

Buses

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residents and enhance the city's offerings for visitors.

"Anytime a service is offered seven days a week and 365 days a year, you can expect it to be more useful for both livability and convenience," he stated. "We're glad to offer this service for the first time. We hope that people will take advantage of it."

City native Randy Smith says he is looking forward to the implementation of Sunday service.

"It's about time they catch up with the rest of them - with Charlotte and other cities," said the grandfather of 13, who rides the bus daily Monday-Saturday. "Just because it's Sunday, people still need to get around."

Reading, Penn. native Earnest Hancock only recently began riding the bus to save gas money, but says he is also planning to utilize public transportation on Sundays.



Wilson

"I think it'll help people out, like helping more people get downtown when stuff is going on," said Hancock, a Forsyth Technical Community College student.

City native Bobby Wilson has been advocating for the city to add Sunday service for years. Wilson recalls paying a dime to ride on the Safe Bus - a black-owned bus company that was eventually absorbed by the



Earnest Hancock poses at the Clark Campbell Transportation Center.

WSTA - on Sundays. He said he was thrilled that city buses will soon be running seven days a week.

"I am overwhelmed that it's going to happen because it opens a new chapter in Winston-Salem, a serious new chapter," declared the 68-year-old, who plans to use the bus to get back and forth to services at his church, St. Stephen Missionary Baptist. "It's good for the city, it's good for the green - the environment - and it puts us on par with other cities of our size. Across the board, our city will be greatly enhanced."

Turner said he expects it will take roughly four months for the city to hire and train drivers and solidify routes, pushing the expected rollout of Sunday service to October or November.

The new budget also includes merit raises of up to three percent for city employees, a measure that is long overdue in the eyes of Taylor, who represents the city's Southeast Ward. "If we want to retain our brightest and our best employees, we have to pay people, and this budget addresses that," Taylor said. "It made me feel good to be able to turn to our city employees (during the budget meeting) and say thank you."

Overall, the budget received higher marks than usual from Council members, in part because of the work of the Citizens' Organizational Efficiency Review Committee (COERC), a nine-member committee that worked to identify opportunities for increased revenue for the city and areas where services and/or expenses could be cut. Among the COERC recommendations that the city adopted in its fiscal year 2013-2014 budget were a \$5 increase in maximum parking fines, increased fees for cemetery plots and grave openings and increased fines for weeded-lot violations.

"I'm definitely happy with the budget," commented Taylor, noting that he has voted against the last two budgets. "This year, we actually came back and found well over \$1 million in savings, just by cutting some of the fat."

Making cuts in other areas allowed city leaders to keep taxes increases relatively low, according to City Council Member Derwin Montgomery. Because most homes in the city have been devalued following Forsyth County Tax Assessor's most recent revaluation, many homeowners will actually be paying less for property taxes despite the increase, added Montgomery, who represents the city's East Ward.

"Their recommendations have been very pivotal in keeping the tax rates from going up to rev-

enue neutral," he said, referencing a commonly used taxing procedure that allows the government to still receive the same amount of money despite changes in property values and other factors. "...This budget, for the majority of the citizens of Winston-Salem when it comes to the taxes that they're paying, they will feel nothing changing, or they will see a decrease."

The budget also included funding for several projects, including revitalization efforts on the Martin Luther King Jr. Drive Corridor and the Creative Corridors initiative, in addition to water and sewer and storm-water management projects and

improvements at Winston Lake Golf Course. Montgomery said he would've liked to have seen more funding go to infrastructure development and maintenance, which he says is greatly needed city-wide.

"It's going to probably come down to us looking to bring a bond to voters within the next year or so in order to get some of these projects done," he stated. "It's about \$500 million across the city in needed capital investment. We're just chipping away at that, but there's a lot that needs to be invested in."

The City Council voted to not accept merit raises for itself.

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Juneteenth

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suggestion, he changed it into the shape of a Zulu shield to represent of the power of theater to change lives. The logo, filled with images representing different aspects of theatre, has been the signature of the massive NBTJ ever since.

Williams comes from a long line of woodcarvers, having served as an apprentice under his brother. He wants to keep the art form alive; therefore, he now has apprentices of his own. He hopes to return to Winston-Salem's next Juneteenth to conduct a live carving demonstration.

Juneteenth did its part to educate attendees about the current struggle. A number of organizations set up displays to tout some of today's most pressing social issues. The NAACP set up a display right beside one for Democracy North Carolina. Both groups are sounding the alarm about what they say are efforts by Republicans in the General Assembly to turn back the clock on voting and equal rights. Attendees were encouraged to sign-up to take part in the NC NAACP's Moral Monday protests, which have taken place at the General Assembly each week for more than two months.

Democracy NC Central Field Organizer Linda Sutton has taken part in several Moral Monday protests. She compared the movement to the March on Washington.

"It's a good feeling to be with people who are fighting for causes you believe in like that," said Sutton.

Juneteenth drew attendees from far and wide. Last year, Alabama resident Loretta Hampton was in Winston-Salem visiting her sister-in-law, who suggested they attend the Juneteenth festival. Hampton asked, "What's a Juneteenth?"

She was dazzled when she discovered the answer. Hampton said she was taken in with the event's historical displays, especially the one for black-owned Safe Bus Company, which operated in Winston-Salem from 1926 to 1972 and was the largest black-owned transportation company in the world. Hampton said she has



Photos by Todd Luck

Above: Linda Sutton with interns Charles Gray and Shelby Armstrong.

Left: LaVon Williams with his famous logo.

Below: The Safe Bus exhibit was among Loretta Hampton's favorites.

update on his slow recovery from a traumatic 2011 car wreck. He said he was doing well and hopes to be recovered enough by the next Juneteenth to do "the slide" across the stage.



made a vow to attend the local festival every year. She has followed through with that commitment so far. She was back at Saturday's event; where she stated that she likes that the festival focuses on black history beyond slavery.

"It (is) giving me a sense of my culture," she said. Larry Womble, hon-

orary and lifetime chair of the local celebration, welcomed afternoon attendees to the celebration.

"We're here to have a good time," he said. "I want you to laugh, I want you to enjoy yourself, be with your great-grands and your family...and your children and get good food."

The former state representative also gave an

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