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4-year KM Council term vote fails

Councilman DeVane announces he has Lou Gehrig disease

ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

Kings Mountain City Council members will continue to serve two-year terms.

Councilman Carl DeVane, who plans to run again despite Lou Gehrig disease, attempted to make terms four years long. The measure failed by a 4-3 vote during Tuesday night's council meeting. Veteran council members DeVane, Rick Moore and Howard Shipp voted for the measure. First-term council members Houston Corn, Kay Hambright and Brenda Ross voted against the measure along with Jerry Mullinax who has served before. DeVane, whose ability to speak is

limited by the disease, prepared a statement which was read by Mayor Rick Murphrey before the vote. In that statement, DeVane argued that two year terms do not give first-term council members time to learn their jobs. He also accused some council members of seeking election related publicity as early as January. According to former councilman Gene White, the measure was not DeVane's idea.

"We all know who is actually promoting this," White said during the public comment phase of the meeting. DeVane vigorously shook his head no as White spoke.

White said he was not opposed to staggering the current two year terms but said four years terms had

been tried before and failed. He went on to launch more accusations laced with innuendo.

"This political structure has corrupted the city manager system," White said.

Referring to Manager Greg McGinnis, White said "he won't be here long unless he compromises his integrity."

White criticized the city for spending money on special events, saying it was "not the city's responsibility to entertain for votes."

"There isn't one person in Kings Mountain who doesn't realize the real reason," White said, referring to special events spending.

White accused some members of the council of "pursuing their own

interest while running the city in the ground."

Until several months ago White had been a fixture during the public comments portion of meetings, speaking out against the city. Then, he went on record saying he wasn't going to continue the practice and was absent from meetings until Tuesday.

The measure DeVane proposed would have affected the 2007 election. If council had approved the matter a public hearing would have been held. After that the measure would have appeared on November's ballot. If it passed, the Justice Department would have had to give its approval pursuant to the See Council 3A



Kings Mountain Councilman Carl DeVane's proposal for four-year council terms was voted down 4-3 at Tuesday night's meeting.

JULY FOURTH FIREWORKS



JOSEPH BRYMER / HERALD

Rashad Dowling, left, and Michael Leviston shop Monday night at Cherokee Fireworks. The store, located at the South Carolina state line, is seeing heavy traffic due to the upcoming Independence Day weekend.

Locals flock to state line for fireworks

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

The boxes have catchy names - Wild West, Munitions Dump, Thunder Road - and they're selling fast, at least according to Cherokee Fireworks manager Roger Cozart.

The store, located over the South Carolina line at Grover, ordered three times its normal pre-Independence Day inventory, Cozart said.

Cherokee has seen an increase in business since the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Cozart says that since then fireworks have caught on so well with some folks that the loud, colorful mini-explosives have become a hobby.

Customers will spend anywhere from \$1 to \$5,000, according to Cozart. The larger purchases typically come from groups of neighbors who pool their funds to have their own private pyrotech show.

The July 4 fireworks selling season cranked up two weeks ago. Sales will drop dramatically on July 5 though according to Cozart customers come every day regardless of the season.

After North Carolina relaxed its fireworks laws, South Carolina retailers feared their sales would drop. Not so, See Fireworks, 3A

Big celebration Monday in KM

A flyover by ultra light air craft, music and a fireworks show are all part of the City of Kings Mountain's annual Fabulous 4th celebration.

The event starts at 6 p.m. Monday at the municipal walking track adjacent to the YMCA.

The ultra light aircraft will fly over at 6 p.m. followed by a concert by Kelsey DiMarco.

At 9 p.m. the Kings Mountain Police Explorers, Loch Norman Pipe Band, 505th N.C. National Guard unit, Over the Mountain Man Dale Putnam and Mayor Rick Murphrey on horseback will make a parade entrance.

As part of a patriotic program Lindsey Bledsoe will sing the National Anthem and Sabrina Collias will sing "My Country 'Tis of Thee."

After musket fire, fireworks will begin. The event is slated to end at 10:30 p.m.

Huffman gets zoning hearing, announces run for Grover board

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

GROVER - A South Carolina man hoping to develop land in Grover has moved to the town and says he will seek a seat on the Grover Council.

"I'm going to change things," Calvin Huffman said Monday night as he stood outside town hall.

Huffman attended Monday night's council meeting as part of a continuing effort to get permission to develop land he owns inside the town. He is proposing a subdivision but needs a zoning change from council before proceeding.

Monday night the council split 2-2 on whether to allow Huffman a public hearing on the issue. Mayor Robert Sides broke the tie in favor of the hearing. Commissioner John Harry was excused from the vote because he owns land adjacent to Huffman's property.

Council members Max Rollins and Barry Toney voted against granting the hearing and Bill Willis and Jackie Bennett voted for it.

The issue first came up during the April 5, 2004 meeting when the board wouldn't act on Huffman's rezoning request. During that meeting no council member would make a motion to approve the request. Town Attorney Mickey Corry then advised Mayor Robert Sides to ask for a motion to deny the request. Councilman Max Rollins made the motion but it died for lack of a second.

After Monday night's meeting Huffman accused some council members of having their "minds made up."

"It's always that way on my issues. It's a vendetta," he said.

Huffman went on to say "zoning is nothing but Communism. Who has a right to tell me I can't develop my property?"

The public hearing is scheduled for Aug. 1.

In other business, council members went into closed session to interview two candidates for police chief but no action was taken. Mayor Robert Sides said Tuesday he expects a decision will be reached by week's end.

The town is re-opening its police department. For the past several years Grover contracted with the Cleveland County Sheriff's Office to provide one full time deputy 40 hours a week.



Calvin Huffman listens as Grover Council ponders his request for rezoning property for a subdivision at Monday night's meeting.

KM shoppers hate to see Winn-Dixie go

BY ANDIE L. BRYMER
 Staff Writer

Grocery shopping options for King Mountain residents may shrink by late summer.

The Kings Mountain Winn-Dixie along with 42 other locations in the Charlotte region and others across the south are closing shop.

The supermarket chain is trying to find buyers, according to Dennis Wortham, communications manager for Winn-Dixie. They are marketing the stores not only to other grocery retailers but businesses like gyms and hobby

stores.

Winn-Dixie customer Essie Marie Foster hopes another grocery store will buy the Kings Mountain location.

"I live two blocks away," she said Monday afternoon as she walked through the store parking lot.

Foster said if another grocery store doesn't step in, she'll start shopping at Food Lion.

It will be a change for Foster though. She has shopped at Winn-Dixie for decades since it was located downtown at what is now Plonk Tire.

Erica Carpenter, an elementary

school student, says she'll miss the Winn-Dixie employees. One man who has worked in produce and frozen foods has known Erica since she was riding in a carrier in her mom's shopping cart. As a toddler she would sing for him, something he teases her about to this day.

Erica's mother Linda Carpenter hasn't made up her mind if she'll take her grocery purchasing dollars to Food Lion or Harris Teeter. One thing is for sure, she'll miss Winn-Dixie's store brand pimento cheese.

"We just wish it wouldn't See Winn-Dixie, 3A



Dietta Wright leaves Winn-Dixie after a grocery stopping trip.

JOSEPH BRYMER/HERALD