

WATERFRONT

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Norman abstained, which by state law a vote to abstain counts the same as a "yes" vote.

Council decided unanimously that the purchase of the property on West Grubb Street will not come from money set aside from the King Street Project.

This project includes construction of a new playground and surrounding landscaping, though the project is likely to grow over time.

"The King Street Park Project is a priority for Council and we have funds in the existing budget and in next year's budget to support it," Hodges said after the meeting.

After the decision was made to purchase the land by West Grubb Street, Jackson admonished council for purchasing the property during a pandemic when times are tough and Town Hall's budget is projected to be lean. He compared the matter to how tone deaf Elizabeth City Council was when council members recently voted themselves a 73 percent raise in the midst of uncertain times as the effects of COVID-19 continue to shatter the economy.

Jackson said the property has been vacant for more than six years, so it is ludicrous to buy blighted properties that no one has expressed an interest in purchasing.

On the flip side, Town Hall has submitted a request to the US Department of Agriculture for a Rural Business Development Grant to develop more detailed plans for the waterfront.

The proposal includes public waterfront walkways, a retaining wall to address flooding, restored wetlands, a public

stage, and development of a mix of revitalized and new buildings to create amenities for citizens and attractions for visitors. A beautifully restored waterfront within walking distance will contribute to the revitalization of the historic downtown.

The current grant is the follow-on to a successful 2018 county-led USDA grant, which became the foundation for the current waterfront development and community concept plans.

Allison Platt, senior urban designer and landscape architect with Rivers & Associates of Greenville, whose projects have included successful waterfront renovations in New Bern and Washington, was the lead for the 2018 study and contributed to the development of the most recent USDA RBDG grant submission.

Acquisition of this parcel allows the town to manage the transition of the waterfront as a single project, which is critical for dealing with flooding and related issues.

Town Council and the County Commission have endorsed resolutions of support for plans to develop Hertford's waterfront.

If another entity purchased the property, those plans could be in jeopardy as well as proposals for drainage improvements planned for that low lying area.

After the council meeting, Hodges said the land purchase was to secure the land so the Town will be free to make drainage and flood protection improvements to the area as needed. He said 216 W. Grubb St. - the narrow lot between Missing Mill and the Feed and Seed - contains a small fresh water creek which actually begins as a spring somewhere between Market and Dobb

streets. During storm events, the river backflows up the creek and prevents storm sewers from draining properly, resulting in street flooding throughout Town.

As the lowest point of the Grubb Street waterfront, the Feed and Seed parking lot is likewise subject to flooding, which at times has actually completely covered the street with water.

Moreover the parking area is bowl-shaped which causes the ground to be soft for days after significant rainfall.

Hodges said the reality is that while the Feed and Seed building itself is out of the lowest flood zone, the present condition of the land makes it unrealistic for either a manufacturing or commercial use because a prospective buyer would be required to make these improvements before opening shop.

"If we allow another entity to purchase the property we would likely have to acquire much of the land later - either through purchase or a costly imminent domain legal action - just to protect the residences, park, and businesses that are in the area," Hodges said. "By buying the property now we can be proactive in protecting valuable waterfront property and Town infrastructure for decades to come."

In other matters from Monday's meeting, Jackson apologized and explained the technical glitches that affected Thursday's meeting conducted via Zoom - technical problems that other municipalities are experiencing as leaders adjust to conducting public meetings through this format.

Staff writer Miles Layton can be reached at mlayton@ncweeklies.com

Historic Hertford Happenings

BY LYNNE RAYMOND
Historic Hertford

Welcome to our column that will keep you all informed about Historic Hertford, Inc. & Carolina Moon Theater's activities.

As I sit here today, I'm hoping that soon we will be able to be out and about. The lawns and flowers are loving the rain - me not so much!

As we keep being reminded to wash our hands and stay home, we make quick grocery store trips and focus on funny videos and jokes online and what is new on Netflix. We've run out of Netflix we haven't watch so on to HULU!

MAY CALENDAR

Below are some opportunities to become involved in and things to do!

It continues to be difficult to plan for the next few months, but we still try to look forward at the Carolina Moon Theater.

Our first play, when we are able to perform, will be "Love Letters." This is a two-person play that has been on Broadway performed by many famous "couples." So, our "famous" couple will be Tom Loughlin and Lynne Raymond! The play is tentatively planned for July but, of course, watch for news as we move through the next months.

Carolina Moon Theater also has plans to do "Midsummer Night's Dream," a well-known Shakespeare play, in August. More on that will be in our upcoming newsletters.

We still have plans for "The Red Velvet Cake War," written by Jones, Hope, and Wooten, to be performed at the

Carolina Moon Theater, 110 W. Academy Street, on October 16 & 17 at 7 p.m. and October 18 at 4 p.m. Tickets will go on sale at



PHOTO BY KYLE JONES

During a windstorm last week, an old tree succumbed to the elements in downtown Hertford.

Carolina Trophy & online at carolinamoontheater.org starting September 7th. Please mark your calendar & plan on coming. Get them early because this is sure to be a sold-out performance! Tickets are \$18. If you need more information, visit our website at carolinamoontheater.org.

The "Daylily Banners" have been cleaned and are ready to be hung around town. Volunteers are needed to water the plants around town. You can volunteer to do this and still keep social distancing.

Do you have 30 minutes to help water anytime, any day?? If so email us at office@historichertfordinc.org. You can also email us if you are interested in joining the Downtown Beautification Committee and help make our downtown area beautiful. Maybe you have some new ideas that could be implemented!

Carolina Moon Theater will soon launch a new website! We hope you will find it easier to use to order tickets & see what is going on at the theater. If you are interested in helping with publicity for the theater, we NEED YOU!

If you have not yet joined HHI as a member, we hope you will do so now! You can mail your check to HHI at 110 W. Academy Street, Hertford, NC 27944. HHI was not eligible for any government funding because

we have no paid staff. You will soon be able to make your donation online so keep checking our website.

Unfortunately, the May 31st "Songs of Celebration" concert that was to be performed by the Albemarle Community Orchestra has been cancelled. The Orchestra hopes to re-schedule this performance in the Fall. We will keep you posted!

Did Know You That... You might wonder why my little logo for this month is a tree - or maybe not! Here is the answer. I have just heard that one of the beautiful trees on the Perquimans County Courthouse lawn has been taken down!

The tree was severely damaged during the recent windstorms and the County Manager, Frank Heath, brought in an arborist to look at it. It was determined that the core of the tree was rotting from the inside and so this very hard decision was made to protect the Courthouse and for safety reasons.

The tree was a water oak tree and it is believed that it was planted after Hurricane Hazel in 1954. We will miss you "old friend" as the Courthouse takes on a new look.

Check out our website at historichertfordinc.org or carolinamoontheater.org for more details! Follow us on Facebook!

ABC BOARD

Continued from A1

job building the business and generating revenue - if I recall correctly our store is actually the third highest grossing store in our region."

Terms of two members of the ABC Board expire in August: Chairman Michael Hare and Joseph Hoffer.

Board member Todd Tilley's term expires in October 2022.

"When Council increased the ABC Board size from 3 to 5 it provided the opportunity for more input while still allowing existing members to maintain the majority vote. The move made sense to me as a low-impact way to put any real or perceived issues to rest," Hodges said.

Brown said as mayor, she is trying to work with the council through a "prepared and informed decision making process" but this last minute decision to appoint new members to the ABC Board runs counter to that approach.

"The proper way would have been to present the council with a proposal as to why there was a need to increase the ABC Board and allow the ABC Chair to come to a Town Council meeting and comment," she said. "If the council then decided to add another seat(s) there would have been the

opportunity to consider who could bring the most value to the ABC Board. The Town Manager was appointed the ex-officio of the ABC Board, therefore providing a Hertford Town Council presence."

Brown said the manner in which this appointment process was undertaken makes her uncomfortable.

"The fact that the current ABC General Manager (Don Keaton) is planning to retire and the ABC Board is about to replace him made me very uncomfortable with the hurried way in which this was presented and executed," she said.

Brown said she has seen no evidence of transparency lacking in the existing ABC Board's operations.

Hodges said current and previous council members and town officials have at times felt communication between the ABC Board and Town was not as timely or transparent as it could or should have been.

As to Jackson's appointment, Hodges said Jackson is knowledgeable about the ABC Board's operations and finances.

"Councilman Jackson has already been studying the nearly 1,000-page ABC Laws and Rules book along with our previous audits and budgets for some time and I believe he will be a well-informed vote on the

Board," he said. "My vote was an act of faith in his ability to engage with his new colleagues on the ABC Board in a respectful and value-added way even in times of disagreement. I know he understands the significance of the trust Council has placed in him by supporting his appointment and I'm committed to providing accountability for he and all the other members of the ABC Board as needed. I believe we will see our ABC Store continue to grow and prosper moving forward."

Perquimans Weekly reached out to Jackson for comment, but he did not respond.

Brown offered praise for the operations and decisions of the Board that are carried out by three knowledgeable individuals with legal, financial, and municipal government experience; Todd W. Tilley, Perquimans County Clerk of Superior Court; Joseph Hoffer, Per-

quimans County Commissioner, Retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel, MBA; and Michael Hare, a prominent banker. She said there is a part-time employee, who happens to be an active law enforcement, who can provide security and the ABC Board is currently in the process of hiring a new General Manager to replace the retiring Manager.

Two years ago, the present ABC Board members, signed for a \$169,000, 10-year loan with the Hertford Saving Bank to renovate the ABC store, which is not their building. Brown said taking these actions shows how committed the ABC Board is to success.

"This reflects sincerity to their appointment, plus it has increased the monthly sales, thus revenues for the Town of Hertford," Brown said.

Miles Layton can be reached at mlayton@ncweeklies.com

LAW ENFORCEMENT LOG

Perquimans Sheriff's arrests between April 9 and April 23:

- William Ward of Boscely Road, Sunbury, was arrested April 9 and charged with driving under the influence. Bond was set at \$1,000 secured.
- John White of Wynne Fork Road, Hertford, was arrested April 12 and charged with communicating threats. Bond was set at \$1,000 unsecured.
- Timothy Corprew of Wynne Fork Road, Hertford, was arrested April 12 and charged with assault by pointing a gun. Bond was set at \$1,000

- unsecured.
- David Owens of Belvidere Road, Belvidere, was arrested April 13 and charged with violation of a court order. Bond was set at \$50,000 secured.
- Martin Hassell of Beech Street, Hertford, was arrested April 18 and charged with assault with a deadly weapon. Bond was set at \$3,000 secured.
- Cody McCotter of Belvidere Road, Belvidere, was arrested April 21 and charged with simple physical assault. Bond was set at \$500 secured.

OBITUARY POLICY

For information on submitting obituaries or death notices Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., call 252-329-9505 or email obits@appenc.com and specify that you are interested in obituary information for The Perquimans Weekly. On weekends and holidays, email obits@appenc.com. We

do not accept notices by fax. Obituaries must be received, processed and approved by noon on Tuesday to appear in print in the Thursday edition.

Death notices are \$25 and can include the name and age of the decedent; funeral and visitation or viewing information; and the name of the funeral home.

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REQUEST FOR BIDS

The Town of Hertford are accepting contract bid proposals for mowing Cedarwood and Roadside cemeteries, Missing Mill and Tree Memorial Parks and right-of-way on Service Road 1420.

Bid proposals can be mailed to: Town of Hertford PO Box 32 Hertford, NC 27944, delivered to the drop-box at the Municipal Building located at 114 W. Grubb Street Hertford, NC or email at townclerk@townofhertfordnc.com.

Questions and detail contract information can be obtained by calling (252) 426-5311 or at www.townofhertfordnc.com

Bids will be accepted until 5:00pm May 15, 2020.