

February 7th, 2011

At 7:00pm., on Monday, February 7th, 2011, in the Board Room of the Landis Municipal Building, Mayor Dennis Brown called to order the Town of Landis Board of Aldermen Regular Meeting. Those present along with the Mayor were Aldermen James Furr, Roger Safrit, Tony Hilton and Craig Sloop, Town Manager Reed Linn, Public Works Director Steve Rowland, Police Chief Brian McCoy, Deputy Town Administrator Debbie Goodman, Administrative Assistant Heather Wood and Town Attorney Rick Locklear.

A quorum was met.

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

The invocation was led by Reverend David Franks.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Mayor Dennis Brown.

Alderman Sloop motioned, seconded by Alderman Furr, to adopt the agenda with the removal of item #9, Concerning the Video Arcade/Electronic Gaming Ordinance. All voted aye.

Alderman Fur motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to adopt the minutes from the January 3rd, 2011 Regular Meeting as presented. All voted aye.

The Board then heard a presentation from YMCA staff concerning the Lake Corriher Wilderness Area. Manager Linn stated that they had been discussing this matter for some time, and that there were currently two organizations working on the project: the Town of Landis and the YMCA. The trails had been cleared and a bridge constructed, and as of now an opening date had been set.

Crystal Karriker, Aaron Crowe and David Freeze from the YMCA were present to speak. Manager Linn stated that a lot of time and labor had been put into this area thus far, and gave the Board a brief overview of the history of the project which had began five years ago.

David Freeze presented an overview of things that had been completed at the wilderness area thus far, stated that the United Way Day of Caring had provided workers to help clear the first trails. With the aid of Landis Public Works, a bridge had also been installed. David Roberts Engineering had designed the bridge and town power poles had been used in the construction.

Aaron Crowe stated that the area in front of the bridge had been cleared out, and the bridge leads to the smaller of the two lakes. All combined, there are 4.5-5 miles of trails, and they were currently in the process of making them more user friendly. He stated that they had talked to various groups that had shown interest in helping around the wilderness area to get it ready. He stated that they also hoped to clear an area for potential (primitive) campsites and the opening was planed for the weekend of September 24th, 2011. The YMCA planned to host an "Adventure Run" to coincide with the opening.

Crystal Karriker stated that they would be hosting a four mile run that would include obstacles through out (such as a mud pit), people would be able to get dirty, climb and generally have a good time. She commented that it was an upcoming sport and was for fun more than to win. There would also be a kids' race so that they could go through the mud pit as well. They hoped to have 200-300 people in attendance, which was what most races of this type usually drew. She stated that they also hoped to have places for

people to camp, and that most races of this nature generally have “host hotels” and they would be trying to get one that was located in Salisbury so that this event would benefit Rowan County and not just Landis.

Ms. Karriker went on to explain that this wilderness area would also be a place for schools to use, so that they can be safe and not have to run on the roads. It would also be a place that could be used for science projects and field trips. She hoped that they would be able to get volunteers from organizations such as the Boy Scouts to help. Also, they intended to try and have vendors and inflatables at the grand opening, it was their desire to turn this into a community gathering that would last all weekend. The YMCA will be open all weekend for people to use.

Alderman Safrit said that he personally approved of all the outlined plans, stating that he has always said that the lakes could be a benefit to the community.

Town Attorney Rick Locklear commented that he had seen a lot of exposed roots in the slide show and that they had spoken of cross country running and he felt the roots could be tripping hazards. He inquired if there was a long term plan to eliminate the exposed roots and if it would cause damage to the trees; he also inquired if they intended to put any surfacing on the trails.

Ms. Karriker stated that they hoped to get the trail cut closer where there would be less roots, and they hoped to get the one around the smaller lake much smoother, but the other trails are “true cross country trails”. There would be other trails that could be made that would not have so many exposed roots in them.

Mr. Freeze stated that there is actually an attachment to a bobcat that can take out the less entrenched roots and they had already done some of that. The problem is that the four-wheelers that had been using the trails previously had “spun the area up” and exposed the roots. He stated that since they were no longer able to access the trails, they should see a reduction in the problem. Also, as the trail pays for itself, they would be able to get other resources to help cover up some of the roots.

Alderman Hilton stated that as the trails currently were, they are as good as what Dan Nicholas provided, and he felt that the trails were fine as is.

Mr. Crowe stated that they wanted it to become a place for the community to go, and they wanted the opening weekend to be a family/community event. They were going to try and do as much as they could that weekend, and from that date on everything would be open.

Mayor Brown asked if they had gotten the boating in the lakes cleared through the state. Manager Linn stated that the lake was still designated as a WSII. Alderman Hilton stated that as long as the boats weren't motorized they would be fine and Manager Linn confirmed none of the boats on the lake would be.

Ms. Karriker stated that at 3:00pm on Saturday afternoon of the opening they hoped to have a canoe and kayak race. They were looking to have a lot of people come in for the events that weekend.

Alderman Furr stated that some time ago he had walked around with the Board at that time and some had tried to say that the best use of the lakes was to sell them for development. He stated that he had disagreed and that this was his dream for that area. He thanked the Board for their vision. Manager Linn stated that the property at Grants Creek connects to the property at the lake and could become part of the Greenway and also connect to downtown.

The Board thanked the staff from the YMCA for their presentation.

The next order of business concerned initial zoning for recently annexed property. At the last Planning Board meeting, they had reviewed the recent annexations and had forwarded initial zoning recommendations for all three parcels to the Board of Aldermen.

The three parcels in question were as follows:

- A parcel located at 300 West Round Street off of South Valley Street owned by Terry Griggs, with a recommended initial zoning of R-8 (Single Family Residential)
- A parcel located near the intersection of Highland Avenue and Airport Road owned by Gary Moss, with a recommended initial zoning of R-8 (Single Family Residential)
- A parcel located at the intersection of North Central Avenue and North Main Street at the railroad tracks owned by the Town of Landis, with a recommended initial zoning of R-8 (Single Family Residential)

Manager Linn explained that all property around and adjacent to the parcels was also zoned residential. These recommendations were voted upon at the January 25th, 2011 Planning Board meeting. He stated that if the Board agreed with these recommendations they would need to accept them and call for a public hearing.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to call for a public hearing on March 7th, 2011 at 7:00pm concerning the initial zoning of property recently annexed into the Town of Landis. All voted aye.

Department Head Comments

Deputy Town Clerk Debbie Goodman: stated that City Hall had begun the update to prepare for the Smoke Signals project. They were asking customers to fill out information with their name and current phone numbers on the back of their utility billing statements and return to the office. This updated information was needed to implement the program, which would allow the Town to contact customers regarding repairs and outages, as well as concerning disconnection notices. This information would be going out for approximately two months in billing statements, and it was also posted on the Town's website.

Town Manager Reed Linn: reminded the Board that the ROTC banquet at South Rowan High School was coming up and they were all invited. He also informed the Board that the Fire Department would be conducting a life burn on February 9th, 2011 on North Main Street. It would be a night burn. Manager Linn also stated that the period for applications had closed on January 28th, 2011 for the Director of Parks position. They had received thirteen applications and they would be narrowing it down to six, which would be interviewed on Thursday. He hoped to have a candidate in mind for the Board by the next meeting. Also, the electric department had once again received the Electricities Safety Award. Manager Linn stated that he and Chief McCoy would be meeting tomorrow to discuss the promotion within the Police Department. Lastly, Manager Linn reminded the Aldermen about the upcoming budget retreat on Saturday, March 12th, 2011.

Public Works Director Steve Rowland: stated that they had officially started the electrical upgrades program today and they would be starting on the South side to the substation. Also, leaf crews would be working for the next 2-3 months.

Police Chief Brian McCoy: stated that his officers had begun to familiarize themselves with the lake area with all the upcoming activities in that area.

Board Comments

Alderman Tony Hilton: stated that he was the representative to the MPO, which is responsible for looking at roads – from prioritizing repaving, to installing new roads. He stated that he had been elected as Vice-Chairman and next year he would be Chairman. He went on to explain that COG had introduced a new initiative without consulting anyone, which would basically establish a “supersized” metro planning committee that would also involve Charlotte. It was Alderman Hilton’s belief that if Charlotte was combined with Rowan and Cabarrus counties for planning purposes that it would “suck the money” out of those counties. He stated that “our MPO is against” this new initiative. He stated that COG had handpicked the people that would be on the committee. He felt there was going to be a “little battle” and he would fighting it and meeting with others. He felt that all towns and counties should unite in opposition to this new COG initiative.

Alderman James Furr: stated that he is the representative for COG and at the meeting next weekend he would pass along the concerns and stance of the Town of Landis.

Citizens’ Comments

Michael Toler: stated that the 10th anniversary of 9-11 was coming up and he was asking for permission to form a 9-11 10th anniversary commission, with a representative from the Fire and Police Departments as well as an Alderman. Alderman Furr stated that before the Board could approve something like that, they would need something formal laid out in writing. Mr. Toler also asked about getting Central Avenue repaved. Director Rowland stated that there were other streets in much worse condition. Alderman Safrit said Main Street needed repaving worse than Central Avenue. Mayor Brown pointed out that both streets were state streets, so it would not be up to the Town either way.

Jerry Wright: inquired about the contracts for the upcoming water/sewer projects. Mayor Brown stated that we were still waiting on one thing to proceed. Manager Linn explained that it was currently in the hands of the railroad. The Town would have to be included the railroad’s liability plans. The Town had submitted the request and paid the fees. Once the paperwork was returned to the Town, the projects would be able to go out for bid. The Town had received the encroachment information from the DOT today.

Mayor Brown stated that after talking with Manager Linn, they had decided that the best idea for this year’s budget retreat would be to have it in the Council Chambers. Unless something changed, that would be the plan for March 12th, 2011.

Alderman Furr motioned, seconded by Alderman Sloop, to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye.

The meeting adjourned at 7:42pm on Monday, February 7th, 2011.

Heather Wood
Administrative Assistant