

NEWS

Ebony rezoning appeal case in the news

BY SYLVIA ALLEN
Brunswick Times-Gazette

LAWRENCEVILLE – During the citizen comment period at the October meeting of the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors Irving Moore questioned the amount of money the county has spent on the rezoning of property in Ebony to make way for a new Dollar General.

Earlier the Brunswick County Board of Supervisors approved a request to rezone property from Agriculture (A-1) to Business (B-1) that will allow Dollar General to build a store in Ebony, a small rural community in the southern part of Brunswick County. The request pitted the interests of residents to keep the area rural against those who see this as an economic development opportunity.

The vote was 3 to 2 with Supervisor Dr. Barbara Jarrett Harris – Chair, breaking the tie vote. Supervisor John Zubrod, who represents the Meherrin District, made a mo-

tion to deny the rezoning request and Supervisor Bernard Jones seconded the motion and Supervisor Dr. Alfonzo Seward and Supervisor Welton Tyler voted against the motion setting the stage for Dr. Harris to break the tie. Tyler then made a motion to approve the request seconded by Seward and Zubrod and Jones voted against the motion and Dr. Harris voted in favor. The story ran in the Feb. 5, 2020 edition of the Brunswick Times-Gazette.

According to information provided by Director of Planning George E. Morrison, III, the subject property is located on the east sides of Ebony Road (State Route 903), across from the intersection of Hendricks Mill Road (State Route 903) and Robinson Ferry Road (State Route 644) in the Meherrin Election and Magisterial Districts.

Anne and Al Hartley of Ebony are leading the campaign opposing the rezoning and filed an appeal. The court battle has been long and costly.

Moore said the county has spent approximately \$96,000 on lawyers

to defend the decision. He said the supervisors didn't listen to citizens who didn't want Dollar General. Moore said that as far as he was concerned when the citizens said they didn't want the company in Ebony that should have been the end of it.

Moore said a settlement has been offered and he suggested the supervisors take the offer and stop spending \$300 per hour on lawyer fees. He said citizens don't want to see money thrown away.

Several supporters applauded Moore when he finished speaking.

Gene Wiley from Freeman said even though he likes Dollar General, the residents of Ebony don't want a Dollar General in their neighborhood. He said the county needs to seek the right kind of business and expressed his concern that the court battle has gone on for so long. Wiley encouraged the supervisors to listen to the people and to stop trying to put square pegs into round holes. He also encouraged the supervisors to settle the case. Wiley also received applause from supporters.

Arrests made in drone delivery of contraband case

On November 15, 2021 at approximately 11:34 p.m. investigators were alerted by surveillance systems that two subjects were in the area surrounding the Lawrenceville Correctional Center, which is operated by The GEO Group. Sheriff B. K. Roberts said the suspects matched the description of persons previously identified and suspected of delivering contraband into the correctional facility. Brunswick County deputies, the bloodhound K9, investigators, members of the Virginia Department of Corrections Drug Task Force, officers from the Lawrenceville Police Department and the Virginia State Police quickly responded to the scene and secured the area. A search of the area was conducted, our bloodhound K9 deployed, and two subjects were located in the woods and detained. The subjects were identified as Kendall Jamal Shaw, 31, of Norfolk, Virginia and Hakeem Jamal Berry, 24, of Norfolk, Virginia. Shaw and Berry were found to be in possession of two book bags containing a drone and three individually wrapped packages containing 11 cell phones. Both subjects were arrested and charged with attempting to deliver contraband to inmates and transported to the Meherrin River Regional Jail where they were given secure bonds. The investigation is ongoing and other charges are pending.

On Thursday Sheriff Roberts said, "I'm really proud of my team's persistence in working hard to get these suspects identified. I've worked in a prison before and any contraband coming in puts all staff and inmates at risk."



Two men are charged with attempting to deliver contraband, 11 cell phones, to inmates at Lawrenceville Correctional Center on Nov. 15, 2021, by using a drone.

Lake Gaston Association Year in Review

The Lake Gaston Association will hold their next monthly meeting on December 1 at 9:30 a.m. at the Lake Gaston Baptist Church located on Hwy. 903 across from the Subway Restaurant.

Topic: LGA Year in Review - Speaker: Brian Goldsworthy, LGA President. The meeting will also provide an op-

portunity to get caught up on the various activities that the LGA Committees – Public Safety, Lake Environment, Government Relations, Marketing and Membership, and Lake Clean-Up – are working on.

Got a lake-related issue or concern that the LGA should be working on? There will be time allotted on the

agenda to present those concerns to the LGA Board.

The meeting is open to the public, members and non-members alike, so gather up your neighbors and come join the LGA.

For more information contact (252) 586-6577 or 1-888-586-6577 or info@lakegastonassoc.com.

Lake Happenings

Nov. 26, Post 308 Dinner Meeting, 6 p.m., American Legion Post 308, 217 Mitchell Street, Littleton, NC. All members are urged to attend, by order of the Post Commander.

EVERY WEDNESDAY Lake Country Al-Anon Family Group Meetings, 7 p.m. at Prospect United Methodist Church, 1974 Ebony Road, Ebony, Va. Meetings are for family and friends of people with alcohol/drug problems. You can virtually access this meeting by calling 1-415-655-0003 then enter the Access Code: 180 692 9058 # #.

Firearm on school property charge filed

BY SYLVIA ALLEN
Brunswick Times-Gazette

LAWRENCEVILLE – Marcus Davis, 36, from Lawrenceville, Virginia is charged with possession of a firearm on school property on Nov. 11, 2021.

According to information provided by Captain Brad Evans with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office, Deputy S. J. Finch was called by administration at Red Oak-Sturgeon Elementary School about a person Finch was investigating for passing the school bus. The person was at the front door of the school. Finch located Davis and questioned him. Davis said the sun was in his eyes and he did not see that the school bus was stopped. Finch said there were two warrants for his arrests regarding the school bus incident on Nov. 10, 2021. Davis was placed in handcuffs and he stated that he had a gun in his left rear pocket. Finch located the firearm, a HNR ARMS .32 caliber revolver, and the gun had two cartridges in it. Davis did not have a concealed handgun permit and was actively on Brunswick County Public School property during normal operating hours. He was taken to the Meherrin River Regional Jail and charged and held on a \$3,500 secured bond.

Laura Michelle Bowen, 40, from Lawrenceville and George Walter Vespucci, 40, from Lawrenceville are charged with assault and battery of a family member on Nov. 10, 2021.

Evans said Deputy H. Stith responded to 77 Cabel Court regarding a disturbance between a male and female. Both were outside in the yard. The glass to the window was smashed and both parties had conflicting stories about when the glass was broken. The female said the glass was broken days ago and the male said the female broke the glass trying to get back in the residence. He said that is how she got the two lacerations on her neck.

Based on the totality of the situation both parties were arrested for domestic violence and emergency protective orders were issued for both parties.

Charlisa Monae Knight, 36, from Richmond, Virginia is charged with assault and battery of a family member on Nov. 15, 2021. She is also charged with illegal use of gases.

Evans said Deputy T. K. Lewis, Sergeant Connell and Deputy Grassel responded to a disturbance at Piney Woods Road, Lawrenceville at 3:59 a.m. The caller said his son and his son's wife were inside the residence arguing and he wanted them to stop. The victim stated that Knight had sprayed him with pepper spray for no reason. She denied spraying the victim. Lewis noticed a bruise on her arm. Lewis watched the video he could hear Knight make a statement in the background. At approximately 2 minutes and 2 seconds Knight was yelling in the background of the video and it sounded as if she stated "I didn't fight him I sprayed him."

See ARREST, page 11

Lake Gaston HOMES

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