

Fuel stop dooms man wanted in robbery

BY BARRY WARD
The Daily Advance

An Edenton man was arrested Friday night in Bertie County after allegedly committing armed robbery at a Chowan County business, stealing the clerk's car and stopping at a gas station in Windsor to fill up.

26, of the 200 block of East Albemarle Street in Edenton, was charged with armed robbery, attempted kidnaping and larceny of a motor vehicle.

According to the Edenton Police Department (EPD), officers responded to a report of an armed robbery at 10 p.m.



SINGLETON

Friday at Pearls Tobacco Plus, located at the 300 block of North Granville Street in Edenton.

According to police, the suspect entered the store carrying a handgun and demanded money from the clerk.

The suspect then forced the clerk outside at gunpoint and attempted to force him in his vehicle. The clerk refused, so the suspect took the clerk's keys and fled the scene in the clerk's vehicle.

A broadcast was issued with a description of the suspect and the stolen vehicle.

When the suspect arrived at a gas station in Windsor to purchase gas for the stolen vehicle, officers from the Windsor Police Department apprehended the suspect.

It was later discovered that Singleton was also wanted by the Charlotte Police Department for assault with a deadly weapon, inflicting serious injury and other weapon violations.

He was being held at the

Chowan County Jail on Saturday under a \$500,000 secured bond.

The Edenton Police Department asks anyone with additional information on this crime to contact Sgt. Laura Wilkins at 252-482-9884 or 252-482-5144.

"We want your information, not your name," said the EPD in a released statement.

DELAYS VOTE

Continued from 1A

Developers said that would kill the project.

After a public hearing at the meeting, Cole asked her fellow commissioners what they wanted to do. She pointed out that board has been listening to the public since August and the planning board did forward a recommendation.

"I don't know if I would say I heard anything at the public hearing (tonight) that I haven't heard before," Cole said.

Commissioner Matt Peeler said he did.

Craig Craft, who runs a crop-dusting company, talked about how it will be harder to recruit pilots to spray crops with the threat of running into one of the turbines in the way.

Commissioner Wallace

Nelson also said he's still having citizens provide him with information and he wanted to delay a decision.

The board has a work session later this month. The next regular meeting will be Feb. 1.

Peeler wanted to create a subcommittee to address the issue. He suggested it include two or three county commissioners and one or two planning board members. His motion to do that failed to get a second.

Don Giecek, senior development manager for Apex, said he believes the county commission will make the proper decision.

"I have confidence the full county board will consider properly this important issue," Giecek said Tuesday.

Opponents of wind power have talked about how it will destroy the

natural beauty that either brought them to Perquimans or kept them in the county in the first place. Others have questioned how they will impact nearby property values, birds, bats or other flying things. There is also the issue of "flicker" the strobe-light effect caused when sunlight is falling through the turbine blades at a certain angle.

The newest issues brought up involved what would happen if a wind turbine blade fell off and what happens to the ice that may accumulate on a turbine blade and what area that may impact.

Supporters point out the Apex project would bring millions of dollars in tax revenue to the county and provide even more to the property owners that lease land to Apex. Perquimans County could stand to gain \$250,000 a year in

taxes with the Apex project if 50 turbines are located in Perquimans. That would make it the single largest taxpayer in the county.

Given that Weyerhaeuser, one of the world's largest private owners of timberlands is the largest property owner in the Apex project, some critics say that makes the Timberwind project is different than the similar-sized wind project Iberdrola is building on the northeast corner of Perquimans County as well as parts of Pasquotank. Weyerhaeuser owns about 15 percent of the land used in the Iberdrola's project — Amazon Wind Farm East. Weyerhaeuser owns the biggest chunk in Timberwind project.

But there are some smaller property owners

Rita Saunders, whose family has owned property

on Popular Neck Road in Tyner since 1946, spoke in favor of the Apex project. She said if the county adopted a tough setback on wind turbines, then their property could no longer play a part. By increasing the setback on the Apex project, it will actually leave out most if not all of the smaller property owners who would benefit from lease payments for the next 25 years. Only Weyerhaeuser would then benefit under tighter setback rules.

Of the eight people who spoke in favor of Apex and Timberwind Monday, four were either employed by Apex or Weyerhaeuser.

But Weyerhaeuser has a financial stake in what is decided and is the largest single property owner in Perquimans County.

"Changing the ordinance now, after it has been approved and is in

use for a project (Iberdrola) currently under construction impacts our rights as a property owner," wrote Alissa Cale, a real estate manager for Weyerhaeuser who spoke to the board Monday.

"Further, it is discriminatory to change ordinances affecting one single landowner when multiple landowners received different treatment," Cale said.

Patsy Miller works for Apex in their office on Market Street in Hertford. She explained she's lived 66 of her 68 years in Perquimans County.

"I have grandchildren, age 20, 12, 5 and 3. I would never do anything to hurt my grandchildren," she said. "This is my statement, not theirs (Apex)."

She said she felt to change the rules on Apex at this point, would "not be fair."

HISTORIC JAIL

Continued from 1A

historic jail is no longer part of the State Historic Site tour in Edenton because of the condition the building is in now. The state is not in a posi-

tion financially to take on the restoration of another building at this point, he said, so he's glad other entities in the community are taking a look at the historic jail.

If the building is restored to a presentable condition, he and his

staff would be thrilled to offer guided tours at the facility. Hopkins said.

Restoring the building could be a tall order. Hopkins noted, for example, that the building has termite damage.

But \$10,000 could at least get the ball rolling, he said.

"It would be fantastic to be able to open that up again," Hopkins said of the historic jail "There is interest in it."

"I do believe that the building definitely needs to be saved," Hopkins continued, adding that something needs to be done soon because the condition of the building is deteriorating rapidly.

Climer agreed that restoration work should begin soon.

"Transforming the Historic Chowan County Jail from a deteriorating facility to a worthwhile asset makes all

the sense in the world," Climer said. "Managers of the Beaufort site told us that Beaufort's jail is their most frequently visited building within their cluster of historic buildings," Climer said.

Chowan's jail actually is more interesting than the one in Beaufort because of features such as interior metal cells, enclosed exercise yard and exterior stairs to the second floor. Climer said. A jail tour would complement a visit to the 1767 Courthouse.

"For relatively little expense to the county, the jail will become a safe and educational attraction helping residents and visitors better understand the close connection between conviction in the courthouse and incarceration in the jail," Climer said. "If the money is not spent, the deterioration of the jail

will accelerate and the county will be the loser for not having taken care of this rare asset."

Nicholls said the trip to Beaufort was a wonderful day because the Chowan group not only saw the historic jail there but also visited other historic attractions and learned about how Beaufort presents and promotes its historic sites.

Nixon told his fellow county commissioners that members of the Tourism Development Authority Board had been looking for a use for the historic jail. There always is a lot of activity around the jail, but the building's condition is going down and money has not been appropriated for the jail site in recent years, Nixon said.

Beaufort has a jail of a similar age that is used as a historic site and local tourism officials would

like the historic jail here to be a historic site for visitation, Nixon said.

Patricia Suggs, executive director of Beaufort Historic Site, said the site draws more than 60,000 visitors a year, and the jail is the top attraction among the 14 houses and buildings.

"We do tours on a daily basis of the jail showing how the prisoners would have lived," Suggs said.

"The Beaufort Jail of 1859 housed the sheriff and his family the first few years, so we also show their living quarters. The jail is used for the individual daily tours, and it is also one of the most popular buildings used for our school group tours. During the Pirate Invasion Weekend, every year in early August, we also open the jail for use with the Pirate Encampment on the grounds of the Beaufort Historic Site."

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WIND REGS

Continued from 1A

requirements for a wind energy facility and to require an escrow account to cover the costs of independent studies that might be required by the county during the permitting process.

Chowan Board of Commissioners Chairman Jeff Smith said last week that he didn't see any need to revisit the wind energy regulations in Chowan. Smith said that even if Perquimans were to adopt some new rules, that wouldn't mean Chowan needed to adopt anything new.

He said he thinks Chowan

should move forward under its existing ordinance.

On advice from the county attorney, Smith is not voting on any matters related to the wind energy ordinance or Apex's Timbermill Wind Project. Smith's family has been approached by Apex regarding the possibility of leasing part of the family farm for the wind energy facility, according to disclosures by Smith and the county's attorney.

The only outspoken proponent of stricter wind energy regulations among the Chowan commissioners has been Commissioner Alex Kehayes. Kehayes, who has argued for larger minimum setback requirements and a

lower noise limit, said he had not seen anything that would change his mind regarding those positions.

But making the Chowan wind energy regulations stricter would require other commissioners' minds being changed, he said.

Kehayes said he believes the commissioners should do their own research on wind energy and not depend on what other counties have done. In that sense, he said, whatever Perquimans might do or not do would not change his mind regarding the regulations he believes should be in place in Chowan.

Commissioner Emmett Winborne said he was waiting to see how the Perquimans vote turns out next month before thinking about how to respond to it.

"Let's not go speculating on what they might do," Winborne said. "Let's wait and see what they actually do. I don't like speculating."

Commissioner Keith Nixon pointed out that even under the existing regulations, the county will still have the conditional use permit process as an opportunity to consider the location of wind turbines and possibly add some additional conditions on the project.

Nixon said at this point he doesn't plan to ask for the county's wind energy ordinance to be put back on the agenda, and he hasn't heard any other commissioner asking about that, either.

Commissioner Greg Bonner said he doesn't think it would make any difference for Chowan's ordinance if Perquimans ended up changing their wind energy ordinance.

"I wouldn't say that it would impact us at all at this point," Bonner said. "Our board met and we came to a decision about what we thought would be best for the people in our county."

REACTION

Continued from 1A

keep in mind the need for a lessening of fossil fuels in Edenton and elsewhere.

"We have to find ways to use less energy (from fossil fuels)," she said.

The proposed solar farm, Inglis said, "is such a splendid solution."

At presstime, the Edenton Town Council was scheduled at its regular monthly

meeting on Tuesday night, Jan. 12, to consider adopting a text amendment to its Unified Development Ordinance regarding requirements governing the presence of solar farms in the community. At present the UDO does not mention solar farms.

Should the text amendment be approved the town council would then be free to consider a request from the developer for a Conditional Use Permit for the project.

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