

TOWN OF HIGHLAND LAKE, ALABAMA

MINUTES of the TOWN MEETING of the Town of Highland Lake

Sunday, March 1, 2020

Meeting Location:

The Anchor - 612 Lakeshore Dr. Highland Lake, AL 35121

The Town of Highland Lake held a Town meeting at the Anchor on Sunday, March 1, 2020 at 2:00 pm.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed Sales and Use Tax, and the Town's need for additional revenue to maintain the roads. In the past, the roadways were maintained by the County, but were returned to the town in October 2019.

Gail Bailey, Roads Chairman, provided financial information on the expense of maintaining the roads, including mowing of the roadways, bridge and culvert repair, and resurfacing. She further explained how the revenue would be divided between the roads (65%) and the Police Department (35%).

Chief Scott Kon explained how the police department, which not only provides service for Highland Lake, but the surrounding police jurisdiction (an area of 1 ½ miles from the center of Town), would use the revenue. Budgeting issues were discussed, as well as the possibility of cutting back hours, if more revenue is not collected.

Other income resources, including the Lake Usage Fee, were discussed. It was noted that the fee is not only for the usage of the lake, but the park, and other Town expenses. It was also discussed that property values are considerably higher because of the lake. An increased effort to collect the fee from all residents was discussed.

Mayor Donna Hanby explained how residents are sometimes already paying a sales tax, unless they tell the vendor they don't live in Oneonta, as we have the same zip code. This tax then goes to Oneonta. Items which are delivered, such as propane, furniture, and appliances, to name a few, will now be taxed at 3% in the Town, and 1 ½% in the police jurisdiction, with the tax going to the Town. Highland Super Stop is the only business affected and it will be taxed at 1 ½% as they are out of the Town's limits. This tax will only apply to goods delivered in the town. Items purchased and transported by the owner will still be taxed at the rate where the product is purchased.

Attorney Alex Smith answered numerous questions regarding the Sales and Use Tax, and noted that if the tax passes on March 10th, it would go into effect June 1st 2020. He also emphasized that except for County Line, Highland Lake is the only town that does not have a sales tax in Blount County.

The meeting was turned over for questions and numerous concerns were addressed by the surrounding area residents and questions were answered. The Ordinances will be presented for vote at the next Town Council meeting on March 10, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joan Shirley – Town Clerk

Donna Hanby - Mayor