

June 7th, 2010

At 7:00pm., on Monday, June 7th, 2010, 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 Tony Hilton, Roger Safrit, and Craig Sloop, Town Manager Reed Linn, Public Works Director Steve Rowland, Recreation Director Julie Noblitt, Police Chief Brian McCoy, Deputy Town Administrator Debbie Goodman, Administrative Assistant Heather Wood and Town Attorney Rick Locklear.

Alderman James Furr was not in attendance due to a family emergency.

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 Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to adopt the agenda with the addition of item 12-A, Southern Rowan Sports League Contract. All voted aye.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to adopt the minutes from the April 12th, 2010 recessed meeting, the April 19th, 2010 recessed meeting, the April 27th, 2010 recessed meeting and the May 3rd, 2010 regular meeting as written. All voted aye.

Mayor Brown then opened the public hearing for the 2010-2011 Budget.

Nadine Cherry stated that in today's economy she didn't feel the Town was "out of the woods yet" and it was her opinion that furlough days should remain in effect until the economy improves—with one employee per department taking a furlough day each month. She stated this should not create a problem because everyone in City Hall was supposed to be cross trained. She also felt the secretary at the Police Department should have to take furlough days as well. She also commented that Chief McCoy had asked for officers and had been turned down and that in today's economy she felt it was "wrong" to not hire more police officers. She commented that in 2006 Lieutenant Gary Phillips had sent an email stating that he had been unsuccessful in recent attempts to get more manpower (in the Police Department) and that there had been discussion of a juvenile curfew ordinance but that it had never been enacted. Manager Linn clarified that the Police Department does participate in furlough days and employees at City Hall are cross trained.

Mayor Brown then closed the public hearing.

Manager Linn then went over some of the highlights of the 2010/2011 budget, stating that they were still researching different insurance brokers, and once they had chosen one to get the Town's insurance through, it would actually show a decrease in the budget.

Mayor Brown inquired if this would hold up the adoption of the budget. Manager Linn stated that it would not; they could make the changes as they moved forward.

There was discussion of the different insurance quotes that the Town had received and that with any of them the Town would see approximately \$100,000.00 in savings per year. They were also still negotiating for

workers compensation and liability. Staff recommended quote #1 for medical insurance. The Board instructed Manager Linn to proceed with the quote staff felt was best for the Town. Alderman Hilton commented that “this is why we have a Town Manager”.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Sloop, to approve the 2010-2011 budget ordinance as presented. All voted aye.

Mayor Brown stated that amazing work had been done on this budget considering the hard economic times we were facing. He felt staff had done a good job and he was proud of them. The Board concurred.

The next order of business concerned a resolution allowing the Town’s Engineer Mike Acquesta and Manager Reed Linn to apply for planning grants with the North Carolina Rural Center. These grants would be based around water and sewer but they could be expanded to the entire Town. Manager Linn gave further information on the plan, stating that it was a ten year capital outlay plan. They did not know if they would receive the grant, but would like to apply. Alderman Hilton inquired if this included downtown business planning. Manager Linn said that it could, if they wished that to be in their capital plan. They had also applied for the North Carolina Small Town Grant, and were still waiting to hear back on that. Alderman Safrit recommended putting the two together.

Alderman Safrit motioned, seconded by Alderman Sloop, to adopt the resolution allowing Mike Acquesta and Manager Reed Linn to apply for the North Carolina Rural Center Grant Program. All voted aye.

The next order of business was a proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Town of Landis and Mecklenburg County concerning recyclable waste. Manager Linn explained that when the Town went with a one stop recycling program, they would have to take it to Mecklenburg County. Tonight it was being presented for review and if the Board wanted to add anything they could and a formal resolution could be presented and passed at the July meeting.

Alderman Hilton commended staff on pursuing single stream recycling, stating that Landis would become a leader in Rowan County and the area. He stated that they would need to educate citizens about the new recycling program.

The Board then received an agreement between the Town of Landis and the North Carolina Department of Transportation concerning bridge inspections. The Town had entered into this agreement two years ago and it was time to renew it. DOT does charge for the inspections, but it was less than the Town could hire their own inspector for.

Alderman Safrit motioned, seconded by Alderman Sloop, to adopt the agreement between the Town of Landis and the North Carolina Department of Transportation allowing the NC-DOT to handle bridge inspections for the Town of Landis. All voted aye.

The Board then received a request from True Homes concerning a change in the Conditional Use for the Oaks of Landis subdivision. True Homes was requesting the minimum house size be lowered from 1400 square feet to 1170 square feet. The Planning Board had already heard the request and after discussion at two meetings, they voted to recommend to the Board of Aldermen not to approve the request. Manager Linn reminded the Board if they did open the matter up to a public hearing, since it was a Conditional Use Permit, they could revisit the other conditions that had been set on the project as well. It was stated that the subdivision was currently doing well as is, and they sold homes before they ever started to build. Alderman Safrit inquired why they want to reduce the home sizes. Manager Linn explained they wanted to target a different kind of homebuyer, specifically retirees. The Planning Board would have supported the change if

the smaller homes had been in a different area of the subdivision, not mixed in with the larger homes. They felt that the smaller homes would affect the property value of the other homes.

Alderman Sloop stated that the minimum house size was originally put onto the project specifically to keep the homes from being smaller. He felt the subdivision was doing well as is and he would not support a change in the minimum house size.

The Board agreed with Alderman Sloop's comment and after some discussion, the matter was dropped and no action was taken.

The next order of business was the contract with the South Rowan Sports League. Rex Graham, who is a principal in the Kannapolis School System, stated that he firmly believed in activities for the youth in this area and that he understood everyone was having hard economic times. When the Board had made the decision at the April meeting to no longer have a youth league, a group of concerned citizens had approached Mr. Graham to ask for his help. They wanted him to help them approach the Board of Aldermen with interest in forming a group to take over the youth league. They had met on several occasions and put a lot of hard work into the project, and they stated that Recreation Director Noblitt had also done a lot of work on this. There was a group of citizens present and ready to take over the youth league and work with the Town of Landis. They were asking to use the ball fields and to create the South Rowan Youth League for baseball and softball.

Mayor Brown stated that when the Board had made the decision to no longer have a youth ball program, this was what they had envisioned and hoped for and he stated that the group of citizens could probably "do a better job". He also made a proposal to Mr. Graham, stating if the league would line and drag the fields, then the Town would pay the utility bills for the fields. Mr. Graham stated that this was a "good deal" and they accepted those terms. Mayor Brown stated that he had done some investigating and that most places pay the utility bills for the leagues and he wanted to be fair to the group and for it to be successful. Mr. Graham stated that he admired their decision and he felt it would help the kids and that it would be something they could be proud of.

Alderman Hilton commented that the contract presented did not say anything about liability coverage. Mr. Graham said that the league had discussed this matter yesterday, but they needed approval from the Board to proceed before they could move forward. They could not do anything until they had registered in Raleigh, and then they would be able to look into insurance coverage.

Alderman Hilton also stated that they would have to make sure to do background checks and do their due diligence and keep the Town informed.

Alderman Hilton motioned, seconded by Alderman Sloop, to proceed with the creation of the South Rowan Youth League and once they had registered in Raleigh, and a final contract was in hand, they would move forward. All voted aye.

Mr. Graham had two final questions. He inquired if they would be allowed to put up banners at the fields to let people know about registration. Mayor Brown said as long as they met the Zoning Ordinance requirements, they were free to. The second question was concerning the contract; Mr. Graham asked if it would be handled on a year by year basis. Mayor Brown confirmed that they would go one year at a time for the first few years. Mr. Graham said that they had a lot of people extremely interested. Alderman Hilton commented that this was how the league used to be handled. Mr. Graham thanked the Board.

Public Works Director Rowland commented that we would see a big cut in the utility costs of the field lights due to the new lights, which were more efficient.

The Board then discussed the July regular meeting date. It had originally been moved from the 5th to the 12th, due to the 4th of July holiday but Mayor Brown would not be in Town on that day. After some discussion, the Board decided to move the July Regular Meeting to Tuesday, July 6th, 2010 at 7:00pm.

The Board then discussed the date of the annual employee pool party. It was decided that it would be held on Saturday, July 24th, 2010 at 5:00pm at the Landis pool.

The Board then discussed closing City Hall early on June 30th, 2010 to close out the fiscal year. This was something done every year and it would only be City Hall, the rest of the Town offices would still be open.

Alderman Sloop motioned, seconded by Alderman Safrit, to close City Hall at 2:30pm on Wednesday, June 30th, 2010 to close out the 2009-2010 fiscal year. All voted aye.

Department Head Comments

Recreation Director Julie Noblitt: thanked Public Works Director Rowland and Public Works for all their hard work at the pool; they had done long, hard work there. They had also worked on the ball field lights, which made a big difference and made them safer. She stated she had also received the final draft of the Master Plan last week and that Site Solutions would be present at the July meeting to present it to the Board. Director Noblitt stated that she had also contacted the North Carolina Resources Commission, the Division of Inland Fisheries Management, in regard to fishing at Lake Corriher and how to proceed. She stated that they would come in to do a survey and that they did have programs that could help the Town, but they were very selective on whom they take on and it could be a one to two year wait. Further discussion was held on this matter. Director Noblitt stated that she had also spent time walking both Lake Corriher and Lake Wright with a retired Parks and Recreation director, trying to develop ideas. She had also contacted the prison about potential work programs. Alderman Hilton recommended pursuing an agreement with the DNR as soon as possible to get the project underway. Director Noblitt concluded by stating she would have several dates next month for the Board to approve and decide on for the festivals.

Town Manager Reed Linn: stated that he had contacted the Electricities representative that had addressed the Board at the retreat, and that the Board could take a tour of the Catawba Nuclear Plant if they wished. He would need dates that would be good for them, Saturdays were preferable, but they could accommodate other days if necessary. Manager Linn stated that they had been swamped with code enforcement issues because of all the rain (high grass, etc) and that the Town was starting clean-up procedures and had sent out 32 letters on Friday. Also, the “weather siren” had been moved from Station #1 to Station #2 because of the park. It was currently being operated manually, but it would be set up to the tones soon.

Public Works Director Steve Rowland: stated that they were going “wide open” in every department. The sewer videoing project had concluded and they had located the places that would need to be fixed first. Manager Linn stated that Mike Acquesta would be at the next meeting to address the Board. Director Rowland had also finalized dates with Mr. Acquesta for the first two phases of the water project.

Police Chief Brian McCoy: stated that the department was free of any major problems.

Board Comments

Alderman Craig Sloop: stated that he had given Director Rowland information on LED street lights, as they only use 1/10th of the power. Director Rowland had contacted several companies and they were going to provide one LED light so the Town could install it and see the difference. Alderman Sloop stated that while they are more expensive, they pay for themselves over the years. Director Rowland said the cost was \$800.00 vs. \$200.00 for the current type of street light.

Alderman Tony Hilton: thanked Staff for their work and diligence.

Alderman Roger Safrit: also thanked Staff. He also commented that “Main Street is coming apart” and that they needed to get together with the state to see what can be done. Director Rowland stated that he had spoken to Chris Corriher (with the DOT) every time he saw him. Mayor Brown asked if we submitted a list of repairs we wanted on state streets every year, Director Rowland confirmed that the Town did. Mayor Brown instructed Director Rowland to let him know if there was anything the Board could do.

Citizens' Comments

Marvin Kitzmiller: inquired about the drug use in his neighborhood (Beaver Street) and Chief McCoy assured him the Police Department was looking into it. Mr. Kitzmiller commented that at night there were people in the park at all hours. Chief McCoy stated that he had spoken to another citizen today about the same problem and they were looking into the matter, but it can take time to do something about it. Manager Linn commented that they could establish hours of operation for the park.

Jerry Wright: complimented Director Noblitt on her running of the ball program, but that there were people there after practice until 9:30-10:00pm at night and they were not supposed to be. He felt they should put rules in the new agreement since the Town was paying the electric bill. Mayor Brown stated that one of the rules in the contract was to adhere to the 10:30 light rule and that people were not allowed to hold unsanctioned games. There would be locks and keys.

Alderman Sloop motioned, seconded by Alderman Hilton, to go into Executive Session to discuss Legal matters. All voted aye.

Alderman Safrit motioned, seconded by Alderman Sloop, to come out of Executive Session and to adjourn the meeting. All voted aye.

The meeting adjourned at 20:50pm on Monday, June 7th, 2010.

Heather Wood
Administrative Assistant