

DOJ preclearance discussed at meeting

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

Institute of Government faculty member Robert Joyce spoke to a Shelby audience last week on U.S. Department of Justice preclearance requirements.

Last year the board of elections had wanted to initiate the process of getting out from section five of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

A county under section five must have any changes related to voting sent to the U.S. Justice Department for pre-clearance.

According to County Board of Elections Director Debra Blanton, the issue has been tabled.

She said the board wanted to start the bailout process and save some money.

"It was more of a cost savings process than anything else," Blanton said.

Reactions from county commissioners and members of the community were also reasons the board tabled the issue, she said.

Currently, 40 North Carolina counties are under section five and that list includes Cleveland and Gaston counties.

According to a handout furnished by Joyce, section five applies to certain governmental units that had low voter registration rates at the time the Voting Rights Act was passed. Those jurisdictions were assumed to have been discriminating. Preventing the

introduction of new election procedures that would adversely affect minority voting was a reason for pre-clearance, he said.

To bail out from the pre-clearance requirements, a governmental unit must have no findings of violations in its submissions and all discriminatory voting practices must be eliminated, all changes that needed to be pre-cleared were pre-cleared and it has taken positive steps to increase minorities in the election process.

Several county, municipal and school board representatives were in attendance Wednesday and participated in a question and answer session after Joyce's presentation.

Kings Mountain and Grover Attorney Mickey Corry said while changes must be cleared for everything related to voting, the hours he puts in on those issues are few.

"I think its pretty consistently few hours," he said about time spent with Justice Department pre-clearance requirements.

Kings Mountain School Board member Stella Putnam and Superintendent Larry Allen were also in attendance.

The voting rights of 181 Kings Mountain Schools students who live in Gaston County has been an issue in the school merger issue.

Having Joyce speak was a way to inform municipalities about the pre-clearance requirements, Blanton said.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

West School students and teachers recently celebrated Relay for Life by wearing their hats to school. They raised over \$1,200. Left to right are Dustin Breakfield, Durham Harmon, Alayna Pearson, Speech Therapist Dr. Talley, Collin Cobb, Dreshawn Bell, teacher Mrs. Mabry, and Colby Crisp.

Grover discusses law enforcement arrangement

By BEN LEDBETTER
Staff Writer

During Monday's Grover Town Council meeting, officials discussed parts of the new law enforcement arrangement with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department which is expected to start July 1.

Mayor Bill Favell said he hand delivered a list of items the town could furnish to Cleveland County Sheriff Dan Crawford and is awaiting word from him.

The list of equipment, valued at \$15,643, includes office equipment, ammunition and a 1997 Ford Crown Victoria.

Councilman Bill Willis said he saw no problems with the list.

"Overall when you look at the bottom line, I don't see anything wrong with it," he said.

But Mayor Pro-Tem Max Rollins said he hopes all areas will get covered in the town, such as Grover Elementary, when the new law enforcement starts.

"I hope we cover all those things," he said.

In February, the town voted to contract with the sheriff's department after police chief Ed Pheagin announced his retirement in January because of health reasons.

Deputies patrolling Grover under the agreement would provide 24-hour coverage in the town and would be under supervision of the sheriff.

In other business:

- Council accepted two quotes with a total of \$2,094.78 for benches and swing equipment to be used at Grover Municipal Park.
- Council declined bids from an electric company for installation of additional Christmas lights.

- Council will hold its budget workshop on May 15 and it is expected to be presented on May 29.

- Favell and Councilman Jack Herndon reported that people had been taking flowers from the town's cemetery.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

BB&T is named 2002 Achiever

BB&T Corporation has been named a 2002 Dividend Achiever by Mergent, a New York City-based provider of global financial information.

The annual list of Dividend Achievers is made up of publicly traded corporations which have increased their cash dividends every year for the past 10 years.

BB&T has paid a cash dividend to shareholders every year since 1920 and increased its quarterly cash

dividend payments for 30 consecutive years.

Winn-Dixie offers Savings for College

Winn Dixie shoppers can earn money back for college when they purchase certain items.

Through Winn-Dixie's "Save for College" program, a percentage of purchases will be contributed to a college savings account for a child the purchaser designates.

To participate, customers register their credit cards at www.upromise.com.

Ingles offering money for college

Ingles Supermarkets is now making it possible to save money for college education while doing your grocery shopping.

For information, go to www.ingles-markets.com and click on the Upromise link and follow the directions to sign up for the program. Register any credit cards and/or debit cards that you would use to pay with at Ingles.

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