grocer from occupying either the former Farmers Food store or the grocery store currently occupied by Food Lion at Edenton Village Shopping Center," Knighton said in an email statement to the newspaper in response to a reporter's query about challenges and opportunities for the town in 2015.

But Christy Phillips-Brown, a Food Lion spokeswoman, said the company would be able to respond to the speculation.

"At this time, Food Lion has not signed a new lease, or purchased property, for a store location in Edenton,

See NEXT MOVE, 4A

Sheriff warns of '\$1 million prize' scam

From staff reports

Chowan County Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin is warning area residents to be wary of scam calls claiming people have won a \$1 million prize.

Goodwin said some of the numbers show up on caller ID as legitimate businesses, but that if you call the number back it doesn't go to that business but to the caller.

The caller in the instances Good-

win is most familiar with has a foreign accent that appears to be from a mid-eastern country, Goodwin said.

The callers tell the person they have won \$1 million and that a van is on the way to their house with news media along to record the check presenta-



GOODWIN

tion. But the callers then insist that before they can receive the money they must go to a Western Union location and send money to cover the taxes, he said.

Usually a caller will put someone else on the line who claims to be from the IRS or FBI to make it sound more official, according to Goodwin.

The thing to do with such a call is

See \$1M SCAM, 4A

Consultant hired to review power deal

BY REBECCA BUNCH
Staff Writer

Edenton town officials have hired a consultant to review documents related to the proposed sale of N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency assets to Duke Energy Progress.

The town council voted

unanimously at its Dec. 9 meeting to contract with Robert "Bob" Pender to review the proposed agreements pertaining to the proposed sale of NCEM-PA's generating assets to Duke Energy Progress and the long-term power supply purchase agreement.

Town Manager Anne-

Marie Knighton had recommended the council hire Pender. Hertford has also hired Pender to conduct a similar review.

The town is one of 32 members of NCEM-PA. This move to sell NCEM-PA's ownership interest in power plants to Duke is expected to retire a signifi-

cant portion of NCEM-PA's debt in effect lowering its wholesale power costs, town officials said.

"Lower wholesale power costs will mean lower rates for Edenton utility customers," Knighton said. "The town council will consider

See POWER DEAL, 4A

