

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



Rotary honors teachers, 9

"News from Next Door"

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7, 2017

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50 cents

County proposes no property tax increase

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath is proposing a budget that will hold the line on property taxes and water rates yet increase some services.

The \$15.2 million general fund budget is \$124,983 more than the current budget. It largely holds the line on spending on schools despite a decline in enrollment. Heath is

recommending an increase to add another school resource officer. There are two on the payroll now, and School Superintendent Matthew Cheeseman asked for two more so there will be an officer at each school.

The budget also includes \$397,000 for school capital expenses.

There is also enough money in the budget to upgrade emergency services to a paramedic level of

care.

One reason why he estimates the Amazon Wind Farms East project will pump an additional \$350,000 in revenue next fiscal year. Earlier projections had been the project would produce about \$250,000 in local taxes.

The annual solid waste fee is scheduled to increase from \$130 to \$140. The money pays to operate five convenience sites as well as pay the county's share of

sending waste to a private landfill in Bertie County. There is no proposed increase in water rates, but once again Heath cautioned commissioners that the water distribution system is more than 30 years old in some places and will require ongoing repairs.

For county employees there will be no cost of living raise. County employees got a 3 percent cost of living raise in the current budget.

But the county has covered the

increased cost of health insurance. It is expected to climb from \$506 per employee to \$540. That includes a projected 5 percent increase in rates and \$25 per month per employee that the state will begin charging employees for the base 70-30 plan. The county will pick up the \$25 per month charge in the proposed budget.

County employees will still be

See TAX, 2

State may ease gun rules

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

A proposed state law that would allow anybody of legal age to carry a concealed firearm in public without a permit is not a step in a positive direction, Perquimans County Sheriff Shelby White said last week.

Under the current law, residents can apply for a concealed-carry permit. They are required to undergo an eight-hour class and pass a test.

White teaches the course and he says it's not hard. White said his office issues an average of about 15 concealed weapons permits a month.

The sheriff says he thinks the concealed permit has a place, but questions some other laws on the books.

"What blows my mind is if they've got a concealed carry permit they're not allowed to consume any alcohol or drugs while they're armed."

If the same person openly carried a pistol on their hip there is no law against them using alcohol or drugs.

Concealed carry permits are issued through the local county sheriff. They conduct a criminal background check that looks for records of mental illness or incapacity. The requirement has long been a sore spot with gun rights advocates,

See GUN, 2

CONTROLLED BURN



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Top, members of the Hertford Fire Department control the spread of flames as they burn down the two-story Matthew-Jacocks House on Church Street at the foot of King Street on Sunday afternoon. The home had declined to the point it was no longer safe. It was built in 1824.

STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Just the chimney remains Monday from a house on Church Street that was built in the 1820s.



Judge hears wind case

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

CURRITUCK — The Perquimans County Commission was wrong when it rejected plans for 57 wind turbines in the Bear Swamp area last year, a lawyer told Superior Court Judge Walter Godwin Jr. Tuesday.

Attorney Bobby Sullivan argued that because of majority of the commission agreed Apex Clean Energy had met four the county standards, the commission was obliged to vote yes when it came to the fifth and final vote. At the very least, commissioners who had some concerns could have approved the project on the final vote with some conditions, Sullivan said.

Apex appealed the case to the Superior Court. Perquimans County only holds Superior Civil Court twice a year, so Tuesday's case was heard at the Currituck County courthouse. Godwin heard about two hours of testimony and said he would release a ruling later. Apex is suing the county because it was the body that denied the project.

See WIND, 2

NAACP to honor first responders

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

Before the parade, before the fireworks, the Perquimans County NAACP will be honoring a special group this Independence Day weekend.

On June 30, the group will hold an event for first responders. It will be held at the Perquimans County Recreation Center at 6 p.m.

The event will focus on law enforcement, firefighters, emergency respond-

ers and those who work in the 911 telecommunications office.

"We hadn't heard of anybody doing an appreciation for them before, and this is long overdue," said Lenora Brothers, one of the organizers of the parade set for July 1.

Both Hertford Police Chief Douglas Freeman and Perquimans County Sheriff Shelby White said they appreciated the gesture.

See NAACP, 2

Golden LEAF funding may be available

BY PETER WILLIAMS
News Editor

If Perquimans County can raise most of the money to get the first phase of the Marine Industrial Park started, Golden LEAF will likely be there to help with the rest, according to the president of the non-profit corporation.

Perquimans County approached Golden LEAF for money for major site devel-

opment money within the last year, but was turned down. At the time, the board of directors didn't think the project was to that point, according to Dan Gerlach, president of Golden LEAF.

"At the time the board felt the other sites has more promise, but that if Perquimans got close we'd be interested to take another look at it." He believes the board still feels that way.

Now the project may be

closer to becoming a reality.

The N.C. Senate included \$2.8 million in its version of the state budget for the first phase of the boat basin. The N.C. House completed work on its version of a \$22.9 billion spending plan last week. Now the two bodies will work together to iron out the details.

And Monday Rep. Bob Steinburg said he thinks the

See LEAF, 2

Top scholars to net nearly \$1.1 million

From Staff Reports

Three Perquimans County High School students who were accepted to attend the Newport News Apprentice School were led the list of the top scholarship recipients this year in terms of dollar value. The total value of the top five is \$1,094,000.



UPTON



JORDAN



TYSON

Graduation is set for this Friday night at the high school.

Blake Jordan, Andrew Tyson and Garth Upton will earn a \$25,000 annual salary for the four years at the school. That, and the \$172,000 in free education

benefits have a total value of \$272,000.

Both Jordan and Tyson will also play on the Apprentice baseball team and Upton will play football.

Sarah Baker, who will at-

See SCHOLARS, 2

FARMERS MARKET OPENS



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Shoppers visit the Hertford Farmer's Market Saturday at the new location in the parking lot of Coastal Carolina Family Practice, 600 S. Church St. The market will be open each Saturday through Aug. 26 from 8 a.m. until noon.



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