



Open Door hosts back to school event — 6B

482-4418

Wednesday, August 26, 2015

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## Solar generation facility permit approved

■ Exec: Construction could begin early next year

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

A 110-acre solar farm development planned for Yeopim Road has its special use permit from the county planning board and construction of the

facility could begin early next year.

Charlotte-based 02emc LLC plans to install a 20-megawatt solar generation facility on about 110 acres at 740 Yeopim Road. The entire tract the company is purchasing is 177 acres, but Chief Operating Officer Adam Foodman said 110-120

acres would be part of the actual energy generation facility.

And only about 50 acres of the facility would be "under glass" or actually covered by panels, according to Foodman.

The Chowan Planning Board voted 5-1 at its meeting Aug. 18 to approve the special use

permit with an additional condition, formulated by new board member Linda Peterson, that within 12 months of the facility's ceasing to actively generate electrical power it would either be decommissioned or the process of re-permitting the facility for an additional period would begin.

The lone dissenting vote was cast by board member Jim Robison, who had extensive questions and concerns about decommissioning, noise, fire safety and whether the project was appropriate for an agriculturally zoned area.

"This is an industrial facility," Robison said.

"This is not agriculturally friendly industry."

Foodman said one benefit of the project would be that the land would remain in agriculture without impermeable surface.

The company uses sheep for land maintenance.

See PERMIT, 2A

## Smooth first day for schools

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

Reagan Elkins said she had a good summer, but Monday morning she was ready to take on the fundamental fifth-grade tasks of "learning and meeting new people."

The 10-year-old said math is her favorite subject, and she was looking forward to fifth-grade math in her final year at D.F. Walker even as she acknowledged the math this year might be kind of tough.

Meanwhile, just down the breezeway at White Oak Elementary School, 6-year-old Shuan Niya Miller was ready to start first-grade.

And Shuan Niya had a singular clarity about what would be the best part of the first-grade experience.

"You know what I'm going to say: 'Recess!'" Shuan Niya said. "I like to play."

With some parental encouragement, she admitted she also was looking forward to reading and other classroom pursuits.

"I like reading," Miller said, nodding.

Ariana Dowell was starting kindergarten at White Oak School. Arriving for the first day with her mother, Tamara Phillips, at her side, Ariana said she was looking forward to learning a lot this year.

Raymond Brown, the head custodian at White Oak — who also works with the buses at the school — said the buses were in top condition for the first day of school.

"All of them are running pretty good this morning," Brown said. "We've got a couple that are running a little late — but that's expected on the first day."

Brown explained he monitors the bus traffic as it arrives at the school.

"I make sure the kids get off safely, and where they're supposed to," Brown said.

Principal John Lassiter at Chowan Middle School said all the preparations the staff made during the summer paid off with a great first day.

"It has been outstanding," Lassiter said.

The focus throughout the summer, Lassiter said, has

See FIRST DAY, 4A



STAFF PHOTOS BY REGGIE PONDER

Shua Niya Miller, 6, (top photo) accompanied by Shuan Miller (left) and Tanya Miller, arrives to school at White Oak Elementary on the first day, Monday. Students and parents arrive to White Oak Elementary Monday morning.

## Wind ordinance amendment talks continue tonight

BY REGGIE PONDER  
Editor

The Chowan County Planning Board will meet tonight to continue its consideration of proposed amendments to the county's wind energy ordinance.

The board met more than three hours Monday night and recessed its meeting today (Wednesday) at 7 p.m.

Before the board for its consideration are a staff report from Planner Elizabeth Bryant and an alternate proposal from board member Jim Robison. Both make the ordinance stricter to some degree or other, but Robison's version much more so. The Robison alternate essentially presents in more precise or formal terms the points of the original planning board recommendation from April.

*"It was not a prohibition of wind energy. It was a need to consider all the facts involved in wind energy facilities."*

Jim Robison  
Planning board member

The April proposal included a one-mile setback from non-participating properties, a 35dBA noise limit, an escrow account to cover regulatory costs and a bond to cover decommissioning costs.

The staff report includes a setback of one and half times the turbine height from non-participating properties, a 55 dBA limit and a decommissioning plan that takes into consideration salvage value of materials.

The upstairs training room at the county's office building was packed for the board's meeting Monday, and several members of the public spoke on both sides of the issue.

A number of legal questions occupied the board for a significant part of the meeting.

Among those questions were whether board members William Monds and Linda

See AMENDMENT, 3A

## Steinburg appointed to fisheries panel

BY JON HAWLEY  
The Daily Advance



STEINBURG

State Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, has been appointed to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, a 15-state policymaking body for recreational and commercial fishing across the Eastern Seaboard.

Appointed by Gov. Pat McCrory, Steinburg said he's already plunged into the fishing issues the 45-member body considers, attending its summer meeting in Alexandria, Va., last week. The body must balance environmental and commercial interests as well as follow federal law when setting policies for the harvest of diverse fish species from Maine to Florida.

Steinburg said he's excited to join the body because fishing is "a big part of our economy" in his six-county district. Steinburg is the only North Carolinian state lawmaker on the body, he added, which has three appointees from each state. He joins N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries Director Louis Daniel III — also the Atlantic commission's chairman — and Doug Brady of Beaufort. Steinburg replaces former Sen. Clark Jenkins, D-Edgecombe, who lost his re-election bid last year.

Steinburg said he tried to attend as many subcommittee meetings of the commission

## Town officials taking time with building decision

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Town council members decided at their monthly work session Monday night to take a step back and do more homework before acting on either of two proposals for the future use of the former Northeast Commission building.

The decision followed a lengthy, animated discussion concerning how to proceed to determine the highest and best use of the property.

Several council members

said they had been convinced to put the breaks on making a decision after talking with members of the Edenton Yacht Club about the impact that either the proposed microbrewery or the proposed restaurant/retail space would have on the waterfront and the future use of a building adjacent to the property by the Sunfish Sailing program. The program, geared toward young people, is operated out of that building by volunteers from the EYC who help a paid instructor teach the Edenton-Chowan Recreation Department-sponsored program. The program stores equipment there and uses the building to teach classes on rainy days.

Councilman Sambo Dixon

noted that he had taken a walk around the property with one of those volunteers, Kermit Layton. He said he came away feeling it was crucial to preserve the sailing program. "I think we need to grow that program," he said. Councilman Jimmy Stallings concurred. "I think we need to expand the sailing program, if anything," he said.

Stallings said, with about 40 people seated in the audience, that he wanted the public to understand the council recognized the significance of the decision

they were called upon to make.

"We're not taking this lightly," he said. "We want to do what we feel

like is best for the community."

Sailing regattas offer big benefits to communities in which they occur, noted Councilman Steve Biggs, a boat owner and member of SailNC.

Biggs said that the group had recently hosted three regattas.

"Everything so far has been in Manteo," he said.



QUINN



STALLINGS

See DECISION, 4A

See FISHERIES, 3A



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