

Rocky Mount TELEGRAM

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ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA

\$2.75

SATURDAY-MONDAY, JULY 10-12, 2021



State House to weigh bill inspired by city audit

BY AMELIA HARPER
Staff Writer



BARNES

The “Enhance Local Government Transparency Bill” co-sponsored by state Sen. Lisa Stone Barnes, R-Nash, is far from dead despite coordinated attempts to kill it, Barnes said this week in an interview.

Senate Bill 473, which was inspired in part by the findings presented by State Auditor Beth Wood regarding the mishandling

of money within the City of Rocky Mount government, offers more options to regain public money lost in similar situations. It also criminalizes situations where an elected official misuses his or her elected office for personal financial gain and legally restricts self-dealing by public of-

officials who also serve on nonprofit boards.

As of June 30, the bill has been re-referred to the state House Judiciary I Committee. If that panel approves it, it will then move to the House Rules, Calendar and Operations Committee.

“There is an amendment to the bill floating around that would clarify some of the language surrounding public officers who serve on nonprofit boards, but that amendment can be voted in one of

several committees,” Barnes said.

The work of the General Assembly resumes on Tuesday. Barnes said she hopes to be able to see the bill brought to the House floor for a vote soon.

“I am really pushing for that to happen,” Barnes said.

Barnes said she feels the bill, which strengthens penalties for local governments and public officials who abuse their positions and misuse public funds, is nearly ready for that vote. It has already

sailed through the state Senate, passing on May 6 by a 42-6 vote after being approved by three state Senate committees.

“The bottom line is that this bill has been scrutinized by a lot of people from both parties,” she said.

Though the need for the bill was brought to light by the Rocky Mount audit report, which uncovered ethical issues that have nev-

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PAIGE MINSHEW/ROCKY MOUNT TELEGRAM

Scott Tulloss, right, has taken the helm of the Tulloss Equipment Co. from his father, John Jr., left.

New generation takes helm of family firm

BY PAIGE MINSHEW
Telegram Correspondent

Family-owned businesses are the primary form of business in the country, but few of them are able to last for a second or third generation.

One local business is proving that wrong.

Scott Tulloss, now president and CEO of Tulloss Equipment Co., is the third generation of Tulloss men in the role. At the helm of a company that was started in 1946, Scott follows his father, John Jr., and his grandfather, John, at the helm of

the company.

Fresh out of college, Scott began a career in finance, where he worked for several years. Something, though, was missing, he said.

“Behind the desk just wasn’t my thing,” he said.

He was ready to leave the world of banking behind and join his father at the family business.

“I said to Scott, ‘This isn’t like the bank,’” John Jr. said. “Every two weeks you get a check, but here you’re only going to get a check if we have the money. My concern was when

he started was if we could do enough business to pay us, pay the rent. But I guess it worked out alright since we’re sitting right here.”

Although Scott is now in the driver’s seat, John Jr. isn’t planning to retire anytime soon.

“I don’t want to retire,” he said.

Scott said that’s fine with him.

“We’ve already talked about it, and I told him he could come into the office for as long as he wants,” Scott said. “He’ll retire at his desk with his head down.”

John Jr. said building a career outside the family business didn’t even cross his mind. He said that he finished his last class at N.C. State University at noon and by 1 p.m., he was back in Rocky Mount working.

“One of the keys to us staying in business is being smart with our money and with the equipment we sell. We pride ourselves on getting our hands on product that people are proud to have,” Scott said. “When we’re selling good

See **TULLOSS**, A6

Candidates filing to run for election

Town posts up for grabs

BY AMELIA HARPER
Staff Writer

Local elections boards are in the midst of the filing season for most municipalities in the Twin Counties, and some election races are heating up faster than others.

Spring Hope Town Commissioner Prudence Wilkins was the first candidate to formally announce her candidacy. Wilkins announced at a news conference before the filing season began that she plans to run for mayor during the November election.

That seat is currently occupied by longtime Spring Hope Mayor Buddy Gwantley III. Wilkins has served two years on the Spring Hope Board of Commissioners.

“Being the person that I am, many of you know that I am very much in the community, very much love the Town of Spring Hope and love what Spring Hope has to offer,” Wilkins said on June 29 at her news conference. “I am not going to stand here and tell you guys that I am going to do this or I am going to do that because it takes an entire community to do the things that we need to do here within Spring Hope. We



WILKINS

See **ELECTIONS**, A6

Council reappoints city panel members

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer

The City Council recently quickly voted for keeping in place a number of people who made clear their availability to continue serving on boards and commissions.

During the June 28 council regular meeting, Garland Jones and Jean Almand Kitchin were reappointed to the Central City Revitalization Panel and William Sharpe and Nehemiah Smith were reappointed to the Human Relations Commission.

Also, the council reappointed Clara Knight and Johnnie Mayo Jr. to the Planning Board, Carl Revis to the Board of Adjustment

and Darlene Spencer-Harris to the Community Appeals Board.

The council also reappointed Chantelle Mosley to the Utility Services Review Board.

The Central City Revitalization Panel advises about matters regarding the preservation of and improvements to the downtown area.

Jones was appointed to the CCRP in 2006. Jones serves as a representative of property owners in the central part of the city and also has been serving as the CCRP’s chairman.

Kitchin was appointed to the CCRP in 2014 and serves at large.

See **BOARDS**, A6

Local women’s shelter upgrades safe house

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer

My Sister’s House has completed a major two-part project at the local nonprofit organization’s safe house that replaced the windows with new ones and resulted in having better and more secure fencing.

My Sister’s House Director Emily Lemus told the Telegram that the windows



LEMUS

the City of Rocky Mount and that the fence project was paid for with a \$10,000 donation by Cummins

project was paid for with \$15,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding via

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Lemus noted CDBG funding via the municipality has

Rocky Mount Engine Plant and \$6,000 in CDBG funding via the municipality.

My Sister’s House is the program locally providing outreach and shelter services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. Employees of the Cummins plant have long served on the organization’s board of directors.

Lemus noted CDBG funding via the municipality has

been used to pay for replacing the roof at the safe house.

Lemus said of the benefits of the federal funding, “We shelter 100 to 125 people a year, so you’ve got a lot of wear and tear and moving in and out and families moving in and out.”

My Sister’s House has had the safe house since 1986.

The organization is quite

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Volume 110, No. 131 — \$2.75

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