

Acworth votes to annex Cobb property

By Rachel Miller
rmiller@mdjonline.com

ACWORTH — Mayor Tommy Allegood and the Board of Alderman approved annexing portions of unincorporated Cobb County into the Acworth city limits Thursday night.

Several county residents spoke in opposition to the move, but the board approved the annexation

that will bring “islands of land” into the city that confuse emergency responders and road maintenance crews over jurisdiction.

The lone vote against the annexation came from Alderman Butch Price, who said, “It is hard to justify.”

Before approval, City Manager Brian Bulthuis added stipulations that owners or renters who are currently living on the desig-

nated properties will receive free trash removal for 10 years, which is a savings of \$235 a year.

Bulthuis also recommended to the board that they honor current county business licenses paid through 2013 for the six-month gap before Acworth’s next business licensing in June 2014. He said businesses that are part of the annexation will be licensed at half price for the next five years.

Alderman Tim Richardson asked that mailings with this updated information be sent to the property owners this month, which was the only comment from a board member before the vote.

A representative from Cobb County attended to show support from the county, which is the only other party that needed to consent to the city takeover of the

land. The county has an agreement to cooperate with Acworth on any actions deemed necessary to end duplication of services.

The annexation will take effect June 1.

From an audience of more than 50 people, seven individuals spoke during a 25-minute public comment period. Each landowner spoke against another level of

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SPIRITUAL DAY



Staff/Laura Moon



The city of Acworth had its annual National Day of Prayer on Thursday at City Hall. **Above:** North Cobb Christian School Choral Director Amy Wallace performs a song as Mayor Tommy Allegood watches. **Left:** Lucille Eargla of Acworth raises her hand in praise as she sings along. **Below:** North Cobb Christian School middle-schoolers Brianna Daly, left, and Kelin Bert exchange hugs. **Bottom:** Freedom Church Pastor Todd Lollis leads the crowd in prayer.



Cobb Police arrest Marietta suspect in park flashing

Man admits exposing himself to women

From staff reports

MARIETTA — Cobb Police say they have found the man who reportedly exposed himself to two female college students at Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park on Tuesday.

Detective K. Gardner researched and found a possible suspect in this case. Police showed up at the residence of 34-year-old William John Jacobson in Dallas with an arrest warrant between 8 and 9 p.m. Wednesday. They interviewed him, and he reportedly confessed to the crime, according to Cobb police.

He was taken into custody and charged with public indecency and simple battery.

He had initially fled the scene of the confrontation with the women in a red Ford dually pickup truck. The incident occurred Tuesday near 750 Cheatham Hill Road.

The two women, both college students, were



William J. Jacobson

reportedly walking in the national park when they saw a man standing at the wood line, nude from the waist down and fondling himself. The man then charged the two women, knocking one of them to the ground.

One of the women chased after her attacker and was able to get a good look at his face and the truck that he was driving. She then called 911 and gave the description to authorities, which helped a GBI artist to sketch a composite drawing that very closely resembled Jacobson.

“My hat is off to the two ladies,” Nancy Walther, park superintendent, said Wednesday. “She chased him down and called 911 and gave a description of the vehicle.”

Michael Bowman with Cobb Police said that the

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Cobb Fire Dept. tackles home fully engulfed in flames

By Rachel Miller
rmiller@mdjonline.com

ROSWELL — The Cobb County Fire Department responded to a call at noon Thursday at an east Cobb residence with flames shooting from the attic.

The two-story home became fully engulfed, and the back deck also caught fire. The home, at 2678 Boulder Creek Drive, is owned by Thomas and Melanie Sinclair, according to Cobb County tax records.

The fire required three engines, with the first arriving at 12:09 p.m.

Lt. Dan Dupree with the Cobb Fire Department said

that because of the danger, the fire was fought defensively for about 40 minutes.

“The house is heavily damaged and collapsed into the basement,” Dupree said.

Heavy equipment was brought in to knock down remaining walls.

“We will have an engine on the scene for most of the evening to monitor for hotspots,” Dupree said.

No one was home at the time, and no one was injured at the location, which is four houses away from the Fulton County line.

The cause has not been determined and is under investigation, according to Dupree.

Cobb school district needs to fast-track ‘failure to report’ fix

The Cobb school district has finally taken a step toward protecting the rights, reputations and careers of principals, teachers and other staff ensnared by misguided and over-zealous application of the state law mandating the reporting of alleged or suspected child abuse, molestation, rape and similar offenses.

The district has dismissed a string of charges filed against Awtrey Middle School Principal Jeff Crawford, a 21-year educator. Crawford was accused of incompetency, insubordination and willful neglect

of duty for not reporting a female seventh-grader’s allegation of a sexual assault off-campus by another seventh-grader.

Crawford’s vindication comes soon after the dismissal of a “failure to report” charge against former Kell High School Principal Trudie Donovan, who retired last year under a dark cloud after 34 years in the Cobb school system. She was accused of not



Don McKee
COLUMNIST

reporting that a former teacher had slapped a student’s behind and another student’s face in the classroom in May 2012. Then after the better part of a year, after the principal lost her job, and her reputation and paid out legal fees to defend herself, the Cobb solicitor general dismissed the charge about two weeks ago because of a lack of evidence to prove that she “willfully and knowingly” violated the mandatory reporting law.

Donovan would never have been charged if the school district had done its work properly. And, by the way, why did it take

the solicitor’s office so long to discover the lack of evidence?

And what about the other cases of “failure to report?” There’s the case of Tapp Middle School Principal Dr. Jerry Dority and counselor Yatta Collins. Three months before Donovan retired, Dority and Collins were charged with failing to report that a child was molested and attempted suicide. The two were fired after a three-member panel of the school board upheld the district’s decision on appeal. There’s also the case of Greg Leontovich, a 30-year educator accused

of child molestation. He lost his job, reputation and savings — before he was acquitted by a Cobb jury in 2008.

Jeff Crawford’s attorney, Justin O’Dell, said he hoped the dismissal of charges against his client “is the first step by the school district on a path to changing the entire process of investigating and charging educators. ...” Amen. Let’s hope this signals the end of the district’s knee-jerk reaction policy that has brought down one educator after another in recent years and put them through a living hell.

School board Chairman

Randy Scamihorn has said the district is “in the process of reviewing the procedures.” He said he’s being patient “because these things sometimes become complex and the district may need time to work through changes and the ramifications of any changes.”

But not too much time. Why does the district need more than a couple of days to review its procedures? They can’t be that complicated. If they are, throw them out and institute a sane policy. Fast-track the review. Fix the problem now.

dmckee9613@aol.com