

**TOWN OF TRYON
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JANUARY 17, 2017 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL – MCCOWN ROOM**

Present: Mayor J. Alan Peoples Mayor Pro Tem Crys Armbrust

Commissioners: Roy Miller, Bill Crowell, Bill Ingham

Staff Present: Town Manager Zach Ollis Town Clerk Susan Bell
 Police Chief Jeff Arrowood Comm. Dev. Dir. Paula Kempton
 Fire Chief Joey Davis Town Attorney Bailey Nager

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order. There have been some horrible storms go across the central states. He asked for a moment of silence for the people that were lost and those that are having troubles, because of the storms. Mayor Pro Tem Armbrust led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Peoples stated additions to the agenda are Streetscape and the discussion of Highway 108. Make it 9b and 9c. Commissioner Miller stated Dr. Carson would like to be added to the agenda to speak. Peoples stated he would make him item 6b. He entertained a motion to adopt the Agenda. Commissioner Miller so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA ADOPTION

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda, which includes the Board's minutes and tax releases for DD Bradley, Heirs (\$269.87), Carolina World Travel (\$48.65 & \$25.69), RW Earley (\$44.46, \$34.69 & \$29.10), Archie Frink (\$32.06), Homer Frye (\$39.04), Nannie Henderson Est (\$85.97), Romey Johnson (\$52.79), Will King Estate (\$45.79), Mildred McCarroll (\$218.91), Ethel McDowell (\$291.79), Theodore McDowell (\$33.84), Town of Tryon (\$2.69), Otis Vernon (\$388.48), Viola Waddell (\$633.64), Leroy White (\$60.39), Ella Williams (\$75.03), RL Wood (\$77.94) and SBA Communications (\$283.07). Commissioner Miller so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

APPOINTMENT TO BOARD OF PLANNING AND ADJUSTMENT

Town Manager Ollis stated that before you is an application from Jonathan Gerst for the appointment to the Board of Planning and Adjustment. He has a hydrogeological background and a background in planning. Mayor Pro Tem Armbrust made a recommendation to accept Jonathan Gerst as the appointment to the Board of Planning and Adjustment. The Board agreed unanimously.

DR. CARSON MADE STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE EASTSIDE

Dr. Carson stated the members of the Eastside Committee are himself, Reverend Eleanor Miller, Dr. Joseph Fox, Coretha Littlejohn, Commissioner Roy Miller, Commissioner Bill Ingham and Helen Hudson. He stated he would like to read a statement on behalf of the Eastside.

January 17, 2017

Mayor Peoples and Town Commissioners,

During 2002-2003, the last year that I served on the Town Council, the Council established what came to be known as the Eastside Citizens Advisory Committee, to be comprised of five citizens from the Eastside Community and at least one Town Commissioner, who would meet regularly with the Town Staff, including the Town Manager, the Chief of Police or his designee, the Fire Chief, the Director of Public Works, and other such staff as may be necessary to address a myriad of issues and problems that existed in our community, chief among them, the delivery of city services in an equitable and efficient manner, the removal of the blight caused by the presence of abandoned and dilapidated houses, and the improvement of police interactions with the citizens who live on the Eastside. For a number of years leading up to putting this advisory committee in place, Town Council meetings had been inundated with complaints about these and other issues brought by Eastside residents and property owners, and which the Council ultimately realized were systemic, longstanding problems that needed more than a Council meeting to resolve. Due to the *ad hoc* nature of the Advisory Committee, not one of us expected to still be wrestling with these same issues 14 or 15 years later. But here we are, in 2017, with a community still overrun with flagrant housing code violations, overgrown lots, streets in disrepair, drainage issues that threaten our homes and safe passage on the streets, traffic violations, and still often having to negotiate for routine services like side mowing and leaf pick up.

To be sure, we have had some successes. A quick count confirms that about 14 structures that were code violations been removed since we began our work. Some street improvements and infrastructure issues were addressed on East Livingston St. The lower half of Peake Street was finally repaved last fall after being on the list for years. And this year, for the first time that I can recall, the leaf machine was on the Eastside about three times within a month, even before the leaves had fallen.

The late Beryl Dade would have been overjoyed. Perhaps one of the accomplishments that so interested the Council in 2002 is that complaints and concerns from the Eastside have not been coming directly to the Town Council and are therefore not part of the public record. We have effectively been out of sight and out of mind. That will stop tonight.

Despite the successes that I have mentioned, and there are perhaps a few others, our work is not yet finished. For example, if you ride down East Howard Street from Oak St. to Peake St., you will notice a number of houses and lots that need attention for being minimal housing code violations. Eastside property owners have pointed out on numerous occasions before that these are not just eyesores, but health hazards that also serve to bring down property values. It seems to us that any work toward addressing these houses has come to a complete halt. Further, persons from outside of the community who have purchased houses for the purposes of rental or resale property have been allowed to do little or nothing to improve them for years and are often in violation of various codes such as not posting building permits or leaving trash in heaps in the yards, even some that is suspected to be asbestos filled. Several streets, including Cleveland, Aspen, and Shepherd, are in serious disrepair. We continue to have issues

with speeding and other traffic related issues on the Eastside, so much so that it not safe to walk on any of the streets, and of course there are no sidewalks on the Eastside.

It has come to our attention that members of the Town Staff are frustrated with the Eastside. We understand frustration. It is said that the wheels of progress move slowly. No one knows that better than those of us who live on the Eastside. We have been characterized as complainers, and accused of enjoying something that no other community in the Town has, and of having some kind of special provision that perhaps we do not deserve. Let me remind you that the Eastside has problems that no other part of Tryon has. Moreover, it was not an act of benevolence that brought the Eastside Advisory Committee into being, but a practical recognition that different issues require different methods and solutions. We ask for no more than any other citizens are entitled to in the Town of Tryon, and it is certain that we will accept no less. We find, then, suggestions that we are getting something that other Town citizens do not get or that the Staff does not have to "dance to the tune of the Eastside" or that the Town should do away with the committee to be patently offensive and non-productive. The members of the Eastside Advisory Committee, with the exception of two members, have served since the inception of the group, and they all have served honorably, with great passion and sacrifice, with an abundance of patience and goodwill, and in good faith. They should be applauded rather than criticized. Perhaps most unfortunate is that we are often accused of making things about race. To that, let me say that it would be difficult indeed to miss the fact that the residents of the Eastside are overwhelmingly African American. It is also a fact that the majority are senior citizens, single females, own their own homes, and so on. We make no apology for who we are, and if race matters during election time, then it can certainly matter at any other time.

We recognize that while it is certainly within the purview of the Council to establish *ad hoc* committees to help them accomplish their work, it is just as much in their purview to discontinue them, although this usually does not occur until the objective has been met or the task completed and that has not happened. Finishing this work on the Eastside would be a joy to us. I know that I speak for the others when I say that we would be happy to complete it and move on to something else. But we are not finished, and we are here tonight-representative voices from East Howard St., Peake St., Markham Road, Cleveland Road, Elm St., Livingston St., Jackson St., Lyle St., Shepherd St., Beech St., Spruce St., Young St., Aspen St., Tuckaway Lane-all over the Eastside, to reiterate that this is not the time to abandon the very necessary work that has to be done there. Rather, it is time for us to redouble our efforts to get it done and put mechanisms in place so that no community within our corporate limits ever has to face these issues again. If we spent a fraction of the time, effort, and money on resolving Eastside issues that have spent on Trade Street (which we celebrate by the way), we could make these things go away in no time flat. We understand staff shortages, tight money, and other projects and other parts of town that require attention. We do not understand, and cannot accept, no action at all on the Eastside. For us, the Eastside Matters.

In closing, we ask that the Council, Citizens and Staff recommit themselves to examining ways by which to bring solutions to these problems, recognizing that Tryon will never be all it can be until the Eastside can become all it can be. The residents of the Eastside are resourceful people who stand ready to help transform our neighborhood into everything great that it can

be.

Thank you,

Warren J. Carson, Ph.D., Chair
Eastside Citizens Advisory Committee

Commissioner Ingham stated he has heard those complaints and apologized for the slowness. We have three quarters of the staff since Dr. Carson has been gone. The Town probably hasn't done what it should have done.

Nancy Johnson stated this has been on the agenda since 2003. When was Trade Street put on the agenda? Ingham stated they were talking about it in 1998. Ms. Johnson asked if cleaning up the streets so that people can come in and shop is more important. Ingham stated it's not more important, but the small towns are in competition with each other for survival in a lot of ways. Downtown is very important for the vitality of the town. If we want people to come downtown, then it has to look better than Landrum and Columbus. Ms. Johnson stated they pay taxes and deserve for stuff to be done also. Ingham stated we are working on it.

Dr. Fox stated one of the properties has been on the list since 2000. The house has been torn down finally. They need to find out what to do about the overgrowth. Mayor Pro Tem Armbrust asked how much does it cost to remove the houses. CDD Kempton stated Chief Davis should be able to answer that question.

Chief Davis stated the one on Rippy Road cost about \$8,000. If the Fire Department burns it down it cost a lot less. Attorney Nager stated around \$5,000 is the range for demolition. That's the hard cost and doesn't include the time of staff and the attorney.

Armbrust stated it seems to him that funding for the projects needs to be found. The projects downtown have been funded mainly by state funding. The sewer line project for the Eastside was about \$700,000. Streetscape was started in 2001, now it's 2017 and we are only three quarters of the way done.

Miller stated for many years they have allocated money for dilapidated structures about \$20,000 each year. Even though streetscape was on the agenda in 2001, the funding for the sidewalks was done in December of 2016. The residences are saying the cleanup of the properties of the dilapidated properties needs to be done. Fourteen structures have been removed and there has been no continuation of care. If we can approve \$200,000 for streetscape, surely \$20,000 can be found to help with cleanup.

Ingham asked about Howard and Peake Street. Armbrust stated part of that was for the Eastside. Point of fact the \$200,000 that was approved was a temporary transfer. Everything that has been implemented in the past year on streetscape, such as the sidewalks from the theater to Buck's Pizza and the work on Oak Street actually came to the town free of charge through the sale of 289 S. Trade Street that was gifted to the Town while he was the Economic Development Director. That structure did sale and the monies were to be rerouted back into the General Fund. He thinks that it is important that all the citizens understand that.

Ingham stated he understands the point that Roy has made. The line item is just for working on those lots. Peoples stated that we used to have a line item for that. Miller stated that we did replace the sewer trunk line that came from a lady complaining about sewer running into her yard. Most of the money came from grant money. That is the main sewer line for the entire town, not just the Eastside.

Dr. Carson clarified the town didn't remove fourteen houses at one time. Why can't the money continue to flow? Don't just stop a project completely in its tracks.

Armbrust asked when was the last house taken down? Kempton stated 2015. The owner requested it, because the house was falling in. Peoples stated that he understands that the Eastside needs stuff done. The Town takes in \$800,000 a year for property tax. The Town spends more than that. The only other money comes from when people come into the town and spends money. If he understands correctly, Dr. Carson is asking for the town to budget money to help the community and he is asking when they can expect this. He is also asking for the town to mow the grass and keep up the lots where the homes have been torn down. Dr. Carson stated essentially yes.

Kempton stated the Town has a process to go through. Within 10 years of placing a lien on the property the town has to request that the property be sold to collect on the lien. Then if the property didn't sell the Town would own it and could start taking care of it. Ollis stated that essentially you have to go into a bidding process and when no one bids on the property, the Town gets it, but the Town has to pay the back taxes and attorney fees. Then the Town can maintain the property.

Peoples stated at one time he and Miller had discussed donating properties to Habitat. Kempton stated Habitat has two houses that are in minimum housing. Dr. Carson stated we need to think out of the box. He asked how we get things done.

Alan Suber resident of the Eastside stated as a youth, this affects all, especially the young men and women. You can't expect them to live in the void conditions like Dr. Carson said we can plan all day long, but we need action. After so many years, it is time for action.

Armbrust stated every person sitting up here is willing to try and find a solution. He feels everyone wants to appropriate money. It's identifying those funds and putting it in the dialogue of the upcoming budget creation. Mr. Suber stated he understands that, but sometimes trying has to be replaced with doing. We need action and are not asking for anything that anyone else wouldn't want. He doesn't know the conditions or the district that each of you live in, but he's sure that you don't want to deal with kudzu all over, abandon buildings and torn up sidewalks. You wouldn't want to live there. We are only asking for a standard in housing. This is not only our community, at some point it is all of our community. So what affects us at some point, will affect everybody in Tryon. We are trying to find ways to fix it. Need a call to action.

Coretha Littlejohn stated she grew up here and moved away. When she returned she was appalled at the condition the Eastside community was in. She joined the Eastside Committee to try and help. She feels they are being given a pacifier and now they are no longer accepting that. She is only asking for accountability. Their community doesn't want to be forgotten when they leave here tonight. They all pay taxes. She's lived in large cities. This Town is too small to be divided into Eastside, Westside, it's just Tryon. With everything that is going on in our country, she doesn't want to see that in her hometown. Let's work together to get this done. What she is saying is if you are tearing down your

piece then you are tearing down our piece of town. She actually brought friends into town and they told her there was nothing on Main Street that would get them to stop. That needs to be changed. Young people are our future. They need something to look forward to.

Bernice Suber suggested instead of donating land to Habitat, there are so many people that would love to have land. There are a lot of people that need homes, maybe we could help one another. Miller stated that a lot of properties can't be built back on because of the setback requirements. When doing title searches it is hard to find the heirs. The property owners are never coming back to this area. The gateway to Hunting Country needs to be taken care of. The ship needs to move forward. Why do African Americans not come to the restaurants or shop in Tryon. It's not about the color of our skin, it's the condition of living. The quality of life. Need to stop looking at Eastside, Westside. It's time to live up to the promises that were made when this board was running for election. We should commit to making the Eastside part of Tryon. The racial divide has to go away. Ingham stated that he has never made a decision based on race or color. Miller stated that he doesn't feel that decisions are made on color, the Eastside just gets forgotten.

Ms. Johnson stated that Dr. Carson had mentioned permits had to be posted. She had posted hers when she had to rebuild her house after the fire. There are houses on Cleveland and Peake Street that permits are not posted. The one on Peake Street has asbestos sitting on the street. This is dangerous to everyone. It should be properly disposed of. Kempton stated that she put a call in to Mr. Lambert advising him that he needed a permit. She has also called the building inspectors office about the permits not being posted. The contractor that is doing the renovations on the house has been advised to get a building permit. She doesn't want the houses to be left for minimum housing issues. She didn't think he listened because she didn't find a permit. She told the building inspectors office that she wanted the houses inspected and permits posted. That was last Tuesday. Ms. Johnson stated he also has one in town. Kempton stated yes. The building inspector's office were to get with the contractors. She will check with them in a few days to make sure they have been out there.

Mr. Fox stated he is hearing a disconnect here. They have provided recommendations and have found grants. They have done a survey and a feasibility study. They are not expecting the town to allocate all the money. They just need to know the process. They have met, gave recommendations, now they need accountability. Who does the follow up? If someone comes to the meeting and complains about sewer, then we bring to the town, what happens then. Who follows up with that resident? What's the process? The process is not handled yet. Who takes the lead on the grant? He along with Meg Rogers identified several grants before. What happened to them? Miller stated in 2008 the town went after a grant for \$580,000 for W. Livingston Street and that's how Bryant Park came about. The Town has been active. Kempton stated after that grant the state quit funding.

Miller stated the article in the Asheville Citizen Times concerning the Nina Simone home stated that the Eastside is a poor neighborhood. A lot of people are upset over this. He stated that the Eastside is rich and the oldest neighborhood. The perception shows a disconnect here. Need to get a resolution. We have Zach and Paula here to get an open dialogue. Peoples stated that we need to get money in the budget. He asked were there any money put into the budget for last two years? Miller stated no. Armbrust asked about the one house. Kempton stated that house was sliding off the bank. Miller stated the money came out of contingency. Marie Burns stated then nothing will get resolved. Peoples stated the next budget will have money in it. There has not been money in the last two budgets. There will be \$15,000 to \$30,000 put in next year's budget. Ingham stated that the town will also try to get

grant money to help. Miller stated that will give us money for drainage issues. Lack of funding doesn't help. Dr. Carson agreed, there are drainage issues.

Ms. Littlejohn stated she hopes that we don't start and then just stop. Armbrust stated he doesn't feel that would be an expectation of this board. Three people on this board haven't even served for two years as of yet. So this typically is a new board.

Latisha Miller stated the responsibility needs to come from both sides. They can't expect the town to come in and take care of our community if we're not willing to take care of it ourselves. There is trash everywhere. People throw trash out all the time. If we love our community the way we say we do, then we need to take care of it. We can't always be looking for someone to help us. On the flip side just the other day, Uncle Roy called the town, because when they cut a tree down, half the tree was sticking out in the road. She had to cross the double lines to get around it. He asked the town to come and remove it and it is still there today. That's our community and we need to take care of it. We can't look for everyone else to help out. We can't ride by the trash and expect others to stop and pick it up if we don't. We can't point fingers at each other. She hasn't seen any of the board on the Eastside.

Miller stated the tree is gone now. It was removed about 3:15 today. Thank the street guys for removing it. Wanda May asked when the board comes back next month, she would like to see a plan or response for the community. She suggested a community work session. Get the whole community to work on it. Then they would know how much money is spent. It is embarrassing to her to see how the Eastside is treated.

Ms. Johnson stated she has been fighting a drainage issue at her house coming from Livingston and has lost 12-15 feet of her land. She can't pull into her driveway and the issue is getting worse. Nothing has been done. Miller stated that Andrew and crew is aware of the issue. Culverts were put in but no pipe. As soon as we have the money it will be fixed. We are elected to serve the entire Town. Armbrust stated this is where the dialogue occurs.

Mr. Fox stated the Eastside Committee was formed because of the attendance at the meetings. It was to help funnel their concerns, but they can make it a reality to be at the meetings. Armbrust stated everyone is welcome here at every meeting. This is the process. The adhoc committee doesn't replace this meeting. There always needs to be representatives from the committee here.

Being no more comments Mayor Peoples stated the Board is going to take a five minute recess before continuing.

SCHEDULE OF FEES

Town Manager Ollis stated at last month's meeting the Board approved the Meter Testing Policy. If the meter is tested and comes back as testing accurate, then the customer will be charged a fee of \$400. Commissioner Ingham made a motion to amend the fee schedule to include the meter testing fee. The motion carried unanimously.

BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 1

Town Manager Ollis stated this is Budget Amendment No. 1, the first for the year. It recognizes \$47,861 in revenues, along with expenses of \$35,824 to the Police Department, \$2,325 to Parks and \$9,712 to

Debt, Transfers. Essentially what it recognizes is the loan for the police car, donations for benches at Vaughn Creek Greenway as well as the explorer payment made by the fire department and later transferred to administration. The ordinance is included, as well as how it is broken down. Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to adopt Budget Amendment No. 1. Commissioner Crowell so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

MONTHLY PRIORITIZATION UPDATE

Town Manager Ollis stated the list is in front of you. This is the running list that we are trying to keep our public works crew caught up on. They have been battling the leaf season along with the snow storm. Some of the items haven't been completed the way we wanted them, but they are working on it. Let me know if you need to add anything. Commissioner Miller asked about the speed bump on Peake Street. Ollis stated the last he had checked we were waiting on the signatures. Kempton stated we have them. Chief Arrowood stated he needs to make sure that it meets all the requirements.

Miller would like to put the idea that was discussed in the work session concerning Trade Street and McCown Street on the list.

STREETSCAPE

Town Manager Ollis stated that he wanted to hold a general discussion on where the council thought the streetscape priorities would fall. Mayor Pro Tem Armbrust stated following a discussion with one of DOT's support staff, he has concerns that our time line meets the DOT time line. He understands the repaving of the complete central business district is scheduled to begin in spring of 2018. We have to engineer and implement the last three quarters of a block of the sidewalk. There are fifteen months, not a lot of time. Commissioner Ingham stated that we do need a plan. Armbrust stated if there is an action item this evening, it would be to have the project engineered. The project will have to be permitted through DOT and Norfolk Southern and this too is a long process. Ollis stated that he would work on getting RFP's from engineers to do the sidewalk from Foothills Realty to Palmer Street.

Mayor Pro Tem Armbrust made a motion to put out RFP's for engineer services for the three quarters of sidewalk that hasn't been finished. Miller asked if we have received the money for the building that was sold. The projects that have been started need to be finished. Kempton stated the only thing left is the Howard Street repaving and the sewer line, which needs to be done first. Armbrust stated they have already been directed to do this.

Ollis stated that he has 100 % confidence in our crew. His concerns are when there is a water line break, then we are expected to be there within a certain amount of time. This year we've had more breaks due to the age of the water lines than we've had in a long time. When they are installing sewer, they may or may not get called off, but if they do, it will add time to the project. He would like to look at the idea of contracting it out. Kempton stated we have one quote, but it is too high. Armbrust asked if the board didn't discuss this months ago. Ingham stated he knows that we discussed that we were going to do this in house, but maybe to get finished we need to look at contracting the work. Armbrust stated his understanding was that Trace was going to start in January. Kempton stated they can't start until the sewer line is done. Armbrust stated we can't allow things like this to fall through the cracks. He understands that we've had more breaks this year than we've ever had. There shouldn't be any expectations that it is going to get any better. Kempton stated that she is over the contractors, she can't direct public works too. Ingham stated we borrowed \$200,000 from the fund balance and then we sold

the building and agreed to put that money back, but maybe we need to take some of that money and pay a contractor to put in the sewer line. Miller stated he feels that we need to bid this out and finish this project. Ollis stated he would get quotes and then let you make the decision. Miller asked if we could agree with a number and suggested \$50,000 or less. If the bids come in over \$50,000 then we do it in house. Armbrust stated that the overage from the projects was \$53,000. He feels that the engineering fee for the other is not going to be that much. Miller stated he didn't feel that we needed two projects going on at one time. Kempton stated she could send out Request for Proposals. Armbrust stated it will be over a year before we can get started on the sidewalk project.

Commissioner Miller made a motion to direct Kempton to secure RFP's for engineering for the remaining streetscape project and also to secure bids for the Howard Street sewer with emphasis on Howard Street. The motion carried unanimously.

HIGHWAY 108 DISCUSSION

Town Manager Ollis stated he and CDD Kempton had a meeting today to discuss the Highway 108 project, between I-26 and Highway 176. The project was scored through the RPO process and their initial intent was delivered to us. It is to build four lanes with a median, curb and gutter and sidewalks. One of the issues brought up today was will the community be able to accept this. He told DOT that he would discuss this with council. Ingham stated everyone that has spoken to him, says leave it alone. They don't think it needs to be widened at all. He's not heard anyone say this is a good idea. Peoples says he travels back and forth to Columbus each day and he's never been stopped in a traffic jam except at the roundabouts when school is letting out or people are getting off work.

Ollis stated they are looking to start on this in 2021 and construction beginning around 2025. Two lanes work now. Commissioner Crowell stated that he would like to see the sidewalks, but four lanes are overkill.

Ken Dahlstrom asked why DOT wants to do this. Ollis stated the process is that the projects are sent to the RPO and then are scored. This project must have scored very high amongst the RPO. Seems it is a priority to get the road widened. Kempton stated that she sits on the RPO along with Tim Barth of Columbus and the widening of the roads was discussed, such as bike lanes and sidewalks, not four lanes. Armbrust asked if this is possibly a later day request that DOT made to us nine years ago. A huge meeting was held and the community said "NO". Many officials were sent to the meeting. Kempton stated they say this is the first option. They are starting to listen to different solutions. Miller asked if we could have a discussion at our next work session and if he had anything that showed the plans. Ollis stated DOT gave them a couple of things that he can copy and send to you. They have overhead aerials of the project. Peoples stated with four lanes, curb and guttering, they are going to take a lot of property. Wanda May asked if the work session was open to the public. Ollis stated that all work sessions are open to the public.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Ollis wanted to thank Jamie Carpenter for a wonderful Tryon Midnight event. Jamie Carpenter thanked Polk County Community Foundation for providing funding to make this event free, food, hot chocolate and entertainment. She then thanked the Fire Department, Police Department and Public Works who helped get everything set up. Through the grant she purchased three propane heaters that can be used for additional events. Food was provided by Buck's Pizza, Tryon Co-op Coffee

House and Manna Cabana. She thanked Steve King for volunteering to help and Sidney Waldman and Sidney Metcalf for doing the face painting and the TDDA Board.

Ollis stated Christopher Cochran successfully completed the course and test for his Grade II Wastewater license. He thanked everyone who worked over Christmas, Jeff Arrowood, Bill Smith, Alan Corn, Ann Gibbs for the Police, Daniel Walker, Andrew McCallister and Phillip Miller from Public Works and all the firemen. He received a letter from White Oak of Tryon, thanking Phillip Miller, Sanitation Supervisor and crew who took care of their garbage during the snow storm.

COUNCIL/MAYOR REPORT

Commissioner Miller thanked all the citizens for attending the meeting tonight. It helps to get a dialogue going. With the traffic circle up town, TDDA has been blamed. TDDA had nothing to do with the circle. One of Martin Luther King's greatest quotes was "We must learn to live together as brothers" and he would like to add and sisters "or pair us together as fools". This means no matter what culture, what ethnicity, what gender, whatever, we are all human beings and were put on this earth to co-exist. Whether we like someone or not, we are the ones that our citizens have chosen to lead this town for the next four years. He thinks we have a good board here and he would love to see us to continue to make the decisions impartially, not based on anything, but the right thing and he looks forward to continuing to see that happen. Thanks again to Zach, Paula, Chief Arrowood, Chief Davis and Susan. There is a lot of criticism, but we represent the citizens of the town. It's not easy sitting in these seats. Thank you for electing us.

Commissioner Crowell thanked the Eastside community for attending the meeting. He would like to see you again next month, be involved. He thanked Chief Davis and crew, along with Chief Arrowood and staff for everything done over the holidays.

Commissioner Ingham stated he would like to reiterate what Roy had said that we are all in this together. He appreciates the crowd that is here this evening. He congratulated TDDA on Tryon Midnight. That was a lot of fun. He congratulated the Town on the beautification award that was received. He praised the Town for the snow removal. He thanked the Police Department, Fire Department and Street crews for all their good work. He recognized Drew Bailey, a high school student that has been attending our meetings and she would like to attend the next Eastside meeting. He thanked everyone for allowing him to sit up here.

Mayor Pro Tem Armbrust stated the problem with going last most everything has been said. He thanked TDDA and the Polk County Community Foundation for an excellent Tryon Midnight. He thanked them for a wonderful design charrette this past week. He thinks great things will come of that. Congratulations to the Town as well on the Polk County Appearance Commission award. He thanked the staff for its service during the recent snow storm. He will end with the phrase that has been echoed tonight that pleases him most. "There is one Tryon, one Tryon". This is not a black Tryon, white Tryon, Eastside and Westside. The greatest benefit to us all will be if we all move forward as one connected community. He thanked everyone for participating in this process.

Mayor Peoples thanked everyone for choosing Tryon.

CITIZEN COMMENTS & RESPONSES

Steve King thanked Zach for getting the tennis courts replaced. Unfortunately he went to help Travis with the nets and determined that the company that put them in didn't do it properly. They are going to have to come back and redo the poles. Ollis stated that Travis has already set up a time for them to return and repair.

Wanda May has been working with a small group on dismantling racism since October. A small discussion group has risen up out of that. The only way to combat it is to be in the community, have conversations, to know people on a more personal level. The vehicle they have chosen this time is to do a discussion about a recent book "Small Great Things", by Jody Picone that lays down the damage that racism has done. The discussion is open to the public and will be on a Saturday afternoon in February at the Depot. The churches will get information and there will be articles done in the newspaper. Watch for more details. She feels it will be great discussion.

Ingham reminded everyone of the Martin Luther King celebration at the Tryon Fine Arts Center Saturday at 6:00 pm.

MOTION TO CONVENE TO CLOSES SESSION

Mayor Peoples entertained a motion to convene to closed session to approve closed session minutes and pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client privilege. Commissioner Miller so moved. The motion carried unanimously.

RECONVENE REGULAR SESSION

Commissioner Miller's motion to approve the proposed Blue Ridge Barbeque agreement with the Carolina Foothills Chamber of Commerce with the change to say that the CFCC would pay the Town \$0.25 for each ticket sold was approved unanimously.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Ingham's motion to adjourn was approved unanimously.

J. Alan Peoples, Mayor

Attest:

Susan B. Bell, Town Clerk