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Zoning text amendment sent back to the table

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By 5-2, Kings Mountain City Council Tuesday sent back to the city planning and zoning board a zoning ordinance text amendment to resolve issues which surfaced during the November meeting.

Councilman Keith Miller made the motion to table the vote until Dec. 11 on Hounds Campground developer Mike Brown's request for a text amendment which regulates multiple recreation uses in the city.

The 11-member planning and zoning board, which is appointed by city council, voted unanimously at last month's meeting to recommend approval of an amendment to the zoning text pertaining to public commercial multiple recreational and entertainment uses facility.

Brown contends that setbacks should be substantially lower than what the planning board proposes.

Tuesday's council meeting evolved into charges by Attorney Doug Arthurs that the agenda

See ZONING, 7A

Annexation approved

The former Herman Cobb convenience store/gas station at 721 Margrace Road in the Midpines Community will open as Mike's Food Store soon after the first of the new year.

By a 6-1 vote Tuesday Kings Mountain City Council approved after public hearing the voluntary annexation of 2.85 acres belonging to Mike Heath. The board's action paves the way for the new business which is in the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction.

Councilman Keith Miller cast the dissenting vote. Approving the annexation were mayor pro tem Rodney Gordon and councilmen Rick Moore, Dean Spears, Howard Shipp, Mike Butler and Tommy Hawkins.

Annexation means the business will receive city services, including

See ANNEXATION, 7A

No gas increase planned for KM

Kings Mountain natural gas customers got an early Christmas present from the city Monday.

Nick Hendricks, who heads up both the gas and electric departments, told city council at a Monday afternoon work session that he is recommending that gas users see no additional costs from the city with the expected increase in transportation costs to the city from its supplier, Transco-Williams.

"Based on projections our fund balance in the gas department should take care of any proposed increases," he said in response to a question from city councilman Tommy Hawkins.

Hendricks said Transco has applied for a rate increase and after a public hearing in late January 2013 the city will learn if its increased rate, as expected, is 28%. "We won't recommend that our increase be passed on to customers," he reiterated.



It's the Holiday Season!



'Tis the Season.

A crowd estimated at between 5,000 and 6,000 people lined Kings Mountain streets Saturday for "Home for Christmas," the 2012 Christmas Parade.

High-stepping bands, pretty girls, floats, vintage cars, Girl Scouts celebrating Scouting's 200th anniversary; "Bam Bam" Byers, three-time world medalist and Olympian who carried the Olympic banner escorted by the Kings Mountain High School wrestling team (he is an alumnus of the class of 1993), dance teams, screaming sirens and Santa Claus in traditional red suit topped by a fireman's hat.

Parade-watchers brought their chairs with them in shirt-sleeve weather, cheered all 100 plus units and the kids had a ball, loading up bags of candy thrown by excited paraders walking or riding in the parade.

The weatherman smiled on this year's parade and people loved it.

Ellis Noell, the city of Kings Mountain's events coordinator, remembers parades when the weatherman didn't smile. In past years parades have had to be called off or rescheduled because of King Winter.

"This was just a perfect time and everything went well," said Noell who handled last minute changes like he always does. "It's the season," he laughed.

- Kings Mountain Christmas Parade1B**
- Jingle Bell Rockin' Run.....2B**
- Grover Christmas Parade.....3B**

Hawkins named chairman for CC board of commissioners



photo by LIB STEWART
 Kings Mountain's Ronnie Hawkins takes the oath of office, as chairman of the county board of commissioners, from NC Rep. Tim Moore. County Manager Eddie Bailes looks on.

Kings Mountain mortician Ronnie Hawkins was elected chairman of the Cleveland County board of commissioners Monday morning as Republicans took majority on the five member board.

Jason Falls, Kings Mountain auctioneer, was elected vice-chairman. He has served on the board two years and is active on a number of committees.

A third Republican and newcomer to politics, Susan Allen of Shelby, was also sworn in by NC Rep. Tim Moore (R) of Kings Mountain during an oath-taking ceremony at the Charlie F. Harry

Administrative Offices in Shelby.

Hawkins begins his 13th year and fourth term on the county board. He has served twice previously as vice chairman and chairman.

Eddie Holcomb, Democrat, and Johnny Hutchins, (R), former chairman for two years, round out the board.

"We will continue to work as a team," said Hawkins. He thanked members of the board for their confidence, county manager Eddie Bailes and county staff for their support.

See HAWKINS, 7A

Hackers on the move

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If your credit/debit cards haven't been hacked be thankful. Police Chief Melvin Proctor says hackers are on the move in this area.

"Hackers steal your personal information, put it out on the Internet, people buy it and make duplicate cards," says the Chief.

Proctor was himself one of the victims of this type of theft.

A Kings Mountain woman said the cards of 32 of her "friends" on Facebook were hacked. Four incidents of financial card fraud were reported to Kings Mountain Police this week.

Credit, debit card hacking is happening more often and you don't even know its happening.

Hackers put a tiny device on the card reader where you swipe your card, so when you scan it they get your personal information.

"Scary? You bet it is," says Proctor.

"They can put a phony thing over the part where you swipe your card. You think you're swiping your card through a memory reader and what you're really doing is swiping your card through a device the hacker has created," says a local merchant whose business was flooded by hackers over the past several weeks.

Says the merchant, "There's a lot of Internet fraud in fiber thefts, it's called a worm and it gets in the servers. Many businesses in our two counties have been targeted by this cyber thief who duplicates your



Police chief Melvin Proctor

See HACKERS, 7A

City awards bid to BB&T

"Kings Mountain is on the cutting edge of fiber technology," City Manager Marilyn Sellers told city council Monday afternoon before city fathers awarded the low bid of \$495,722 to BB&T with an interest rate of 1.51% to finance the five year fiber optics project.

Sellers said the first annual payment of \$90,000 is included in the 2012-13 city budget.

In related motions, council awarded a contract to OFS for ADSS cable and hardware for the project in the amount of \$131,127.45 and to Katalyst for Cisco computer products in the amount of \$121,294.10.

By the first of the year all fiber lines are expected to be completed with cable to be installed early in the new year, the city's utilities director Nick Hendricks said, in a progress report at a council work session in the Public Works Conference Room on N. Piedmont Avenue.

The "brains" of the sophisticated fiber operation will be located at two main stations: Public Works and KM City Hall. Once opera-

ble, the communications system linking all city buildings is expected to save the city up to \$65,000 a year. The outside cable, according to Hendricks, has a lifespan of 40-50 years. "This will reduce a lot of telephone costs for us," he said.

Hendricks estimated that over the life of the cable the savings to the city could run \$2.5 to \$3 million.

The service may be available in the future to business and industry but not residential. The current project is a cost savings plan to link all city facilities.

"We have two customers eager to lease dark fiber from the city," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

A "path to Internet service, a ring around the city and dark fiber—a way of the future" is how Hendricks illustrated the fiber project update.

Council members at Monday's work session also received notebooks containing the city's storm water management plan by Holly Black, who gave an update

See BID, 7A

NOW PLAYING



Beth (Josie Gold) and Charlie (Dominic Cline) discussing how the Herdmans never go to church in a scene from "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" which plays Friday and Saturday nights at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday afternoon at 3 p.m. at Joy Theatre. Sell-out crowds have been attending the Kings Mountain Little Theatre performances of the Christmas season classic.



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