

COASTAL OBSERVER

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Sheriff questions enforcement of rules for meetings

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A set of rules that will allow for the removal of people who disrupt Georgetown County meetings is due to take effect March 1. County Council agreed to delay implementation to allow for law enforcement training.

Sheriff Carter Weaver raised concerns about the measures.

"Who's determining disruptive behavior?" Weaver asked. "What are the courts and case law saying is disruptive behavior, especially in a public meeting in a public space?"

The sheriff's office provides security at the courthouse that houses the County Council chambers.

Under the rules adopted by ordinance this week, people who attend county government

meetings and who speak to the council and its boards and commissions "shall conduct themselves in a decent, orderly, respectful, and lawful manner, or shall be subject to removal from a meeting. Those who are removed can be barred from attending meetings for up to 12 months at the "sole discretion" of the chairman.

Weaver said his deputies are required to follow state law, not

the orders of board chairmen. He didn't envision deputies at the courthouse keeping track of who was allowed to attend meetings.

"The county attorney reached out to me several months ago, and I sent him some case law with my concerns," Weaver said. "I asked him to not only worry about the behavior of the public. I also told him it needed to have a

component of the board members and council members, because how can you deal with a disruptive electorate or a disruptive citizenry and not deal with a disruptive board."

Weaver added that he never saw the final draft of the ordinance.

County Council approved the measure by title only in December. This month, at the
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LAND USE

Commission recommends county deny duplex plan

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

County Council will have the final say on a plan to build 12 units on a two-acre property on Petigru Drive between Inkwood Court and Ferguson Drive.

The Planning Commission last week recommended the council deny the plan.

Under its current "general residential" zoning, the six duplexes can be built on the property. They would have a net density of 7.7 units an acre, which the county considers high density.

However, the property is shown as "medium density" in the future land-use maps that are part of the county's comprehensive plan.

"It's a [slippery] slope I think because people purchase property based on the zoning and what they can do and what they're entitled to do," Jim Green of G3 Engineering, the agent for the property owner, told the commission. "If we're going to not follow what zoning allows and follow the comprehensive plan, then somehow we need to throw out current zoning and start all over or institute the comprehensive plan as current zoning."

It is the fourth multi-family development in the Parkersville community to come before the Planning Commission in the last six months. Residents and community groups filed suit over the approval of two townhouse developments that received site plan approval from County Council. They argued that the county should have applied the medium density criteria from the land-use maps rather than the high density use allowed by the zoning
SEE "LAND USE," PAGE 3



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Pawleys Inlet flows through a gap in a groin that, below, was still partly covered last year.

PAWLEYS ISLAND

As inlet continues to migrate Prince George group files lawsuit

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The migration of Pawleys Inlet has prompted a third lawsuit against the state, the town of Pawleys Island and its contractors seeking to shift the inlet north to its location before the town conducted a beach nourishment project.

The Prince George Community Association filed suit last week asking the Circuit Court for an injunction "requiring Defendants to immediately restore the Inlet to its pre-nourishment location and to restore the oceanfront and creek side sand dunes," according to the complaint.

Bud and Melesa Watts, who own the northernmost oceanfront house at Prince George, filed suit last May against the



town, the state Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, the Department of Health and Environmental Control, Marinex Construction and

Coastal Science and Engineering. They said the inlet between Pawleys Island and Prince George had moved south by
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HIGHWAY 17

Group forms to adopt median landscaping through Pawleys

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The orphaned median through the Pawleys Island business district has a new family. A group is organizing to raise funds to maintain the landscape along the 1.9 miles of Highway 17.

"There's a whole lot of energy behind getting the orphan taken care of," said Beth Goodale, the director of Georgetown County Parks and Recreation, who is working with the group.

The landscape was planted when the state Department of Transportation installed the median in place of a two-



way left-turn lane in 2015. DOT funded maintenance for the first year, but the county was responsible after that. Work by contractors was spotty until last year, when two overnight cleanups were done by Waccamaw Landscaping and paid for from county economic development funds.

The raised median falls between two landscaped areas that are maintained by non-profit groups with help from the county, leading to its informal designation as the orphaned median.

"We named it Mainstreet Pawleys, because that's what it is," said Vida Miller, a former business owner and state representative who helped form the
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Wofford Sculpture Studio

HISTORY | Harriet Tubman

Exhibit on emancipator coming to county

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

While others areas of the country get three months to enjoy and learn from "Harriet Tubman: Journey to Freedom," the sculpture will be in Georgetown County for six months.

It will spend three months at Joseph Rainey Park on Front Street in

A sculpture of Tubman by Wesley Wofford is the centerpiece of the exhibit.

Georgetown and then three months at Brookgreen Gardens.

Steve Williams, an author and historian, said having the sculpture in Georgetown will bring "pride" to the African-American community.

"For many years we didn't have that much to be proud about because of institutional slavery," said Williams, a Georgetown native. "From an African-American perspective. From a female perspective. From a historical perspective. She is a giant in so many other places, but this one of the few places that we don't know much about her."

Tubman was born into slavery in 1822 in Maryland. She escaped and as a

fugitive became a conductor of the Underground Railroad - a network of safe houses and secret routes. She made numerous trips to the South to rescue hundreds of slaves and was a scout and spy for the Union Army during the Civil War. She eventually settled in New York and was active in the women's suffrage movement.

"What we're doing with the event is not only celebrating Harriet Tubman and her courage and her life story of being an emancipator of slaves," said Marilyn Hemingway, president and CEO of the Gullah Geechee Chamber of Commerce. "I think it's a wonderful
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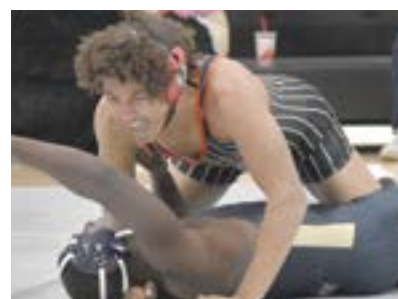


Scout project on course: A bridge for runners and walkers goes up in a day.

SECOND FRONT

Safety: Sheriff renews quest for funds to add patrol deputies.

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WHS sports: Wrestlers set record for wins. And they're not done.

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