

LEGALS

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personal representative's attorney are set forth below.

All creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate on whom a copy of this notice is required to be served must file their claims with this court WITHIN THE LATER OF 3 MONTHS AFTER THE TIME OF THE FIRST PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE OR 30 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF SERVICE OF A COPY OF THIS NOTICE ON THEM.

All other creditors of the decedent and other persons having claims or demands against decedent's estate must file their claims with this court WITHIN 3 MONTHS AFTER THE DATE OF THIS NOTICE.

ALL CLAIMS NOT FILED WITHIN THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN SECTION 733.702 OF THE FLORIDA PROBATE CODE WILL BE FOREVER BARRED.

NOTWITHSTANDING THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH ABOVE, ANY CLAIM FILED TWO (2) YEARS OR MORE AFTER THE DECEDENT'S DATE OF DEATH IS BARRED.

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TOP STORIES



Madison County Community Bank (MCCB) held groundbreaking ceremonies Oct. 16 for a new bank here that will be known as Taylor County Community Bank. On hand for the event were: (left to right) Mayor Shirlye Hampton, Cindy James, MCCB vice president of business development and loan officer; Perry Advisory Board members Benjye Tuten, Morris Steen and Thomas Demps; MCCB Board Chairman Bill Rutherford; MCCB board members James Coleburn, Alan Cherry, Robby Robinson and Carson Cherry; and MCCB President and CEO Edward Meggs.

Several new subdivisions receive initial approval

DEVELOPMENT

Continued from page 1

over the Fourth of July holiday. The three-story marina project features 6,600-square feet of retail space with package store, a full-service bar, dry-stack boat storage for up to 48 vessels, 103 wet slips, fish cleaning stations, bathrooms with showers, boat rentals and a bait shop offering fresh and frozen baits and was projected to employ an estimated 35 people.

With a total capital investment estimated at around \$7.6 million, the project was aided by an economic development incentive approved by the county commission, which consisted of a 50% property tax abatement over the next five years, projected to save the owners \$126,000 in taxes.

In October, City of Perry officials joined Prospect Real Estate Development Group Chairman Richard Zahn in turning the ceremonial first shovel of dirt during a groundbreaking at the future site of The Grove Apartments.

The multi-family gated apartment village – estimated to cost \$42 million – is currently under construction on a

22.5-acre parcel located between U.S. Hwy. 19 and Old Dixie Highway behind the Holiday Inn Express and is projected to include 344 new “luxury, upscale” workforce and family residential housing units.

Taylor County’s newest and largest residential development is planned for construction in two phases and was made possible by 10 years worth of ad valorem tax and natural gas utility incentives granted by the City of Perry, set to begin once the final unit is completed.

On Nov. 16, just over a year after announcing plans to site a new bank here, officials held a groundbreaking ceremony to officially mark the start of construction of Taylor County Community Bank at the corner of Jefferson Street and Church Street. Construction of the new bank, a division of Madison County Community Bank, is expected to take up to 10 months.

In other banking news, effective June 1, Buckeye Community Federal Credit Union (BCFCU) announced a major expansion into seven additional counties in North Florida, as well as a name change to Blue Coast Federal Credit Union.

According to site plan

documents filed with the city, Capital City Bank is in the early stages of a proposed project that would include the construction of a new 3,000 square-foot bank with drive-thru lanes on .61 acres located along Byron Butler Parkway (U.S. Hwy. 19) in front of the former Kmart building.

West End Subdivision, a proposed 31-unit residential development on 18.84 acres in Steinhatchee proposed by Joe H. “Joey” Anderson III of Old Town, received preliminary plat approval from the planning board after a March 3 public hearing. The major new development is planned to include 19 single family dwellings and 12 townhome/condo units 56 existing lots located near the mouth of the Steinhatchee River.

In April, the county commission approved a zoning change and amended the county’s Future Land Use Map to allow for a proposed new 120-unit recreational vehicle (RV) park campground on Beach Road. According to the application, JKSW Investments, LLC (George and Stephanie Weldon) are seeking to develop a 10.51-acre parcel located at 18835 Beach Road just south of Dekle Beach and Sand

Dollar Road.

On June 2, the Taylor County Planning Board voted 3-1 to approve a preliminary subdivision plat application for Lazy Tortoise Ranch subdivision – a 45-unit “luxury residential RV resort” residential development proposed on approximately 245 acres off Strickland’s Landing Drive near Spring Warrior.

At the city’s Aug. 9 meeting, City Manager Taylor Brown informed the council that the city’s Planning and Zoning Board had approved a final site plan clearing the way for Ellianos Coffee Co. -- a specialty coffee chain known for its drive-thru only service – at the Perry Square shopping center in front of Save a Lot.

According to its application, 850 Coffee, LLC (doing business as Ellianos Coffee of Lake City) plans to construct a free-standing, 800-square-foot, dual drive-thru building on .17 acres in the existing parking lot located at 2020 S. Jefferson Street.

Big Bend Technical College broke ground on a new \$2 million health science virtual reality lab during ceremonies held Tuesday, Oct. 25.

North Florida College (NFC) recently announced plans to open a local “service center” at 319 Byron Butler Parkway in Perry, allowing students to apply for admission, seek financial aid, enroll in classes, as well as access tutoring, testing and online classes.

In separate meetings, the City of Perry agreed to sell small, dead-end portions of local streets to two local businesses (Cribbs & Sons Auto Parts and Wilson’s Bait & Tackle) after owners expressed an interest in expanding.

More than \$7.2 million in upgrades and rehabilitation projects are planned at Perry-Foley Airport over the next six years, with another \$5.5 million project in the wings still awaiting federal funding.

Residents along the coast from Steinhatchee to the Leisure Retreats area are expected to receive high-speed fiber internet service early next year as part of a \$65 million project to deploy some 2,400 miles of “fiber-to-the-home” broadband internet to Tri-County Electric Cooperative customers located in Taylor, Madison, Jefferson and Dixie counties.

Although the lone bid came in \$2 million over

budget, Taylor County Sheriff’s Office (TCSO) officials are working with county staff and a construction company to trim down options in order to take advantage of a \$4.6 million allocation from the state to renovate and expand the Taylor County Jail.

A red-hot real estate market continued for the first half of 2022, sending property values and home prices up, producing equity for homeowners looking to sell or downsize, as well as generating additional tax revenues for local governmental agencies.

City, county and school board officials managed to keep property tax rates steady, despite adopting larger budgets due in part to inflation and minimum wage increases, thanks to record-setting numbers of home and land sales that resulted in increased property values in 2022.

As part of a “seller’s market” in portions of the country over the past three years, the average (mean) sales price of a single-family home in Taylor County soared by nearly 70% – from nearly \$130,000 in 2019 to an average of nearly \$220,000 through the first six months of 2022.

City manager submitted letter of resignation effective Jan. 28

TURNOVER

Continued from page 1

the closest local race of the primary election.

In a three-person race for the vacant District 3 seat, Diane C. Landry received more than 50% of the votes cast to avoid a run-off and win outright, filling the seat formerly held by the late Mike Deming.

District 5 Councilman Ward Ketring secured a new term without facing opposition.

Leading up to the election, Brynes made regular appearances at council meetings, engaging in contentions exchanges with various city officials while raising questions and on a wide variety of issues, including the city’s most recent audit, an incentive package for a proposed apartment village, the city’s proposed budget and several policy decisions.

The council later tightened

its policy on how and when members of the public could present requests and questions, moving the appointed public comment time earlier on the agenda near the beginning of its twice-monthly meetings.

Citing the city’s annual audit at a June 14 meeting, Brynes questioned council and staff over what appeared to be declining natural gas usage by commercial customers and the operating margin in the gas fund dipping into the negative after declining over the past several years.

Three months later, at a Sept. 13 meeting, City Manager Taylor Brown reported that “multiple mistakes,” “honest human errors” and an “out-of-place decimal point” in a spreadsheet reportedly led to a complex series of miscalculations resulting in city staff underbilling Super-Pufft Snacks for more than \$1 million in natural gas

utility services over the past two years.

According to a two-year snapshot provided by City Finance Director Penny Staffney, the City of Perry accidentally underbilled the city’s largest utility customer \$990,813 for natural gas from June 2020 to June 2022.

City Attorney Ray Curtis submitted his resignation on Aug. 29, citing a desire to spend more time with his newborn son.

Brown later submitted his

letter of resignation on Oct. 24, announcing his intent to leave on Jan. 28, 2023.

Curtis ultimately agreed to continue to serve as the city’s legal counsel – after the city council voted to move the start time of its twice-monthly meetings to 4 p.m. and increase the annual legal retainer from \$18,000 to \$36,000 – however, the search continues for a new city manager heading into 2023.

On Nov. 9, in his first meeting after being

sworn into office, Brynes brought a number of accusations against top city administrators, calling for an external investigation into the Super-Pufft underbilling. The city council discussed the issue at length, but ultimately took no action on his request.

As 2022 drew to a close, Brown provided an update on his ongoing negotiations with Super-Pufft, stating he hopes to have some resolution on billing and environmental fines related

to wastewater compliance issues before his final day with the city on Jan. 28.

At the city’s Dec. 13 meeting, in a split 3-2 vote, a divided council opted not to interview any of the 12 individuals who submitted applications to fill the soon-to-be-vacant city manager position and instead approved a motion by Brynes to reject all applicants and re-start the process by re-advertising the position with one slight change to the job requirements.

Bystanders held suspect until officer arrived

DRUNK

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she saw a man choking a dog by pulling on the leash too hard and tried to help. The man got aggressive and punched her in the head. Several bystanders separated the male and held him until my arrival,” Peacock reported.

“I made contact with the male subject, identified as Johnny Knutson, who was highly intoxicated to where he could hardly stand. I asked him for his name and if he needed EMS to look at a cut on his left ear from where he fell on the concrete. He muttered his name and was unable to answer due to his level of intoxication,”

Peacock wrote.

In a sworn statement, the female victim stated she saw Knutson was drunk and went to check on him when she exited the store, asking EMTs if he was all right because he had fallen in the ditch in front of Kathi’s Krab Shack.

She stated she was going to her cousin’s car when

Knutson approached her and hit her in the head with his fists.

Knutson was charged with disorderly intoxication for endangering people both on the roadway while stumbling in and out of traffic and while at the Dollar Tree. He was also charged with battery for striking the victim in the head with a closed fist.