

September 8th, 2014

At 7:00pm, on Monday, September 8th, 2014, in the Board Room of the Landis Municipal Building, Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Brown called to order the Town of Landis Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting. Those present along with the Mayor Pro Tem were Aldermen Roger Safrit, Tony Hilton, and Dorland Abernathy, Town Manager Reed Linn, Finance Officer Ginger Gibson, Public Works Director Steve Rowland, Recreation Director Andrew Morgan, Administrative Assistant Heather Wood and Town Attorney Rick Locklear.

Mayor James Furr was not in attendance due to attending an economic conference on behalf of the Town of Landis.

A quorum was met.

Mayor Prom Tem Dennis Brown opened the meeting and welcomed all those in attendance.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Brown.

Alderman Safrit motioned, seconded by Alderman Abernathy, to adopt the agenda with the addition of Item 5-A Presentation by Judy Klusman. All voted aye.

Alderman Safrit motioned, seconded by Alderman Abernathy, to adopt the minutes from the August 4th, 2014 Regular Meeting as amended. All voted aye.

The first order of business was a presentation from Judy Klusman, candidate for Rowan County Commissioner. She stated that she had been here before to address the Board and gave some of her background and history. She stated that she promised to listen to the concerns of the Board. Ms. Klusman thanked the Board for their time.

The next order of business concerned Landis taking over the East Landis Water District water system. Manager Linn stated that this had been recommended by the USDA and staff had several discussions with Alan Hart. The East Landis water system was owned privately by the citizens located in that area, which amounted to 60 or 70 meters in the entire system. Several years ago, the water system in that area had failed, and the citizens living there had approached the USDA to secure a grant or loan to install a new water system. Landis supplies an entry point for the water at Dial Street and Coldwater. Manager Linn explained that there were not many of the original residents who had entered into the agreement left in that area. Mr. Hart had asked the Town to take over the East Landis water system, though Landis had indicated that was not something they were willing to do. Landis currently supplies the water, flushes the system and maintains the hydrants. If Landis were to take over the East Landis water system it would incur the \$114,000.00 debt still remaining. Currently, East Landis citizens paid an additional \$10.50 per month, per meter to make the payment. The annual payment on the water system is \$7,500.00. The East Landis Water District currently has \$2,000.00 in reserve funds and \$5,000.00 in a checking account. This money would be turned over to the Town if the Town were to take over that water system.

Several staff members had met with the residents of the East Landis Water District to discuss this possibility at a meeting on August 19th, 2014. The citizens present had voted unanimously for Landis to take over the system. If the Board agreed to accept this take over, they would need to accept the resolution the East Landis Water District citizens had voted upon and also apply to the USDA for a loan assumption to take on the remaining debt. Currently, there was no one left in that district to run the system (the bookkeeping, submitting financial reports, etc). This course of action was highly recommended by the USDA.

Alderman Abernathy inquired if the citizens would continue to pay the \$10.50 monthly surcharge. Manager Linn stated that was something that the Board would need to discuss, though they did not necessarily need to come to a decision tonight. However, if the citizens did not continue to make the monthly payment, the Town would assume the remaining debt in its entirety and be responsible for it. Alderman Hilton inquired after the total amount still due on the loan; Manager Linn stated that it was \$114,000.00. There was some discussion. Manager Linn stated that he, the Town's Attorney Rick Locklear, and Town Finance Officer Ginger Gibson had all attended the meeting. There were 60-70 meters and it was a small system.

Alderman Hilton stated that since the Town already maintained and ran the system, he had no issue with Landis taking it over with the stipulation the East Landis Water District customers would continue to pay the monthly charge of \$10.50 towards the remaining debt. Manager Linn also clarified that all water rates were the same for East Landis Water District customers; they simply paid the additional monthly charge towards the debt payment. Alderman Hilton inquired if the Town would be adding any additional burden if it assumed the East Landis Water System in full. Manager Linn confirmed that it would not. There was some discussion. The majority of the customers only had water, no sewer, utilizing septic tanks. There were a few exceptions for customers who fronted Highway 29 (such as Sonic); they were hooked to the sewer system.

Mr. Locklear stated that the purpose of the surcharge was to satisfy the outstanding debt and the water rates were the same. He inquired if there was any intention that once the system was taken over and the debt satisfied, to remove the surcharge. The consensus of the Board was that if there was no longer debt to be repaid, there would be no need for the surcharge. There was some discussion.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to assuming ownership of the East Landis Water District with the stipulation that customers in that district would continue to pay the monthly surcharge of \$10.50 until the outstanding debt had been satisfied. All voted aye.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to make application to the USDA to assume the loan debt for the East Landis Water System in the amount of \$114,000.00. All voted aye.

The next order of business was a request from Johnny Eckerd, who resides at 3435 Linn Avenue, to be granted access to certain Town owned property. Manager Linn stated that the property was off of Highway 29 and part of the recently acquired property from the DC Linn Family. The section in question was approximately 30 feet and Mr. Eckerd was asking permission to cross that parcel which was located between two parcels he owned. Mr. Eckerd wished to purchase the small parcel, but the stipulation on the land given to the Town was that it could not be sold for three years. Until then, Mr. Eckerd was asking for access.

Alderman Hilton inquired if they could allow the easement with the stipulation that Mr. Eckerd purchase the property at the end of the three years. Manager Linn stated that when the time limit was up, the Board would have to declare the property as surplus and put it up for bid, like any other surplus property of the Town.

Mr. Locklear inquired as to why Mr. Eckerd wanted the access, what was his intent? It was his suggestion that before granting permission they find out the exact details so that it didn't turn into something else. It was his recommendation to table the matter until Staff had obtained further information regarding his intent.

Alderman Abernathy stated that he has no problem if Mr. Eckerd simply wanted to use the property to walk across, but his concern was if they allowed this now, Mr. Eckerd may see no need to buy the property once the three years was up.

Alderman Abernathy motioned, seconded by Alderman Hilton, to table the matter of allowing Mr. Eckerd to access a piece of Town property until more information was gathered. All voted aye.

The next order of business concerned a discussion of the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area, as requested by John Derhodes. Mr. Derhodes thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and he thanked Manager Linn and Finance Officer Ginger Gibson specifically for getting the information he had requested. He stated that it was all a bit overwhelming.

Mr. Derhodes stated that on the website, it states "Welcome to the town next door", he asked the Board if they would explain what the Town of Landis actually means, who Landis is.

Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Brown stated that the Town was established in 1901 by several great men and it had been started to run a business (the mill) and provided opportunity and business for its citizens. He stated that this is what they had tried to do over the years, no matter who sat on the Board.

Mr. Derhodes stated, with respect to who we were, he wanted to know who we were today. What objectives and goals did the Town have to entice people and businesses to move to Landis. He knows that Landis wants to keep the small town feel while maintaining growth. He stated that he had put in a series of questions about the purpose of the Board and that he had gotten a better feel over the last months. He stated that the Board was elected to oversee the Town and nothing happens without their approval. He stated that he felt the Board's biggest responsibility was to make sure that the citizens were safe and the Town's money was spent wisely. He stated that Landis is a good place to live, but what attracted people, what would make them choose to move here over somewhere else? Were the Town's leaders creating an environment to make people want to live here and do business here?

Mr. Derhodes stated that he wanted to discuss the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area in more detail, specifically the (PARTF) grant. He stated that at the meeting last month, that a document had been submitted to the Board including staff recommendations concerning changes at the Wilderness Area and that the Board had approved those recommendations. He stated that as part of the discussion with Staff and with the Board, it had been talked about designation all of the parking at the new park office as either for handicapped or employee only. However, with the staff recommendations that had been approved, that was not specifically spelled out. It was Mr. Derhodes proposal to amend the language to

specifically designate parking at the new park office only be for handicapped, employees and vendors. He wanted it made clear.

Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Brown suggested that Mr. Derhodes speak with Manager Linn and Manager Linn could submit any new requests or amendments.

Mr. Derhodes then stated that there had been no specific discussion about long term solutions for the access to the park and there were none in the document. He stated that he would most likely schedule a meeting with Staff in the next few weeks.

Mr. Derhodes stated that it had also been mentioned that Staff would be available to keep the lines of communication opened. He stated that he had heard there was a park committee and inquired further about that. Manager Linn stated that there was a Council of Arts and History as well as a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Mr. Derhodes inquired if they met on a regular basis. Recreation Director Andrew Morgan stated that they had not met recently; they simply met any time there was a major event planned. Mr. Derhodes inquired as to how that worked. Manager Linn stated that they were appointed by the Board (the Planning Board and the Council of Arts and History) and that for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Director Morgan would submit recommendations for that to the Board.

Mr. Derhodes wanted to know what to do as a community; he wanted to know how to get representatives for Meriah Woods onto the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Manager Linn instructed Mr. Derhodes to speak to Director Morgan. Mr. Derhodes stated that he felt they could be an asset.

Mr. Derhodes stated that he had submitted a document to Manager Linn with a lot of questions and thoughts concerning the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area and that he appreciated the time and effort that had gone into gathering the information for him. He stated that he thinks it's important to know where the park is going. He stated that the idea of having a park, or parks, is a good idea even if it's not essential. However, he felt that a park the size of the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area could potentially become a black hole and he had concerns. He stated that the citizens pay for this park even if others from outside the community are benefiting from it. He stated that Landis was a small community with limited money and he was concerned that the Town didn't really know what it was costing year to year to run the park and revenue was coming (currently and in the future).

Mr. Derhodes stated that he had looked at the current and previous years budgets and that there was no documentation with details in regards to what it cost to maintain the park. He stated that the citizens needed to know, as did Staff. He stated that he liked the park but did not want it to turn into a black hole. He stated that it was, in his opinion, not "good financial sense" to accept the (PARTF) grant.

Mr. Derhodes stated that in 2010, Site Solutions had been contracted by the Town to assess the Town's recreational needs and a citizen survey had been conducted. He stated that he would like to see the full results. He stated that there had been some information regarding that in the report that Ms. Gibson had given him, but he would like to know what it had cost to hire Site Solutions. Manager Linn stated that it was \$23,000.00. Mr. Derhodes stated that the firm was very thorough and he thought that the amount was a "bargain", but he wanted to highlight a few points from the study.

The Master Plan was meant to be a “road map” for recreation development in the Town. He stated that the study had indicated that the Town would benefit from a community park, but it was not at the top of the list. It had stated that the addition of football, basketball, playgrounds, trails, etc could all be met with extension of existing parks and the clean-up of the mini-parks in existence. Mr. Derhodes stated that it seemed to him that the Town had instead decided to focus fully on the wilderness area and not focused on the other smaller park areas at all. The study had indicated that the Town needed to focus on the passive park and so far that didn’t seem to have happened.

Manager Linn stated that in regards to the passive park, the Town was in the process of securing funding and that it was a completely separate project. They were seeking donations and so far had raised \$122,000.00. Alderman Abernathy clarified that the money that would be used for the passive park was being sought at through private funding, not tax money.

Mr. Derhodes stated that the median income for Town residents was approximately \$36,000.00 and that citizens didn’t have a lot of extra money to spend on things that they don’t need. Mr. Derhodes also went over some of the other park and recreation needs listed in the study – various parks, the greenway, etc. He stated that the Town was making progress but he was just concerned about what was going on at the wilderness area. He stated that there were several large parks located close to Landis so he did not see the need for Landis to focus on a larger park of its own. Mr. Derhodes stated that the current recreation budget would need to be increased to do the things the Town had planned, but it did not appear to him that there was very limited information in regards to what it currently costs to operate the wilderness area and he felt that was a very big problem. It was his suggestion that accountability needed to be established concerning the day to day operation of the wilderness area.

Mr. Derhodes stated that the Town had done a survey, paid for one, and he wanted to know how it was they determined what it would cost to operate the wilderness area year after year. Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Brown stated that every year the Town develops a budget and it is approved after numerous meetings where it was discussed. Mr. Derhodes stated that he was told everything falls under recreation but there was nothing specific in the budget that related to the actual Lake Corriher Wilderness Area. He stated that he felt the Board and Staff should know exactly what was being spent there since they were spending taxpayers’ dollars to do it. Mr. Derhodes stated that he realizes the Town provides other services, but he had a problem with no one seeming to know how much it costs to operate the wilderness area.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated that Mr. Derhodes did not seem to be asking the right questions because he was certain Town Staff could provide down to the penny what had been spent at and on the wilderness area.

Manager Linn stated that last year the Recreation budget had come in \$25,000.00 under budget. Like all other areas of Recreation, it all fell under one budget, like building maintenance, etc. He stated that Staff is able to go back and pull records to see what had been spent where. Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated that it wasn’t like they had no idea how much money was going into the wilderness area. Mr. Derhodes stated that he wanted to know how much had been spent and was being spent on the wilderness park specifically. Manager Linn also specified that the trails in the wilderness area were maintained by volunteers.

Mr. Derhodes stated that the only costs associated would be in regards to staff, utilities, etc? He knew those were likely small expenses but they were expenses. He stated that perhaps he was not asking the correct questions but that he also felt staff should be able to “spit out numbers” on request when it came to how much it cost yearly to operate the wilderness area.

Mr. Derhodes then stated that the (PARTF) grant process had started in 2012 when the Town had applied and not been approved. Staff had received guidance on what to do to improve the Town’s chances for approval and then resubmitted the following year. One thing that had been suggested was a community survey. This survey had been done by the Town, with 101 surveys turned in and 80% of them having been done via door to door visits. The surveys had been made available at City Hall and various points around Town and Mr. Derhodes stated “shame on” him for not picking one up. Manager Linn pointed out the various places the survey had been made available. Mr. Derhodes stated that 35% of people who responded weren’t even citizens of Landis and that didn’t make sense to him since they were not the ones paying for any projects that would be undertaken.

Director Morgan stated that the first time the Town had applied for the PARTF Grant it had been for the passive park and it had not passed. The survey had been done with the passive park in mind, however it had not specifically stated that it was for the passive park, and had not been solely directed towards questions about the passive park; the surveys had been put in schools as well as other places in Town. Director Morgan stated that he cannot force citizens to fill out surveys. When they went door to door, they had gone downtown, as well as to heavily populated areas since they were generally on foot. They had looked at the responses.

When the people at PARTF had informed the Town they would be better off to focus on the wilderness park for the grant, they had also informed Staff that the survey would still apply for the application for the wilderness area.

Mr. Derhodes stated that he couldn’t be specific but his gut told him that the thought process of installing a community park at the Lake Corriher area was already underway at that point and he was “struggling” with the fact that no one had come door to door in Meriah Woods to get their input.

Mayor Pro Tem Brown inquired if Mr. Derhodes was also willing to take responsibility for not attending the multiple meetings and public hearings that had been held.

Mr. Derhodes stated that he would, but that he was not trying to place blame, he was just trying to establish an open dialogue. He stated that the park is a good thing, but the traffic was a problem, the access point was a problem. He appreciated the work that Manager Linn and Director Morgan had done so far, but there were still more things to work out, such as a long term solution, etc. Mr. Derhodes reiterated that he felt it had been a mistake not to include the neighborhood (Meriah Woods). He also stated that in the survey, many of the respondents had indicated no interest in or had no time to utilize picnic areas, fishing areas or trails. He wanted to know if the Town had taken the survey seriously or not.

Mr. Derhodes stated that a CIP had been submitted as part of the PARTF Grant and he wanted to know if the things included and the money that would be spent would be a good investment for the Town and its taxpayers.

Mr. Derhodes went over some of the numbers for the cost of engineering, installing cabins, boardwalks and piers. He stated that a lot of money was being put into the park that he felt would never see its money's worth returned. He stated that the Town had to figure out how much money to spend versus how much money they would get back in return. He stated that the Town needed to do what was right to maximize profits. He stated that the area needs to be nice and it needs to be taken care of, but he didn't want money thrown away especially if no one knew how much it was going to cost to operate the wilderness area year to year.

Mr. Derhodes inquired if they Town needed to spend \$400,000.00 in one location; he did not see how it could ever get paid back and it would all be funneled into one location. Perhaps he was wrong, but that was how he felt. He stated that he was concerned the Board had been sold a "bill of goods" at the meeting where they had approved the CIP; that Manager Linn had stated that the Town would pay back the money over several years and not have to borrow; now Staff was indicating the money would have to be borrowed.

Mr. Derhodes asked the Board to reconsider this investment and not accept the PARTF Grant. He stated that he needed to convince Manager Linn that not accepting it was a good idea, but he wasn't sure he could do that, but he would be talking to him about it. He stated that the Board controls the purse strings, and that he wasn't saying they shouldn't spend \$400,000.00, just that it should not be spent at the wilderness area until they had a better idea of the cost benefit analysis. He stated that he knew the (PARTF) grant was not easy to get, but there were always other grants. He felt the money spent needed to be more "inclusive".

Mr. Derhodes inquired as to how they can bring in more people; grow the population and tax base in order to raise more money. He stated that right now the tax rate, water and sewer rates were too high. He wanted to know how the Town intended to create an environment that would make people want to move to Landis. He stated that Landis has a reputation of being an expensive place to live and only the Board could fix that. He stated that he wanted to make the Town better and he felt together they could make the Town better. He stated that he hoped the Board had listened to what he had said, specifically about spending \$400,000.00 at the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area.

Alderman Hilton stated that no one pays the full cost for the running of government, if the rates were changed to what everything really cost citizens would be very unhappy. He stated that they try to run the business of the Town the best they can and that they know the park will likely not make back enough to repay what had been put into it. However, this was not solely about recouping the costs of what had gone into the park; it was also a quality of life issue. He stated they were not just looking at right now, but they were also looking ten to twenty years down the road.

Alderman Hilton stated that he knew money was an issue for everyone, but the wilderness park provided a place for people to go for free and not have to spend money. He stated that the Board and the Town had not undertaken this "in the blind" and they "weren't idiots", they understood the costs. He stated that they were not trying to ruin the Town, they were trying to do what was best for all of Landis, and that this was not just about Meriah Woods. He stated that the Board and Staff were trying to address that community's concerns, but it was not just about that community. He stated that they do know what had been spent and where they were going.

Mr. Derhodes stated that it was good to look twenty years down the road, but he didn't understand the thought process. The Site Solutions study had recommended a lot of different things, but it seemed the Town had "locked in on" making the park the "greatest thing since sliced bread" and that he felt the \$800,000.00 should be devoted to other projects.

Alderman Safrit stated that the PARTF Grant is specifically for the wilderness park, they could not simply choose to use it anywhere else. Mr. Derhodes stated that he understood that and that was why he suggested the Town not accepted it. Alderman Safrit stated that if the Town refused the PARTF Grant they would never get another grant awarded to them. Mr. Derhodes stated that he did understand what Alderman Safrit was saying.

Alderman Abernathy stated that he was thrilled to see a room full of people at the meeting tonight and that he could only speak to what had happened since he had come onto the Board. He stated that his first introduction to the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area was in January, he had not even known it existed before then. He stated that he does not take the Salisbury Post and had not seen the announcements. He stated that he did want to clear up one thing regarding funding and procuring a loan for the Town's part of the PARTF Grant. He stated that at the meeting in question, the Board had asked Manager Linn where the money would come from, and that Manager Linn had simply stated they would find the money and Alderman Hilton had clarified that it would not be through any tax increases. Alderman Abernathy stated that if Mr. Derhodes had come to the various meetings held on the topic, he would know.

Mr. Derhodes stated that he did not appreciate being "thrown under the bus" that he had already stated that he had not attended the meetings and took responsibility for that fact. Alderman Abernathy stated that he was not intending to specifically single Mr. Derhodes out, that he was including himself in that as well. He stated that back in March they had spent an entire day talking about the upcoming budget and then held various workshops after that to do the same and that all of it was open to the public.

Alderman Abernathy thanked everyone who had attended the meeting tonight, no matter what the reason was. He recommended that citizens continue to come to meetings and listen and give their input.

Mr. Derhodes stated that in regards to that, it was his understanding that every process was started with and funnels through Manager Linn and by the time it was brought before the Board for a yay or nay, it was over then and the community had no input. Mayor Pro Tem Brown pointed out that very rarely does the Board act on anything big without a public hearing or tabling it until the next meeting. Mr. Derhodes stated that there were better ways to advertise than the newspaper and he wanted the Board to think of better ways to improve the communication process.

Alderman Hilton stated that they would continue to look into ways and that they did not operate in a vacuum or secret. He stated that not everything was started through Manager Linn, that citizens come to the Board quite often and that most initiatives are started through the Board. Staff issues, etc were what generally came through Manager Linn.

Department Head Comments

Recreation Director Andrew Morgan: stated that the pool season had wrapped up and it had been a very successful season. He also wanted to clarify that they had done things in areas other than the wilderness area. They had paved the tennis courts, etc. He stated that they would be focusing on the passive park, but that would be done through private funding. So when they had looked at re-applying for the PARTF Grant the wilderness park had been the best option. He reiterated that they had been improving other facilities as well. Director Morgan reminded everyone that the Landis Fire Breast Cancer 5k would be on Saturday, October 4th and they would be sending out sponsorship requests soon.

Public Works Director Steve Rowland: stated that the sewer meter was in operation and they should be looking at some numbers next month.

Police Chief Bob Wood: went over the calls received by the Police Department during the month of August:

- 4 accidents
- 11 calls for assistance
- 17 disturbances
- 16 property crimes
- 0 violent crimes
- 10 arrests from warrants
- 21 citations issued out of 82 stops

There were 146 general calls. The Police Department averaged a response time of 1.53 minutes for emergency calls and 2.34 minutes for non-emergencies.

Board Comments

Alderman Roger Safrit: stated that he appreciated everyone attending the meeting tonight and that there were a lot of issues they were looking at concerning the park. There were certain things that they could not divulge now that they may solve in the future. They simply couldn't discuss it yet, but they did wish to work with the citizens.

Alderman Tony Hilton: stated that National Night Out had gone very well and they had a great attendance.

Mayor Pro Tem Dennis Brown: agreed with Alderman Hilton stated that it had been very well put together and it had been a great crowd and everyone had a great time.

Before citizens comments were opened, Mayor Pro Tem Brown requested that those who were present to comment on Meriah Woods to please state their name and address for the record and to keep it "short and sweet" so that they would be on the record.

Citizens Comments

Becky Hart (who resides on Blume Street): stated that this was her first meeting and she had never even heard of the park, but she wished that they could swim in the lake. She stated that she was going to come to all of the meetings and that where she lived people seemed to think it was a speed track. She stated that they have children in their neighborhood and that a lot of cars come by that she feels are going too fast. She stated that a police officer had told her that people were doing the speed limit. She wanted to know if there was any way to get the speed limit decreased to 25 mph in her neighborhood, children at play signs, or a speed bump or something of that nature. She stated that there are two big curves, a blind hill and that it was as scary area. She thanked the Board. Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated that they would have Chief Wood look into the matter.

Nadine Cherry: stated that at last month's meeting they had voted to put into effect changes to ordinances that would require parents to know where their children were at all times and that it was not working. She stated that 8:00pm one evening she had seen a child on a scooter on the road and that at the intersection the child had been unable to stop so had jumped off the scooter. The next morning she stated she had seen Manager Linn at the post office and had told him what had happened. She had informed him that she wanted a meeting with Manager Linn and a police officer but that the meeting had never happened. Ms. Cherry went on to state that on September 3rd at 5:50am she had once again seen police officer Buddy Porter leave the church parking lot and pull into where he lives before the end of his scheduled shift and she hoped that the Town wasn't paying police officers for time they had not worked.

Ms. Cherry then stated that once again the video system was not on and working and there would be no record of the meeting. Administrative Assistant Heather Wood assured Mr. Cherry it was in fact working, that the display screen did not need to be on in order for the system to record.

Ms. Cherry thanked Alderman Abernathy for addressing the situation at the old hardware store, and that the property had been taken care of last week and she stated it should not have been allowed to get to that point.

Alby Stamey: inquired as to why they couldn't talk about the situation in Meriah Woods at length. Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated simply that they had spent the last hour hearing concerns and discussing the matter with one of the neighborhood's representatives (Mr. Derhodes). Mr. Stamey stated that he had other concerns. He stated that the Board had decided that all Town vehicles would use the Town owned portion of Tranquil Lake Drive to access the new park office and that Town vehicles were still using the private portion. He stated that the residents there had to pay to have that road repaved and that every vehicle that was not one of theirs that went down that road was one less trip down the road the residents could take. Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated that it would be discussed with Staff.

Donna Montgomery: thanked the Board for supporting the South Rowan JROTC and they currently needed help with funding because they had lost their funding from NASCAR. She stated that Town donations would really help make better citizens for the future. She stated that she would meet with Manager Linn to see when the JROTC could open one of the meetings to thank the Board. Ms. Montgomery stated that businesses had already come to Town thanks to the wilderness area and that she thought it was a great thing. She stated that it does take time, money and perseverance but she felt that

the statement “if you build it, they will come” was very true. She stated that it gives a place for people to go and gather for free and get some fresh air (specifically children). She stated that she had not read any study that was done, but that they needed to study the human factor and specifically the children. Yes, it was more expensive but the quality of life in Landis was much higher with the park than without it. She stated that she wanted to thank the Board for their funding and for leading the Town in the right direction. She stated that the wilderness park would bring business in, that it already had, and that it would be thriving in ten to fifteen years as younger families continued to move into Town.

Alby Stamey: once again addressed the Board, wanting to know why the Town no longer sponsored little league. Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated that little league was now handled by the South Rowan Sports League. Mr. Stamey stated that with the talk of kids, little league was one thing that was really needed. Mayor Pro Tem Brown commented that if they wanted to talk about a “black hole” then little league was certainly one. He stated that he had coached little league and it was money poured down the drain. The Town furnishes the facilities for the South Rowan Sports League and keeps the fields up, but the League paid all fees. He stated that it was simply a thing that had to be done and they had discussed it on several occasions before coming to a decision. Mr. Stamey stated that he felt it was an injustice.

David McCarty (who resides on Tranquil Lake Drive): thanked the Town for the things that had done so far and that everyone appreciated it. However, he wanted to reiterate that the Board needed to look into a permanent solution to the traffic problem. Mayor Pro Tem Brown assured Mr. McCarty that they were. Mr. McCarty stated that he was not against the park, simply concerned.

Larry and Sue Williams (who reside on Tranquil Lake Drive): stated that they also support the park but they were also concerned with the growth. Mayor Pro Tem Brown once again reassured them that they were working on the matter.

Jerry Wright: inquired if the East Landis Water District was in the Town’s limits. Manager Linn stated that a portion was, but that the biggest part was outside of city limits. Mr. Wright stated that he would like to see the area annexed because there were people who lived in Town all of their lives and they “got no breaks”. Manager Linn stated that they do pay a fire tax, specifically, in addition to normal taxes. Mayor Pro Tem Brown stated that he agreed but he did not think it was possible due to annexation laws. Manager Linn confirmed that the Town could not forcibly annex property into the Town. There was some discussion.

There were no more citizens’ comments.

Police Captain Roger Hosey then asked if he could address those present. He stated that they have a lot of great guys at the Police Department and that generally things like this were not handled in public session, but since the complaint had been made in a public forum, naming a specific officer, he felt the need to respond. He stated that officers were scheduled on twelve hour shifts, from 6a-6p and from 6p-6a, with three days on and three days off. It was common practice to relieve each other early. It was also not uncommon for an officer to have checked on at 5:15 for a shift that started at 6:00. These officers work that extra time without being paid for it. Captain Hosey stated that he resented that in ignorance of the actual facts one of his officers had now been berated twice in public session. He stated that if Ms. Cherry wished to speak to him about the changes to the ordinance concerning skateboarding, then he would do so.

Alderman Abernathy motioned, seconded by Alderman Hilton, to go into Executive Session to discuss Legal Matters and to adjourn the meeting once the Executive Session concluded. All voted aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20pm on Monday, September 8th, 2014.

Heather Wood
Administrative Assistant