

THE ISLAND PACKET

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Hilton Head Island • Bluffton

75 cents

Pepper Hall vote put off

Divided County Council postpones second of 3 votes on plan

By ZACH MURDOCK
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Deadlocked and heated Beaufort County leaders want time to cool off before a pivotal vote on a borrowing plan to purchase the Pepper Hall property in greater Bluffton.

After an hour-long debate Monday night, a divided County Council decided 6-4 to postpone its second of three votes

on the plan to borrow \$12 million to buy 84 acres of Robert Graves' property along U.S. 278 and the Okatie River.

Monday's vote sets the stage for an intense May 11 council meeting in Beaufort, during which council members will grapple with questions they have over the county's ability to limit development on the environmentally sensitive property without purchasing it.

At issue is whether county zoning

regulations will allow the council to deny Graves' still-pending request to have the property zoned for commercial use, which nearly all of the council members fear would open the door to overdevelopment and an environmental and traffic "catastrophe" in the area. The property is currently home to Graves' horse farm and is zoned rural.

Please see PEPPER on 7A



THEOPHIL SYSLO • Staff photo

A discarded tire rests along the edge of the Okatie River looking toward Pepper Hall on Monday in Bluffton. Beaufort County Council postponed the second of three votes on a plan to borrow \$12 million to buy the property.

Libraries scale back hours for summer

By REBECCA LURYE
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Beaufort County public libraries will reduce their hours beginning June 1, a little more than a year after county and library leaders opted to keep most branches open for longer periods.

Budget constraints will now undo those changes.

CHANGES IN HOURS
• **Beaufort, Bluffton, Hilton Head Island branches:** From 50 hours to 42

• **St. Helena Island branch:** From 40 hours to 32

• **Lobeco branch:** From 40 hours to 28

While the library system had enough money to fill half of its 10 vacant positions in September — and hoped those new employees could keep the branches open — more employees have left in the months since, said interim libraries director Jan O'Rourke.

The system currently has 18 full-time vacancies it can't afford to fill, O'Rourke said.

"We just don't have the staff to provide the service that the public deserves," she said. "We just have to do what we have to do at the moment."

Please see LIBRARIES on 7A

SADNESS, THEN CHAOS

Baltimore erupts after funeral for man hurt in police custody



PATRICK SEMANSKY • The Associated Press

A man walks past a burning police vehicle Monday in Baltimore during unrest after the funeral of Freddie Gray. Gray died from spinal injuries about a week after he was arrested and transported in a Baltimore Police Department van.

"They don't want this movement nationally to be marred by violence. It makes no sense."

Billy Murphy, attorney for the family of Freddie Gray

By TOM FOREMAN Jr. and AMANDA LEE MYERS
The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Rioters plunged part of Baltimore into chaos Monday, torching a pharmacy, setting police cars ablaze and throwing bricks at officers hours after thousands mourned the man who died from a severe spinal injury he suffered in police custody.

The governor declared a state of emergency and called in the National Guard to restore order, and Attorney General Loretta Lynch, in her first day on the job, said she would send Justice Department of-

officials to the city in coming days. A weeklong, daily curfew was imposed beginning today from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m., the mayor said.

At least 15 officers were hurt, and some two dozen people were arrested. Two officers remained hospitalized, police said.

"The National Guard represents the last resort in restoring order," Gov. Larry Hogan told a news conference.

Please see CHAOS on 7A

THE LATEST ON THE VIOLENCE

OFFICERS HURT: At least 15 police officers were injured in the chaos.

GUARD ACTIVATED: Maryland's governor declared a state of emergency and activated the National Guard to help stem the violence.

CURFEW IMPOSED: The mayor of Baltimore said she would impose a weeklong curfew after people looted stores and threw rocks at police.

BUILDINGS BURNING: A massive fire broke out in a building under construction. Earlier Monday, a CVS pharmacy near downtown was looted and set on fire. Some people cut holes in a hose that firefighters were using.



Quake deaths eclipse 4,000

Help pours in after Saturday's devastating earthquake in Nepal, but traffic jams and landslides block the way. 7A

HIGH: 68
LOW: 61



Weather, 2A

Half off 2-hour guided paddle boarding tour

dealsaver.com/HiltonHead

TODAY'S QUOTE

"Every act of creation is first an act of destruction."
Pablo Picasso



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