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Board adopts ridge law resolution

By SARA L. BINGHAM
Times-News Staff Writer

The Henderson County commissioners Wednesday formally adopted a resolution asking the state to extend protection to all the county's ridges that are more than 500 feet above the valley floor.

The commissioners' resolution seals a decision made at their last meeting to go with the strictest version of the state ridge law available. The board is asking the state to

eliminate the provision of the state ridge law that only ridges 3,000 feet in elevation and 500 feet from the valley be protected from highrise development, and instead have only the 500 feet requirement. The state law gives counties the option of asking for the stricter application of the state ban on ridge construction.

When the new state ridge law goes into effect on Jan. 1, county offices will not be allowed to give building permits for tall buildings on the protected

ridges. The state ban prohibits construction of buildings over 40 feet tall on the ridgeline. An area of 100 feet below the ridge top will be protected. Also, no building protruding more than 35 feet from the ridge crest can be built.

The state ridge law adopted earlier this year by the General Assembly gave counties the option of coming under the state ban that goes into effect Jan. 1, or adopting a local ordinance. The Henderson County commissioners

decided to go with the state ban, but with the additional ridges under its protection.

The resolution to the state, prepared by county planner Dave Fowler, noted that since the county is the fifth fastest growing county in the state, continued population growth is likely to increase pressures to develop ridges here.

In other business, the board agreed to prorata benefits of the county's part-time permanent employees. The decision see BOARD, Page 6

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sion primarily affects insurance, which the county has been paying for part-time workers on a 100 percent basis.

Under the new policy, the county will only pay a proportionate share of a part-time worker's insurance benefits and the worker will pay the rest. But the decision does not affect the 18 county employees now working as part-time but receiving full insurance benefits.

A part-time permanent employee is one who works part time in a permanent position. In some cases, workers share a full-time job, Joel Mashburn, county administrator, said.

The commissioners agreed to allow WHKP/WKIT to erect a scaffolding on the courthouse lawn for a "Singing Christmas Tree," provided the radio station provides plans for the structure and liability insurance.

The structure, on which Christmas carolers will stand to form a "human Christmas tree," will be 30 to 40 feet high, Art Cooley, station general manager, told the commissioners. Commissioners asked specifically about liability insurance, noting that there might be a potential for injury.

An architect is drawing plans for the structure, and the station plans to provide liability insurance, as it has in the past for other special events it has sponsored, Cooley said. The station will also repair any damage to the lawn caused by construction and removal of the structure, he said.

The board also:

- Named optometrist Dr. Dudley Hauschild and registered nurse Mary Waller to the Henderson County Board of Health.

- Accepted a low bid of \$12,317 from Hoyle Office Supply Co. for new jurors' chairs for the county's upstairs courtroom, and other furniture for the courtrooms.

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safe movement
one order for arrest
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