

# Carrboro Board Mulls Town Wish List

BY KAREN WILLIAMS  
STAFF WRITER

Like most civic governments across the state, the Carrboro Board of Aldermen is drawing up its annual list of requests for the state legislature. The wish list of local bills will be presented to state representatives March 31.

But, like other municipalities in the area, the board is having a tough time deciding what it wants to spend its representatives' political clout on this early in a Republican-dominated legislative term.

Carrboro Mayor Eleanor Kinnaird said she thought the General Assembly's new policy to cut back on spending would make it hard to get new projects passed by the state legislature. "The legislature is in such a tax-cutting mode, they'll turn down anything that sounds like spending money, even if it's a worthwhile project," she said.

One new proposal the Carrboro town government has asked for legislative approval for calls for the local vehicle tax to be raised from \$10 to \$15, Kinnaird said. She said the additional tax would help increase town revenue.

"I don't think the people will even notice the increase until they go to pay their taxes," Kinnaird said. "There is no stampede to complain against raising taxes, and if the government removes funds for valid purposes, we (the town government) have to raise our taxes."

The board has four other proposals it wants the General Assembly to approve. One of these proposals deals with the af-

fordable housing problem in Carrboro, Kinnaird said. The board is asking the legislature to approve inclusionary zoning in Carrboro, she said. Inclusionary zoning would mandate that developers include a certain number of low-income housing units whenever they built. Kinnaird said this would help make affordable housing available.

"We feel it is important that everybody have the opportunity to buy into this community," she said. She said the housing in Carrboro had become too expensive. "Permanent housing is getting out of reach," Kinnaird said.

Assistant Town Manager Larry Gibson said he also agreed that increasing the affordable housing in the area was necessary. "The inclusionary zoning is another tool for maintaining diversity of housing in the area," he said.

The board is also concerned with special obligations bonds. Town Manager Robert Morgan said the town was interested in using a special obligations bond to fund the purchase and construction of a new landfill.

Morgan said special obligations bonds currently could not be used for the purchase of landfills. He said the board was asking the General Assembly to change the restrictions on the special obligations bonds so they could be used to fund landfills.

"We want to use bonds to spread out the cost over 20 years," Morgan said.

The board also is asking the legislature to approve deals with performance bonds,

Gibson said. State legislation requires that every local government have contractors purchase the \$50,000 bond for insurance on construction projects. "If a contractor fails to meet the terms of a construction contract, then the performance bond is used to pay for the remainder of the project," Gibson said.

He said the board wanted legislation to waive the performance bond requirement for Carrboro.

"The bond is not a big deal for huge contractors, but if you're a small contractor it is more difficult to get that bond," he said. "The objective is to allow local and smaller contractors to get involved in projects."

Kinnaird said the board also was interested in redrawing the town's boundaries to include the "doughnut holes" that existed. Doughnut holes are areas that still belong to the county but that are located in the middle of town. Because these areas are not part of Carrboro, they are not subject to town laws. The Carrboro government wants to annex these areas.

Gibson said he did not think the new proposals Carrboro had presented would meet with much opposition at the state level.

"The only revenue measure we are asking for is the vehicle tax increase from \$10 to \$15."

Morgan said he did not expect any opposition to the new proposals. He said, "I'm not anticipating there to be any problem, but you can never be sure."

## Lawn Bathing



Temperatures in the 70s brought students out to enjoy the sunshine while studying in an effort to prolong those Spring Break tans. Temperatures are forecasted to remain balmy for the rest of the week.

# Ham Radio Group Hopes To Beef Up UNC Tower

BY SUZANNE WOOD  
STAFF WRITER

The Orange County Radio Amateurs hope to raise \$28,000 before June to finance an addition to the new radio tower atop the UNC Center for Public Television, said Harvey Arnold, the associate director of engineering at the center.

"They have free use of the tower, they just have to provide their own equipment," he said.

The new tower at the UNC television station, which is being built 95 feet from the present tower, will be completed in early June, Arnold said.

The present tower and the OCRA's current equipment will be torn down when the new tower is completed.

The OCRA needs to raise the money by June to finance its new equipment on the new tower.

It will be out of service if the group cannot raise the money before the present tower is torn down.

OCRA works with Orange County emergency services to keep lines of communication open during emergencies, OCRA Chairman John Hughes said. "We're a ham radio club dedicated to providing emergency services to any agency that requests it," he said.

To help pay for the new equipment, OCRA has received \$8,000 from UNC Hospitals, \$3,500 from OCRA club members, and has asked the Chapel Hill Town Council for \$8,000, Hughes said.

The club has received support from its members but needs the help of the community to put an emergency radio site on the

new tower, he said.

OCRA, which aids the emergency services, acts as more than backup to the other services, said Nick Waters, Orange County Emergency Management Service director.

"The OCRA is a civilian group we use for communication for a backup system," he said.

"They act as a supplemental system. If one channel goes down, we can rely on another. They support our system."

OCRA helped in such emergencies as the time in 1992 that three fires broke out on the same day in Chapel Hill.

OCRA helped set up Red Cross sites after the Hillsborough tornado of 1992 and set up emergency communications after a 1993 cut telephone cable left 4,000 without telephone services for four days, Hughes said.

The new system, which will unify all major emergency networks in Orange County, is vital to the community, Waters said.

"It is like an insurance policy," he said. "If we're going to depend on this system, we'd like to see it built to its full capacities. The tower they want will give us 100 percent coverage."

The Chapel Hill Town Council has not discussed whether OCRA will receive the requested \$8,000, Town Council member Joe Capowski said.

"We received the request two weeks ago," he said. "We have referred it to the staff, but we have not analyzed the request."

The council will vote on the request in a month, Capowski said. "It is too early to know what will happen."

# Former Police Sergeant Dismisses Lawsuit Against Town

Shauna Winston Settled for \$5,000, Which Doesn't Fully Cover Attorney's Fees

BY DAN THOMAS  
STAFF WRITER

Former Chapel Hill police Sgt. Shauna Winston dismissed her lawsuit against several local officials and settled the matter out of court for \$5,000 on March 8.

Winston brought a lawsuit against the Chapel Hill Police Department, the town of Chapel Hill, Town Manager Cal Horton, police Chief Ralph Pendergraph and Cary Psychology Inc. after she was dismissed from her position with the Police Department.

Winston signed a stipulation of dismissal with prejudice in the Eastern District Court. The stipulation agreed that Winston's claims against the defendants had been settled and dismissed civil action against them.

The agreement states that the dismissal makes it impossible for the Chapel Hill defendants to bring any further civil claims against Winston for repayment of pay received after she was dismissed and precludes counterclaims for court costs spent defending against Winston's legal actions.

Winston was placed on administrative leave with pay in August 1993 after several charges of noncriminal allegations, such as operating a town vehicle without a valid license, failure to report an accident, misusing a police computer and allowing an

unauthorized person to ride in a police vehicle. She was fired on April 13, 1994.

Ralph Karpinos, Chapel Hill's town attorney, and representatives from the town's risk-management program decided it was in the best interest of the participants to pay the \$5,000 settlement and agree to the dismissal of Winston's lawsuit.

The agreement stipulates that Winston's employment record will continue to show she was fired from her position with the Police Department in April.

The defendants also required Winston to have her certification as a law enforcement officer revoked by the N.C. Criminal Justice Standards Commission, according to a statement from Karpinos' office.

Neither Karpinos nor Winston's lawyer was willing to answer questions regarding

the lawsuit. Chief Pendergraph could not be reached for comment.

According to the statement from Karpinos, the defendants' settlement of the case does not constitute an admission of liability but rather implies that they wanted to avoid further litigation.

The \$5,000 payment only partially covers the attorneys' fees and costs Winston incurred challenging the town's decision to terminate her employment as a police officer. Representatives of the town's risk-management program concluded that settling the court case was a business decision in the best interests of the risk-management program and its participants. Under the auspices of the program, the Town Council did not have to approve the settlement to conclude the matter.

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