

THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY



"News from Next Door"

THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2022

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Durants Neck Ruritans sponsor blood drive, help families at Christmas



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As CCC manager, Hoeltzel continues role helping others



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Retired Episcopal bishop pens 'God, Life, You and Me'

Smooth transition



REGGIE PONDER/THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

Town Manager Pam Hurdle (left) and acting Town Manager Janice Cole review information related to Hertford's town government on Hurdle's last day with the town Thursday, Dec. 30. Hurdle's retirement took effect on Jan. 1. Cole will serve as interim manager until the town appoints a new full-time manager.

Cole takes reins as Hurdle departs

Hurdle: Infrastructure upgrades should be town's priority in new year

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

Town Manager Pam Hurdle and acting Town Manager Janice Cole spent three days last week preparing for a crucial transition in town administration as town officials eye a renewed focus on community development.

Hurdle, who retired effective Jan. 1, said upgrading town infrastructure should be the town's top priority.

"Infrastructure has to be first," Hurdle said.

Hurdle said thanks to the availability of new federal grants the town is poised to see improvements to both its infrastructure and community development over the next few months.

She said the town's new Riverfront and Community Development Plan will provide good launching point for those

efforts. The key will be planning, she said.

"I don't have a doubt in this world that it's going to happen," Hurdle said.

Hurdle said the town will consider a resolution of support at Town Council's January meeting for converting the S-Bridge truss for use as a public facility. The Perquimans Board of Commissioners was scheduled to discuss a similar resolution at its Jan. 3 meeting.

See TRANSITION, A3

Black soldiers monument not moving

Effort to put signage near Confederate statue progressing

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

Perquimans County officials expect to have proposed language for an explanatory sign or signs at the Confederate monument on the courthouse green in the next few months.

Meanwhile, the Colored Soldiers Monument on King Street will not be moving to the courthouse green. County officials have consulted the owners of the monument and been advised they "prefer that the

monument stay where it is," County Manager Frank Heath said.

Heath did say the effort to develop language for signs putting the Confederate monument in context is moving forward.

"We are still working on that," Heath said last week. "We are still seeking input from different historical sources."

Heath said county officials have already had a conversation with a faculty member at Elizabeth City State University and are planning to consult with College of The Albemarle

See MONUMENT, A3



PHOTO COURTESY AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE OF NORTHEAST NC

The owners of the Colored Union Soldiers Monument on King Street have advised Perquimans County officials they are not interested in moving it to the Perquimans County Courthouse green.

Election-related sheriff salary adjustment on hold

County missed deadline to reduce salary before election

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

Perquimans County's longstanding practice of reducing the salary of the sheriff and register of deeds



HEATH

in the years when elections for those offices are held is on hold for now — and might be canceled altogether for this election cycle.

A resolution for an election-related salary reduction for the office of sheriff in Perquimans was on the agenda for the December regular meeting of the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners.

But the item was then removed when county officials realized they had missed the deadline set by

state law. That law doesn't allow reductions of salaries to be taken any later than 14 days from the end of the filing period.

Although the county appeared to have missed that deadline, election filing has been suspended by order of the N.C. Supreme Court because of the ongoing litigation over the state's new legislative and congressional districts. The court ordered a trial court to rule on the case by Jan. 11. The court reset the election primary from March to May, however no date has yet been set for when filing may resume.

The delay might allow the county to reconsider the action, but county officials haven't made a

decision whether they will pursue the matter any further this election cycle.

Perquimans County Manager Frank Heath said when asked about the matter last week that the county may not revisit the resolution even though the filing period has been changed.

"We may just leave it alone," he said.

Leaving it alone would suit Terry Swope just fine.

Swope, who told The Perquimans Weekly recently that the election-year salary adjustment is a "pet peeve" of his, sent county commissioners a written statement last month objecting to the

practice.

"After two back-to-back years of large tax increases, Perquimans County just recently enacted large pay increases countywide because the commissioners believed that Perquimans County was not offering competitive compensation in relation to other counties," Swope said.

"Clearly the board recognizes compensation has a direct impact on the ability to attract candidates," he continued. "By reducing the compensation from what one must assume the board believes to be the proper compensation for

See SHERIFF, A3

Jackson returns phone, reimburses town for hotspot

Town checking claim one computer given to ex-chief

BY REGGIE PONDER
Staff Writer

Former town councilor Quentin Jackson last week returned one item issued to him by the town of Hertford and reimbursed the town for another — but town officials said some other town-issued property to him still has not been accounted for.

Town Manager Pam Hurdle said in a Dec. 30 interview — her last day at Town Hall before her retirement took effect — that Jackson's claim that the Hertford Fire Department has one of the computers issued to him while he was a town councilor appears to be correct.

But Jackson's claim that he turned over a town-issued computer to Hertford's then-police chief remains in question. Acting Town Man-



JACKSON

ager Janice Cole said that claim is currently being investigated for the town by attorney John Leidy.

Hurdle and Cole said Jackson returned a town-issued cell phone on the morning of Dec. 30, though Cole noted it was badly damaged. They said Jackson also reimbursed the town for a WiFi hotspot.

Officials believe there are also other items Jackson charged to Hertford using a town credit card that were never inventoried.

"We're checking into that," Cole said. "He says that's not so."

A computer bought by the town for former Town Councilor Frank Norman III

See JACKSON, A3

Sheriff anticipates making arrest in armed robbery

Family Dollar-Dollar Tree store robbed at gunpoint

From staff reports

The Perquimans sheriff said Friday authorities have examined surveillance footage of last week's armed robbery at the Family Dollar-Dollar Tree store and expect to make an arrest soon.

Sheriff Shelby White released no other details of the robbery carried out by an armed man at the retail store in Hertford on Monday, Dec. 27.

According to a press release, the Perquimans 911 Center received a call about 10:40 p.m. reporting an armed robbery at the Family Dollar-Dollar Tree Combo store in the 200 block of Ocean Highway South.

Before deputies arrived, they learned a man had entered the store and demanded cash of the store's two

employees by gunpoint. The suspect then fled.

Deputies arrived within two minutes of the call but the employees were not able to say which direction the suspect left, the release states.

The press release didn't describe the robbery suspect or state his method of travel.

Six deputies and investigators responded to the store to begin searching the area near the store, the release states.

Both employees were able to exit the store after the robbery and go to a neighboring business where they alerted authorities. One of the employees was evaluated by Perquimans Emergency Medical Services personnel but neither was transported for medical treatment.

White did ask that anyone with information related to his office's investigation of the robbery call 252-426-5615.



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