

'Get Patriotic in Person' See page A2 for info

The Courier-Times

Weather Outlook TODAY: Hi 41 Lo 27 THURSDAY: Hi 38 Lo 23 FRIDAY: Hi 46 Lo 26

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www.personcountylife.com

Currier named director of county's Economic Development Commission

By PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT C-T Staff Writer pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

Barbara Wagstaff Currier has been named director of the Person County Economic Development Commission (EDC).

The Person County native said Tuesday that she was "thrilled to be back home." She added that she was also happy to be working with Jim Stovall, who is chairman of the EDC and has served as unofficial director for the past year. Currier said she was looking forward to working with the entire

EDC board and "all our partners," which include Piedmont Community College, where she served as executive director of the PCC Foundation for 13 years, as well as the school system, county commissioners, Roxboro City Council and the Tourism Development Authority.

Prior to going to PCC Foundation director, Currier worked as director of public information, director of admissions and as a counselor at PCC. After leaving the college in 2005, Currier went to the state office of the North Carolina Community College System, where she served as director of the North Carolina Community College Foundation and

Alumni Affairs.

Before her time at PCC, Currier served as director of Person County Partners in Education and as community schools coordinator of the Person County Schools system.

She holds a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from UNC-Chapel Hill.

Stovall said Currier's work with the schools, PCC and the state office of community college, and the contacts she had made in those positions, as well as the fact that she was a native Personian, would allow her to "hit the ground running" in her new position.

County commissioners approved the

position last month, which will allow Currier, through the Person County Business and Industrial Center and the Economic Development Commission, to direct economic development activities in the county.

Currier will operate out of a county office and be accountable to both the EDC and the county manager's office.

She will receive an annual salary of \$40,000, with no benefits.

The county will also furnish office space, a computer, access to a copier and telephone, and will reimburse mileage

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Barbara W. Currier

Revaluation delayed by commissioners until 2013

By TIM CHANDLER Courier-Times Editor tchandler@roxboro-courier.com

The Person Board of Commissioners voted unanimously Monday night to delay property revaluation for an additional year.

Property revaluation for the county is now scheduled for 2013. At that time, the county will be required to perform the process.

The county last had a revaluation in 2005 and, prior to the last few years, had operated with a four-year revaluation cycle, which is also permissible.

The delay approved Monday by commissioners will, according to Person County Tax Administrator Russell Jones, "give the real estate market one more year to stabilize."

Jones said that a delay in the revaluation should allow time for the market to adjust and the county/taxpayer will not be locked in to a value that is incorrect — either too high or too low — until the next revaluation cycle.

Jones told commissioners Monday that the county's current assessment rate is 96-percent accurate, based on a sales ratio sampling.

"Values are higher today than they were in 2005; however, there has been a recent decline in values," Jones said. "A revaluation is not needed at this time, since values are so close to the current market value."

Jones further explained that delaying the revaluation for another year would allow taxpayers to keep their 2005 tax values for another year.

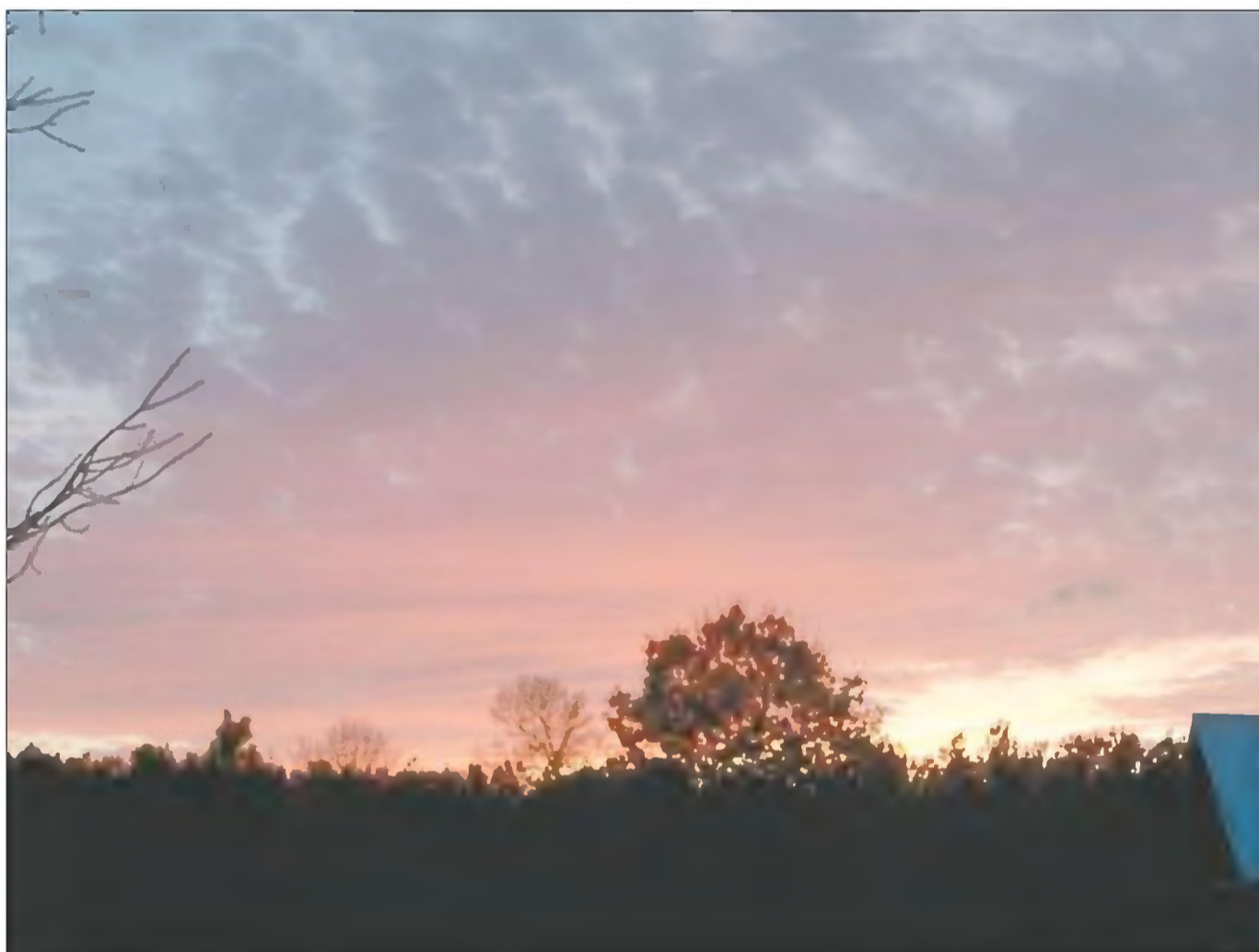
"This will take away some of the uncertainty concerning their property tax bill," Jones explained. "This will be our final delay since revaluation is required every eight years."

In other matters Monday, commissioners approved advertisement of delinquent 2010 real property taxes in *The Courier-Times* on March 5.

State law requires the newspaper advertisement, Jones explained, and it can be published at any time between March 1 and June 30.

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SCENIC SUNSET



Phyliss Boatwright / C-T

PICTURESQUE — A winter sunset brought vivid colors to the Rougemont sky Sunday night.

Support gained for occupancy tax hike

By TIM CHANDLER Courier-Times Editor tchandler@roxboro-courier.com

"I see it as another way of revenue. If [a] property tax [increase] is not one, then this is the next best thing."

Commissioner Ray Jeffers spoke those words Monday night before joining three other commissioners in voting in favor of a resolution supporting an increase in the occupancy tax rate in Person County.

The Person County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) is seeking state legislation to increase the county's occupancy tax rate from five percent to six percent.

If allowed, the additional revenues would be used to promote tourism in Person County.

County Manager Heidi York estimated that the increase would generate \$27,000 annually.

The tax would only affect persons utilizing hotels, motels and extended stay facilities in the county.

Commissioner Kyle Puryear cast the lone vote against the resolution.

"It is not time for it," Puryear said. He later said that the "way to solve [budget issues] is not through increasing a tax."

Jeffers pointed out that a host of persons seeking continued support for recreation services in the county were in attendance at Monday's meeting.

"We are going to continue to have a slew of people here," Jeffers said. "We've got to find some way to support them."

Commission Chair Jimmy B. Clayton pointed out that Personians pay occupancy tax rates in other counties and states when they travel for vacation or business.

"If we are willing to pay it when we go elsewhere, they should be willing to pay it when they come here."

In another TDA-related matter Monday, commissioners voted, 4-1, to support a resolution that would increase the current size of the TDA Board of Directors from six members to nine members.

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Citizens plea for continued funding of recreation/senior citizen services

By TIM CHANDLER Courier-Times Editor tchandler@roxboro-courier.com

"Progress has to still continue to take place."

Johnny Myrl Lunsford, the former chairman of the Person Board of County Commissioners, spoke those words to the current board of commissioners Monday night during the informal comment portion of its regularly scheduled meeting.

Lunsford was one of five citizens who encouraged commissioners to keep funding for recreation and senior citizens in the county a priority heading into budget discussions.

"I appeal to you to keep these pro-

grams at the front," Lunsford said. "I'm concerned. I'm not going to sit back and relax because I'm retired."

County Manager Heidi York has projected a budget shortfall of \$4.8 million for the upcoming fiscal year that begins July 1.

In addition to the four other citizens who spoke, a host of persons who utilize the county-hosted exercise programs were also in attendance.

Ethel Brann Tillman of Allensville told commissioners that "males and females from pre-teens to senior citizens" want a proposed recreation/senior center to be constructed.

In the November 2008 general election, Person County voters approved a bond referendum for the center.

The bond referendum authorized approval of up to \$6 million to fund the recreation/senior center. The proposed center would include a swimming pool, basketball courts, racquetball courts, exercise rooms, meeting rooms and offices.

In 2008, approximately 55 percent of the 15,934 votes cast favored the referendum, which passed by an 8,761 to 7,173 count. The bond referendum was favored in 11 of the 14 precincts in Person County.

This past November, however, Person County voters soundly defeated a proposed quarter-cent sales tax by a vote of 8,553, or 79 percent, against to

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Carson Allen

Roxboro's Junior Miss Carson Allen preps for next week's state competition

By GREY PENTECOST C-T Staff Writer greypentecost@roxboro-courier.com

Last October Carson Allen was named Roxboro's 2011 Junior Miss, but her practice and preparation didn't end that night. Since then she's been getting ready for the state level of competition, set to take place next week.

Allen leaves for Greensboro Friday, where she will spend a week with a host family and other contestants before the competition on Friday and Saturday, Feb. 18 and 19.

Since winning the local competition, Allen said she's been practicing and perfecting and making some changes to

the dance she will perform during the talent portion of the program. During "workdays" in Greensboro and Fuquay-Varina she learned and practiced the fitness routine, which includes push-ups, sit-ups and v-sits. In order to keep in shape Allen has been participating in Jazzercise, and thanked Stacey Davis for helping her with that.

"The fitness routine is some intense cardio," Allen commented.

She said she was a little nervous on the first workday, but that everyone was "nice and sweet," and she found it comforting to know that all of the girls were in the same position.

The competition is made up of fitness, talent, self-expression, scholastic and

interview portions.

The Roxboro Jaycees helped Allen hone her interview skills on Sunday, and

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Allen said she is continuing to follow current events, which may show up in the judges' questioning.

Allen's roommate in the coming week is a contestant from Pitt County. She said the two discovered that they share a mutual friend, someone that Allen had met at a summer camp. The girls will be staying with Jack and Cathy Bayliss in Greensboro. Allen will meet her hosts on Friday.

Allen said she is looking forward to the "opportunity in general," but most of all the chance to spend time with the other contestants and getting to know them.

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