

# The Courier-Times



## Schools settle in Sugar Creek ruling

BY GREY PENTECOST  
 C-T STAFF WRITER  
 greypentecost@roxboro-courier.com

Person County Schools (PCS) settled claims this week with Bethel Hill Charter School (BHCS) and Roxboro Community School (RCS), allotting the two charter schools a combined total of \$800,000.

According to PCS Finance Director Julie Masten, PCS has always paid the BHCS and RCS according to the law, which requires school districts to pay charter schools a per-pupil amount of the local funding received from the county.

"Per pupil funding was calculated by taking the combined county current expense funding and fines and forfeitures and dividing that amount by the total

number of Person County students in both the public school system and the charter schools," said Masten. "It was an equitable distribution of all county funds received. Person County Schools does not receive supplemental taxes."

As other charter schools in the state have done within their own systems, in June of last year BHCS and RCS requested funds that had not been paid to them by PCS in response to a 2008 ruling by the North Carolina court in the Sugar Creek Charter School v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education case. In 2005, Sugar Creek, accompanied by other charter schools, filed a lawsuit against the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) to recover funds not included by CMS in its per-pupil allotments to the charter schools.

In 2008 the courts ruled in favor of Sugar Creek, mandating that CMS pay Sugar Creek and other charter schools named in the suit additional funds from their local current expense budget.

RCS Board of Directors Chair Donald Long said the school pursued the funds their attorney had found were owed to them according to the ruling in order to fulfill its "fiduciary responsibility" to the school. To keep from losing the claim, the charter schools had to either settle, or enter into negotiations through a tolling agreement by June 30, 2010. Rather than go into litigation, said Long, PCS and the county's two charter schools agreed to negotiate.

A press release issued by RCS and BHCS states that the charter schools "asserted

claims for a combined total of \$887,000 for the fiscal years ending in 2007 through 2009."

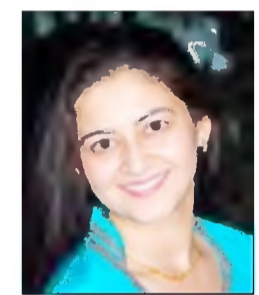
According to the settlement reached this week, BHCS will receive \$424,000, and RCS will receive \$376,000.

Though given the option of paying the amount over a three-year period, Person County Board of Education Chair Gordon Powell said PCS was able to pay the lump sum from the Schools' fund balance.

Per the state court ruling, the payments reflect money held in the PCS current expense fund between the 2006-07 and 2009-10 school years. The additional monies the system is being required to pay the charters, said Powell, account for funding for

See **SCHOOLS**, Page 3

**EXPLORER!**  
 New program engages youth in law enforcement, community **B1**



**HEALTHIER YOU:**  
 Dr. Jasmine Singh provides information, tips for better health in monthly column **B3**



**MILESTONE:**  
 Family & Consumer Sciences to celebrate 100 years in Person County **B3**

**BARGAIN:**  
 PATS offers reduced rates to Farmers Market beginning Wednesday **A3**

**QUOTABLE**

You can make a difference, through voting and other means, so don't let healthy skepticism turn into feckless cynicism.

— John Hood

**A5**

**DEATHS**

Harold Pasco Grinstead, 73  
 Rougemont

SEE PAGE A9

**INDEX**

AGENDA	A3
CLASSIFIED	B8-9
COMMENTARY	A5
COURTY DOCKET	B6-7
DO YOU KNOW	A2
EDITOR'S NOTES	A2
EDUCATION	B2
FAITH & WORSHIP	B4-5
LEGAL NOTICES	B9
LIFESTYLE	B3
MOVIES	A2
OBITUARIES	A9
OPINION	A4
REALTY TRANSFERS	B7
SPORTS	A6-7
TV LISTINGS	A8
WORD ON THE STREET	A2

## County agrees to move forward with highway patrol VIPER tower

Public hearing to be held on amending cell tower ordinance

BY PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT  
 C-T STAFF WRITER  
 pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

Person County this week agreed to move forward on allowing the North Carolina Highway Patrol (NCSHP) to erect a VIPER (Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders) communications tower on county-owned land off of Critcher-Wilkerson Road.

A public hearing must be held before the tower can be built, however. The hearing will be for the purpose of allowing citizen comment on amending the county ordinance regarding cell tower construction.

County attorney Ron Aycock said the current ordinance restricts the height of towers. To allow the 480-foot VIPER tower to be built on a 100-by-100-foot plat of land owned by the county, the ordinance will have to be amended to specifically exempt law enforcement towers built on county-owned land.

The site of the tower will also include a building that will house a generator and radio equipment that will be maintained by the highway patrol. The site will be secured by fencing, with access available to NCSHP and county personnel.

Highway patrol personnel were on hand at Monday night's meeting of the Person Board of County Commissioners, and

said they had tried to lease land from the City of Roxboro, on Hill Street, at the 911 Center.

"This area is the most desirable because it is the highest point in the surrounding area," former Person County EMS Director Michael Day said in a note included in the commissioners' agenda packet. Day added that constructing the VIPER tower on the Hill Street site would have made it "easy to replace and run new equipment from this new tower into the 911 Center."

Day and NCSHP representatives said during the commissioners' meeting that "several meetings were held with the appropriate city and county personnel," but, "the former city manager had some concerns and questions prompting additional meetings to address his issues."

He went on to say that Interim City Manager Tommy Warren had also expressed concerns about the project.

"Given the delay with securing the ideal site," Day continued, "the highway patrol has requested an alternate site be named as primary and the project be allowed to move forward" so that the NCSHP could begin construction of the tower before the deadline for acquiring Homeland Security funding of \$706,000 with which to build the tower. The funding will expire on Feb. 1, 2012, Day said.

County Manager Heidi York said she had spoken with Warren about the city's concerns,

See **VIPER**, Page 3



## WELCOME HOME

SPC4 Adam Deans was welcomed home Thursday by family, friends and other community members after serving in Afghanistan. The welcoming party gathered at the American Legion Hut on Chub Lake Street, where Deans was presented with a certificate of appreciation. (Above) American Legion Post 138 Commander Richard Vining shakes Deans' hand upon his arrival. At right Deans prepares to cut the first slice of cake at his welcome home party.

PHOTOS BY GREY PENTECOST



## School board to consider request for transfer of lottery funds

BY GREY PENTECOST  
 C-T STAFF WRITER  
 greypentecost@roxboro-courier.com

The Person County Board of Education will face a short agenda when it holds its regular monthly meeting next week.

The board will meet on Thursday, Aug. 11 at 6:30 p.m. in the board of education board room, located on the ground floor of the Person County Office Building at 304 South Morgan St.

As part of the action agenda, board chairman Gordon Powell will present a request from the Person Board of County Commissioners for Person County Schools (PCS) to transfer money from its lottery

## City council to consider replacing streetlights at next week's meeting

BY PHYLISS BOATWRIGHT  
 C-T STAFF WRITER  
 pboatwright@roxboro-courier.com

Roxboro City Council members will discuss the possibility of replacing streetlights in the Uptown business district.

Progress Energy would replace the lights at no additional charge, but the monthly fee for the lighting would increase. Council will consider two proposals regarding the lighting.

Also on the agenda for Tuesday's regular August meeting is an update on the Cavel Village Community Revitalization

project, which includes grant funding to address crime in the neighborhood. Under the grant, the city was allowed to purchase a home and rehabilitate it for occupancy by a Roxboro Police Department officer at a reduced rental fee.

Two officers have shown interest in residing in the home.

City council members will consider the current city policy of providing health insurance for family members of employees. Currently the city bears the cost of both employee and family coverage. With the rising cost of insurance, and the reduction in

the city's tax base, according to a memo in the agenda for Tuesday's meeting, "Without growth in the tax base this is a benefit that the city may not be able to continue to afford." The proposal examines the possibility of continuing to provide dependent care for those already employed by the city but requiring future employees to fund the family coverage.

Also at next week's meeting, Samuel Winstead will talk to council members about Mayors for Peace, which works for "a

See **CITY**, Page 3