

CHOWAN HERALD

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July 20 vs Petersburg Generals (Wayback Wednesday: Salute to Prince, Pepsi Night)

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Search called off for missing boater in Yeopim River

BY PETER WILLIAMS
The Perquimans Weekly

The active search for a boater missing since last week in the Yeopim River was called off Sunday afternoon.

John Poandl, 56, of Dudley, was last seen alive July 6. He and another man on board a pontoon boat decided to take

a swim and the boat drifted away. One man was recovered by the N.C. Wildlife Service, but Poandl remains missing. Poandl is a resident of Dudley, a small community in Wayne County.

"As of (Sunday) at 1 p.m. the organized search for Mr. Poandl was called off," said N.C. Wildlife Service Master Officer Johnathan C. Beardsley on

Monday.

"There has been some citizens volunteering their time to search (and) we have no way of knowing if any of them are continuing their search," he said. "We just ask that if anyone finds anything to contact us at 800-662-7137 and to be sure and record the latitude and longitude."

For a time, boats from the U.S. Coast Guard, N.C. Marine Fisheries, Harvey Point Defense Testing Activity, Gates County Emergency Management, Hertford County Emergency Management and Perquimans County Water rescue all participated in searching for Poandl, Beardsley said. Perquimans County Emergency Management ran

the base of operations from Holiday Island the entire time and for the first two days, Coast Guard helicopters helped in the search.

"We all will continue to keep a sharp eye out for any sign of Mr. Poandl as we return to our normal work duties," Beardsley said. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family."

FIRST LOCAL BLOOM



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Shown with the first reported cotton bloom in Chowan County this season are (l-r) Wade White and Scottie White.

WHITE'S FARM SPOTS FIRST 2016 COTTON BLOOM

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

Scottie and Wade White experienced a little extra excitement last week on Independence Day.

But while the source of that excitement shone brightly, it was not about fireworks but about cotton.

White's Farm, operated by Dale and Bryant White, has this year's first reported cotton bloom in Chowan County.

Scottie White said he and his brother, Wade, were scouting cotton for bugs and

diseases on July 4 when they noticed the bloom in a field off Greenhall Road.

"We scout all our cotton and while we were scouting it, we found the bloom," White said.

The farm plants cotton every year.

"We have been growing it for as long as I can remember," he said.

This is not the farm's first experience with an early cotton bloom. White recalled that the farm also had the first reported cotton bloom in the county about 10 years ago.

This year's cotton crop was planted about the same time as usual, he said.

"We planted maybe a week earlier," White said.

In addition to cotton the farm also grows corn and beans.

Cotton growers in the area - and throughout the eastern part of the state - had an extremely rough time last year because of weather.

For that reason, along with the first cotton bloom comes a hope that this season will be better.

"So far the weather has been decent - up until the past week or so when it got so hot and dry," White said.

Perquimans Planning Board meets on permit

BY PETER WILLIAMS
The Perquimans Weekly

The Perquimans County Planning Board is scheduled to consider plans for a \$300 million wind power project this week.

The first meeting was Tuesday night. If required, a second meeting will be held tonight at 6 p.m. at the Perquimans County Courthouse Annex, 110 N. Church St.

In Chowan, the planning board meetings on the conditional use permit application by Apex Clean Energy Inc. are scheduled for July 26 and 27.

The project proposed by Apex, a Charlottesville-based company, would straddle about 15,000 acres of Perquimans and Chowan counties. The prospect of turbines as tall as 600-feet has prompted fierce opposition from some area residents. In previous meetings, more than 100 people have packed commissioner meetings and more than 900 people have signed a petition in opposition to the project.

Industrial-sized wind power projects are allowed under Perquimans zoning rules, but they require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The five member planning board reviews CUP applications and then makes a recommendation to the Perquimans County Commission. The commission has the ultimate say on the project.

Both the county and opponents for the project have hired outside legal help.

Opponents have engaged the services of Chad Essick, an attorney with the law firm of Poyner & Spruill. The firm has offices in Charlotte, Raleigh, Rocky Mount, and Southern Pines. Essick earned his law degree from Campbell University.

Essick declined to comment, however according to the law firm's web site, Essick primarily represents land owners and developers before local boards of adjustment, planning commissions, city councils, and county commissioners on matters related to zoning, permitting, variances, annexations, special use permits, site plans, subdivisions and road closings.

In the past, residents have expressed concerns about the health impacts of wind turbines, the aesthetics and their fear of the impact they'll have on property values.

The county has retained the services of Douglas Hanna of the firm Graebe Hanna & Sullivan in Raleigh. Hanna referred all questions to Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath.

See BOARD, 2A

Board hires firm to review wind project permit application

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners on a split vote last week chose to hire a firm with wind energy project experience to review the conditional use permit application for the proposed Timbermill Wind Energy Project.

The board voted 3-2 at its July 5 meeting to hire the firm HDR to review the permit application submitted by Apex Clean Energy Inc.

Apex, a Charlottesville, Va.-based company, has proposed building a 300-megawatt wind energy facility in the Bear Swamp area of Chowan and Perquimans counties.

Much of the land in the proposed project area is owned by forermost management company Weyerhaeuser. Most of the remaining land in the project area is owned by local farmers.

Commissioner Emmett Winborne's motion to hire HDR to do a technical review of the CUP application by Apex passed with Commissioner Alex Kehayes and Commissioner John Mitchener voting against it.

In addition to the proposal from HDR, the county had received a proposal

from Energy Ventures Analysis Inc. ‐ a firm backed by some members of the public who were concerned that HDR would be too prone to view the project favorably because of the company's experience in the wind power industry.

In an extensive presentation at the meeting, County Attorney Lauren Arizaga-Womble explained to the commissioners that the ordinance does not require hiring an expert to review the permit.

But if the board wishes to retain an expert, she said, "who you retain and bring on is in your discretion."

The purpose of the escrow account required by the wind energy ordinance is to cover county expenses

related to the project, she said, and she added that she understood a primary purpose of the escrow account was for staff to have access to an expert in the review of the CUP application, since wind energy is so technical.

Most planners in the state use an expert for reviewing permit applications for wind energy projects, she said.

One of the issues that the county attorney's discussion with the board addressed was whether the county had cast the net wide enough in looking for a firm to assist with the CUP review.

Arizaga-Womble told the board that county staff had

See PERMIT, 2A

Project review vote gets complicated

BY REGGIE PONDER
Editor

The vote last week by the Chowan County Board of Commissioners on selecting a contractor to review the conditional use permit application on the Timbermill Wind Project was unusually complicated.

Apex Clean Energy Inc. of Charlottesville, Va., has proposed a 300-megawatt wind energy facility in the Bear Swamp area of

Chowan and Perquimans counties. The county commissioners last week voted to hire a consultant with wind energy experience to assist county staff in reviewing Apex's CUP application.

The 3-2 vote to contract with the firm HDR to review the application was unusual because of a combination of three factors.

To begin with, Chairman Jeff Smith was recused

See VOTE, 2A

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