

Regular Meeting of the Town of Highland Lake, Alabama

The Highland Lake Town Council held its regular meeting on Monday, June 8, 2015 at the Anchor. Mayor Bailey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Skip Davis gave the invocation. The Mayor led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Gail Bailey
Council members Skip Davis, Donna Hanby, Shani Ort, Tim Peek and Connie Vice
Absent: None

Town Attorney Alex Smith was also present.

May 4, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes – Ort made a motion to approve the minutes, as written. Vice seconded. Roll call. All voted yes. Motion carried.

Financial Report – Council member Vice gave the monthly financial report. Davis made a motion to approve the financial report. Hanby seconded. Roll call. All voted yes. Motion carried.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Lake – Chairman Skip Davis reported the committee met May 11. Davis met with Keith Clements of Lakeside Boathouse today to review the sites on the lake for the pilings that will replace buoys. Davis stated we are not changing anything, just providing a better way to inform boaters of the idle speed areas. Davis also reported that we need to finalize the sign for the spillway area.

Ordinances – Chairman Shani Ort reported the committee did not meet during May. The council will be voting on an amendment to Ordinance HL-11-05 regarding derelict boathouses later in the agenda. The Mayor stated the derelict boathouse that belonged to the Austin's in Long Hollow will be coming down this weekend. The new property owner hired Lakeside Boathouse to remove the structure.

Buildings & Grounds – Chairman Donna Hanby reported the committee did not meet last month. The committee will meet this Thursday and discuss an Alabama Power grant that is available for entrance signs. The deadline for applying for the grant is June 26.

Roads – Chairman Tim Peek stated he had no report. Mayor Bailey stated the county should be cutting the right-of-ways in the next couple of weeks.

Regular Meeting of the Town of Highland Lake, Alabama

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Dredging - Council member Davis reported he met with Tetra Tech on May 20 when they were here for the dredging feasibility study. Tetra Tech took sediment samples from Brasher Creek and Sand Creek bay areas. Disposal possibilities were discussed. Tetra Tech also looked at the special dredging areas that the council and committee had recommended. The results from Tetra Tech should be available in the August timeframe.

OFFICER REPORT

Officer Joe Franklin reported that the police are doing both lake and road patrols with no problems to report. Franklin also stated that maintenance on the police boat was done this past weekend.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HL-11-05 Amendment – Regulate Construction of Docks, Piers, Boathouses - Sections 7 & 8 –

Hanby made a motion to approve the amendment. Davis seconded. Roll call. All voted yes. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Blount County 9-1-1 Emergency Dispatch Service Contract – This contract is for October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016. Contract reflects a 2.5% rate increase. Davis made a motion to approve the contract. Peek seconded. Roll call. All voted yes. Motion carried.

Patricia Goodner Santamour – request for a concrete drive/boat ramp at 366 Lakeshore Drive. John Santamour stated they are requesting a 10' wide concrete drive for driving the mule. The 16 x 16 area near the lake will be to park jet skis. The 16 x 6 concrete area at the top will be replaced. The concrete drive should solve the drainage issues. Mayor Bailey asked Santamour to look for the stake that indicates the property line between the two properties, as the fence is not on the property line, but inside approximately 1 foot. Peek made a motion to approve plans. Davis seconded. Roll call. All voted yes. Motion carried.

Jessica Owensby – 24 x 24 new boathouse – The existing boathouse will be torn down. Peek made a motion to approve plans. Davis seconded. Roll call. All voted yes. Motion carried.

The Mayor read a letter from the Appalachian School 3rd Graders thanking the town and Lady Lakers for inviting them to the “Lost in the Woods” event. The 3rd graders also gave the town a tissue art painting that will be hung in the Ladies restroom in the Anchor.

The Mayor reported that resident Elwyn Williamson passed away and Mr. Snow, who sold produce at the Farmers Market, and lived on Hwy 27, also passed away last week.

Regular Meeting of the Town of Highland Lake, Alabama

Discussion took place regarding annual lake use fees. The Mayor indicated she and the clerk followed up with residents today that had not paid their annual lake use fees. There were approximately 20 residents that normally pay that had not yet paid. One resident indicated since the late fee was only \$10, they were not in a rush to pay. The Mayor suggested that the late fee be increased as an incentive for residents to pay on time.

Discussion also took place regarding the annual lake use fee. After talking with some of the residents, the Mayor stated the way the ordinance is written, folks do not think they have to pay this fee unless they actually use the lake. (dock, boathouse or water vessel). The current ordinance states that if you use the lake or park, you must pay the annual \$100 fee. Attorney Alex Smith stated the ordinance is written as a usage fee. Discussion took place on changing the ordinance to a town maintenance fee or lake maintenance fee so that all property owners would pay. In the last newsletter the Mayor wrote an article encouraging property owners to pay the annual \$100 and how the money was used to maintain the town – not just the lake. However, no new property owners have submitted payment. Alex Smith agreed to look into how the ordinance can be re-written so that all property owners must pay the annual \$100 to support the town and help with expenses.

Discussion also took place regarding the need to mow the sides of the roads.

The Mayor opened the meeting to the public.

John Santamour questioned the cost regarding mowing all the sides of the roads around the lake – in house versus hiring someone. The Mayor indicated the town does not have the equipment to mow all the sides of the roads. The comment was made that the grass around the fire hydrants is not being cut. The Mayor stated we are having a difficult time keeping a maintenance man because it is part time work. We are budgeted for 10 hours a week during the summer for maintenance. The town hires a lawn service to cut the park and three entrance areas. The County should be cutting within the next couple of weeks, and we will have our employee cut around the fire hydrants, and along the lake where the ground is level. The Mayor encouraged residents to cut sides of the roads near their homes to help out. More revenue is needed so the town can do more things.

Carl Randall stated the town should raise the annual lake use fees.

Tim Peek stated that when residents obtain their vehicle tags from the court house to be sure and tell them you live at Highland Lake. The town receives a percentage of the cost each month.

Mayor Bailey stated that the revenue the town receives from ad valorem taxes is going down each year as residents become older and qualify for an exemption. Peek added that property values are also going down.

Bill Rush commented he knew Chief Kon is always looking at the government surplus sites for a tractor and other equipment that the town may need.

Council member Peek agreed to research leasing equipment for mowing the sides of the roads. Peek added that the county leases their equipment.

Bill Rush questioned the placement of the buoy by the dam. Council member Davis indicated we needed to come up with a plan.

Regular Meeting of the Town of Highland Lake, Alabama

Bill Rush expressed his appreciation of the town council. Bill stated he is impressed with the cooperation of the council, that everyone gets along and works well together, even when they do not necessarily agree on an issue. He felt the council deserves a pat on the back.

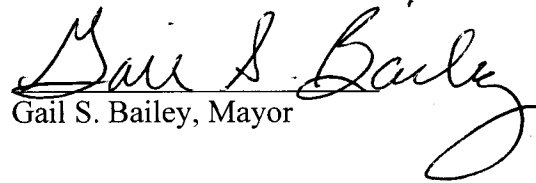
Carl Randall suggested the town implement a sales tax ordinance for items purchased from Oneonta and other counties.

John Santamour suggested we have a fund raiser for a lake beautician fund.

With no other business to come before the council, Hanby made a motion to adjourn. Ort seconded. All said I. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted:


Cheryl Storey, Town Clerk


Gail S. Bailey, Mayor