

Two new House Bills affect Bertie Co.

BY LESLIE BEACHBOARD
Bertie Ledger-Advance

ROXOBEL - Two new N.C. Bills will affect Bertie County.

The Bertie County Commissioners discussed two new house bills at Monday's meeting.

The first was House Bill 353 that was introduced in the North Carolina General Assembly's 2017 session, and thus far has earned favorable review.

This bill would add the Salmon Creek Natural Area, along with other areas such natural areas across the state, to the North Carolina State Park System.

Rep. Howard J. Hunter III, Bertie County's state representative, sponsored the bill.

According to the bill the Salmon Creek area is ecolog-

ically significant for its high-quality natural communities and also because it contains important prehistoric and historic archeological sites.

These sites offer opportunities for studying important archeological discoveries including an Indian occupation site containing evidence of the late 16th or early 17th century English presence.

The area has been popular with researchers looking for clues to tie the area to the Lost Colony.

According to Bertie County Manager Scott Sauer, the Salmon Creek land is adjacent to the property already purchased by Bertie County Commissioners.

The 137-acres already owned by Bertie County was purchased in 2016 as a natural educational environment to be used for study.

According to the H.B. 353, the that state may receive donations of appropriate land and may purchase other needed land for the educational projects, including the Salmon Creek Natural Area, with existing funds from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, the federal Land and Water Trust Fund and other available sources of funding.

A proper function of the State of North Carolina is to acquire and preserve park, recreational and scenic areas, and in every other appropriate way, to preserve them as a part of our common heritage.

The second bill introduced that would have an effect on Bertie County citizens would allow Bertie County to use garnishment of wages and

liens to collect unpaid ambulance bills.

House Bill 378 allows Bertie County to begin garnishing wages and placing property liens for unpaid county ambulance services.

According to the bill, recipients using ambulance services provided by a county, a county-franchised ambulance supplemented by county funds or a municipality-owned and operated ambulance must pay the outstanding balance within 90 days after receiving the services.

If the balance remains unpaid, the county may treat the amount due for services as if it were a tax due to the county and may proceed to collect the amount due through use of attachment or garnishment.

"North Carolina's 'debt

set off" program allows local governments to attach state tax refunds and lottery winnings for taxes owed and unpaid taxes on ambulance bill," said Sauer "Representative Hunter has worked to ensure the Bertie County is included in the enabling legislation with the other 76 counties having the authority to garnish, attach and lien for unpaid ambulance services."

According to Sauer, Since Bertie County is in its third full year of Paramedic Emergency Medical Services, the county had not yet achieved this important billing status.

"We are grateful to Rep. Hunter for taking the initiative to keep Bertie County advancing forward in its service to our residents," Sauer added.

Williams named chief magistrate

WINDSOR - Magistrate Lindora Bond Williams was recently appointed to the position of Chief Magistrate for Bertie County by Chief District Court Judge Brenda G. Branch.

Williams is a native of Bertie County and is a graduate of Bertie High School, and has a Criminal Justice Degree from Elizabeth City State University.

Before being appointed Magistrate of Bertie County by Senior Resident Superior Court Judge

Cy Grant Sr., in 1996, Williams worked as a Telecommunicator and as a Deputy with the Bertie County Sheriff's Department.

She has provided dedicated and loyal service to Bertie County since her appointment as Magistrate. According to her supervisor, Chief Judge Branch, "Chief Williams represents Bertie County in a professional manner and endeavors to acquire extensive knowledge of the laws of the state so as to apply them

fairly and respectfully to the citizens of Bertie County."

Williams expressed her gratitude for the confidence Judge Branch has placed in her.

"I appreciate the opportunity to serve as a Magistrate of Bertie County and the State of North Carolina," she said. "I welcome the added responsibility of Chief and look forward to interacting with other magistrates and judicial officials to be of greater benefit to our citizens."



New Bertie County Chief Magistrate Lindora Williams

Bertie-Hertford Foundation accepting applications

The board of advisors of the Bertie-Hertford Community Foundation is currently accepting grant applications for projects funded from its community grantmaking fund, according to Laura Beasley, board president.

The Bertie-Hertford Women's Fund is also accepting grant request from area nonprofits that serve the needs of women and children.

Funds are available for nonprofit organizations that

serve general charitable needs in Bertie and Hertford counties. Applications are available online beginning March 10. Visit nccommunityfoundation.org for information about applying. The deadline for submitting applications is noon April 11.

The Bertie-Hertford Community Foundation is an affiliate of the North Carolina Community Foundation. The community grantmaking fund was established to sup-

port local charitable needs through annual grants. In addition to Beasley, board members include: John Taylor (vice president), Lindsay Vaughan (secretary-treasurer), Austine Evans, Carole Everett, Richard Hoggard, Robert Lee, Anna Pierce, Karen Ray, Penney Rose, Marti Tyler and Ron Wesson.

For further information, contact NCCF Regional Director Natalie Peel at 252-562-9824 or npeel@nccom-

communityfoundation.org or visit the NCCF website at nccommunityfoundation.org.

About the North Carolina Community Foundation

The NCCF is the single statewide community foundation serving North Carolina and has made \$116 million in grants since its inception in 1988. With more than \$222 million in assets, NCCF sustains 1,200 endowments established to pro-

vide long-term support of a broad range of community needs, nonprofit organizations, institutions and scholarships.

The NCCF partners with a network of affiliate foundations to provide local resource allocation and community assistance across the state. An important component of NCCF's mission is to ensure that rural philanthropy has a voice at local, regional and national levels.

Farmers can nominate STEM education schools

ST. LOUIS, MO. - The number of jobs with an emphasis in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) is expected to grow significantly over the next ten years, according to the National Science and Math Initiative.

To help K-12 educators enhance their STEM curriculum, the America's Farmers Grow Rural Education program, sponsored by the Monsanto Fund, will once again provide farmers with the opportunity to nominate their Bertie County public

schools for opportunities to receive \$10,000 and \$25,000 grants.

Former grant-winning schools, such as Early County Elementary School in Blakely, Ga., indicate the program stimulates school budgets for STEM education, as well as students' level of interest in science and math.

In 2016, Early County Elementary School used the \$10,000 grant they received from the Grow Rural Education program to expand the school's science curriculum by building a

hoop house, allowing students to apply classroom lessons about the ecosystem and plant lifecycles to the fruits and vegetables they harvest.

"The Grow Rural Education grant has had an impact throughout our entire school district. After our elementary school students harvest their crops, we provide the food to our high school culinary arts program," said Early County Elementary School teacher Tim Spooner. "This allows high school students

to learn their craft and then give a portion of that food to our area's most needy residents."

In 2017, the Grow Rural Education program will award approximately \$2.3 million to deserving schools.

Since the program began in 2011, it has awarded more than \$11 million to schools in rural communities across the United States.

To qualify for a Grow Rural Education grant, farmers in eligible counties must nominate an eligible rural public school district to com-

pete for a merit-based grant of either \$10,000 or \$25,000. Farmers can nominate their school district from Jan. 1 to April 1.

After the school district receives a nomination, the Monsanto Fund will notify the district and encourage administrators and teachers to design a grant that enhances STEM education in their district.

Nominated school districts have until April 15, to submit a grant application describing their project.

To nominate a local school district for one of the Grow Rural Education grants, as well as a complete list of program rules and eligibility information, farmers can go to GrowRuralEducation.com. Additionally, more information about the program can be found at facebook.com/AmericasFarmers. **About Monsanto Fund** The Monsanto Fund, the philanthropic arm of Monsanto Company, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities.



Bertie Ledger-Advance | Subscribe Today! Call 252-794-3185

USDA - Farm Service Agency Notice of Availability Willis Michael Bass, Jr. Draft Environmental Assessment

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (FSA) announces they will be completing an Environmental Assessment for the construction of broiler houses located at Coward Road, Merry Hill, NC PIN 6853936921. The primary objective of the activity is to construct four 42' x 500' broiler houses.

FSA is accepting comments on the potential effects of the proposed project on protected resources and the human environment through April 21, 2017. Information regarding this project can be reviewed in person at the Perquimans-Chowan FSA Office. Comments should be submitted to Michelle Hurdle-Winslow at 512 S. Church St., Box 1, Herford, NC 27944 or by email to michelle.winslow@nc.usda.gov.