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THE CHRONICLE

Volume 43, Number 35

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C.

THURSDAY, May 4, 2017

City: Review tax reappraisal process

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The Winston-Salem City Council would like to see changes in the way the county does real estate property tax reappraisals.

The council unanimously passed a resolution asking for an evaluation of the reappraisal process by the Board of Equalization and Review, which reviews appeals to the reappraisal process. Residents were still encouraged to file appeals on their individual properties if they feel the reappraisal value is inaccurate.

The resolution by City Council Member Derwin Montgomery, who is a part of a group that recently pur-

chased *The Chronicle*, questioned if the process accurately accesses the value of properties in African-American communities.

"Although the majority of properties rose in value, there are certain neighborhoods and communities where the reappraisal process is much more challenging," said Montgomery.

The county does reappraisals every four years, using qualified real estate sales in an area and the condition of properties to estimate their value. Reappraisals were controversial in 2013 when a downturn in the real estate market caused 90 percent of properties to lose value. This year, 70 percent of properties saw some increase, but Montgomery said that there's an inordinate amount of



Montgomery



Burke

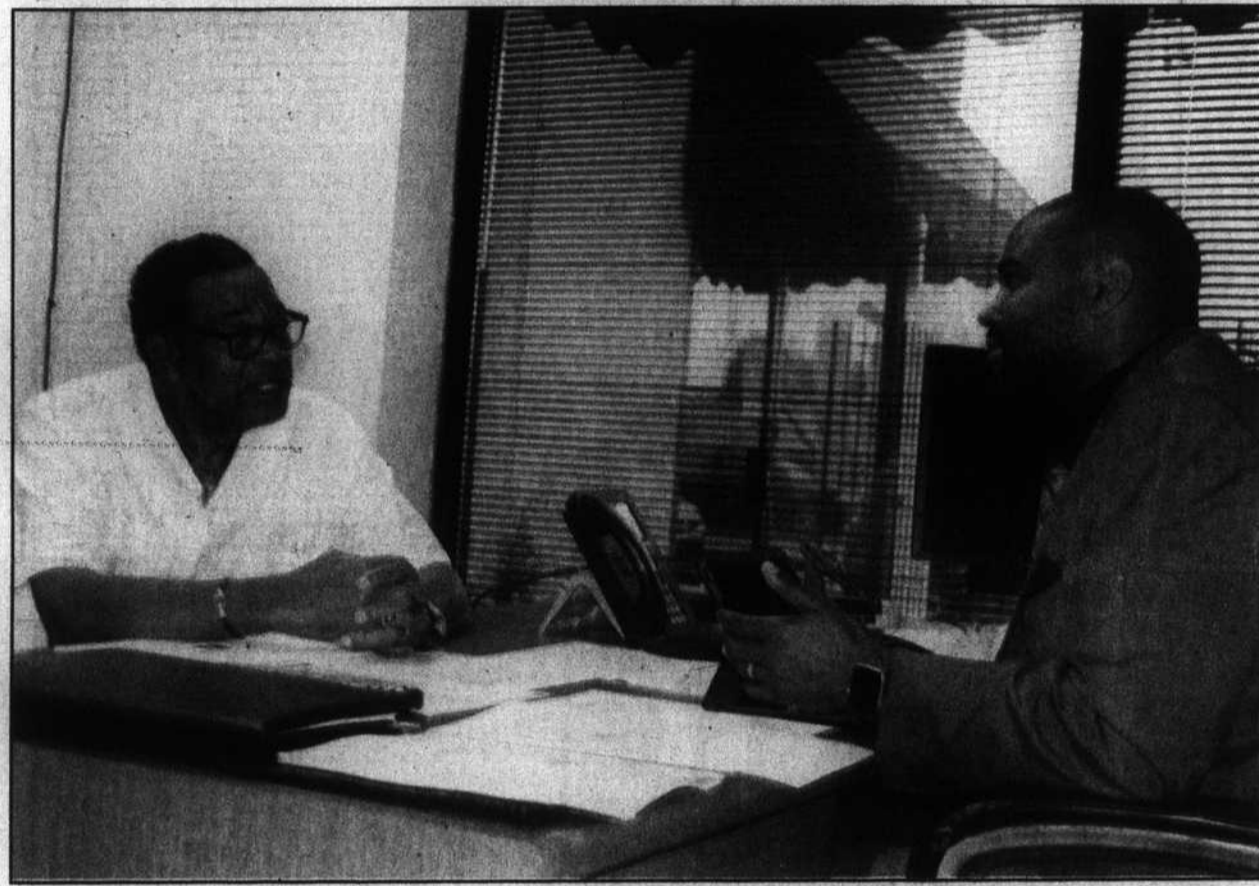
properties in black communities that saw drops similar to 2013.

The resolution said that some properties are being sold for below market value and are then being rented by tenants at a higher amount, and asks that this "lease value" be considered in the reappraisal process. It also asks the board to examine other parts of the process, like how homes are evaluated on their exteriors unless there's an appeal.

Other City Council members agreed the process should be looked into. Denise "D.D." Adams said there should be a different metric to measure property values in the urban core. Vivian Burke said she didn't believe prop-

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ERNIE PITT: A 'TRUE TITAN'



Ernie Pitt, left, founder of *The Chronicle*, talks with present Publisher James Taylor Jr. in Pitt's former office, which is now Taylor's office.

Founder of *The Chronicle* and others look back at the ups and downs of his long career

BY CASH MICHAELS
FOR THE CHRONICLE

This week, for the first time since he founded *The Chronicle* on May 4, 1974, Ernie Pitt is no longer its publisher.

Last week, Pitt officially retired after selling the paper to *The Chronicle Media Group LLC*, whose principal directors are Derwin Montgomery and James Taylor Jr., two Winston-Salem city council members.

Taylor is now the publisher.

"Mr. Pitt is a true titan for this community, having started this great newspaper," Taylor told *The Chronicle* Tuesday.

"It's truly an honor to now take the baton."

In an exclusive interview immediately after the acquisition became official, Pitt said he was pleased with the sale because he knew that *The Chronicle's* tradition and mission of serving the community would be continued.

"I have confidence in these guys," Pitt said. "I feel good about the fact

that they're young, they're smart, they're committed, and they've shown their commitment to this community."

Still, as he sat in what had been his office on North Liberty Street for many years (Mr. Taylor's name was already emblazoned on the door), taking note of the barren walls that used to display his personal and professional accomplishments, Pitt recalled his early years as a budding student journalist at the UNC - Chapel Hill School of Journalism, and how that

See Pitt on A5

1st African-American to lead YMCA of NW N.C.

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Next week, Stan Law will officially become the first African-American to serve as president and chief executive at the YMCA of Northwest North Carolina. Law, a native of Charlotte, will succeed Kurt Hazelbacker, who left in January to serve as president at the YMCA of Metropolitan Dallas.

Before returning to his home state, Law served as the chief executive at the YMCA of Greater Birmingham and the YMCA of Greater Cincinnati. He also served as the vice president at the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington, D.C. and YMCA of Greater Charlotte.

"I've had some great experiences in other parts of the country, but it feels really good to be back home," said Law during an interview earlier this week.

While discussing his plans for the 16 branches that make up the YMCA of Northwest N.C., Law said he is looking forward to getting out in the community to find out ways the organization can better meet the needs of the people. He said his goal as president is to engage the community by creating more cause-driven programs similar to the diabetes prevention program they already offer.

"The Y has to engage itself in the communities we serve. As communities change, the Y must change," the said. "We are committed to getting involved in the community and building partnerships with other organizations as well."

When asked about the future of the Winston Lake YMCA, Law said they are still having discussions to decide what's next for the branch located on Waterworks Road. Last October, it was announced that the city was considering purchasing most of the branch's current location. At that time, *The Chronicle* reported that low membership led to a shortfall of \$400,000.

The branch started on Depot Street in 1924 to serve African-Americans during segregation. It continues to

See YMCA on A10



Law

Democrats will rise again, N.C. chairman says

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

N.C. Democratic Party Chairman Wayne Goodwin said he believes that his party can turn the current discontent with Republican rule into future victories.

Goodwin was in Winston-Salem last week attending a fundraiser for the Forsyth County



"seen the epitaphs of both political parties written

Democratic Party. He said there's been a tremendous groundswell of support for Democrats since President Donald Trump's upset victory last November. He said in his 35 years in politics, he's

at least three times each" and believes Democrats will rebound from last year's losses.

"I know [that] as much as it was a bad night for Democrats in November of 2016, I know that we Democrats will rise again," said Goodwin. "We shall prevail again."

Goodwin knows how bad a night it was first-

See Democrats on A3

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