

City purchases Dr. Padgett's office

By GARY STEWART
Editor of The Herald

City Council Tuesday night approved paying \$65,000 for the former Dr. Phillip Padgett office at 103 West King Street.

City Manager Jimmy Maney said the property is valued at \$85,000. He said the city would renovate it for use by the codes department and may eventually use it for expansion of Mauney Memorial Library.

In another property matter, city resident Jane Martin asked City Council not to consider purchasing the Barrett property at the intersection of Gold St. and Battleground Avenue to be used as a parking lot.

At last month's meeting, Bernice Chappell, who lives next door to the property and operates a business across the street from it, asked Council to consider purchasing the metal building which previously housed Kings Mountain Farm Center.

Martin said it had been reported last month that the property was available for \$150,000, but she said it would probably take another \$50,000 to demolish it and landscape the site.

"Kings Mountain doesn't need another parking lot," she said. "There is parking right behind Main Street. Taxpayer money is being handed out by the thousands in Kings Mountain."

"This is one more example of spending money that doesn't

benefit every citizens," she added.

In another matter, Council heard a lengthy presentation by Grover Mayor Bill Favell asking that Grover's water rate be the same as Kings Mountain's inside city rate. He said Kings Mountain's most recent increase of 43 percent and almost 100 percent increase over the past five years were too much to bear.

"We would like to stay on the inside industrial rate," Favell said. "There would still be an increase but not 43 percent."

Favell said Grover has only 378 water customers, and a population of 700 of which over 50% are 55 years of age and older.

"We already have the third largest tax rate in Cleveland County behind Shelby and Kings Mountain, and we had an \$11,000 loss in water/sewer last year," he said.

He said, unlike industry, Grover has to maintain water lines and meters and hire maintenance workers which drives the cost of its water even higher.

City Manager Jimmy Maney defended the new rate, saying "we can't continue to sell

Grover water cheaper than we sell it to our own citizens."

In a related matter, Council authorized a major "10 to 20-year" study of the water capital needs which Maney said could further impact water rates.

"Our cost has skyrocketed," he said, pointing to a 52% in-

crease to the city by Gastonia for the Crowder's Creek wastewater treatment facility. "We're not trying to balance our water/sewer budget on the backs of Grover. I would love for you to be selling me water at the same rate. This is not something we just came out of the blue with."

Favell said Cleveland County paid for the water line to Grover and then "turned it over" to Kings Mountain, and that Kings Mountain benefits from selling water to Grover because KM "doesn't have to flush the line."

Maney said Cleveland County turned the line over to KM because Cleveland County "didn't have the maintenance department to take care of it."

"Grover is small," Favell said. "We're stuck with 700 people. We can't go out and annex places like Eaton. If we could we'd have all kind of tax money."

KM Utility Committee Chairman Carl DeVane said his committee agreed to move ahead with the new rate, which will take effect with the new fiscal year budget on July 1.

In other action Tuesday, Council

- Scheduled a public hearing on the 2001-02 FY budget May 14 at 6 p.m. Copies of the budget are on display at City Hall and Mauney Library.

- Authorized the mayor to submit a Community Development Block Grant ap-

plication in the amount of \$700,000 to help renovate homes on West Gold Ext. between Spring St. and Garrison St. Steve Austin of Benchmark said there are 43 house sin the area and over 90% of them are low to moderate income families.

"The greatest need is in sewer, because they have experienced a lot of problems with septic tanks and drain lines," he said. "Most of the residents are elderly on fixed income."

Most of the housing needs are moderate, he said, with such needs as new roofs and wiring.

If the grant is approved, the city would have to match \$200,000 plus waive tap fees, he said. Included in the area is the property the city recently purchased for a new fire department. It includes a mobile home that must be moved.

- Adopted a resolution amending the original resolution approving the preliminary plat for Indian Creek subdivision on Margrace Rd., and approved a resolution extending water, sewer and streets/drainage to the subdivision.

- Appointed Joe Champion, Dennis Patterson, Tim Plonk, Shirley Brutko, Rev. P. Kilgore Saunders, Steve Killian, and Ellis Noell to the Ad Hoc Gateway Community Committee.

CHILD CARE

From Page 1A

City Staff was up front with the citizens from the beginning of last year's block rezoning process. "All of these zones were clearly stated," he said. "The city went the extra mile to make sure everyone's request was considered. As a result of the original application the property was rezoned exactly as requested by the property owners. All information was available to everyone. The city in on way misled anyone."

City Attorney Mickey Corry said since day care centers are permitted in the zone and a permit for the center has already been issued, there is little the city can do legally to revoke it. The property owner would have to voluntarily surrender the permit.

That's not likely. Faunce said he is currently following state guidelines for getting the property ready for a center, and that he expects it to be open in June.

"It's true it will serve up to 45 children, but they won't be there at the same time and they won't necessarily be coming in when school is taking up," he said. "They'll already be there because momma and daddy will already be at work."

"This is a great site for a day care," he added. "We only want what is best for the community."

City Planner Steve Killian said amending the R8 zoning text may be a way to prevent day care centers in residential neighborhoods in the future. Councilman Carl DeVane said he worked with West Mountain property owners in their rezoning effort last year. "No one ever considered that this item would ever come up and they'd always have single-family dwellings. We thought we were doing them a favor by taking it as a block request, but evidently we overlooked some things."

In other action, Council approved a request from Rajendra H. Gandhi to rezone property at 507 E. King St. (Silver Express) from Neighborhood Business to General Business. Part of the

land where the shopping center is located has been zoned GB, and part NB since 1967. Killian said GB is more appropriate zoning for the property since it traditionally sees more traffic, stores, and business development and is not necessarily associated with a residential area.

Rezoning requests from Tommy E. and Tina Hall to rezone property at 204 Cansler St. from RS-6 to Conditional Use R-6, and from Cynthia Falls to rezone property at 112 Tact Court from Residential R-10 to Light Industry, were continued until

the May 29 meeting. The Halls are planning to build three condominiums. A cell phone tower is located on Falls' property and she wants it rezoned so it can be rebuilt in case of a disaster. She said the cell tower supplements her income and that there are other property owners in the same area that have been granted LI permits in a residential zone.

Public hearings were scheduled for May 29 for the following rezoning requests:

Albert Perkins, to rezone property at Margrace and Crocker Roads from R-20 to R-10.

CJ Holland, to rezone property at 706 E. King St. from Residential R-8 to General Business.

Charles Scism, to rezone part of his property at 2027 Shelby Road from R-10 to GB to accommodate an auto paint shop.

Barbara Bigger, to rezone property at 115 Perch Dr. from R-10 to R-20.

Paul Medford, to rezone property at 809 E. King St. from R-8 to GB.

Nome Manivong, to rezone property at 920 S. Battleground from Residential to Neighborhood Business.

Council also approved a budget amendment to transfer funds in the Davidson and Jake Early capital project fund to the Special Events budget (\$30,572 for bathroom/concession stands at Davidson and Deal St. and \$6,000 for professional services relating to the playground project.

THEATRE

From 1A

Contributions were received from 130 individuals, businesses and agencies, ranging from an individual's gift of \$25 to a pledge of \$50,000 from the City of Kings Mountain.

Renovations to the theatre will occur during the summer, Champion said, and the first play by KMLT, "Fever Plaid," will be in October.

Champion said although the facility is still "similar" to what it was when it was the Joy Theatre, several changes are planned. One of the first orders of business will be restoring the old theatre marquee which was covered when the church bought the facility several years ago.

The old stage has been expanded into an altar, and one of Holland's priorities will be to design a vaudeville stage, Champion said. Some electrical and lighting work will also be necessary.

Champion said the building seats about 300, and they are in their original condition but have been re-covered at some point.

"But they are in very good working order and appearance," he said. "There is not a bad seat in the house. There is a lot of room between the rows of seats."

The theatre originally seated over 700, he noted. He said some of the seats will be removed and it will eventually seat between 200 and 250.

The old balcony has not been utilized in years and its seats have been removed, he said. The lobby is very similar to what it was when the theatre was in operation.

The little theatre will hold four plays a year there, and be-

tween plays and practice sessions will utilize the building about eight weeks a year, he said. At other times it will be available for public use for plays, dance recitals, music recitals, meetings, conferences, and other activities.

"We hope civic groups and businesses will utilize it," he said. "We hope to keep the rates for rental very affordable." He said Saturday matinees for children are also a possibility.

Champion said his group will attempt to find old pictures and other information about the Joy Theatre to be placed in the lobby along with pictures of old Little Theatre performances.

"We have pictures from almost all of our performances since we reorganized in 1969," he said. "We actually have some photos from the Battle of Kings Mountain dramas that were produced by Kings Mountain Little Theatre in the 1950s."

KMLT was organized in 1941. In recent years it has operated out of Kings Mountain Woman's Club.

In 1992 the group purchased the old Dixie Theatre for a nominal fee from the John O. Plonk Family, but Champion said the project bogged down. KMLT had discussed purchasing the Joy on two other occasions since then.

"Finally, we came to an agree-

ment this time," Champion said. "We felt the price was something we could handle and the community would support. Renovating the Dixie would have cost more money and it probably would have taken two to three years. So we've saved time and money by going with the Joy."

Champion said the little theatre began negotiating with the church late last year but didn't begin its fund-raising drive in earnest until January.

"We had very good support from the community," he said. "Forty volunteers worked hard on this project. It wasn't one person or any one individual that gave a sizable amount. It was a team effort."

Total expenses for the entire project will be \$410,000. The group will now sell the old Dixie Theatre to help with the cost.

The purchase price of the Joy was \$230,000. Renovation costs will amount to \$70,000, and other miscellaneous fees and costs will amount to \$110,000.

The Joy Theatre actually traces back to 1942 when brothers Dave and Charlie Cash got the idea to buy a lot on Railroad Avenue. Blueprints were drawn in 1947 but were re-drawn when the old Mountain View Hotel property at the corner of Railroad Avenue and Mountain

Street became available. They purchased it from DuCourt Mills, Inc. in November 1947 and razed it.

Champion said KMLT will continue to solicit contributions that will be used to expand the building and purchase equipment and other amenities for the Performing Arts Center. Those wishing to contribute may mail checks to Kings Mountain Little Theatre, P.O. Box 1022, Kings Mountain, NC 28086.

Kings Mountain Weather Report

(Compiled by Kenneth Kitzmiller)

	April 18-24	Year Ago
Total precipitation	.69	1.08
Max. one day	.69 (24th)	1.08 (24th)
Month to date	1.41	4.68
Year to date	14.97	17.22
Min. temp.	34 (18th)	40 (21st)
High temp.	81 (24th)	81 (20th)
Avg. temp.	58.4	62.0

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PARROTT

From 1A

get through the interim time until she finds out what she will do.

"If I didn't have them to care for I'd guess I'd go crazy," she said.

The children have also kept her occupied; Parrott said she has lost 25 pounds.

Parrott said she would like to move back to her previous address but doesn't know when. People have been responsive to her needs.

Parrott said she has received donations from area residents and organizations.

A burn fund has been set up at First National Bank. To contribute to the Thelma Parrott burn fund, go to any First National Bank office.

Donations may also be dropped off at the Kings Mountain YMCA's Mountaineer Room on Cleveland Avenue.



SNAPPER

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