

PERQUIMANS

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the audience instead of with his fellow commissioners.

"I thought of a lot of ways this (vote) could go, but I didn't see this one coming," Peeler said.

The only two commissioners who voted for all four of the aspects of the project were Chair Janice Cole and Commissioner Ed Muzzulin. The final up or down vote on the project had Cole and Muzzulin in favor and Leigh, Nelson and Jones opposed.

The biggest issue appeared to be if the Apex project would damage property values. Both Apex and the attorney representing opponents of the project presented witnesses to argue their respective side. All five commissioners said neither did a good job.

"I felt that both of them were really poor witnesses," Cole said.

The key word in the ordinance was would the project "substantially" injuring adjacent property owners.

Nelson questioned if a property was valued at \$100,000 and it dropped \$10,000 was that substantial?

"Ten thousand dollars could be substantial for some people," Nelson said. "Ten thousand dollars is pretty significant to most anybody in Perquimans County."

Residents who opposed the project were upbeat with Monday's decision.

Tommy Harrell, one of the property owners who hired a lawyer to fight the project was elated.

"I'm exuberant," he said. "It's been a hard, emotional battle to protect what is ours."

The Perquimans commission has scheduled a meeting for Nov. 21 at 7 p.m. to iron out the details of their decision.

Monday's hearing capped a process started more than three years ago when Apex started to look at a project in northeastern North Carolina. Then in August 2015, large numbers of people started packing county com-

mission meetings to voice their concerns. That led to the board imposing a moratorium on approving any new wind project until the planning board had a chance to review the ordinance. The board did and in February, the commission made some changes to the rules.

The actual Apex Conditional Use Permit (CUP) request was filed in May which prompted a review by the planning board which signed off on the plan. The county also hired a consultant — Clarion and Associates — to review the application to make sure it was complete. In August the county commission then start a process of quasi-judicial hearings to review application. Unlike a typical commission meeting, the board acted as a court and witnesses had to be sworn in and vetted. Even Monday's meeting resembled a court trial with the commission seated as the jury.

"A jury deliberates in private, but as a public body, we have to do this publicly," Cole said.

CHOWAN

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and spending that go with it, to northeast North Carolina," Giecek said in response to the Perquimans vote.

According to the county's own outside consultant, our application satisfied all of the requirements in the county ordinance, and our plan exceeded all of the ordinance's health and safety measures. Wind energy is one of the safest forms of electricity generation and the region is already seeing the economic benefits a project can bring in terms of local spending, construction jobs, and tax revenue. We do have an approved permit in Chowan County and are evaluating options for moving forward."

The Chowan board voted Nov. 4 to approve the CUP for the Timbermill Wind Project. The vote Monday night by the Chowan commissioners

was to approve the legal order granting the permit and establishing the conditions that pertain to it.

Among the conditions Chowan officials included in the permit was a prohibition against relocating any turbine outside the blue grid of tab 18 of the permit application — which would move the turbine away from the core project area and potentially closer to occupied houses — without permission of the county commissioners.

The CUP also requires Apex to submit an Environmental Assessment to the county before any building or zoning permit is issued if such an assessment is required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, all other required state and federal permits must be issued prior to any issuance of a building or zoning permit to the county.

In order to ensure that the project does not exceed the noise limits in the county's ordinance,

the CUP requires a sound monitoring program to be developed by the developer and the county's planning and zoning staff.

The permit expires in 54 months if the project has been constructed but has not begun operation, or if less than 10 percent of the total cost of developing the project has been completed on the site, or if Timbermill has not applied for a building permit.

Another condition of the permit is that the project developers must provide the study of the project's impact on wildlife and natural resources at the same time the permit application is submitted to state environmental officials.

Apex is required to notify county officials of any application for state or federal permits at the time those permits are applied for. The company also must provide the notice of the agency's decision to the county.

ELECTION

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"Tonight is a bittersweet because Janice Cole, who really has been a mentor to me, is coming off (the board)."

Cole is chairman of the commission and Jones is vice chairman and hopes to push forward.

"I am proud to have the chance to work with these two new gentlemen and I think we'll continue the tradition we've maintained under Janice's leadership of working together and making progress for the county."

Jones piled up a big share of his lead in New Hope, his home precinct. There he picked up 740 votes compared to 354 for Woodard, 209 for Hoffler and 122 for Lennon. Jones also had the highest totals in Nicanor

and Bethel.

Technically it was not Woodard's first time running for commissioner. He did about 20 years. Back then he was a Republican and he lost.

Both Woodard and Lennon have been vocal opponents of a plan by Apex Clean Energy to build wind turbines in the Bear Swamp area of Perquimans and Chowan counties and both are parties in group that hired a lawyer to fight the plan.

The issue of whether to grant a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) was decided by the current board of commissioners on Monday. New commissioners won't be sworn in until December.

But Woodard pledged to fight any more wind projects in Perquimans.

"I am glad the people decided to support me and show their confidence," Woodard said.

The Perquimans County native has run his business, Woodard's Pharmacy, for 44 years. He wants Perquimans County to keep the rural lifestyle people more here for.

Woodard carried the majority in four of the county's seven precincts. His best showing was in the two Hertford precincts where got 513 votes compared to 282 for Jones. He also held the edge in Parkville and Belvidere.

Hoffler, a 76-year-old retired U.S. Air Force Lt. Colonel, said he enjoyed getting out and meeting people and finding out what they need and want.

The answer was clear. "They want jobs, jobs, jobs. They are tired of young people having to leave the area to find jobs. That's the main thing they want — jobs, jobs, jobs."

Hoffler understands their point. He was 5-years-old

when his parents returned to their native Perquimans County where Hoffler went to school until he graduated high school. He went off to college and made a career in the U.S. Air Force. Only after retirement did he return to Perquimans County.

The need to expand the job options is Hoffler's top goal.

"If you can get a job, everything else falls into line. I heard from a few people who said lower taxes, but mostly I heard about the need for jobs."

Lennon said the loss was

"a bit of a disappointment. No one likes to lose. It is what it is."

Lennon, 40, left open the door to seeking office in the

future.

"We will see what the future holds and what God has planned for me and my family."

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CHURCH NEWS

Hertford UMC
 Hertford United Methodist Church will be hosting a county-wide Turkey Drop Nov. 18-19 to benefit Open Door Food Pantry. Turkeys and canned food for thanksgiving can be dropped off each day at the church from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Riddick Grove Baptist
 Riddick Grove Baptist Church will host a program on the 12 tribes of Israel on Nov. 19 at 4 p.m.

Oak Hill AME
 Oak Hill AME Zion Church will celebrate its 161st Founders Day on Nov. 20 at 2 p.m. Guest speaker will be Rev. Michael Gaddy of Kadesh AME Zion Church and his congregation.

Burgess Baptist
 Burgess Baptist Church will host "The Oak Grove Boys" plus Stephanie Nov. 20 at 6 p.m. For more information please call 619-9689.

Hertford UMC
 Hertford United Methodist Church will host The Lord's Table Soup Kitchen every Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. For information call 426-5467.

Information for Church Notes should be emailed

if possible to perquimansweekly@ncweeklies.com. The deadline is Friday at noon. Early submissions are encouraged. Church

Notes features special services and activities that are open to the public. Photographs of special activities are also welcomed.

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PAY IT FORWARD!
 1 TIMOTHY 1:15-16 (NLT)
 "This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—and I am the worst of them all. 16 But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life."
 One of the biggest tragedies in the house of God these days is the lack of compassion for sinners. If the truth were to be told there are many of us who have truly forgotten where the Lord brought us from. In our text for today, the Apostle Paul puts the gospel in its proper perspective: "CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS! My question for you today is this: If God had mercy on us when we were sinners, who are we to judge anyone else? My prayer is that the people of God would pray for the same type of compassion that the Lord has shown us. There are hurting people who need to know that there is a Savior who can meet their every need. Take the time out to listen to those around you. Ask God to show you someone you can help. Don't be too proud to let someone know that you didn't always have everything together. PAY IT FORWARD! The bible says the harvest is plenty, but the laborers are few. I want to suggest to you that someone is waiting on you! Let them know that if God has done it for you, he can do it for them too! God Bless!"

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