

# Foy welcomed to position

## Officials don't see potential conflict

BY RYAN C. TUCK  
CITY EDITOR

Mayor Kevin Foy had barely finished his motion Monday night by the time Chapel Hill Town Council members approved his appointment to a downtown advocacy board.

Foy's nomination of himself to round out the Downtown Economic Development Corporation garnered little discussion from the council — one of the funding partners for the group — and mostly positive remarks from his new colleagues Tuesday.

"That's terrific news," Roger Perry, a member of UNC's Board of Trustees and corporation member, said when he learned of the appointment.

The corporation was convened last summer as a partnership among the town, University and private stakeholders to advocate for the downtown area.

Foy's appointment was praised as a strengthening of that bond — most directly created by the sharing of funding among the three entities.

"This affirms the nature of the corporation," Foy said of his

appointment Tuesday.

The council, matched by the University and the downtown district service tax, provides \$70,000 annually to the corporation.

That, and the council and University's strong interest in downtown — often called the area's front door — were reasons Foy's appointment made sense, officials said Tuesday.

"The town is providing the funding for us, so it's reasonable for them to have a representative," said corporation Chairwoman Andrea Rohrbacher.

Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos said he had been consulted regarding the legality of the appointment before Monday.

Because the corporation is a private, nonprofit organization, there are no legal issues with dual membership, Karpinos said.

"I didn't see there to be any problems," Karpinos said, adding that there have been previous examples of council members serving on quasi-public entities.

Perry said Foy's membership will give the corporation added credibility.

"We have the number one person from the town on the board," Perry said.



Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy appointed himself as the new member of a downtown committee.

The council is responsible for four of the appointments to the corporation — downtown merchant Allen Fine, downtown property owner Tom Tucker, at-large member Rohrbacher and now Foy.

The University appointed two members to the board — Perry and Nancy Sutfenfield, vice chancellor for finance and administration — and the corporation appointed the seventh member, University Square owner Betty Kenan.

The corporation had operated short-manned for the last four months, following the resignation of former Chairman Bob Epting.

Epting resigned after a dispute at a November meeting about the corporation's obligation to the N.C. Open Meetings Law.

Foy said the council initially had envisioned the corporation as a separate body, not an appendage of the council or University.

"In these early stages, it became

clear that there should be a closer working relationship," he said. "And the best way to do that was to appoint a representative of the council."

Perry and Sutfenfield have served as the University representatives on the corporation since day one.

"I think it's taking off — the direction the corporation will take ... is still evolving," Foy said.

Some of the corporation's recent undertakings have been searching for a permanent executive director, actively requesting condemnation procedures on a long-vacant downtown property and investigating a downtown wireless network.

While declining to call his appointment temporary, Foy said the stakeholders might need to rethink how the corporation should work.

"A mature organization five years from now would be able to make strong ties to the University and town in a more subtle way," Foy said.

The corporation will meet at 7:30 a.m. Feb. 23. Applications for the executive director position will be accepted until March 1.

Contact the City Editor at [citydesk@unc.edu](mailto:citydesk@unc.edu).

# System faces crunch in wake of Pell changes

BY JAMES EDWARD DILLARD  
STAFF WRITER

Annual changes in Pell Grants are expected to place great strain on North Carolina's need-based student aid program.

The changes, which limit the distribution of the federal grant, might cost UNC-system students as much as \$3.2 million, and many will look to the state to make up the difference.

"Students will have a safety net under them in case of a loss of Pell Grants, but we need the state to put more money into the system," said Steven Brooks, executive director of the N.C. State Education Assistance Authority.

The added stress comes in an already difficult financial year for the N.C. General Assembly.

"My question is, since we have a \$1.2 billion deficit, where do we get (the money)?" said Sen. Jerry Tillman, R-Montgomery.

"You've only got two places that you can get money: You can cut spending or you can raise taxes. ... You just don't have many options."

Sen. John Garwood, R-Wilkes, had a similar perspective, saying the choice of whether to provide the money will be another tough decision to make this session.

The process can't move forward until Gov. Mike Easley submits his budget proposal. "These decisions need to be made on down the line toward the end of the session, not now," Garwood said.

The problem, Brooks said, doesn't come from federal budget cuts, but from changes in the tax tables that determine who receives Pell Grants.

The tables are used to determine how much individuals pay in taxes and their ability to pay for a college education. This year's tables indicate that people are paying less in taxes, so many students are going to be receiving reductions in their Pell Grants, Brooks said.

North Carolina's case is special in that it has a constitutional duty to provide an education as close to free as possible, said Mary Shuping,

counsel to House Speaker Pro Tem Richard Morgan, R-Moore.

The state tries to fulfill that promise by using a formula that relies in part on Pell Grants.

The state automatically expects \$4,500 from a student. To that sum, the state adds a family's expected contribution — determined from a table created by the College Board — and any federal grant money.

If the cost of education is more than this total, the state's need-based aid program attempts to cover the difference.

The bottom line is that less money in Pell Grants means that more is required from the state program.

Brooks said the tables used to determine who gets Pell Grants are outdated, but this year's changes are based on the small section of the population that itemized its tax returns in 2000.

"The truth is, the table wasn't accurate last year and won't be accurate next year," Brooks said.

As bad as the problem is for public institutions, it could be worse for private-school students.

Tim McDowell, vice president for government relations and public information for N.C. Independent Colleges and Universities, said that at some schools, as many as 95 percent of students receive Pell Grants.

McDowell said that about 90,000 students will be affected nationwide but that education, while expensive, is worth the cost.

"People should look at education as an investment in the future of our state and country."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

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## POLICE LOG

FROM STAFF REPORTS

■ A 16-year-old East Chapel Hill High School student was arrested Monday and charged with two felony counts of taking indecent liberties with a child, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, Enobong Daniel Ebong, 16, was served with outstanding warrants at the police station at 2:45 p.m.

He was held in Orange County Jail on a \$5,000 secured bond. He was scheduled to appear Tuesday in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

Capt. Bob Overton said Ebong was arrested in relation to inappropriate behavior with children who were younger than 10 years old.

■ A Chapel Hill woman was

arrested Monday in relation to reported larcenies from three downtown sports memorabilia shops, Chapel Hill police reports state.

Lashunda Racquel Goins, 24, of 2607 Overland Passage in Chapel Hill, was charged with one misdemeanor count of concealing merchandise/shoplifting from Johnny T-Shirt, at 128 E. Franklin St.; Carolina Pride, at 151 E. Franklin St.; and Carolina Sportswear, at 133 E. Franklin St., reports state.

Goins was released on a written promise to appear April 11 in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

According to reports, the stolen items were four toboggans, valued at \$58.88; two sweatshirts and a ball cap, valued at \$51; and one sweatshirt, valued at \$41.99

■ A Chapel Hill man was arrested Monday and charged with one felony count of assault with a deadly weapon, inflicting injury, Chapel Hill police reports state.

Joseph Raymond Kocot, of 22 Woodbridge Drive, was arrested at 6:12 p.m. He was released on a written promise to appear Monday in Hillsborough.

■ An Elon woman was arrested Monday and charged with shoplifting \$376 in items from Dillard's department store at University Mall, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, Juanita Grace Chavez, 34, of 1521 N. N.C. 87 at Elon College, was charged with one misdemeanor count of concealing merchandise/shoplift-

ing.

Chavez is scheduled to appear March 14 in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

■ An employee of Mercia Properties was arrested Monday in connection to various larcenies that occurred within the 100 Block of Franklin Street, Chapel Hill police reports state.

According to reports, James Lafayette Watkins, 33, of 100 W. Rosemary St. in Chapel Hill, was arrested and charged with one count of misdemeanor larceny and three counts of misdemeanor possession of stolen goods.

Watkins was released on a written promise to appear in Orange County District Criminal Court in Hillsborough.

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