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Annexation generates little interest in Winfall

by JACK GROVE

An annexation hearing, held Monday night at the Winfall Town Office, went totally unattended by Winfall citizens.

The annexation extends the town's boundaries 500 feet on both sides of U.S. 17 and N.C. Highway 37 and brings in an additional 800 feet near Union School. Some 300 to 500 acres of woodland bounded by the town limits also become part of the town. Mayor L.R. Morgan emphasized, however, that farm and

woodland would not be taxed by the town.

Town Attorney, Walter Edwards, Jr., said that annexation procedures had been started in the past but never completed. Edwards said that the current annexation includes past efforts.

Morgan pointed out two purposes for the annexation. He said one was to more clearly delineate the town's boundaries. The other he indicated, was to bring all the town's water lines into the town.

When asked if this action would in-

crease revenues, Morgan indicated that it would but he couldn't say how much the increase would be.

Morgan did indicate one immediate benefit to those citizens affected by the plan. They will no longer have to pay for trash pickups.

After Edwards read the annexation ordinance for the record, the councilmen adopted it unanimously placing it into effect immediately.

Perquimans County Deputy Sheriff Joe

Lothian spoke to the councilmen, inviting them and Winfall citizens to a community watch program sponsored by the sheriff's department. The meeting for all county residents will be held at the Court House tonight (Thursday) at 7:30 p.m. Guest speaker will be Tony Young from the Governor's Community Watch Program in Raleigh.

Lothian pointed out that several community watch organizations had already been started in the county. The

program is designed to get citizens involved in helping to reduce the crime rate.

Lothian said that such programs in some Piedmont counties have helped reduce the incidence of such crimes as breaking and enterings and burglaries as much as 75-80 percent.

Glen Hassell, head of the Albemarle Law and Order Association, had been scheduled to appear at the council meeting but was unable to attend.

Morgan said that Hassell has shown his interest in assisting Winfall in setting up an embryo police department. Although the town cannot afford a full-fledged department now, it is looking at the possibility of a part-time policeman with a car and radio.

Morgan stated the idea of a part-time officer working in conjunction with the sheriff's department and an organized community watch program would ease law enforcement problems in the town.

Conspiracy

Youths plead guilty to reduced charges

Three county youth accused of conspiring to commit murder pleaded guilty to lesser charges and were issued suspended sentences at a probable cause hearing last Wednesday.

Mark Lane, 17, William Madre, 17, and David Lynn Eure, 18, all of Route 3, Hertford were handed 8 to 12 month sentences suspended for three years and will each serve three weekends in the Albemarle District Jail following plea bargaining that reduced charges of conspiracy to murder down to conspiracy to commit assault with a deadly weapon.

According to Perquimans County Deputy Sheriff Joe Lothian, letters exchanged between Eure, and the alleged victim's 15 year-old daughter were evidence, along with Eure's statement, that a murder plot had been in the making. The victim presented the letters to the sheriff's department on Feb. 10, when Lothian said he had come seeking assistance "fearing for his life."

But the defense argued that there was never any intent to follow through with the murder.

Gerald White, attorney for Eure, told Judge J. Richard Parker, that the entire incident stemmed from Eure's relationship with the victim's daughter.

"It all originates with his (Eure's) going with (the victim's daughter), and her unhappy circumstances have brought us here today," said White.

"This originates, not justified of course, out of some unfortunate conditions in the household of (the victim's) family, and if things were more ideal in (the victim's) household, if things went a little smoother, this might not have happened," said White.

Although Lane and Madre admitted to accepting \$140 from Eure as partial payment for the deed, both testified that they had no intention of murder.

"We were sitting in my dad's van at White Hat Seed Farm when David came up and asked us if we'd kill somebody," said Lane.

"We looked at each other and decided it would be a good way to make some money," continued Lane, who added that of the \$140 he had received from Eure, he had given \$50 to Madre.

"I saw a quick \$90 out of it but we had no intentions of killing him," said Lane.

Madre testified similarly, telling the judge that the plot had simply been "a way to get some money, but we knew we weren't going to do it."

"I don't think we have to worry about if

we let these boys go out on the sidewalk this afternoon, who's going to get shot," he continued.

Lane's attorney, O.C. Abbott, argued that the incident stemmed from immaturity.

"I call it teenage immaturity more than actual intent to kill somebody."

Madre's attorney, William Bentley, also told the judge that he believed the incident stemmed from childishness.

"What we have is a group of boys who thought they'd get some money and found themselves in a very serious situation.

"I call it a prank by a bunch of young men," said Bentley.

In addition to the suspended sentences and the weekends in jail, Parker ordered Madre, a sophomore at Perquimans County High School, to remain in school, advised Lane to get a job, and told Eure to keep his job.

All three were ordered to have no association with the victim, and will be subject to supervised probation for three years.

Because of the involvement of a juvenile, the victim or his daughter's name cannot be disclosed.



Getting started

Jarvis Copeland did some preliminary grading work last week at the eventual

site of Hertford's Missing Mill Park. Bid preparation is expected to be completed

by March 16. If approved, work could begin in 90 days.

Planning input sought

The town of Hertford is currently distributing a questionnaire to gain public input for a land use plan.

The n is required by the Coastal Area Management Act, and is a first for the town. "Last time we were included in the county plan but we decided it would be more beneficial to do one of our own," said Hertford Mayor Bill Cox in a meeting with members of the town planning board last Tuesday.

The planning board will play a role in developing the plan, and was briefed for the first time on the subject by Howard Capps, a landscape architect-planner contracted by the town to coordinate the work.

"The preparation of a coastal area land use plan helps you determine the type of community you want, how the community will grow and how land is used in the town of Hertford. (It involves) looking at current land use and the type of growth you would like to see," said Capps.

The questionnaire is based on community concerns, some of them mandated to be addressed in the plan, Capps said. Public participation in the plan is required by law, and a questionnaire is one way of gaining that input, Capps said.

Planning board members looked over the survey to determine whether or not it

addressed most areas of concern, and whether or not any questions were objectionable.

The questionnaire covers history, industrial development, utilities, recreation, and general services provided by the town, said planning board member George White. "It looks like it's pretty inclusive," he said. "It's touching on about everything I can think of that the town could provide," said White.

"From history to garbage," threw in board member Ray Haskett.

The form also includes a catch-all question, which reads, "What do you feel

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Tri-county search begins

The search for funds to construct a center that would teach advanced academic and vocational courses to students from Gates, Chowan, and Perquimans Counties is now underway.

Publication of a 23-page prospectus outlining the Tri-County Career Center concept marked the end of the planning stage and the beginning of an ambitious funding search to offset an estimated \$5,790,104 in construction costs.

The prospectus was distributed to members of the Perquimans County Board of Education last Monday, and copies are already in the mail to some potential funding sources, according to Tri-County Steering Committee director Kenneth L. Stalls.

He said that funding will be sought from both public and private agencies, and that to get enough money to build the center, several sources will have to contribute.

Stalls expressed confidence, however,

that at least part of the money would be available. "We know we're going to put our hands on some money but we don't know how much," he said.

"If we think we have an amount substantial enough to get started, we'll go ahead," he said.

Copies of the prospectus will initially be sent to between 20 and 30 agencies. "We'll start at the top with funds where we feel we will have the most chance for success and go on from there," Stalls said.

After agencies have received the prospectus and had a chance to review it, education officials of the three counties will schedule follow-up visits to determine whether or not there is an interest in committing funds to the concept.

Stalls said he did not feel that budget-cutting efforts on the federal level would have an immediate impact on efforts to secure funding from public sources.

The prospectus begins with letters of endorsement from A. Craig Phillips, state superintendent of public instruction, and governor James B. Hunt, Jr.

Topics addressed in the prospectus include reasons the center is needed, consideration of reservations expressed concerning the center, curriculum that would be offered, and even such logistical information as location and transportation.

The prospectus calls for a 107,676 square foot facility that would serve 600 students for one half of their school day, or 300 students at a time.

The center would be located some 15 miles from each of the three county high schools from which students would travel, somewhere near the intersection of N.C. 37 and N.C. 32, the prospectus states.

Plans include classroom and shop space in 30 different study areas, and curriculum will include courses in advanced vocational skills, advanced academics, languages and the arts.



Marc Basnight

Hertford plant

Ice man recommends update

Obtaining block ice from the Hertford Town Ice Plant may be a thing of the past.

After talking last week with a representative from an ice equipment firm, town councilmen are considering purchasing equipment that would convert the some 60 year-old plant into a crushed-ice only operation.

Bill Banks, of Morris Associates, Inc., a Raleigh-based ice equipment manufacturing company, met with Hertford Mayor Bill Cox and council members last Wednesday.

According to Cox, Banks told town officials that he did not recommend repairing a faulty compressor at the plant, which has halted operations since around the first of the year.

Previous estimations have put the cost of repairing the compressor at some \$8,000.

Alternative methods of making ice could cost the town between \$18,000 and \$40,000 in new equipment, depending on what size operation the town wants to get into.

Cox said councilmen will be considering two proposals: one would in-

volve two small units with a freezing capacity of 3 tons a day; and the other would involve a 7-ton single unit that could freeze up to 7 tons of ice per day.

"We're talking about a different type of plant than what we've got, which would produce cracked, crushed ice rather than block form," said Cox, who deemed the production of block ice as "obsolete."

"It's more expensive to produce a 300 pound block of ice than it is to produce 300 pounds of crushed ice," said Cox, who explained that crushed ice was largely frozen with Free-on, a method requiring less electricity and labor.

He added that little site or facility preparation would be involved in the change-over. "We'd still use the same storage room, it would just be a change in mechanics," said Cox.

An alternative ice-manufacturing method would also require fewer employees than the block system, according to Cox.

Depending on what kind of hours the plant would maintain, Cox said he expected that water plant personnel could operate ice production and sales, with

the addition of one employee during peak months of June, July, August, and September.

Before the council decides whether to purchase alternative ice-making equipment, Cox said they would investigate operations at similar plants.

"If the decision is made to continue in the ice business, we'll have to feel assured it would be profitable to the town and not subsidized by the town," said Cox.

Ice sold to produce trucks has been the operation's biggest money-maker in the past.

But profits shown at the ice plant have been decreasing in recent years. While Cox estimated that the town sold anywhere from \$20,000 to \$30,000 worth of ice a year, the last audit report indicated that annual sales exceeded maintenance costs by only some \$4,000.

Cox attributed decreasing profits to the "obsolete method" of producing ice. "It hasn't been as profitable in the last few years because of the method we've been using to make ice," he said.

One of the few existing block ice manufacturing plants left in the state,

the operation has been owned and operated by the town since 1920, when the building, located on Grubb Street, was built.

Utilizing what Cox called the "ammonia and brine method" of making ice, the plant came about during the ice box era. As the advent of modern refrigeration gradually took over, Cox said the demand for block ice declined. But he admitted that some still preferred the block-type ice, because of its keeping quality.

Should the council deem the switch to crushed ice manufacturing a financial risk, Cox said the plant would close its doors for good. "If we find it's not feasible to purchase new equipment, we won't do it," said Cox, adding, "We don't think it would be feasible to repair the present equipment."

If the town does, however, decide to purchase alternative ice-making equipment, Cox said they would like to have the business in operation by the end of May.

Last year, the town sold some \$16,000 worth of ice during the months of June through September.

This week
Winners were honored last Thursday in the Soil Conservation Service annual poster contest — see page 3.

Senior sweethearts find true love after an exceedingly long wait — see page 1.

Strapped with rising costs and poor production due to drought conditions, farmers turned heavily to borrowing to pay last year's debts and get this year's crops in the ground — see page 10.

Weather word
Fair Thursday and Friday, chance of rain Saturday. Highs upper 60s to low 70s, lows mid-50s.