

Board not ready to OK Human Relations move

BY T. KEVIN WALKER
THE CHRONICLE

At least one member of the Board of Aldermen is not pleased with a proposal that would relocate the city's Human Relations Department to City Hall.

Human Relations, which works to promote equality and helps to resolve conflicts between tenants and landlords, has been housed in the Black-Phillips-Smith Neighborhood Government Services Office since 1996. The office building is at the intersection of Patterson and Glenn avenues. Human Relations has three full-time employees and one part-time employee.

City administrators, citing a need to consolidate more city offices, want to relocate Human Relations to City Hall, which is undergoing a massive facelift and will probably reopen in November. The Human Relations Commission, the body that governs the department, has already approved the move.

Alderwoman Vivian Burke pressed administrators about the change Monday during the aldermen's Finance Committee meeting. Burke questioned whether or not the idea to relocate the department came as a

result of a request by Wanda Allen-Abraha, who took over as director of the department a few months ago.

Allen-Abraha was not available for comment. A Human Relations employee said Tuesday that Allen-Abraha was out of work for the week.

Assistant City Manager Lee Garrity said that plans to relocate the department were put in place months before Allen-Abraha took over the helm at the department.

Burke was also upset because she said she heard that some Human Relations employees wanted to move out of Black-Phillips because they did not feel safe. The area where the building is located, which is part of Burke's Northeast Ward, has been a hotbed for prostitution and drug activity. Burke said the area has its problems but has many more advantages than disadvantages.

give back. People also gave time and effort to my four kids. My grandkids are playing football now."

Coaches who assisted Hill with the camp hailed from various churches in the city. The coaches from Union Baptist Church included Adrian Sides, James Watlington, Edward Blackburn, Willie Patrick Thomas, David Edwards, Lance Searcy, and Harry Davis. Other coaches were Willie Ashford Jr. of Dreamland Park Baptist Church, Anthony Coles of First Wauhtown Baptist Church, Donald Grand of First Assembly of God, Dred Booe of New Hope Missionary Baptist Church and Bernard Fulk.

Ronnie Beverly of the Carl

"I feel that the Black-Phillips (building)...is a very fine place," Burke said. "A lot of the people with human relations problems have a difficult time getting to City Hall."

Alderwoman Joycelyn Johnson has also raised concerns. She was not pleased that signs were placed at entrances of Black-Phillips notifying visitors that no public bathroom facilities were available. Johnson took down the signs. She said they sent the wrong message to the community.

Concerns by the alderwomen were enough to make the Finance Committee table the proposal. Garrity said he will work to address the concerns raised at the meeting. If the department is relocated, it would not mean that Black-Phillips-Smith would be shut down, he said. The city's Neighborhood Services Department is also housed at the building. Residents also can pay their water bills and parking tickets at the building. Classes on various topics are also held there.

Garrity said that if Human Relations is relocated, the city would look for additional ways to utilize space at the building. He said the Police Department may use the site for training.

Russell Recreation Center assisted with lining out the field, and Kenneth Pinkney Jr. served as the watchman, to be sure that players were supervised when they left the field to use the facilities. LaKeishia Hill, David Hill's wife, assisted with organizing the documentation for the camp. Karla Brown and Mary Carlton served as nurses for the campers.

Hill and Gregory closed the program by inviting youths to come to Christ.

"You don't have to be an adult to give God your heart. God has made me a better man. He has changed my character," Hill said. "We have talked about scores and trophies, but there is nothing like everlasting life. That is the trophy that counts."

CDC

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cafeteria as a way to build the economy in East Winston. Plans are to build a K&W-style cafeteria that would employ about 100 full- and part-time employees and give people living east of Highway 52 an opportunity to enjoy good food in their own back yards.

But the project has hit several snags over the years. Investors have complained that they have not seen their money put to good use. David Capital raised \$136,000 through its stock offering and received a \$250,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. All told, David Capital had \$434,300 in its coffers to bankroll the cafeteria. But most of that money has been spent, including about

\$300,000 spent to pay consultants and salaries for CDC and David Capital employees. Although the land for the cafeteria has yet to be bought, David Capital has only about \$26,000 in the bank.

At Monday's meeting, aldermen also raised questions about the land David Capital wants to buy for the cafeteria. The land, located off a relatively new stretch of 14th Street, is owned by Michael Grace, the brother of James Grace, the executive director of the CDC.

The results of an audit of the cafeteria project recently done by Health and Human Services was also a topic of concern. HHS is reportedly looking into whether the grant it gave David Capital was used properly.

"That has got to be addressed," Alderman Clark told cafeteria supporters.

Grace said the results of the

audit could take from 90 days to a year.

A clearly frustrated Grace told aldermen that rumors and innuendos have been allowed to fester because he and other cafeteria backers have not been given an adequate forum to answer lingering questions. Aldermen gave Grace and company only about 15 minutes Monday to plead their case.

"The whole truth never seems to get out because we don't get a chance to present it," Grace said. "The project is a great project, but it is so full of other layers."

Grace said fairness is now an issue in terms of how the CDC has been treated.

Aldermen did not rule out the possibility of revisiting the CDC's request once the CDC finds other financing for the cafeteria. CDC officials say they plan to go to BB&T to secure financing.

Jobs

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ing officials of their peaceful purpose, Mendez and the youngsters were "graciously" received by Joines at City Hall, who then took some time to speak with the students and listen to their plea for help.

"I was impressed and delighted with the young people's willingness to go out and try to address concerns they had. It was gratifying to see these young people wanting to find jobs instead of just taking it easy for the summer," said Joines, who offered to take in one of the students as an intern in his office for the summer. Joines has pledged to get the word out to the private sector along with the Chamber of Commerce with hopes that businesses will consider hiring local youths.

Many of the youths, including Taylor, who signed up through the Urban League's YES Program (Youth Employment Services) to participate in the job lobbying effort, have either applied for jobs and never received word back about positions or simply been turned away altogether from local businesses. Taylor was one of the students chosen to address the mayor. Taylor said he attempted to "persuade the mayor that they needed jobs."

"It was good for the students to get involved in the democratic process, to learn how to talk to their city government and to bring to the attention of the city

that this problem exists," said Mendez, who feels a plan should have already been put into action by the city to put these willing and able teens to work.

Once budgetary cuts came down from the state this year, Pam Peoples-Joyner, employment specialist for the Urban League, explained that the Urban League had to fly solo in its efforts to employ youths through the YES Program, typically a joint effort between the Urban League and the Job Link Center. Quickly Urban League officials found themselves in a bind, with numerous high school students jobless for their summer vacation.

"We don't know if we're going to hear anything simply because a month ago we sent out letters to the local churches, area businesses, neighborhood associations and we haven't had any response," said Peoples-Joyner, who blames the summer job predicament the students are facing on the state budgetary crisis.

Annessa Warehime, with the Chamber of Commerce, said the chamber was "pleased to see the students and their enthusiasm" about job opportunities. Warehime is the work force development manager for the Chamber of Commerce, and she indicated that the chamber will assist the students this summer as well as work to create a system to ensure they and other students like them are employed for summers to come.

"The chamber has several dif-

ferent programs to help connect employers with the community. Our ears are always open for new opportunities for the emerging work force here in the community. It's one of the best ways to build a strong local work force."

When asked about why so many students are having trouble getting hired for the summer, Warehime said she believed the "tight labor market" resulting from the state budgetary crisis could be blamed for creating some challenges on youngsters in search of work. Nonetheless, Warehime said the chamber will be making a daily effort to seek out employers who have job openings and work with the Urban League to devise a long-term strategy to avoid this problem again.

In past years, Joines said, the city "always had monies to hire and place (students) in nonprofit organizations to work through the summer," but the recent budgetary cutbacks are not allowing the city to spend money for that. Unfortunate as it may be, that is why so many kids are experiencing such had luck in searching for summer work.

"It's not fun sitting at home, looking at TV in front of a bunch of fans. It's hot all day," Taylor said.

He said he will continue to apply for jobs wherever applications are being taken but also hopes that his lobbying efforts will encourage businesses to give him a calls with job offers.

Football

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Bernard Fulk.

Ashford has been a Little League coach for 29 years. He was inducted into the Winston-Salem State University Sports Hall of Fame on May 3. Ashford was proud to be one of the coaches for the UBC football camp.

"I am proud to participate in a vision of one of my former players. My reward for all these years of service is to see a lot of young kids out in the community doing well, being good citizens," Ashford said. "I kept doing it because someone took the time to put time and effort into me as a young person. I feel obligated to



Those gowned during Sunday's ceremony show off their outfits.

Stanley

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bers of the Liberian Organization of the Piedmont view Letton as a godsend.

"I just do what I do every day. The Lord works through me," Letton said.

Letton was just one of the many people who made Stanley's trip to the United States possible. James Hunder, a former president of the Liberian Organization of the Piedmont, first started pushing Stanley's story when he read about the boy on a Liberian Web site. Hunder, who was then a student and employee of Wake Forest University, went to his friend Edwin Wilson, senior vice president at Wake Forest University, to seek guidance. Wilson put Hunder in touch with the international affairs wing and started the ball rolling. Wilson was also honored Sunday at the celebration, which featured traditional Liberian songs and popular foods from the West African nation.

"When we help children, we do the most that we can to move toward the kingdom of heaven," Wilson said.

Wilson, Letton and several others who have helped Williams and Stanley during their stay here were also feted during a "gowning" ceremony, in which they were proclaimed honorary "Liberians" as they



Edwin Wilson is presented with an African print top.

were outfitted in traditional African clothing. Rev. Seth O. Lartey, the pastor of Goler and a Liberian, was among those "gowned," as were David Flomo, the president of the Liberian Organization of the Piedmont, and his wife, who took in Stanley and his mother after they left the Ronald McDonald House last year.

Lartey said the good deeds that have been done on behalf of mother and child will resonate throughout the world.

"This humanitarian act will go a long way to show others that America is a great country," Lartey said.

Since Stanley's condition

will require lifelong check-ups and monitoring, Stanley and his mother will continue to live in Winston-Salem. They hope to be joined by Stanley's father soon. Williams, who recently found a job, could not thank those who helped her son enough. She says Stanley has become a different person since his surgery. He used to be hampered by severe stomach pains because of the condition. No more, his mom said.

"Look at him," she said pointing at Stanley, who was eating a piece of his birthday cake. "He is happy and full of energy. He is totally different than he used to be."

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