

# COASTAL OBSERVER

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## LITCHFIELD RACQUET CLUB

### Opponents serve ideas for rezoning fight

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Nearly 100 people packed into the auditorium at the Waccamaw Library on Saturday with a common goal: stop the rezoning that would replace the Litchfield Racquet Club with apartments. "You see what tennis can do. It can bring us together," said Mike Mushock, who is part of a group of former members that has been trying to buy the

club for years. "It truly is the identity of Litchfield. It's kind of like a landmark." The facility was built by the Litchfield Co. in 1966 and sold to Myrtle Beach National in 1990. Founders Group International then purchased it in 2015. It is now under contract to Trey Smith. Work has already begun on 14 duplexes next to the club which were part of a "planned development." Plans submitted to Georgetown County show 108 one-bedroom units in

nine three-story buildings. The zoning would need to be changed from recreation to multi-family residential. The county Planning Commission will hold a hearing on the zoning change April 18. The property is currently part of a "planned development." The county planning staff will recommend that the commission require a traffic study before making a recommendation to County Council, Boyd  
**SEE "RACQUET CLUB," PAGE 3**



Fences are coming down at the Litchfield Racquet Club, which closed in October.  
Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer



Photos by Tanya Ackerman/Coastal Observer



**Swamp People** | Sixth-grade drama students at Waccamaw Intermediate staged "Shrek Jr. The Musical" this week. Above, Mary Darby Moore as Fiona and Eric Linkous, a Waccamaw High student, as Shrek. At left, Coastal Montessori students enjoyed the show on Wednesday. There is also a show at 6 p.m. Friday.

## COASTAL MONTESSORI

### Pointed questions in survey that led director to quit

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

A survey that the former director suggested to find out why teachers and students were leaving Coastal Montessori Charter School turned into a poll on her management of the school, according to documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act.

The school's board released the questions, but not the answers.

Nathalie Hunt suggested the survey at a Dec. 17 meeting of the school's board. At the time, the school had been dealing with a large budget deficit caused by an error in how the school district calculated its funding.

Board chairman Ryan Fabbri said there was talk that teachers were worried about the future of the school.

"It was more focused on the happiness of the teachers," Fabbri said. "How satisfied they were with the work environment."

The board approved a survey during an executive session at



Nathalie Hunt

the meeting, and tasked board member Jessica Doll with creating it. Doll is an assistant professor of management and decision sciences at Coastal Carolina University.

lina University.

"It was decided that we would allow her to craft what the questions would be," Fabbri said.

After creating the survey, Doll emailed it to the board members and Hunt. Fabbri said none of the board members expressed concerns so it was sent to staff on Jan. 7. There were 135 items on the survey. A third of them were about Hunt or her job performance.

In refusing to release the results of the survey, the charter board cited a section of the Freedom of Information Act that allows information to be withheld if "public disclosure thereof

**SEE "CHARTER," PAGE 4**

## ENVIRONMENT

### Groups appeal state permit for groins

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

The only thing missing was a judge as both sides in a dispute over a state permit to build three groins on the beach at DeBordieu argued their case last week. It was likely to be their last meeting until a state Administrative Law Court judge hears an appeal of the permit.

The Coastal Conservation League and the Belle Baruch Foundation have appealed the permit to allow the groins as part of a beach renourishment project. Opponents argue that the groins will increase erosion on the undeveloped beach at Hobcaw Barony owned by the foundation. The DeBordieu Colony Community Association says the groins will hold the sand and reduce the frequency, and cost, of renourishment that will be funded by property assessments.

The league invited members to the Kimbel Lodge at Hobcaw for an update on the permit, which was issued by the Department of Health and Environmental Control in January. The audience was mostly made up of DeBordieu residents.

"Not that you're not welcome, but it changes the nature of the meeting," Erin Pate, director of the league's North Coast office, told them. She is also a DeBordieu resident. "Our goal is to share information."

The DHEC board last month denied requests to review the staff decision on the permit. The league filed its appeal the day after the meeting. The Baruch Foundation filed the day before. "We're still quite a way from any final decision," said Amy Armstrong, senior counsel at the S.C. Environmental Law Project, which represents the league.

The groups also appealed a previous permit for groins as part of a renourishment project. They were dropped to allow the work to  
**SEE "GROINS," PAGE 3**

## PAWLEYS ISLAND

### Town recycling ends up in landfill

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Items collected on Pawleys Island from a recycling program the town started nine years ago are going straight to the county landfill because they aren't being collected properly.

"All of our recycling is not being recycled. It's being contaminated," Administrator Ryan Fabbri told Town Council this week. The council deferred discussion about changing the collection program.

The town started a voluntary recycling program in June 2010 after getting requests from second-home owners and visitors. It arranged with Rutledge Disposal, which handled 90 percent of collections on the island, to pick up plastics and metals from carts that the town provided to property owners. The town also provided clear plastic bags that were required for the recycled items.

The town's goal was to reduce its waste stream by a third. It pressed Georgetown County to expand the list of recyclables to include paper.

The problem now is that the county can't sort the material that comes in from the town, Fabbri said. He toured the landfill last week with Michelle LaRocco, the county environmental services manager, who showed him the result of the town's collections. "There's stuff that's not even re-



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Council members check the classification of their water bottles during discussion of the recycling program.

cyclable in there," Fabbri said.

The county wants the town to drop paper from its collection and stop requiring plastic bags. The tight market for recyclables is one reason for the change, Mayor Jimmy Braswell said. The company that buys the material from the county wants it "pure and clean," he said.

The county will accept plastics and metal. They can be collected in the same bin. At the landfill, they are sorted by hand. Fabbri estimated the change

would cut the recycling stream by 60 percent, but he said it would actually be recycled.

Paper could be collected separately, perhaps once a month, he said. The town could require people to take it to the county recycling center, which they must do with bottles anyway.

"I don't see renters sorting it like this," Council Member Sarah Zimmerman said. Neither did Council Member Rocky Holliday. "I have rental houses," he said. "It isn't happening."

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



**Rising tide:** Cleanup in Murrells Inlet brings in oddities as well as trash that is sadly familiar.

**SECOND FRONT**

**Household hazards:** County sees numbers rise as it collects items that aren't allowed in recycling centers. **PAGE 4**

**Sports:** Bassmasters Elite fishing tournament returns to Georgetown County with \$100,000 prize. **PAGE 20**



Crime.....	7
Opinion.....	8
Crossword.....	12
What's On.....	13
Classifieds.....	14
Property transfers.....	16
Sports.....	18

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