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482-4418

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

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## Planning Board to review wind energy ordinance

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

The Chowan County Planning Board has dropped a proposal for a wind turbine permit moratorium on the advice of the county attorney — but is moving ahead with a review of the county's wind energy ordinance with an eye to making it more restrictive.

"I have looked at the ordinance and I find it lacking," Chairman Lou Surratt said during a meeting Thursday night that had originally been called to consider a recommendation that the

county commissioners impose a 90-day moratorium on permits for wind energy facilities.

At that meeting, however, Surratt announced that based on input from County Attorney John Morrison, it had become clear this is not the appropriate time for a moratorium.

The proposed Timbermill Wind Energy Project would be located on Weyerhaeuser land in the Bear Swamp area in Perquimans and Chowan counties. Apex Clean Energy, the company proposing that project, is still in a study phase and

has not yet applied for the required Conditional Use Permit from the county. A permit also would be required from Perquimans officials for the portion of the project area that is located in Perquimans County.

The current discussion on the wind energy ordinance is not directly related to the Timbermill project but would apply to any developer seeking to construct a utility-scale wind energy facility in the county.

Landin Holland, the county's planning director, re-

See ORDINANCE, 2A

## Wind project developer seeks to clarify height rule

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

Representatives of the company planning the Timbermill Wind Project in Chowan and Perquimans County noted last week that Chowan's wind energy ordinance measures the maximum allowable height of a wind turbine

from the tip of the turbine blade at the highest point in the rotation.

So the ordinance does not actually allow the towers to be 600 feet high, according to officials from Apex Clean Energy Inc. Rather, the towers themselves would have to be more in the 400-foot range, according to Apex's Tyson

Utt.

Utt cited the frequent objections to 600-foot towers as an example of the misunderstanding he said surrounds the project. The maximum height of 600 feet as stated in the county's current wind energy ordinance applies to

See HEIGHT RULE, 5A

## Officials: Schools more than letter grade

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Responding to the recent release of N.C. School Report Cards to the state's school system, school officials asked parents to remember that schools represent more than a single letter grade.

"It is important to remember our schools are more than one letter grade," Superintendent Rob Jackson said in a message to parents issued after the release of the grades.

"Academic achievement is critical and the focus of everything we do," Jackson said, "but of equal importance is a school's progress in helping students grow academically, socially and emotionally."

Jackson said that when students start school at White Oak Elementary, about 80 percent of them do so academically below the state's standards.

"However, by the end of second grade, 80 percent have grown academically to be deemed at or above grade level," he said.

Continued achievement occurs as students enter D.F. Walker Elementary, Jackson said, where students have shown "significant growth" in compliance with the state's Read to Achieve mandate — giving the fourth highest growth performance in the northeast region.

Over at Chowan Middle School, Jackson said, they have met state student growth standards for the past seven out of eight years and reflected high growth for six of those years.

"Ours is the only middle school in the region to be recognized twice as a North Carolina School to

See REPORT CARD, 2A



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Snow,  
Ice  
take  
over  
County



PHOTO BY  
JENNIFER AMSTUTZ

Birds — among God's smallest creatures — looked for places to perch in the aftermath of a snow and ice storm that invaded Chowan County last week leaving behind power outages and bone-chilling temperatures.

## Business expansion to create 78 jobs

From staff reports

The Town of Edenton has been awarded a \$562,080 loan through the Community Development Block Grant program to upgrade town utilities in support of a plant expansion expected to create 78 new full-time jobs.

### IN A RELATED STORY

■ County's jobless rate unchanged in December — 2A

The CDBG loan was awarded to the town to construct a water line and upgrade the town-owned electrical service to allow a company to expand its existing plant in Edenton by 260,000 square feet, according to information released by the N.C. Department of Commerce.

The name of the company is confidential at this time, according to the Commerce Department.

Town officials also said the company's identity was confidential at this time.

The business is expected to invest \$30 million in new construction and equipment at the Edenton facility and has committed to create 78 new, full-time jobs, according to the Commerce Department.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said the town is excited about the boost the CDBG funding will provide for the town's utility infrastructure.

"We're thrilled about this (CDBG funding) and the chance to upgrade our system," Knighton said.

N.C. Commerce Secretary John E. Skvarla III and Assistant Secretary for Rural Development Pat Mitchell announced this week that the N.C. Rural Infrastructure Authority approved 18 grants or loans totaling more than \$6 million with the commitment of 627 new jobs.

The RIA was established as part of the Rural Economic Development Division at the N.C. Department of Commerce to assist with the review and approval of grants for rural areas in the

See GRANT, 2A



PHOTO BY CATHERINE BAKER

Crytalized Cypress trees stand in the frozen waters off John's Island in Chowan County.



PHOTO BY JEFF KNOX

Snow and ice cover the bright green grass of Colonial Park with the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse keeping watch over the waterfront in downtown Edenton.

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