

TAX: Occupancy tax increase approved

FROM PAGE 1

of directors were at the public hearing on the matter Monday night, and spoke about how important the museum is to the citizens of Person County and to visitors.

Angie Brown, president of the museum's board, said it was the museum's mission to "collect, preserve and present artifacts of the county" for education and programs that benefit all citizens. She also noted that the museum operated largely on volunteer efforts, saying many "wonderful people" make the museum work. "We band together like a family to get things done," Brown stated, adding that all museum volunteers and board members "know [their] jobs and perform them with pride and passion."

Wilkins said in June that he was pleased that the bill passed, and that the TDA would have

some extra funding. He said the TDA had been "bending over backward to help" the Person County Museum of History, and he was happy to know that more funds would be available for the museum.

The TDA board has said it hoped the additional funding could help support office facilities that would give the TDA more of a "store-front presence in the uptown area," according to Margaret McMann, TDA director. She said in June that such an office would afford TDA a place that would be easier for visitors to find and that would be more accessible to the general public.

Mac Wagstaff, treasurer of the museum board, said the museum was "deeply indebted to the county, the city and TDA for their support" over the years. "It's been said," Wagstaff contended, "that the museum is a priceless gem. It's the number one tourist attraction to the

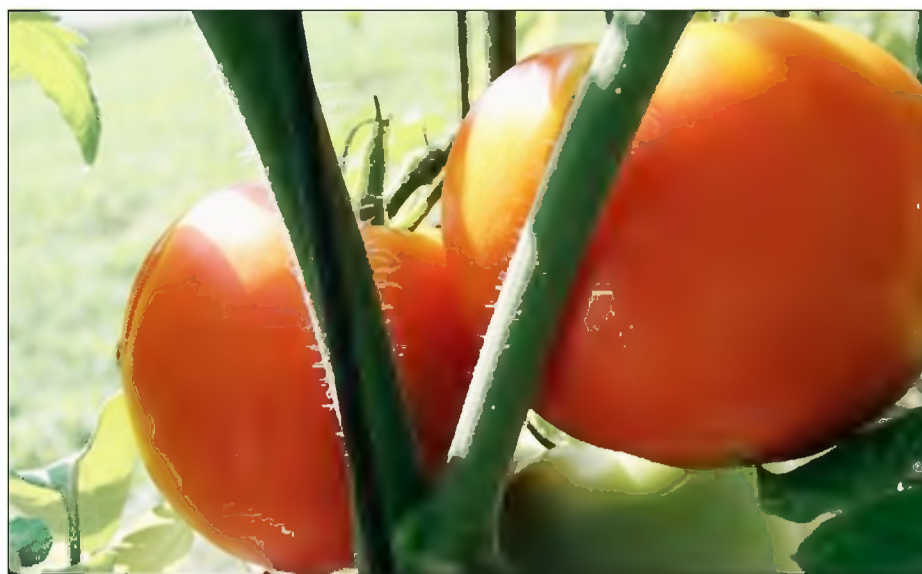
county." He said the board wanted "to ensure that it is here for future generations."

Commissioners Chairman Jimmy Clyaton thanked Wilkins "for the leg work he did in the legislature" in getting the occupancy tax bill passed. He also thanked the museum board "for all that [they] do. It is a wonderful thing for" the people of Person County "to be able to go down there and look at" their history, he said.

Commissioner Ray Jeffers said the intent of his vote for the increased occupancy tax was "to support the museum with those funds" generated by the tax.

Commissioner Sam Kennington stated that he concurred with Jeffers.

He said he received Wilkins' opinion that the TDA had "bent over backwards" to support the museum. "I hope it is clear to TDA" that it is the intent of the commissioners to have that support continue in the future.



It's 'mater time!

Tomatoes are abundant in and around Person County right now. See Page B5 for a few recipes using tomatoes

PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT | COURIER-TIMES

TAX-FREE: Tax-free weekend to be held Aug. 5-7

FROM PAGE 1

General Assembly specifically to help consumers with back-to-school shopping, since many schools and colleges begin classes in late August. This sales tax holiday weekend is typically one of the top sales periods for retailers throughout North Carolina and the other 17 states that offer this special benefit to their shoppers."

For 2011, some new products added to the electronics market are exempt from tax, such as the Apple iPad® and Motorola Xoom®. However,

eReaders such as the Nook® and Kindle® will continue to be taxed.

Person County United Way's "Stuff the Bus" event to collect school supplies for children who need them will also be taking place this weekend. The buses will be located at Walmart and Roses on Friday, Aug. 5 and Saturday, Aug. 6 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on both days, and on Sunday, Aug. 7 from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Those who would like to donate will be able to use a "Teacher's Wish List" to pick items. These shopping lists will be available at the buses. Monetary donations will also be accepted.

GREEN: County to replace vacant house

FROM PAGE 1

bids for demolition and had a builder inspect the house for possible deconstruction.

Foushee said builder Paul Hair told him that none of the materials in the house were worth enough to pay for his time in deconstructing the house.

Also, said Foushee, the paint used in the house is lead-based, which would require extra abatement, making the project more costly.

C.M. Solomon & Sons submitted the low bid for demolition, said Foushee.

Foushee also contacted Person County Habitat for Humanity, and inquired as to whether that group was interested in the house. He said Habitat declined.

Commissioner Frances Blalock said she believed the county had "done due diligence" regarding the property, and that it should be demolished.

Commissioner Sam Kennington agreed, and made a motion to proceed with demolition.

Commissioner Ray Jeffers said he was not comfortable voting on the demolition until he knew what would be done with the property after the house was demolished.

John Hill, Recreation Arts and Parks director, said he had spoken with Rolling Hills Garden Center and had a "very flexible plan" for turning the lot into an "open, grassy space with defined boundaries" that would "incorporate existing

vegetation," be "low maintenance" for the county, and "not infringe on neighbors."

When finished, the lot will contain picnic tables and park benches.

Hill said new plants, to be incorporated with the existing vegetation, would cost about \$900. He said the county could do the work, or he could get civic organizations involved.

He said he had receive inquiries from Boy Scouts working on their Eagle projects and believed the lot would "be an awesome project" for Scouts.

Hill added that he thought there would be "more buy-in" on the project if the community were involved.

If Rolling Hills were to do the bulk of the work on turning the area into a green space, said Hill, it would cost an additional \$1,800 to \$2,000.

Carryover funds in Hill's budget would be used to pay for the work on the property.

The commissioners voted to move forward with the demolition. They voted, 4-1, to allow Hill to proceed with the green space work, using the carryover funds.

Commission Chairman Jimmy Clayton voted against the use of the funds, saying he could not support using county money on a green space project after budget cuts in county departments for the current fiscal year, and county "employees didn't get much" in the way of salary or benefit increases.

CITY: Council considering manager applications

FROM PAGE 1

and council members were looking at experience and relevant education as the top criteria for a new manager.

Spencer stressed that the city would be "very careful" in looking at the qualifications, to make sure the applicants meet the desires of the entire council.

Former manager Barlow resigned last spring, moving to Fuquay-Varina to serve as its town manager.

Since Barlow left on March 25, Assistant City Manager Tommy Warren has served as interim manager here. Warren has been on staff with the City of Roxboro since 1988.

Elections for city council members and mayor are scheduled for Oct. 11.

Ten people filed to run for the five seats on council. Current Mayor Pro-tem Marilyn Newell was the only person to file for mayor. Spencer, who served 16 terms on city council before stepping up to the position of mayor, did not file as a candidate for either mayor or a seat on council.


Spencer has said that a new

manager would likely be hired in October.

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