

VALHALLA

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generations. Ricky Nixon is owner of Nixon's Fishery after taking it over from his father. He has seen changes in the fishing industry that now make relying solely on the state fishing industry for his company's survival impossible.

In short, they know the Chowan River. They, along with several others who have lived or worked on the river for years, are concerned that Chowan County's plan to put a diffuser pipe that would discharge wastewater from the Valhalla Water Treatment Plant into the river. The group met May 2 at Leon Nixon's Banquet Hall to discuss the issue.

The proposal

The proposal — estimated to cost \$4.5 million — goes about five miles from the Valhalla Water Treatment Plant's unlined waste pond to Harris Landing. It will extend about 2,000 feet into the Chowan River, where a 40-foot long, four-valve diffuser apparatus will be located.

Greg Churchill, of Rivers and Associates Inc., the project's engineering firm, said the 8-inch pipe would be underground and use the roads' rights-of-way whenever possible.

When asked why the county chose Harris Landing as the discharge site, County Manager Kevin Howard said the site was one of three given by a previous engineer. The other proposed sites include near the US 17 bridge and along Midway Drive, off NC 94, about 8 miles from the Valhalla Water Treatment Plant. The commissioners decided the other two proposals weren't economically feasible, Howard said at a forum about the project held in March.

If the Valhalla plant discharges effluent at its full capacity — 189,000 gallons per day for the 2 million gallons of potable drinking water it makes — the effluent, which has sodium ions in it, would diffuse into the Chowan River's water enough to be within state standards at about 6 meters from the valves, according to Groundwater Management Associates Inc., which ran the computer models on the project.

Currently, the plant

operates at about a little less than half of its full capacity.

Earlier this month, the Chowan County Commission agreed to conduct a feasibility study about building a regional water treatment plant. Such study would delay work on the proposed Valhalla project, but the issue of sending effluent to the Chowan River still remains.

River flow

Nixon said he prefers the proposal to build an 8 mile pipe to Midway Drive, for about \$8.5 million, about double cost of the proposed Harris Landing project.

He noted that his fishery is the only one still on the Chowan River. His business processes over 300,000 pounds of catfish a year.

The Chowan River is a slow moving river.

"Where the pipe is proposed, it's not going to go anywhere," Nixon said of the diffused effluent.

The Chowan River, from Holliday Island to where it meets the Albemarle Sound, is a dead zone, Nixon and the other fishermen noted. According to the group, further upstream, basically from the NC-Virginia border to Holliday Island, the river is about a half a mile wide and deeper, which causes the river to move quickly.

Once it passes the island, the river becomes to 2-3 miles wide and is more shallow.

"Once it gets to that point where it widens and gets shallow, it gets stagnant. That's why the water turns green," said Herbert Byrum, a fisherman from Cannons Ferry. "When you add stuff (to the river), it only makes the situation that much worse."

"If you turn out the plant waste, it will be dead in the water," he said.

Stanley Tynch's father always told him that the Chowan River is like a whirlpool. If you set a net on one side of the river and then one on the other side, you'll see that the current flows downstream on one side and upstream in the other. The middle is kinda still.

"When you see a floating log in the Chowan River, it sits there," he said. "But in the Roanoke River, logs float downstream. (The discharge) shouldn't be put anywhere in the Chowan River."

BUDGET

Continued from A1

Commissioner Bob Kirby noted that Weiss helped the Center Hill-Crossroads Volunteer Fire Department during its recent barbecue chicken dinner fundraiser.

"I like to give back to the community," Weiss said. "It's a way to meet with people and let them put a face to the voice."

Goodwin went on to present his annual report from the Sheriff's Office, Jail and 911 center, which covered 2018. The sheriff's office has 19 sworn positions, with 25 part-time deputies.

During 2018, the sheriff's office answered 6,046 calls, served 851 criminal papers and 928 civil papers. Deputies spent 148 days in court.

The sheriff's office maintained 976 concealed handgun permit records and issued 342 permits in 2018.

The sheriff also runs

the jail and 911 center. Ten full-time dispatchers answered 44,463 calls in 2018. The jail has nine full-time employees.

In other business:

* The commission authorized disposal of assets through Gov Deals. The items include several vehicles and the Edenton-Chowan Rec Department boat parked in the Edenton Harbor marina. Howard said that the staff will set the prices for the items, which most likely will sell during the website's cycle, about 30 days.

* The commission approved several budget amendments for Fiscal Year 2018-2019. They include adding discretionary income — \$246,000. The amendments also include a stream-debris removal grant for Soil and Water and an A.W.A.R.E. donation for a doggie playground at the Tri-County Animal Shelter.

* The commission proclaimed May as Older American Month.

GOODWIN

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Investigative Service. Goodwin has over 23 years of experience in leading medium- and large-scale

organizations in Criminal Investigations / Counterintelligence Operations, Counter Espionage, Nuclear Weapons Treaty Inspections, and Dignitary Protection within the Naval Criminal Inves-

tigative Service (NCIS). He also has extensive background in leadership and management in government and business startups and development.

After his military service, he served in gov-

Chowan County Sheriff's Office Arrests

Demetrius White, of Whitemon Lane, was arrested May 6 on charges of domestic criminal trespass, cyber-stalking and misdemeanor larceny.

John Nathan Mills Jr, of Dakota Trail, was arrested May 7 on a charge of making harassing phone calls.

Crystal Star Crawley, of Brayhall Road, was arrested May 7 on two charges of school attendance law violations.

Christopher Aylesworth, of Oneida Trail, Arrowhead Beach, was arrested

May 8, on a felony charge of larceny and a charge of obtaining property by false pretenses.

Kenneth Lee Bryant, of White Oak Drive, was arrested May 11, on a charge of communicating threats.

Ebony White-Blount, no address given, was arrested May 10, on charges out of Pasquotank County for failure to appear: driving while intoxicated and reckless driving to endanger.

Incidents

Deputies investigated an April 30 report of financial card fraud on Gilberts Beach Road.

Deputies investigated a May 2 report of vandalism and destruction of property on Albemarle Drive.

Deputies investigated a May 3 report on vandalism and destruction of property on Woodland Drive.

Deputies investigated a May 8 report on vandalism and malicious damage to real property on River Road.

Deputies investigated a May 8 report of vandalism and malicious damage to real property on Virginia Road.

Deputies investigated a May 8 report of vandalism and malicious damage to real property on Coffield Road.

COUNCIL

Continued from A1

Rezoning from R-5, Residential to CU-CN, Conditional Neighborhood Commercial — zoning changes approved by the Town Hall and Planning Board.

The change comes with concerns about traffic and parking patterns. In the past, when that property was used as a church or a retail establishment with limited hours, parking and traffic patterns on North Oakum were relatively unaffected. However, this new establishment seeks more consistent hours six days a week. If the business is a success, that could affect traffic flow in that neighborhood.

During the public hearing, Lori Ann Curtin expressed her concern about safety issues arising from changing traffic patterns and the storage of merchandise.

"Oakum Street is a major corridor to the downtown area of Edenton and to the police station," she said. "This north Edenton neighborhood is supposed to be residential, but somehow commercial keeps creeping in. ... Adding traffic to this neighborhood is going to create a significant safety concern."

To address concerns about traffic flow/parking, the store will have handicap parking in front while the main parking will be to the side of the main building.

Also, council prohibited pods and large shipping containers from being stored on the property. April Garman said the business has other places they plan to utilize for the storage of merchandise, so the site will be unaffected.

In other matters, council approved many changes local ordinances so as to better comply with the Unified Development Ordinance. Town Hall's Planning Director Elizabeth Bryant has been working with Dale Holland, a noted planning consultant, on updating the UDO based on recent changes in state law and court cases.

As to the UDO, there is a such a thing called a "granny pod." No, it is not one an alien pod that lands in a person's backyard and spits out a senior citizen. Rather, a granny pod is a 300-square-foot small cottage, temporary in nature, that may be used to house someone who needs a little more medical care and attention. And if that person moves out of the pod, that structure must be removed from the property so as not to be considered a permanent structure.

Another change that was included involves locating any future tattoo parlors within industrial zones and away from high visibility zones.

Property updates

Council gave its blessing to deferring action aimed at condemning historic Hannibal Badham house at 116 E. Gale St. for another 60 days so as to give the property owner time to remedy the situation.

The Town has worked with the owner Bernard Overton since 2011, however he died about two

years ago. His wife Mary Overton of Maryland now is managing the property. She asked for the town's assistance in helping her find a contractor who can give her an estimate of costs to fix the items the city identified as needed to be repaired to stabilize and save the structure.

Speaking of saving a familiar structure, Mayor Roland Vaughan answered a question from Joe Leotta of West Gale Street during the public comment portion of the meeting about Hotel Hinton. Located by the 1767 Courthouse, the property has been vacant for many years — a tragedy since it appears to be a great location with easy access to downtown and the beauty of the courthouse green.

Vaughan said property developers are seeking financing that is needed for the project, so it is a positive step forward. Developers have reached out to three banks.

"That has been the missing piece for the developers," he said. "They needed a primary lender in their finance package and up until now, they have not been able to locate, find or engage a lending institution. But they are very confident and feel very positive that from these three banks that there will be a partner emerging. I think it will be fairly soon, quite honestly. The dialogue with the developer has been more frequent and positive than other time in the course of this lengthy project."

As to the Conger Building where a proposed brew pub is potentially planned, councilman Craig Miller asked the question that is on many people's minds — where are we at? Though pub developer/entrepreneur John Glover has until June 30 to close the deal, Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton said she is nudging him and his architect to file the paperwork needed to move the project forward that has been talked about for more than three years.

"Do you think things can happen within that time frame (by June 30)?" Miller asked.

Knighton said, "It's going to be tight, but they are supposedly working on it."

Another structure of note — Miller asked what Town Hall is doing about the housing code violations reported at 313 E. Church St.

Bryant said the building inspectors are in constant contact with the property owners regarding the long list of items that are being addressed at the boarding house.

Leotta also asked about the water infrastructure project that will bring Edenton's drinking water in compliance with the state law. The town's water system remains in violation of state law because it contains elevated levels of trihalomethanes, a byproduct of the chemical process to disinfect drinking water. Trihalomethanes, or THMs, are considered a carcinogenic. That said, don't be alarmed because high THM levels in the town's

water don't pose an emergency, but customers — particularly those with specific health concerns — need to know about them.

Knighton said the contract was awarded and construction started for the Beaver Hill water treatment plant that is slated to be finished in September. "We appreciate your patience," she said. "It's been a challenge mainly obtaining the various state permits that have been required for the project, but all that is behind us now — full speed ahead."

Last note — after the meeting, Miller reassured Taco Bell fans that the popular restaurant is only a few months behind schedule, but the project is still very much on track so that someday soon, there would be no need to make a run for the border to buy a 12-pack of tacos along with bean and cheese burritos, hold the onions.

Odds and ends

In other matters:

* Council gave its blessing to health and dental coverage policies, pending some of the finer points. Rand Williams, the broker with the Sorin Group, who assists Town Hall with health insurance renewals, talked about which company offers the best and most affordable deal. Pending X, Y and Z, First Carolina and Guardian appear to have council's nod.

* Council approved filing an application to USDA Rural Development for financing street repairs and resurfacing. Town Hall's budget is approximately \$750,000 plus engineering, bidding, construction administration and contingency, for a total budget of \$950,000. A 20-year loan at 2% would require an annual payment of \$58,098. Once the application is filed and Town Hall gets approval from USDA, it will bid the project and

then file application with the NC Local Government Commission for approval. Town Hall is aiming to be on the NC Local Government Commission's September meeting. Once Edenton receives approval from LGC, council can formally award the bid to the successful contractor. With any luck, Edenton might qualify for a small amount of grant funds for this project.

* Council gave its blessing to file an application to USDA for financing Fire Mobile Command Unit and three police vehicles. Town Hall is optimistic that it will be awarded grant funds — possible 25% to 50% grant and the remaining a low interest loan. The Fire Mobile Command Unit is projected to cost \$45,000 and the Police Vehicles around \$30,000 each (fully equipped with lights, radios, etc.).

* Assistant Town Manager Tammy Woodley will serve as the acting Town Manager while Knighton is on medical leave between May 16 and June 10.

* Council endorsed a resolution in support of House Bill 399, Historic Preservation Act of 2019: Councilman Sambo Dixon requested this resolution be added to the agenda because of the importance of Historic Tax Credits to the community.

* Destination Downtown Edenton Director Jennifer Harris offered the agency's annual report. After hearing the report that detailed some of the fine things Harris is spearheading that have been chronicled in these pages many times, Dixon echoed what many council members and civic leaders say about Harris — "she's rock star" on these matters and she is well known on the national level for her projects and energy.

CHOWAN HERALD

(USPS 106-380)

Published Every Wednesday

Adams Publishing Group

Entered as a second-class matter August 30, 1934 at the Post Office of Edenton, North Carolina, under Act of March 3, 1879.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Daily Advance home delivery area \$30*

(Chowan, Perquimans, Pasquotank, Camden, Currituck, parts of Gates)

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Memorial Day
TOWN OF EDENTON
GARBAGE COLLECTION
MEMORIAL DAY 2019
MONDAY, MAY 27TH HOLIDAY
TUESDAY, MAY 28TH EASTSIDE SOLID WASTE COLLECTION WILL BE PICKED UP
WEDNESDAY, MAY 29TH RECYCLABLES WILL BE PICKED UP
THURSDAY, MAY 30TH YARD WASTE WILL BE PICKED UP WESTSIDE SOLID WASTE COLLECTION WILL BE PICKED UP
FRIDAY, MAY 31ST WESTSIDE SOLID WASTE COLLECTION WILL BE PICKED UP