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# Anger heats up at Hertford town meeting

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor



JACKSON

Tempers flared Monday night when Hertford Town Council members met before a near capacity crowd in the historic Perquimans County courthouse.

The meeting was moved to that location from town hall because the anticipated crowd.

For the past several months Councilman Quentin Jackson has leveled racial charges, been critical of the town's volunteer fire department and asked for

a moratorium on cutting off people's utilities for non-payment until he and other board members can discuss the utility issue.

It came to a head Monday. At one point Monday Jackson walked off the podium into the audience after he said somebody said something negative about his mother. Rev. Gilbert

Vaughan urged Jackson to go back to the podium.

There were also shouting matches between members of the council and other council members and the audience and other audience members and the audience and the council.

Jackson came under fire for a number of actions including why he didn't stand for the pledge of allegiance with other town council members.

Former Town Councilman Ed Lane issued a written statement saying Jackson should stand for the

pledge. "How disrespectful for you not to do so. I did learn that in school while I was there."

Jackson defended his actions pointing out the pledge ends with "and liberty and justice for all."

Jackson claims that doesn't hold true in Hertford if you're black and he talked of racial profiling. Jackson has been arrested several times in the past including Feb. 1 when a town police officer arrested him



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Hertford Town Councilman Quentin Jackson stays seated while the rest of the town board stands for the Pledge of Allegiance on Monday night.

See MEETING, 2

## PRIMARY ELECTION SEASON STARTS

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Perquimans County Sheriff Shelby White, Clerk of Superior Court Todd Tilley and Perquimans County Commissioner Fondella Leigh were the first candidates to file for local office Monday.

White was the first, filing just minutes after noon, the start of the filing period. Tilley was right behind him.

It's White's first election. He was appointed to the job last year when Sheriff Eric Tilley retired. White has been in the sheriff's office for 18 years.

The county commission seats of two other commissioners are also up this year, Ed Muzzulin and Wallace Nelson.

White is the only person so far who is running for the first time.

Since he took office, White worked with the county commissioners to add the position of Chief Deputy. It was filled internally by 12-year veteran Tom Reid. Under Tilley there was no Chief Deputy on the department.

In addition Tilley brought in a K-9 to serve with drug issues and added a third School Resource Officer. During the last year, security in courtrooms was also upgraded.

White said he wants to do even more.

He said he wants to forge a strong bond between the Sheriff's office and the people of Perquimans.



STAFF PHOTO BY PETER WILLIAMS

Perquimans County Elections Director Holly Hunter completes paperwork to run for office for Perquimans County Sheriff Shelby White on Monday. White was appointed to the job in 2017 when Sheriff Eric Tilley retired. He was the first candidate to file in Perquimans on the first day of the sign-up period.

"With what can be a negative environment at times with law enforcement, I hope that the community, from the youngest on up, see the Sheriff's Office as a positive figure for the people", White said.

"I believe that it is important that your sheriff can handle

every aspect of the office with knowledge and service to the community when needed. I do not ask things of my deputies that I am not both willing and capable of performing."

Tilley was first appointed to Clerk of Court and filled the 14 months left in that term. He's

since run for office and won three times.

The filing period runs through Feb. 28 at noon. Voter registration for the primary election ends April 13 and one-top voting goes from April 19 through May 5. The primary is on May 8.

## School leader left legacy

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

If you had a child in the Perquimans County Schools system between 1990 and 2014, Walter Leigh was looking out of them.

That's the span of time Leigh served on the school board. Dec. 1, 1990 until June 30, 2014, six four-year-terms. Those who knew him, say students were always his focus.

Leigh, 79, died Feb. 3 at his home in Elizabeth City. Fellow school board members remember him as a steadfast advocate of children and a man who put children on the front of his mind, not his position of authority.

That's the way his daughter, Sheila Hyman remembers it.

Walter and his wife Fanny, taught her and sister Fondella early on about public service. Fondella is now the vice chair of the Perquimans County Commission.

"They introduced us to politics and the importance of knowing what was happening in your county. We were raised with a sense of service to our church, our community and our neighbors. That was handed down by our parents but also by our grandparents as well," Hyman said.

Walter Leigh was appointed Presiding Elder of the Edenton District in the Albemarle Conference from June 2000 to June 2016. His daughter Fondella is now the Presiding Elder.

Hyman lives in High Point now but she used to live in Greensboro. When the N.C. School Boards Association held meetings Greensboro, she would meet with her father at some of the gatherings.

"There were people from different counties all over the state and everybody knew him."

That's also how both Susan Cox and Wallace Nelson remember it. Everybody in the schools community in North Carolina seemed to know Walter Leigh. In 2009 the state School Boards Association named him to the All-State school board.

Cox served eight years on the board with Leigh and credits him a lot.

"Rev. Leigh was always concerned



LEIGH

See LEGACY, 5

## Hunter named to elections post

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

Just in time for the next election, Perquimans County has a new Director of Elections.

Holly Hunter was appointed to the role this month. She's been working in the elections office for about a year and a half as an assistant.

Sydni Banks resigned the director's job effective Jan. 26 in order to take a similar position in Currituck County.

Hunter, 22, is a graduate

"There is a lot to do and it can be stressful, but I like it."

Holly Hunter

Perquimans Director of Elections



of Perquimans County High School who went on to study at College of The Albemarle.

Hunter takes over at a time when elections boards across the state are in turmoil.

Tradition holds that the

county board has three members. When Gov. Pat McCrory held office, two of them were Republicans and when Gov. Bev Purdue was in office, two were Democrats.

But the General Assembly

challenged the system and the dispute remains in the courts.

The Perquimans board has just two members, Republican John McGowan and Democrat Vera Murrill.

On a statewide level the dispute means there is no functioning state elections board.

Hunter said without that state board, the decision to buy new voting machines is on hold. Hunter said before she left, Banks sought state funding

See POST, 2

## Concerns are resolved over campaign chili cook-off

BY PETER WILLIAMS  
News Editor

A chili cook-off fundraiser for a state legislative candidate will go on, but Perquimans County health officials say they did have some initial concerns about it.

Candice Hunter, a Republican who plans to file for the open seat in N.C. House District 1, said she was advised on Thursday of a potential problem with the fundraiser she's planning to hold Saturday, Feb. 17, at The Crawfish Shack on Swing Gate Road outside of Hertford.

John Morgan, an employee of Albemarle Regional Health Services who is based at the Perquimans County Health Department, informed Hunter of two po-



C. HUNTER

site and brought to the The Crawfish Shack and served to the public. The other issue centered on whether the public would be charged to attend the event.

Hunter said the language in her advertising for the fundraiser clearly indicates attendees are not being charged to attend. The ads recommend donations of \$25 at the "Attend Level."

"It is just that, a recommended donation," Hunter said. "I don't like the fact candidates have to raise money any more than anyone else, but I did not make those rules. We all know the definition of a donation."

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said. "I don't like the fact candidates have to raise money any more than anyone else, but I did not make those rules. We all know the definition of a donation."

The Crawfish Shack on Swing Gate Road routinely rents out its facilities for fundraisers and events. The College of The Albemarle Foundation held a fundraiser at the facility in October that included a catered meal.

Morgan said the Crawfish Shack's kitchen has been

approved by the health department and if the chili for Hunter's fundraiser was going to be prepared there, the event wouldn't have raised any public health concerns. Because the chili for Hunter's event is going to be prepared off-site, however, health officials wanted to make sure public health rules would be followed.

"Her fundraiser presented a complicated way of serving food to the public," Morgan

See CHILI, 2



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