

Parks...from Page 1A

Union County Superior Court records show.

He was originally indicted without being in the presence of the Union County Grand Jury, Enotah Circuit District Attorney Jeff Langley said.

"The Georgia statute and case law giving an officer the right to appear be-

fore a Grand jury does not apply to every situation and the Parks case fell into a gray area of that statute," Langley said. "Applying the case law, I initially presented it without his presence, but then elected to re-indict with his presence rather than allow delay for an appeal of that interpretation."

Charges of two counts theft by taking and two counts violation of oath of office by law enforcement officer were nol pros, or discontinued by the prosecution.

The two counts of violation of oath of office by a law enforcement officer were added during Parks' re-indict-

ment, Union County Superior Court records show.

Parks is to report to the Union County Jail on Sept. 19, at 5 p.m. to begin service of the 90-day sentence, which concludes Dec. 23 at 5 p.m.

Chick-fil-A...from Page 1A

the impervious area will increase to .84 acres out of 1.02 acres, with the rest of the lot going toward landscaping.

Chick-fil-A has to prepare the land before they can build on it to make sure water running atop the added impervious surface gets to where it

needs to be with appropriate storm runoff drainage systems and water and sewer lines.

And before that preparation can take place, the county building department must receive the restaurant's Erosion and Sediment Plans.

The latest revision of

the site plan shows a project start date of Sept. 2, 2014, with a project complete date of Dec. 31, 2014, building and all. But that timetable must remain on hold as plans remain up in the air and the start date has already passed with no construction.

Once the county building department receives all of the necessary paperwork and construction actually begins, according to the site plan, the entire project should only take four months to complete if everything goes according to schedule.

City Business...from Page 1A

come city property down the road.

"It's better than a \$500,000 project that's going to be given to the city if you'll approve it," said Cox.

Coosa Water will be charging the city a surcharge for being in their water district, but Cox said that the RV Park in the form of a homeowners association would cover that cost.



City Attorney Jana Akins, right, explains the agreement the city must reach with Coosa Water Authority in order to service Mountain View RV Park. Photo/Lowell Nicholson

"We're not asking to do anything except build it to city specs and EPD standards, and final review by your engineer approving our plans," said Cox.

Cox received the go-ahead to start designing the water and sewer line project with the expectation of receiving Blairsville City water, contingent upon city approval of final plans.

Another item from the agenda started as a discussion on water meters, and Councilman Tony Dyer explained that a customer had had a rupture in his line. The customer was wondering why the city hadn't discovered the leak before his bill went sky high, running

between \$1,200 and \$1,400.

"His concern was, do we have an alarm system in place that can notify any customer – you, me or whoever – if they have a leak, and how long could it go on undetected?" said Dyer.

Mayor Conley notified the council that there was in fact a system in place with the new radio readings that the city uses to collect meter data. But since no one physically walks up to read meters anymore, detecting a leak the same day that readings are gathered would be difficult unless someone discovered the leak and called about it.

"But we never get past a day or two at the most," said

Mayor Conley.

And if someone couldn't afford to pay a large bill all at once, the city would be willing to work with that customer, as it has in the past, by setting up a payment plan.

"I think we ought to talk about going further than that and just cutting people a break when it's a deal like that. In Dahlonega, if you've got a water leak, they'll cut you a break one time," said Mayor Pro Tem Buddy Moore, who had a similar experience with a rental property there.

According to Mayor Conley, the city already adjusts sewer rates so as to not charge a customer on "the amount of water that was leaked."

But that doesn't make the entire water bill from a leaky line go away, as water and sewer fees are separate.

"Monetarily, as far as the state of Georgia is concerned and our auditors, we'll have to account for the dollars that we're going to charge off," said Mayor Conley.

Moore asked the Mayor about checking with the city of Dahlonega to see how it handles this issue.

"I'll be glad to do that. I'll call the powers that be over there and find out how they do that," said Mayor Conley, and the council agreed to table the item until next month's meeting.

County Millage...from Page 1A

ally get your property taxes."

The reason for the proposed increase in property taxes is the increase in operating expenses throughout the county. Commissioner Paris listed as examples the increase in the price of fuel, gravel, tar and asphalt, and tires and the costs of operating vehicles.

"Everything the county does has gone up in the last several years," said Commissioner Paris.

Due to House Bill 60 and the risk of courthouse violence, Courthouse security had to be beefed up to include two security checkpoints at a cost of \$250,000 to deter the carrying of weapons in the building.

The cost of county liability and property insurance has increased among other things, and even the price of salt for roads during the winter time has become costly.

All of these increased costs have added up to about \$500,000 in more operating expenses for the county, which calls for an increased millage rate.

"We're the third lowest millage rate in the state of Georgia," said Commissioner Paris. "When you put us at the new millage rate, if everybody else stays the same, we would drop down to the fifth lowest, which is still pretty good."

When sorted by total millage rate, including school taxes with county taxes, the new millage rate would put Union County as the third lowest in the state, assuming all other counties' millage rates remained the same.

"I don't necessarily disagree with anybody who wants to gripe about taxes – everybody's got that right," said Commissioner Paris. "But the thing that everybody doesn't know, our school system does a really good job of keeping their property taxes low compared to other sys-

tems in the state."

It's the first time since 2006 that millage rates have increased, and increasing the county property tax is a delicate balancing act, one with which the commissioner is all too familiar.

"Our job is, my job is, and the employees' job is to provide the most service for

the least amount of money that we can," Paris said. "And we have to determine what level of service that is."

"We try to do that based on what the demands from the public are, and I feel that we have got to maintain those services to the level that the public has come to expect."

Jailer...

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violations of law were committed.

"This action was handled promptly and the resolution, termination and arrest were made without delay," Sheriff Mason said. "I will be supportive of the employees of Union County Sheriff's Office, but if their actions are criminal in nature, they will be held accountable."