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Local Briefs

Town holds public hearing on grant

The Town of Hertford held a public hearing Monday night regarding an application for a community development housing grant to be used in the Market and Dobbs Street areas.

Dick George of the Albemarle Commission told the councilmen that \$27 million is available from the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development to fund projects. The maximum grant per project is \$600,000.

He explained the point system used to determine grant application funding, and added that the requirements are stricter this year.

A total of 1,000 points can be obtained on each application. Of that figure, 200 is based on need. The application must show that there is a need to bring the neighborhood up to standard. The need portion of the application applies to structures, water and sewer facilities, streets and sidewalks.

Another 100 points is based on how many of the needs can be met with the grant.

The income level of the people living in the neighborhood accounts for 300 points. It is based on the number of people per household and their total income. The lower the income, the more points the town can obtain.

Feasibility and appropriateness account for 100 points, while 300 points are based on local funds commitment.

Heart Association raises over \$1,300

The Perquimans County Heart Association raised over \$1,300 from their annual celebrity dinner held at Angler's Cove Friday night. According to County Heart Association Chairperson Chris Lane, over 100 guests were served delicious prime rib, steak, mesquite chicken or seafood dinners.

Eighteen "celebrity" waiters and waitresses took orders, served meals and bussed tables during the evening.

County Democratic Convention set soon

The annual Perquimans County Democratic Convention is to be held on Saturday, April 22 at 1:00 p.m., County Chairman John H. London announced. The convention will be held at the Perquimans County Courthouse, Church Street, Hertford.

At the top of the convention's agenda will be the election of a new county chairman and county Executive Committee officers. One county member to the state Democratic Executive Committee will also be chosen, along with a delegate to represent the county at the Congressional District Convention scheduled for May 20.

Bloodmobile draws 39 pints from donors

The American Red Cross Bloodmobile visited Hertford last Wednesday. Fifty-one people attempted to donate blood. Thirty-nine pints were collected.

The collection is better than the December drive, which netted only 31 pints, but falls short of the 60-pint goal.

The Perquimans County Jaycees, sponsors of the bloodmobile, expressed their appreciation to those who attempted to donate, and to the community volunteers who assisted with the drive.

The next visit is scheduled for June.

Self-defense classes offered at Center

The Perquimans County Parks and Recreation Department-Senior Citizens Center will be sponsoring an adult women's self-defense class starting April 27. The classes will be held each Thursday night from April 27 through June 1 from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

In this class, an individual will learn to protect themselves from injury and harm caused by assailants. Pressure points, how to protect yourself from the knife attack, what to do if someone tries to snatch your purse, effect kicks and other items will be learned.

The instructor will be Harrell Thach and the cost of the class will be \$20. For more information, contact the department at 426-5695 or 426-5404.

Residents voice concerns to Town Council

Although the public hearing held prior to the Hertford Town Council meeting drew little interest, three residents of the municipality expressed many concerns to the council during their regular session.

Eldon Winslow approached the council concerning the proposed boardwalk across the river. Winslow told the board, "I'm not against it," but said he had questions about parking and policing the area.

Winslow said people park on his property many times now to walk on the bridge, and he foresees that getting worse if the boardwalk is constructed.

He added that people who live on waterfront property are awakened at many times by pre-dawn boat traffic participating in bass tournaments. He also cited noise on the bridge and trash problems as factors concerning waterfront property owners.

Bill Glover questioned the walkway's maintenance costs and responsibilities.

"If the Town of Hertford applies for the grant and it's funded, then the Town of Hertford will maintain and police it," Hertford Mayor and City Manager Bill Cox answered.

Councilman Jesse Harris asked if perhaps the state would maintain the walk.

The question of liability in accident cases was brought up by Billy White. Walter Edwards, town attorney, said that it should not increase the town's liability. He said gross negligence would have to be shown against the town in an accident case in order for the accident victim to bring charges.

White then asked about fishing from the structure, to which Cox replied people fish now even where there are signs posted outlawing fishing.

Cox also told the residents that he had spoken with Larry Chappell, on whose land the boardwalk would end, about parking. He said that Chappell had agreed to make his lot available for that purpose.

Councilman John Beers said that the former pier at the end of Grubb Street had to be torn down due to abuse, and he felt consideration should be given to that fact before a new like structure is erected.

"We know there'll be some problems we'll have to iron out," Councilman Erie Haste said.

Councilman Billy Winslow said that the walkway is not intended to be a fishing pier, but Mayor Cox interjected that there probably would need to be designated fishing areas.

The residents also questioned whether the piers would be used for boat docks. Because of the shallow water in that area, it was felt that most boats would not be able to dock there.

Cox told the board and residents that some Hertford residents had expressed a desire for a boardwalk to him and when he discovered 75 percent matching funds through the River Access Project, he advocated submitting an application.

The town has made pre-application for funding the project. No word has been received on the disposition of the pre-application. If that package is accepted by the state, a full application will be submitted in May.

Law enforcement changes

Eldon Winslow also asked the council to investigate the possibility of having one law enforcement agency in the county. He said that he believed it might help the turnover rate in the town of Hertford, increase law enforcement salaries and give the residents of Hertford more protection for their tax dollars.

Cox said that the board has discussed the possibility, and he has called League of Municipalities attorneys and asked that they look into the matter on behalf of the town.

He added that the sheriff is primarily answerable to the voters, not to local governing bodies.

Jesse Harris said he advocated asking the county to fund the entire cost of the department if the two agencies are combined. He said the most important aspect of the issue is cost, and that he would strongly support the merger if it relieves costs to Hertford residents in terms of taxes and utility rates.

"It's really down to the dollars and cents issue," he said. "Let it be just like the recreation department," he added.

Billy White said he feared the town would lose control of its law enforcement if the merger is made, as the sheriff answers to the state attorney general's office. He felt that the sheriff's department would not patrol Hertford.

"You're beginning to destroy your identity when you do away with it (the police department)," White added.

Councilman Haste said that the town should not give up control. "If so (control would have to be surrendered), this chair will never vote to do it."

Councilman Harris said that he felt the issue should be put to a vote of the residents.

Hertford Police respond to armed robbery call

The Hertford Police Department responded to an armed robbery call at 11:30 p.m. from Hardee's Restaurant on April 6. Hardee's employees reported that a black male entered the restaurant and ordered food. When the cashier opened the cash register to tender his change, he grabbed money from the cash register.

Thinking quickly, the cashier snatched the money back, at which point the man jumped over the counter and placed what the cashier thought to be a knife near the cashier's throat and back, demanding money.

The cashier was unable to open the register. Other employees in the restaurant made themselves visible and cooperated with the robber. The man jumped back across the counter and ran with an undisclosed amount of cash.

There were no other customers in the restaurant at the time of the alleged incident.

Spence said that there is a suspect in the case, although no arrests have been made. Anyone with information pertaining to the robbery should call the Hertford Police Department.

A robbery had also been reported on April 5 by Raymond Mason of White Street in Winfall. Mason told officers that he left a house on Louise Street Wednesday morning on his way home. He fell, at which time someone ran up to him and took his wallet containing over \$800.

Officers subsequently arrested Warren Farmer, also known as Slim, age 40, of Fort Myers, Florida, and charged him with larceny from a person. The charge is a felony.

After his larceny arrest, law enforcement agents found crack, a popular and lethal form of cocaine, on Farmer's person. He was then arrested and charged with possession of a controlled substance schedule II.

Farmer was being held in Albemarle District Jail under a \$3,000 secured bond awaiting a May 10 trial date at press time.

Spence said other arrests are expected on the larceny charge.

Officer Robert Harvey responded to a report of fighting in front of the Rainbow Lounge at 2:00 a.m. on April 7. Because of the size of the crowd, Harvey called for backup from Officer Spence.

Spence estimated that there were 300-100 people fighting with knives, axes, guns, bricks and other weapons. He said it was one of the largest crowds he had ever seen at a street brawl.

Many of those on the streets were minors, Spence said. The officers confiscated several weapons dropped by fleeing fight participants after Spence sounded his siren.

Some of the by-standers told Spence that a group from Hertford attacked another group comprised of Elizabeth City State University students and their friends from Hertford.

The case is still under investigation, although no arrests have been made.

Roger Winslow of W. Railroad Avenue was arrested on April 4 and charged with driving while subject to an impairing substance. He is out on a \$200 secured bond awaiting a May 10 trial date.

Nelson Isaac "Trick" Jones is in custody at Albemarle District Jail after having been brought back to North Carolina by the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department from Atlanta, Georgia. Jones is being held on a probation violation and drug, breaking and entering and assault charges. His first appearance in court is scheduled for April 20.

Bill Glover said that transporting prisoners and paperwork take up much of the sheriff's department's time.

"Hertford stands to lose more than we stand to gain," he said.

Haste said he thought a meeting with the county commissioners is premature. "We're not prepared to meet with them," Haste said, because not enough information concerning such a merger has been presented to the council.

"This is a big issue," Councilman John Beers added, saying that the matter must be given thorough consideration before any action is taken.

Bill Cox said that the council's first priority should be better law enforcement.

Haste said that he wanted to have an expert come in and speak with the council on the matter.

There were concerns expressed that the delegation that spoke with the county commissioners should have gone to the town board first, and that the Rotary Club acted in haste in passing their resolution re-

questing that the matter be given consideration. Eldon Winslow assured the group that there was no "disrespect intended" by he and the others who spoke with the commissioners. "They met before you all did," he told the board.

The residents added in conclusion that their concerns are not a matter of personalities or of either of the departments doing a poor job.

Support for local businesses

Billy White voiced a concern that local business people are not patronized by some government and organizational units. One such circumstance was the new building at the Newbold-White complex, he said. The building was built by an Elizabeth City contractor, rather than one of the many local businesses.

He also questioned the fact that local contractors who had bid on the nutrition site were not officially told of the town's decision to act as its own general contractor on the project. White was upset because his son-in-law, who bid on the pro-

ject, was never informed of a decision, yet saw building begin.

Town facilities
"It is deplorable, gentlemen," Billy White told the council about the condition of the town's facilities at the old ice plant. He described it as trashy, nasty and junky, and added that the roof leaked badly. "It's a disgrace," he said.

Cox said that he had made the council aware of the condition of the roof some time ago, and had even acquired bids, but that no action was taken by the board.

At White's suggestion, the council will meet at the facility on Wednesday to see what needs to be done.

Junk car ordinance
The council was informed that Officer Tim Spence has been locating junk cars on his patrol. The people in violation of the new ordinance will receive letters along with a copy of the ordinance. The residents will be required to remove the nuisances from their property.



Spring blooms peeked through the snow Tuesday morning when residents awoke to find the ground covered and the snow still falling. Schools were cancelled for the day, and some power problems were reported. Several accidents had been reported. No details were available at press time.

Adopt-a-Highway program important

Governor Jim Martin has proclaimed April as Keep America Beautiful Month in North Carolina.

The proclamation follows a reception on March 20 at the Capitol where Governor Martin and federal, state and local officials honored counties for their participation in North Carolina's Adopt-a-Highway program.

New Hanover's participation was recognized as tops in the state, followed by Gaston and Wake counties. Counties receiving honorable mention were Moore, Dare and Forsyth.

Rankings were based on the number of groups involved in the Adopt-a-Highway program, the number of miles adopted, the ratio of groups to population and the percentage of state-maintained roads adopted in each county.

In keeping with the spirit of the proclamation, Keep North Carolina Clean and Beautiful Inc. and the N.C. Department of Transportation will join with the national organization, Keep America Beautiful, by promoting cleanup, recycling and beautification activities along roadsides and in communities during April.

The emphasis on pickup and proper disposal of trash will raise public awareness about litter and involve citizens in keeping our roadsides clean.

First Lady Dottie Martin has contacted local officials, chambers of commerce, agriculture extension agents and Keep America Beautiful coordinators and has

urged them to promote volunteer involvement in their municipalities and counties.

Adopt-a-Highway groups also will pick up roadside litter in April. After its first year of operation, 19,000 groups have adopted 4,400 miles of highway and have pledged to keep them clean for at least a year.

In addition to thousands of volunteers, many community service workers will be assigned to cleanup work throughout the month. NCDOT maintenance crews will concentrate on litter pickup April 16-22. These crews will be reinforced with inmates from the Department of Correction wherever possible.

"Last spring more than 30,000 citizens volunteered their time to clean our roads and communities," Transportation Secretary Jim Harrington said. "If we had paid these folks, it would have cost NCDOT an estimated \$500,000. We extend our grateful appreciation to all our volunteers and encourage them to help us clean up again this April."

The Perquimans County Commissioners recently requested information from the state regarding the Adopt-a-Highway program. After reviewing the material sent by Dennis Pipkin of the Ahoskie NCDOT office, the commissioners voted to endorse the program. They have pledged their support to all groups in the county who will give their time to help keep our highways clean.

The commissioners commented at their April 3 meeting on the work done on U.S. Highway 17 by the Perquimans Jaycees, who are participants in the Adopt-a-Highway program. Chairman Lester Simpson said that the group is doing a good job, and that the roadsides along Highway 17 from Wynne Fork Road to the bypass bridge look much better since the organization began its cleaning efforts.

Adopting groups are responsible for picking up litter along a minimum of two miles of highway at least four times per year. NCDOT encourages recycling of materials picked up whenever possible.

The group must hold a safety meeting prior to each work time to be apprised of safety requirements.

Youth groups members wishing to participate must be at least 12 years old, and have written permission from their parents to volunteer. The permission slips must be forwarded to NCDOT in Ahoskie.

The highway department supplies orange safety vests, erects signs identifying the group adopting the portion of roadway at each end of the limits, furnishes trash sacks and removes the trash sacks from the highway.

For information on how your group can become involved in this worthwhile project and help to make the community cleaner, contact Dennis Pipkin, NCDOT Division One Office, Ahoskie, NC 27910.



Blood donors relax as Red Cross workers watch them at last week's blood drive. The drive netted 39 pints, up from the 31 donated in December.