

By ROB CHAPMAN

PRINCE EDWARD — County Supervisors presented a framed copy of a resolution of respect honoring the late Oliver Hill Sr. Tuesday evening to his son, Dr. Oliver W. Hill Jr.

Hill, who passed away August 5, was the lead Counsel in the now famous *Davis V. County School Board* of Prince Edward County case that helped end racial segregation in education. (It was one of five cases consolidated in the 1954 *Brown V. Board of Education*.)

Dr. Hill thanked the board and residents of the county and Farmville.

“...I’ve gone to a lot of these kinds of programs and received awards on behalf of my father and, oftentimes there’s a climate of pessimism that the legacy of *Brown* has not been fulfilled and that things have come to turn back around,” Dr. Hill said. “But, when I come to Farmville and I see this audience and I see this board of supervisors, this is really a monument to my father, greater than any monument they’re going to put up on the capital grounds here and I think you all have much to be proud of as an icon to the whole country of what could happen when people work together.”

Dr. Hill added, “So I want to thank you for this and I want to thank you for making the dream of *Brown* come true to have a truly inclusive society here in Prince Edward County.”

County supervisors held a reception honoring the memory and legacy of Hill prior to the meeting at the Virginia’s Heartland Visitor’s Center.

“This evening, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors has the opportunity to pay its respects to the life and legacy of a man who helped bestow upon our county, our Commonwealth and our nation one of the greatest gifts to future generations—that of the opportunity for equal education,” Chairman William “Buckie” Fore commented.

Fore reflected that then President Clinton, who presented Hill the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1999 said that: “Throughout his long and rich life, he has challenged the laws of our land and the conscience of our country. He has stood up for everything that is necessary to make America truly one, indivisible, and equal.”

The resolution of respect honoring Hill was approved at the board’s September meeting and reads, in part, that the Board “...does join other Virginians in honoring the life and legacy of Oliver White Hill Sr. for his efforts to promote racial equality, and ensure equal opportunities and justice for all.”

Boundary Adjustments

County officials have received two requests for boundary adjustments with the Town. Specifically, Woodland, Inc., has asked that an estimated 13.2 acres of property be taken into the Town.

In a separate request, Blalock Real Estate Services seeks a boundary adjustment for 67.2 acres located off of Scott Drive. Baleigh Commons has been planned as a residential development that would consist of approximately 100 home sites.

“...Basically, the people that are interested in this are developers out of Chesterfield County...looking to do a single family development there,” explained the County’s Director of the Department of Planning and Community Development Jonathan Pickett.

About half, he cited, would target market rate homes and the balance for elderly folks with smaller lots. The development would be accessed through Scott Drive and he noted there is an access plan through the back of the subdivision through the new Stage Coach Run subdivision.

“By right, they can do 20,000 square foot lots in the County in this location so I don’t think...you will see a whole lot of difference from a traffic standpoint between what will be allowed in the Town and what will be allowed in the County,” Pickett said. “By right, they can do quite a few homes back there already...”

Following some discussion on the matter (which included input from the County Attorney James R. Ennis), board members specifically moved forward with seeking consent from the Town for the boundary adjustment (they are required to indicate acceptance); an agreement must also be prepared—it must be available to the public for inspection as part of the public notice prior to a public hearing that must be held.

Ennis suggested that the Town have their attorney prepare a draft of a boundary adjustment agreement to be reviewed by the County.

Properties outside of Town limits are subject to higher out-of-town rates for water and sewer service and tap fees.

New Lowe’s Light

Supervisors paved the way to install a new traffic signal for the Lowe’s store site, off of U. S. Route 15 south of Farmville.

Specifically, the board transferred \$1.3 million from the general fund to the economic development fund, appropriated \$125,000 (which was transferred to revenue sharing for the new stoplight) and \$1,175,000 to the economic development fund balance.

"This is very convoluted, but the cause of this was we sold the Lowe's property last fiscal year," explained Bartlett. "It was not anticipated that that would close before June 30, but it did. So, in the budget as approved, there was \$1.3 million in the economic development fund, but when we sold it, the money went into the general fund. So all we're doing is moving the money from that sale into the economic development fund..."

The stoplight will be partially funded by revenue sharing and Assistant County Administrator Sarah Puckett noted that "VDOT anticipates that installation prior to Lowe's opening in mid-December."

The final cost is not known, but the \$125,000 Bartlett cited, is the "worst case scenario."

In Other News...

*No speakers signed up to comment in public participation.

*It was noted that the board does not have a written treasurer's report. County Treasurer Mable Shanaberger explained that a new auditing standard was issued in May of 2006 for audits ending after last December 15.

"We were not fully aware of the effect this would have on us until in the spring," she said.

Ms. Shanaberger noted that steps needed to be taken prior to our closing the fiscal year 2007, thus...one of the delays. In addition to that, they also needed to keep our books open for 60 days, which was another delay.

The fiscal year closed on October 4 and they are working on a treasurer's report for July. The November board packet is expected to have the end of year report for 2007 showing fund balances and other reports.

"...I can assure you that there is money in the banks to cover the County's routine expenditures," Ms. Shanaberger told the board.

*Farmville District (101) Supervisor Howard Simpson highlighted plans to eliminate the automobile decal for 2009 (one will be necessary for the coming year).

Taxpayers will still have to pay the fee, but the decal would be eliminated.

*County officials introduced the Building and Grounds Supervisor, Ronald Vaneps. He had previously served as a trails maintenance supervisor for the Department of the Interior and has 15 years in buildings and grounds maintenance, including 13 years as a supervisor.

*Board members approved a consent agenda that included reimbursement for four erroneous assessments and awarded a livestock claim.

*Board members were presented with an update of highway projects by Ms. Puckett. Miller Lake Road and Hidden Lake Road lack one signature each on securing right of way for road improvements; and work on a rural addition on Slaydon Forest Drive has begun.

Lockett District Supervisor Robert "Bobby" Jones relayed questions about Smith Drive—specifically the ownership of alleyways behind homes to the landowners.

None of the alleyways have been developed and the question arose whether the land could be returned to each property owner. Questions were directed to the County attorney for further study.

*Board members, with the timing of the Virginia Association of Counties annual meeting in November, agreed to move their scheduled November meeting from the second Tuesday (the 13th) to Wednesday, November 14.

Chairman Fore was designated the voting delegate for the meeting and Simpson as the alternate.

*County Administrator Wade Bartlett presented board members with a code of ethics which outlines that he will effectively follow sound business practices as it pertains to running of the county, that his main objective is to look after the interest of the citizens, that they will "behave professionally and we'll seek no favor."

Bartlett said he would pass it out to the staff and hold them to the same kind of standards.

"...Serving the public is more of a calling than a job and we'll try to hold ourselves to those high standards," he said.

*Board members recessed until 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 14 and will request a joint meeting with the Town at noon on November 15.

County Supervisors, given the current drought, will allow farmers to withdraw water from the Sandy River Reservoir. Farmers must, however, contact the county administrator's office prior to withdrawing water.