



Helping Earth

Local Girl Scouts participated in Earth Day recently by planting flowers and picking up trash at McLaughlin Park. Pictured are Payten Parnell, Jenna Howland, Karmen Dukes, Kyla Greer, Kentrice Parker, Cherish Hamilton, Alyssa Ritter, Piper Dearing, Liesl Dearing, Madison Hagler, Chelsea Lee, Kayel Rodger, Alyssa Starkel, Kaylee Parker, Shiloh Henderson, Melissa Thomas, and Mackensy Surich. Not pictured are Gia Fox, Damesha Terry and Jessica Boyd.

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Hospital

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for this hospital, were on hand to tout the opening of a new urgent care facility in Raeford.

Though commissioners have vowed to support both health systems, at least one commissioner seemed to make an attempt at aligning the board with Cape Fear. Vice Chairman James Leach engaged Blackwell, insisting the hospital official already promised a spot for county commissioners on the new hospital's governing body.

"You did say the board of commissioners would be made board of trustees," Leach said during Monday night's open meeting. "I think this board was in on that concept."

Blackwell, however, refused to make a commitment.

"Maybe some, but not all of (the board)," Blackwell said. "We talked about a lot of issues that day, James, we probably should have brought a recorder for all of us to hear."

Leach, however, insisted the entire Hoke board was promised a seat on the new hospital's board of trustees. All seven Cumberland commissioners are on the board for Cape Fear's Fayetteville hospital.

According to Ellen McNeill, one of the commissioners, there was never an official public meeting between Cape Fear Valley officials and Hoke commissioners. However, she did say hospital officials met one-on-one with members of the board to discuss plans, following the rules of the open meetings law.

Blackwell, a former Cumberland commissioner who resigned earlier this year to work full time for Cape Fear, said yesterday

he didn't recall committing to anything regarding the board of trustees.

"We had a lot of discussions before even thinking of this hospital. One of those was the governing structure and we said we would be willing to discuss that," Blackwell said. "I don't recall a meeting except to say local (people) would be on the governing structure. It could have been a hallway conversation. I don't know."

"It's too early to be talking about it—the governing structure," he said.

Blackwell did say Cape Fear intends to look at the system's Bladen County facility, which features a governing body made up of both county officials and citizens from the local community.

Blackwell was at Monday's meeting to announce the opening of a new facility known as Convenient Care for Hoke, an urgent care type treatment center located on Main Street near Unilever.

Blackwell said the new medical clinic proves the system's dedication to the county.

"We've already seen eight patients today," he told the board.

Cape Fear has also announced a site for the new 41-bed hospital facility. Plans are for the building to be built at the corner of Johnson Mill and Fayetteville Roads. FirstHealth's construction site is located near the intersection of Scull Road and Fayetteville Road, about two miles to the west.

Cape Fear plans on building the hospital under the name Hoke Healthcare LLC, a subsidiary of the Cumberland County Hospital System.

New Jobs Coming

A new industrial site is spring-

ing up in Hoke County, replacing a building that has been vacant for years.

Commissioners approved the re-zoning of a tract of land on Fayetteville Road from highway commercial to industrial to accommodate plans of a concrete company moving to Hoke County.

J.H. Musselwhite Company submitted plans to build a concrete production plant on the site of an abandoned truck stop on Fayetteville Road, across from the FedEx distribution center.

Joey Taylor, an engineer for the project, said the company would bring more work here.

"We got a letter of support from the economic development department," Taylor told the board. "At this point we are looking at at least 15 or 16 jobs for drivers and plant operators. The total investment for land, vehicles and equipment is going to be around \$1 million."

The board unanimously approved the re-zoning request. Now, the company must go back before the board to receive a conditional use approval to operate the site.

In other business

• Board members approved a plan that would lease the Westgate Sheriff Substation to Walmart, so the big box store would have a place to conduct job interviews in time for the new store's summer opening. The retail giant will pay the county rent on the building.

• The board approved permits for three in-home daycare centers, a regular occurrence in recent months and a sign that the county's growth spurt is continuing.

• Commissioners will hold a budget retreat at the new park on N.C. 211 on May 11 and 12.

Police make arrest in area break-ins

BY JASON BECK
Staff Writer

The Raeford Police Department has solved a string of break-ins at businesses around the city that resulted in the loss of hundreds of dollars worth of property — everything from tools to potted plants.

Police arrested Lawrence Woods, 30, of 7300 Laurinburg Road and charged him with numerous cases of breaking and entering, larceny and breaking and entering a motor vehicle.

According to Police Chief Mike Dummett, Woods is allegedly responsible for a string of break-ins, including theft at Woods Tire and Auto, Daniel's Auto Repair and an area home.

Items taken from the businesses included six potted plants, 12 bags of mulch, and 12 hanging baskets, wheels, tires, a lawn mower, numerous tools and various car parts. Also stolen were two City of Raeford trash receptacles — apparently used to haul away all of the loot.

Dummett said solving the case was a win for the department and that more area break-ins might be linked to the case.

"Through our investigation we were able to show where the property was being stored," Dummett said. "I'd like to thank my officers for their tireless work and dedication to the citizens of Raeford."

"We were able to photograph all of the property and return it," he said. "They got their stuff back, he's in jail and we cleared the case."

Woods was held at the Hoke County Jail under \$5,000 secured bond. The man has a rap sheet dating back to 1996 including convictions of shoplifting, DWI, possession with the intent to sell and deliver drugs, bringing a firearm on a campus and larceny.

At the time of his arrest Woods was serving a suspended sentence after a conviction last month of assault and battery and damage to property.

City

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annual museum appropriation from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

City council went into a work session on the budget at the end of the regular meeting.

Public hearings: CDBG programs

A community development program for Robbin Heights was the subject of one of two public hearings. Council voted to close

out the 2007 Community Development Block Grant Program for this area, after Patt Crissman of The Wooten Company discussed the accomplishments and performance of the program.

This was a revitalization project financed with a CDBG grant of \$850,000, received by the city from the North Carolina Department of Commerce. Crissman's presentation included "before" and "after" photographs of residences that have been renovated and rehabilitated under the program. Among the renovations described were the removal of lead-based paint; new walls, ceilings, flooring and siding to many of the homes; improvements to electrical wiring, plumbing and light fixtures; and other things to necessary to bring each home up

to the state code.

The second public hearing of the day was to consider the possibility of an application for a 2010 CBDG. This was one of two required public hearings concerning this application.

The state has about \$45 million in federal CDBG funds to go toward nine CDBG program categories, Crissman said. The list of program categories includes community revitalization, scattered site housing, infrastructure, economic and housing development, urgent needs, capacity building and small business entrepreneurial assistance.

"There is a number of possibilities," Crissman said. She added that the city would be eligible for "any of these categories."

**Thank You
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Joe Poole**

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Notice of Meeting

The Hoke County Board of Equalization and Review will meet on Monday, May 17, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. The Board will adjourn for the purpose of accepting requests for hearings on this date. Requests must be made in writing no later than May 7, 2010. **The meeting will be held in the Commissioners meeting room, 227 N Main St, Raeford, NC.**

**Help us plan
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IT'S YOUR HOSPITAL AND WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Join representatives from Cape Fear Valley Health as they present ideas for your new hospital and get feedback from you. This is your opportunity for your voice to be heard. Please drop in as your schedule allows.

please join us for an informal

INPUT AND INFORMATION SESSION

Wednesday, May 5 : *from 11 AM to 3 PM*

Hoke County Commissioners' Office

227 N. Main Street in Raeford



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