

BRIEFS

THE CHOWAN ARTS COUNCIL PRESENTS

A FREE JAZZ CONCERT

Enjoy a night of smooth jazz music by faculty of Elizabeth City State University

JUNE 6, 2019 9:30PM
112 WEST WATER STREET

STAFF, SUBMITTED REPORTS

Arts Council to host free jazz concert

The Chowan Arts Council Board of Directors is offering a free jazz concert at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, June 6, at the gallery, 112 W. Water St., Edenton. Elizabeth City State University faculty members will present an evening of smooth jazz. Bring some friends and enjoy the

music as you wander through the gallery.

The Ya'll Eat Yet? truck will be serving food during the event from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

The board also welcomes volunteers. They currently are seeking suggestions for workshops for "aspiring" artists, both young and old.

Gospel group to perform June 22

The Tidewater Virginia Chapter of James

Cleveland Gospel Music Workshop of America, Inc., a nonprofit organization created in 1980 in Portsmouth, will perform at 2 p.m. June 22 at Edenton United Methodist Church. Meeting several times a year in a workshop format with other gospel choirs, the group continually develops its musical skills.

The concert is free, though a love offering will benefit the local Boys and Girls Club and the visiting choir.

This event is sponsored by the Reconciliation Group's choir, Sounds of Harmony, under the direction of Brenda Little and Yvonne Lambeth, accompanied by local musician, Tony Horton.

Black bears seen in town limits

The Town of Edenton wants residents to be aware that this week there have been several black bear sightings, at night, in the area of Filbert's Creek

from Virginia Road and North Broad Street to West Freeman and West Peterson Street to North Granville Street.

"We want residents to take precautions and this link has several useful tips from the NC Wild Life Commission on what to do if you see a bear in your neighborhood," the town said in an email.

Link: <https://www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Species/Mammals/Black-Bear/What-to-do-if-I-see-a-bear>

VIDANT

Continued from A1

on Thursday voted down Davis' efforts to remove language from the Senate budget that cuts the Medicaid reimbursements that Vidant Medical Center receives for being the Brody School of Medicine's teaching hospital. Vidant's connection to the medical school is why the Board of Governors has nominated individuals to the hospital's Board of Trustees. It gave the UNC System oversight of investments it made so that Vidant could function as a teaching hospital.

The UNC Board of Governors have nominated individuals to Vidant Medical Center's governing board since the hospital became the teaching institution for the Brody School of Medicine.

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners, the hospital's board of trustees and the board of directors of Vidant Health — the hospital's parent company — approved amendments to its articles of incorpo-

ration that ended UNC's appointment powers. The hospital's trustees will make the appointments from a list of candidates recommended by Vidant Health's board.

Shortly after the amended articles were filed with the Secretary of State's office, UNC and East Carolina University filed suit against the hospital and county government, seeking to reverse the action.

On May 28, the two parties agreed to enter mediation to settle their differences. As a judge was finalizing the order, the state Senate released its budget which contained directions to end Medicaid payments Vidant received for acting as the medical school's teaching hospital. The legislation said Vidant would receive the same Medicaid reimbursement as other private hospitals. Senate President Pro Tempore Phil Berger's office confirmed there were discussions about building a new teaching hospital but the senators leading the discussion never were

Vidant makes settlement offer

BY GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Reflector

Vidant Medical Center is offering what is called a "reasonable settlement agreement" to end a lawsuit by the University of North Carolina and East Carolina over governance changes involving the hospital's board of trustees.

Part of the statement released by Vidant Medical Center at 6:12 p.m. Monday calls on the General Assembly to "immediately remove" a proposal that would strip the hospital of \$35 million in Medicaid reimbursements it

receives for serving as the teaching hospital for ECU's Brody School of Medicine.

The agreement plan released Monday maintains that the Pitt County Board of Commissioners should continue to appoint 11 members to the hospital's board of trustees.

The UNC Board of Governors would appoint four members. Vidant also would appoint four members: two would be ECU physicians nominated by a special committee led by the dean of the Brody School of Medicine; the other two

would be made by the hospital board.

The proposal said the medical school dean also would serve on the board.

There are currently two open seats, traditionally appointed by the governors. A restraining order issued May 24 prevented the hospital from making the appointments under the amended governance policy.

The proposal also says the General Assembly must include \$28 million in its final budget to begin planning construction of a new building for the medical school.

identified.

During a radio interview, Vidant Health CEO Dr. Michael Waldrum said he believed UNC Health Care wanted to take over the hospital and Vidant Health. Several media outlets then reported receiving documents that showed the UNC Health Care

researched a merger with Vidant and other health care systems.

A UNC Health Care spokeswoman said that while a study was conducted to examine the state's health care services market, there are no plans to seek a merger.

Davis' amendment to

remove the change in Medicaid reimbursements died when a substitute amendment was entered and approved. The vote on the substitute motion fell along party lines, with only one Republican, Sen. Rick Horner, voting against it.

Davis, in his speech from the Senate floor,

anticipated such a maneuver.

"They didn't fail to disappoint with a maneuver that they believe people won't see through it," he said Friday.

The vote on the substitute amendment that killed his amendment was a test for senators representing eastern Carolina counties, Davis said. The Democratic senator argued "Eastern North Carolina again is under attack" because of the proposed budget cut.

"This was a very test of the heart, the soul of all of us and not putting politics and maneuvering over the people of eastern North Carolina," Davis said. "Every member had a choice, had an option. I tried to make a plea to allow their hearts, their souls, their conscience to guide them."

Steinburg said people should not read too much into one vote.

"Sen. Davis, who is a great guy, I love Don Davis, his impassioned plea did not fall upon deaf ears," he said.

CANDIDATES

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crowded a classroom at Pitt Community College's Walter and Marie Williams building to hear the two hour debate that also focused on abortion, immigration and other topics.

"The people of the 3rd District are people of integrity and honesty — they do not like being lied to," Murphy told Perry in reference to an attack ad by WFW Action Fund that calls Murphy a tax-and-spend politician and utilizes a truncated and out-of-context quote from The Daily Reflector in an attempt to paint Murphy as anti-Trump.

Murphy's campaign is filing suit to stop the attack ad, Murphy said Monday prior to the debate.

He then asked Perry, "Do you speak for honesty and integrity? Is that what's important? Do you renounce that ad and the group that did it? It is full of lies."

Perry said she was not aware of the ad until Monday afternoon.

"Indeed, it did not come from my campaign," Perry said "It came from an independent expenditure. I would be happy to agree with you, Greg, that we have no negativity, but I first need to mention that I began to set the record straight 12 hours after the election when a group affiliated with you came out with an attack on me with complete untruths," Perry said.

Perry added, "I'm not going to renounce something that I haven't investigated myself."

After the initial fireworks were over, the candidates got down to business answering questions on topics including border security and abortion.

When it came to border security, both candidates lauded President Trump and pledged support for a border wall.

"We literally have people running over the border every day with drugs," Murphy said. "Our president was 100 percent spot on to declare a national emergency. And I declared that and I supported that from day one. We need a physical border that prevents physical objects from moving one point to another — be they drugs, be they people, be they human trafficking," Murphy said.

Perry called immigration an escalating crisis.

"The immigration crisis

is doing nothing but escalating," Perry said. "And we have to support the president in building the wall. I have supported the wall — I have supported the wall from the very beginning. Clearly it is an emergency and clearly, an emergency declaration is in order. Where the money would come from — we need to find the money to come from any place but in any way hampering our military," Perry said.

On abortion, both candidates were asked if Roe v. Wade should be overturned and if abortions can be allowed in cases of rape, incest and other emergencies.

"Now we have ultrasounds, that draws out the question of when does life begin? Now we see the issue going to the states, and I think that's appropriate,"

Perry said.

Murphy praised Alabama and other states that have some of the strictest abortion policies in the country.

"It is states like Alabama and other states that are dealing with abortion that actually make me optimistic that our moral compass has not gone completely away, that we care about the sanctity of life, that we care about the mother. Just because an abortion occurs doesn't mean any healing occurs," Murphy said.

Both candidates agreed that no exceptions should be made for abortions and that life begins at conception.

"Life starts at conception without exception and that is the rule," Murphy said.

He continued, "We have horrible tragedies in our

world. We have child abuse, we have incest, we have human trafficking. But a conception taking place in all of those horrible instances does not change the fact that every life is ordained by God," Murphy said.

Perry shared Murphy's views.

"I do not believe there any circumstances in which abortion should be legal. I also believe that every life is ordained by God and life begins at conception."

Also during the debate, the economy, the Second Amendment, health care and other topics came up. Both candidates vowed to repeal the Affordable Care Act, to cut spending and stop Medicaid expansion. They said they would not ban assault weapons or impose gun restrictions.

BUDGET

Continued from A1

increase, the commission unanimously approved a proposed FY 2019-2020 budget that includes a \$0.01 property-tax increase. The total tax will be \$0.755 — it was \$0.745 for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 — per \$100 of property value. As an example, someone owns a property that is valued at \$1,975,000. He or she would pay \$14,911.25 in county property taxes, a \$197.50 difference from \$14,713.75 owed at the FY 2018-19 rate of \$0.745.

Commissioners Patti Kersey, Larry McLaughlin, Greg Bonner and Bob Kirby all made comments on the budget before it was approved.

"I'd preferred no tax increase — we cannot price ourselves out of our neighborhood," Commission President Kersey said. "While we tried very hard not to increase the tax rate (a full cent), and paired down the county manager's recommended 3-cent increase, we still had to address the Rocky Hock Emergency Rescue Volunteer loss, plus we wanted to let our employees know that we recognize their efforts by budgeting a 2

percent COL increase." Kirby called the modest tax increase prudent and justified.

"Generally, I believe the county commissioners hammered out a budget which does a great job of balancing needs against available resources. It was not my desire to raise taxes, but given the needs of the county, and especially the burdensome and increasing pressure of unfunded mandates heaped upon us by the state of North Carolina, our move to raise property taxes by 1 cent per \$100 value is prudent and justified," he said.

Kirby offered praise to Edenton-Chowan Schools Superintendent Rob Jackson who has been patiently seeking a budget increase for the school system for many years.

"During the public hearing for the budget, it is noted that the only speaker was our School Superintendent, Dr. Rob Jackson. As always, he presented a well thought out, articulate and passionate plea for more funds for the school system," he said. "Education has historically been and will always be a cornerstone of our annual budget. Notwithstanding Dr.

Jackson's salient points, I do note that we are finally in a position to retire some long-term debt as we prepare to fund a potential major high school project, so prudence was our compass. To Dr. Jackson I say, 'Patience, my good man.'

Bonner echoed much of the sentiment offered by commissioners, but added one element that taxpayers may like down the road.

"I really thank the administration for a job well done on this budget," he said. "The current debts that we had, soon that will be paid off, so it may be possible that we are looking at a tax decrease down the road. At the same time, we don't want to be stagnant and not move forward, but we have to be competitive not only in terms of growth but when

we hire people along with better salaries that we offer. I commend the commission for all us working together for the betterment of Chowan County."

Commissioner Larry McLaughlin said though it was his first time through the process, it was very informative. He was intent on keeping tax increase to a minimum.

"We kept the tax increase as small as possible," he said. "When doing the budget, you don't have much room to move around — not a lot of money. When you hear politicians say things like — how spending will affect our children and grandchildren's future — well, we're seeing the exact results of overspending from previous years — multiple building that the county has built that have debt service on them."

Much of the county's debt service will be paid off within the next few years, so there's more room to be flexible.

"And beginning next year, the library's debt service will be retired, so we will have some more flexibility," McLaughlin said. "By 2024, all of our debt service will be taken care of, so we will be able to do more. At the same time, we have a high school that needs renovation — so we have to be prudent with any tax increase now so

that when the the time comes for the incurring any school debt, we will be in a better position."

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