

June 13th, 2011

At 6:00pm., on Monday, June 13th, 2011, in the Board Room of the Landis Municipal Building, Mayor Dennis Brown called to order the recessed meeting from June 6th, 2011 of the Town of Landis Board of Aldermen Meeting. Those present along with the Mayor were Aldermen James Furr, Roger Safrit, Craig Sloop and Tony Hilton, Public Works Director Steve Rowland, Police Chief Brian McCoy, Town Manager Reed Linn, Deputy Town Administrator Debbie Goodman, Recreation Director Andrew Morgan, Finance Officer Ginger Gibson, Administrative Assistant Heather Wood and Town Attorney Rick Locklear.

A quorum was met.

The Mayor called the meeting to order and stated that the Board had received the re-written contract for solid waste collection with Crash Morrison and asked if the Board had any questions.

Alderman Sloop inquired what the statement "to wit, customer" meant under number 14. Alderman Furr stated that he thought it was meant to draw attention to the fact that they were talking about the customer, not the client.

Town Attorney Rick Locklear entered at that time and Alderman Sloop inquired as to the meaning of that line in the contract. Mr. Locklear stated that it makes reference to the client and contractor in the contract and when a 3rd party is introduced, it is a customary way to identify that. It clarifies that it means the customer to make certain that the Town does not get involved in the issue between the contractor and customer if a cart is damaged. There was further discussion of the matter and Mr. Locklear concluded by stating that it indicates that it is not between the Town to resolve any differences concerning cart damage between the customer and the contractor, as it would be a conflict of interest for the Town to involve itself.

Mayor Brown asked if Director Rowland had had any recycling bin damage reported. Director Rowland stated that there had been none to his knowledge.

Mayor Brown then stated that Crash Morrison had received the contract and agreed to it and had already signed. He inquired if the August 1st, 2011 start date would cause any problems for the Town. Director Rowland stated that it should not and they had to wait because of the time it would take to receive and assemble the garbage carts.

Alderman Sloop asked how many bins would be provided to churches (or any business that currently had garbage with the Town). Director Rowland stated that the Town would provide one bin, for any more than that the customer would have to contact Crash Morrison and arrange it with them directly, it is the same procedure that is currently used with recycling.

Director Rowland stated that the American Legion building would probably have to have 2-3 carts, but that was a Town-owned building. Alderman Hilton stated also that if the business is big enough, they could contact Crash Morrison and get a dumpster instead, as Crash Morrison provides those as well.

Alderman Furr stated that before they go any further, he thought that the people deserve to know exactly why the Board members felt contracting out solid waste collection was a good idea. He wanted it stated for the record.

Alderman Sloop stated that it had to do with savings in sanitation. Alderman Furr stated that there had been no savings shown in the numbers that he had provided before. Alderman Sloop stated that the current sanitation budget is \$233,017.00 and it costs the Town \$13.87 per household per month to collect garbage.

Even if a third of that was removed for the days when garbage was not being collected, that still came out to \$9.25 per household, per month. He stated that this equaled to an almost \$124,000.00 savings, which was roughly 53.14%.

Alderman Furr stated that those were not the numbers he had been able to come to previously, but that “numbers are like statistics” and you can “make them say what you want”. Alderman Sloop stated that the numbers had been taken straight off of the budget and accounting numbers.

Mayor Brown stated that it comes down to the fact that they have to either do something like this or raise taxes to continue. He felt this was the best way to make it happen.

Alderman Hilton pointed out that if you looked at the audience you could see how “important” this (matter) is to the Town’s citizens. He stated that hardly anyone had attended the meeting that night, or at the previous meeting on the 6th, so it was hard for him to see that any citizens had an issue with contracting out the garbage service.

Alderman Furr stated that he had told the people who complained to him that they should come and they had told him that’s what “they elected him for”. Mayor Brown stated that the one person who had called him about the matter, he had told them when the public hearing was and no one had come. He stated that they would see what the public had to say at the end of the contract term.

Alderman Hilton stated that the recycling had transitioned and was being done with no problems, and he felt this would be the same way. Mayor Brown agreed that recycling had thus far been a success and he felt that the garbage collection would also be a success.

Alderman Furr stated that it didn’t address large curbside items. Manager Linn stated that the Town would continue do pick up the curbside trash as it had always done. There was some brief discussion.

Alderman Safrit then motioned, seconded by Alderman Furr, to accept the contract as written with the following amendment made by Alderman Furr: during discussion it had been made clear that this was being done for cost savings and it had already been made clear that 3 positions would be cut because contracting out solid waste collection. Since this was a 12% reduction of the Public Works department budget and Director Rowland would have “less responsibility”, Alderman Furr would second the motion with a 10% reduction in Director Rowland’s benefits package.

Alderman Hilton stated he would not vote for the motion with that addition.

Aldermen Hilton, Craig, Sloop and Furr all voted nay.

The motion did not pass.

Alderman Furr stated that he had done that as a “litmus test”.

Alderman Sloop motioned, seconded by Alderman Hilton, to accept the contract as written. Alderman Hilton, Sloop and Safrit all voted aye. Alderman Furr voted nay. The motion passed.

Mayor Brown stated they would move on to the budget.

Mayor Brown stated that he was not comfortable doing away with the three employees from sanitation; he did not want to be part of the Board that did away with positions because they could; he wanted to be part of the Board that kept the positions because they could. Mayor Brown stated that they had the numbers to show that there had already been a reduction in workforce and salaries and that they would be able to keep the

employees with no increase in the budget. He wanted to discuss the matter before passing the budget ordinance because he didn't feel it was right to eliminate the employees in this economy.

Alderman Hilton inquired what Staff's recommendation was. Manager Linn stated that originally the Staff recommendation had been to keep the three employees in the Light Fund. Once the Board had indicated that the three positions should be eliminated, the money had been taken from salaries and put into capital improvements. Overall the budget numbers had not changed.

Mayor Brown stated that they could keep the positions but if they left the Town or retired, they could simply not replace the positions. Alderman Safrit stated that Alderman Hilton had originally suggested keeping the three employees for one year and see how it looked next budget year. He stated that he would like to make that recommendation again, that he felt there would be plenty of work for them to do in the Light Department.

Alderman Furr commented that there was plenty of work for them to do, but if they leave or retire, they wouldn't be replaced, he stated that it was an "oxymoron". He stated that he didn't want to see anyone lose their job, but this was about saving money and what pocket the salaries were being paid out of was not the point. He couldn't see justifying contracting out sanitation services and yet keep the three positions. Alderman Sloop stated that the Town currently pays \$88,000.00 to a contractor for tree trimming and that allowing the three employees to do some of the tree trimming would "take a bite into that".

Alderman Furr inquired if the Town had the equipment and if the employees had the training. Alderman Sloop stated that some of the things the Town could do itself with them, yes. Alderman Safrit pointed out that the Town had two employees who were certified tree trimmers. Alderman Furr stated that they were not the employees in sanitation though. Alderman Safrit stated that they could train and supervise those employees.

Mayor Brown stated that he had more people call about the employees than he had about the garbage collection by 3 to 1. He commented that citizens did not want to see people put out of a job.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to keep the three employees on a trial basis for one year in electric and to pass the budget ordinance for the 2011-2012 budget year.

There was discussion and Alderman Sloop stated that he was not at the meeting where it was decided to do away with the three positions, but it had never been his intention for the three employees to lose their jobs.

Alderman Furr stated that his nay vote did not mean that he wanted to get rid of the employees, he was simply looking at the financial aspect – once the vote for the contract had been cast, the employees had been "rendered surplus".

Aldermen Sloop, Safrit and Hilton voted aye. Alderman Furr voted nay. The motion passed.

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

The meeting was recessed at 6:27pm on Monday, June 13th, 2011.