

Murder suspect now in custody

From staff reports

A man wanted in connection with the recent shooting death of an Edenton man turned himself in to police earlier today.

Edward Devonne Wiggins, 36, of the 300 block of North Granville Street, is charged with first-degree murder in the Aug. 23 shooting death of Ronald Taylor.



WIGGINS

the Chowan Detention Center without bond.

Taylor, 51, of 313 E. Church St., Edenton, was gunned down in the 200 block of East Church Street and later died of his injuries at Vidant-Chowan Hospital.

Wiggins is being held at

PAVE

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quality of streets when driven upon. The normal causes are multiple or poor patching resulting in a rough ride being experienced by motorists. The solution? Resurfacing.

Patching that has resulted from utility repairs, subsurface and surface pavement failures requiring asphalt patches, Smith said. The solution?

Large amounts of patching would require resurfacing.

Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said in an Aug. 25 memo to council members that the cost of phase one would be about \$1.7 million.

"I have asked the Wooten Company to prepare plans and bid specifications for phase one," she said. "We are planning on opening bids on Sept. 21 and hope to make a recommendation for bid award at your Sept. 25 meeting."

Knighton also explained how the project would be

funded.

"Funds from Powell Bill Reserve and General Fund Reserve will be used to pay for phase one," she said. "Town Finance Officer Jennifer Baldwin and I have conferenced with the NC Local Government Commission and USDA to determine the best path forward. We were advised that a General Obligation Bond would require a voter referendum during an election for state-wide contests."

Knighton said GO Bonds are generally one-quarter to one-half percent lower than USDA financing. And the earliest a bond referendum could be held would be in May 2018.

"We will continue to refine costs of a GO Bond versus USDA financing," she said. "USDA funding should be available in late fall, so you would have to make a decision about which financing path to follow by then. The good news is that by funding phase one from reserve funds, phase two debt will be much more manageable."

As he has in the past, Councilman Steve Biggs expressed frustration with the condition of the town's streets and what it will now cost to repair them. He added that in addition to the four streets identified as priorities in phase one of the plan, others were also urgently in need of repair including Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue.

"We should be doing that one too," Biggs said.

CRIMEWATCH

EDENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT ARRESTS

■ Aug. 24 — Sharif Kiplin Byrd, 41, of Greenville was arrested on one felony count of breaking and entering, one felony count of larceny after breaking and entering, and one felony count of obtaining property by false pretense.

■ Aug. 19 — William Heath Jordan, 25, of Sign Pine Road, was charged with one misdemeanor count of

simple possession of a Schedule VI controlled substance and one misdemeanor count of possession of drug paraphernalia.

■ Aug. 19 — Jamal Edward Boyce, 21, of Center Hill Road, was issued a citation for possession of marijuana.

■ Aug. 19 — Aaron Jamal Cohoon, 24, of Yeopim Road, was issued a citation for possession of drug paraphernalia.

■ Aug. 12 — Herbert Terrell Ford, 46, of Johnson Street, was

charged with one misdemeanor count of receiving stolen property. He was also issued a citation on the same day for operating a motor vehicle without a license and driving while impaired.

INCIDENTS

■ Aug. 21 — Injury to real property on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue.

■ Aug. 20 — Breaking and entering and larceny on Court Street.

■ Aug. 18 — Vandalism on North Broad Street.

Commission to discuss brunch bill

BY MILES LAYTON
Editor

Chowan County Commission met Tuesday to discuss earlier alcohol sales and learn more about a new hire.

Due to the newspaper's deadline as it related to Labor Day, coverage of the meeting will not appear until the Sept. 13 edition.

However, discussion of the brunch bill was back on the commission's agenda. While the ordinance to allow earlier alcohol sales on Sunday passed by a 4-3 margin at the Aug. 21 meeting, a unanimous vote was needed for the commission to adopt the ordinance.

Because the measure could be placed on the agenda again by any commissioner who voted in favor of changing the ordinance, commissioners voted to place the issue on the Sept. 5 agenda for reconsideration.

Edenton Town Council

While the ordinance to allow earlier alcohol sales on Sunday passed by a 4-3 margin at the Aug. 21 meetings, a unanimous vote was needed for the commission to adopt the ordinance.

recently approved an ordinance that would allow local businesses to sell and/or serve alcoholic beverages on Sunday mornings starting at 10 a.m.

NC General Assembly had recently okayed legislation that would allow towns, cities and counties to adopt ordinances rolling back the traditional noon start time for the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sundays at licensed premises that would include restaurants, grocery and convenience stores that are licensed to sell beer and wine.

In other business, the new executive director of the Edenton-Chowan Partnership, M. Denham,

will be introduced to the Board of Commissioners. Based on early reports and a bit of Internet sleuthing, Denham hails from a medium sized city in Kentucky and appears to be very experienced in economic development matters. Rather than steal the commission's thunder regarding this announcement, more ink will be spilled in the next edition about Denham.

The executive director's post has been vacant since Larry Lombardi took a job in April as Currituck County's economic development director.

Other business on the agenda included how County Manager Kevin

Howard will provide the commission with three quotes for a proposal to install glass doors on the former Edenton Police Department wing of the Public Safety Center so as to create an additional public entrance for offices relocating into this space.

Also, the commission will appoint an interim Planner to serve until a planner is hired.

And, Veterans Services Officer Archie Aples will provide the Board with an update on the activities of the Veterans Services Office.

Also, the commission will consider approval of a renewal rate to include an ACA fee of \$27.22. This fee is mandatory and is required by all plans/carriers.

And, Tax Administrator Melissa Radke will provide the Board with a recommendation for a tax refund for Russell and Alice Blanchard in the amount of \$1,237.37.

COOK

Continued from 1A

of Democratic-leaning Senate District 3, rather than the reliably Republican district Cook has served since 2013, when he assumed office after the 2012 election.

According to a WRAL report, Cook told lawmakers before voting against the new maps that he opposed moving Beaufort into a Democratic-leaning

"I've tried to be a good servant to the people of Eastern North Carolina. However, the recent redistricting changes have prompted me to reevaluate my commitment to my family."

Bill Cook

N.C. Senator, R-Beaufort

district. The "conservative-leaning county will be drowned in a sea of liberalism," he said in the report.

Cook has strongly supported Republicans' priorities over the years, including tax reform and boosting teacher pay. He cited both accomplishments in the release, which referenced him assuming office as the representative for House District 6 before winning a Senate seat.

"When I first earned the right to represent the folks of Eastern North Carolina in 2011, our state had some of the highest taxes in the Southeast, regulations were strangling our economy and teacher pay was among the lowest in the country," Cook said. Now, he continued, North Carolina has "the lowest taxes in the Southeast" and regulations and teacher pay have both been improved.

Cook also said he's proud of his work promoting the oyster and aquaculture industries, keeping inlets open, and helping fishermen.

Cook's release also includes praise from Senate Leader Phil Berger, R-Rockingham, who wished him "all the best in his retirement," and from Christian Action League Executive Director Mark Creech, who said Cook's "strong conservative val-

ues have always represented what is best about North Carolina."

Local officials haven't always been satisfied with Cook, however.

In 2014, Elizabeth City officials pressed Cook to take a more proactive stance against legislation that would study closing Elizabeth City State University; he eventually sponsored an amendment to kill the measure. In recent months, Cook also drew criticism from Pasquotank officials for his stance against the Amazon wind farm, and for not supporting legislation important to the College of The Albemarle that was opposed by House Rep. Beverly Boswell, R-Dare. They have also described him as unresponsive to their calls.

Asked Tuesday about whether Cook had done a good or bad job as senator, Pasquotank Board of Commissioners Chairman Cecil Perry, a Democrat, said "somewhere in between."

"He served well for some people," Perry said, though he recognized

Cook's role in striking out the study of closing ECSU.

He added, however, that Pasquotank commissioners felt Cook "should have stood with us" in defending the Amazon wind farm. Cook signed on to a letter calling for the wind farm's closure out of concerns it would affect a Naval installation in Chesapeake.

As for who will replace Cook in Senate District 1, there's already one potential candidate. State Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, has expressed interest in running for the seat, given he would not have to run against Cook and could potentially serve 11 counties representing all of northeastern North Carolina.

Steinburg praised Cook on Tuesday as a "staunch conservative" who has "worked very hard for the people of Senate District 1." Steinburg also said Cook's support in the district has grown over time, noting Cook went from almost losing in 2012 to winning by a wide margin in 2016. State election results show he defeated Democrat Brownie Futrell 59 to 41 percent.

Asked if he had spoken with Cook about his interest in running for the new Senate District seat, Steinburg said he had contacted Cook but had yet to hear back.

Jon Hawley is a staff writer for the Daily Advance.

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