

**TOWN OF RANLO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MONTHLY JUNE 2024 MEETING**

**RANLO TOWN HALL  
1624 SPENCER MOUNTAIN ROAD, RANLO, NORTH CAROLINA 28054**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 13th 2024, 7:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Governing Body Present**

Mayor Lynn Black  
Commissioner Ronnie Laws  
Commissioner Wade Morton  
Commissioner Robin Conner  
Commissioner Locklear

**Staff Present**

Town Manager	Charlie Hansen
Police Chief	Jimmy Lunsford
Public Works Director	Jason Green
Assistant Public Works Director	Charles Harper
Finance Director	Reagan Day
LFNC Fellow	Antonia Christou

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Black called the meeting to order, and the Town Manager conducted the roll call.

**II. Adoption of the June 13, 2024, Agenda**

Mayor Black called for a motion to adopt the agenda for the regular June meeting.  
Commissioner Morton motioned to adopt the agenda for the regular June meeting.  
Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous 3-0 vote.

**III. Swearing of Effie Locklear to the Ranlo Board of Commissioners**

Mrs. Effie Locklear was sworn in as a Commissioner for the Town of Ranlo by the Chairman of the Gaston County Board of Commissioners, Mr. Chad Brown. Senator Brad Overcash stood as affirmation for Commissioner Locklear. Commissioner Locklear recited the oath and was officially sworn in.

#### **IV. Swearing of Officer Jacob Springs to the Ranlo Police Department**

The Town Manager said that he was excited to announce the swearing-in of the Town of Ranlo's new detective, Officer Jacob Springs. Officer Springs was joined by his family to the podium for the swearing-in.

Officer Jacob Springs recited the oath and was officially sworn in.

Commissioner Conner arrived at the meeting during this time and was previously absent from previous votes.

#### **V. Recognition of youth Police shadowing program**

The Town Manager introduced two young Ranlo residents who went above and beyond to serve the community. The Town Manager said the two young men's mother approached the police department three or four months ago, looking for a police-community partner engagement opportunity for her sons. Over the last four months, Carson and Ryan conducted community clean ups, picking up garbage at the walking track, ball fields, and parks. The Town Manager said that they also picked up trash in their own neighborhood. The Town Manager said Carson and Ryan also cooked and delivered food to the elderly community in their neighborhood. The Town Manager said that Carson and Ryan worked with Chief Lunsford, Pastor Cobb, and their parents to repair a damaged gate at the Ranlo Church of God. The Town Manager said he drove by on Saturday and saw the two young men working very hard.

The Town Manager said that these young men have demonstrated a strong sense of community and have gone above and beyond to serve Ranlo. The Town Manager says the Town of Ranlo would like to formally recognize their service to the community. The Town Manager addressed Carson and Ryan and said that on behalf of the Town of Ranlo, the Ranlo Board of Commissioners, and the Ranlo Police Department, we would like to thank you for going above and beyond for our community. The Town Manager handed them a certificate commemorating their hard work.

#### **VI. Presentation by Antonia Christou, Lead for North Carolina Fellow**

Antonia (Tonia) Christou served as the Lead for North Carolina Fellow for the Town of Ranlo.

"Good evening board of commissioners, staff, and residents here tonight.

Hi, if I have not had the pleasure of meeting you yet, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Tonia Christou and I have served as the Lead for North Carolina Fellow tasked with increasing capacity here in Ranlo.

It is hard to believe that my year in Ranlo is coming to a close. Throughout my time here, it has become evident how hard you all work to make the Town of Ranlo the great place that it is, and I feel extremely fortunate to have sat amongst you over these past few months.

When I graduated from Wake Forest University in May of last year, I wasn't sure exactly what I wanted to do going forward. I spent countless hours researching could-be career paths, speaking with my advisors, and applying to various roles. That was until I came across Lead For North Carolina, a program that places recent graduates in small communities across the state to do good. In fact, it was the tagline "I love good government" that stuck with me days after I had applied and even throughout this fellowship. As nerdy as that sounds, that became a mantra humming in mind as I took on various projects throughout the year.

If you will indulge me for a moment, I would like to talk about some of the great things the team here and I have worked on. To begin, the Finance Director, Reagan Day, and I took on the task of organizing the town's books. The budget you see before you tonight are largely thanks to Mrs. Day's hard work, which I am grateful to have helped with. Together, we reconciled twelve months of bank statements to track year to date actuals, organized and reported the State Capital Improvement Fund Grant and the Town's North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Grant, and worked to demonstrate transparent stewardship of public funds. While the work we did was hard and there was certainly a learning curve, what we achieved ensures that the Town of Ranlo continues to prove its leadership capacity to the community.

Finally, I had the great pleasure of helping to plan the events that the Town held this year. From the Christmas Parade to senior bingo, these events brought me closer with community members and allowed me to forge connections that will stick with me for a long time. Now, these are just glimpses of the great work that a good government accomplishes day in and day out and I cannot emphasize enough how much this experience has taught me.

Now, not many fellows get to say that they have served under two town managers, but I have the distinct pleasure of having had the opportunity to have learned under two of the greatest - Mr. Jonathan Blanton and Mr. Charlie Hansen. They made me realize that good

government is not just an ideal or silly thing to muse over, but a way of living. Whether it comes in the form of a yellow truck whizzing across town to hear resident concerns or someone willing to take on an initiative called “Chats with Charlie” by an overzealous fellow like me, it has been so enlightening to see leadership at this level, in action. I see the same level of leadership in this board, and I would like to say thank you to every one of you for welcoming me here.

I have also received support from countless others who I would like to mention. I would like to thank Beth Price for encouraging me and supporting me. I would also like to thank Jason Green, Charles Harper, Jimmy Lunsford, Pam Moore, everyone at the Police Department and Public Works Department who volunteer their time to create and nurture good government.

This Town has achieved so much in my time here. It has been a pleasure to work with all the staff members here.

As I prepare to take my leave, I will share one lesson that I think is highly valuable. Good governments rely on good people doing a good job. And that is what I have seen in Ranlo.

Thank you.”

The Town Manager said that this would be Ms. Christou’s last meeting with the Town of Ranlo and wanted to share a message he had prepared. The Town Manager said Tonia was here when he first started back in January and in the year that she has been here, has left a monumental impact on Ranlo. The Town Manager said there is not an event, an initiative, or a success that Ranlo has experienced in the last year that did not have Tonia’s name or involvement. The Town Manager said she was in charge of the planning of all the town’s major events, she helped completely reconcile all of our bank records with our finance director, revamped our personnel policy, helped launch and thought of Chats with Charlie, and more. The Town Manager said he has always jokingly said that Tonia is the smartest person in the room no matter what room she walks in, but honestly, I do believe that.

The Town Manager addressed Ms. Christou and said, Tonia, your time with Ranlo has measurably changed the course of Ranlo for the future. The Town Manager said we are so greatly in debt for the time you have spent with us. The Town Manager said it is so terribly sad to see you have to move on from Ranlo and launch your already impressive career. The Town Manager said that whatever you do, you will excel and that he has a feeling that they will be working together in some fashion in the future. The Town

manager said that Ms. Christou has been a gift to Ranlo, to the community, to our residents, and we are so incredibly thankful.

The Town Manager asked for another round of applause for Ms. Christou.

## **VII. Comments from Attendees**

Mayor Black asked the Town Manager if anybody had signed up for comments.

The Town Manager said that this time is for anyone with general comments, but there is also time allotted for the public hearing regarding the budget.

The Town Manager said that the recognition portion of the meeting has concluded and invited anyone who would not like to stay for the business portion, to take their leave.

Mr. Corey Creech said that having met Ms. Christou, he could see that she was a great person and was very smart. Mr. Corey Creech said that residents are very proud of what she has accomplished while here.

Mayor Black asked the Town Manager if two people had signed up to speak. The Town Manager said that the floor is open to anyone who may wish to comment.

Robin thanked the Town of Ranlo for participation in the Warlick Academy's graduation event. Commissioner Robin mentioned the want for a citizen's academy and learning a little bit about plumbing or changing tires. Commissioner Conner said she would like to see the Town more connected.

Commissioner Locklear asked Commissioner Conner if there were any summer programs available. Commissioner Conner said not yet. The Town Manager said that programs will begin in the fall. The Town Manager said he will speak with leadership at Warlick Academy and start planning in September. The Town Manager said he may begin a mentorship program.

Commissioner Conner said Tonia will be missed. Commissioner Conner addressed Tonia and said that she had a glow and a smile. Commissioner Conner said Tonia has been amazing and wishes her the best.

## **VIII. Adoption of the May 16th, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board**

Mayor Black called for a motion to adopt the agenda for the regular May 16th meeting. Commissioner Morton motioned to adopt the agenda for the regular May

16th meeting. Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 3-1 vote.

Commissioner Locklear said she would abstain due to not being present at the previous meeting.

#### **IX. Adoption of the May 16th, 2024, Closed Session Minutes of the Board**

Mayor Black called for a motion to adopt the closed session minutes for the May 16th meeting. Commissioner Laws motioned to adopt the closed session minutes for the regular May 16th meeting. Commissioner Morton seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 3-1 vote.

Commissioner Locklear said she would abstain due to not being present at the previous meeting. Commissioner Locklear asked Town Attorney Tosco if it was proper for her to abstain, given that she was not present at the prior meeting. Town Attorney Tosco said that, technically, under the rules, she is not allowed to abstain. The Town Attorney said she would just not be voting in favor. Commissioner Locklear said she does not want to sound negative. Town Attorney Tosco said that, technically, under the statutes, you are not allowed to abstain

#### **X. Public Hearing for adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Ordinance and Fee Schedule**

Mayor Black called for a motion to enter into a Public Hearing for the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Ordinance and Fee Schedule. Commissioner Laws motioned to enter the Public Hearing for the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Ordinance and Fee Schedule. Commissioner Locklear seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

The Town Manager said that nobody had signed up to speak. The Town Manager said that this is anybody's opportunity to speak.

Mayor Black addressed the room and said that he assumed everybody had looked over the budget and approved of it.

Mayor Black called for a motion to exit the Public Hearing for the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Ordinance and Fee Schedule. Commissioner Morton motioned to exit the Public Hearing for the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget

Ordinance and Fee Schedule. Commissioner Locklear seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

## **XI. Consideration of entering into Annual Financial Audit Contract with Eddie Carrick**

The Town Manager said, as you know, we carry out our annual financial statement audits with Eddie Carrick, CPA. The Town Manager said if the board sees fit, we must return to this agreement. The Town Manager said the contract and the intent to enter into the agreement is before the board. The Town Manager asked to enter into this agreement and for the Mayor to sign it so Mr. Carrick would have the agreement. The Town Manager said, come September, he will carry out the ending in 2024, Financial Audit.

Commissioner Locklear asked the Town Manager if Mr. Carrick was the auditor that the Town had worked with several years ago. The Town Manager said that Mr. Carrick has completed the town's last four audits. The Town Manager said Mr. Carrick caught the Town up on previous audits.

Mayor Black called for a motion to enter the Annual Financial Audit Contract with Eddie Carrick. Commissioner Laws motioned to enter the Annual Financial Audit Contract, with Eddie Carrick Commissioner Locklear seconded. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

## **XII. Approval of Budget Amendment**

The Town Manager said that the fiscal year close-out amendments are before the board tonight. The Town Manager said the finance staff had worked diligently to clean up the books since July 2023, and he is excited to say that, finally, everything is caught up. The Town Manager said all the journal entries and bank reconciliations are caught up. The Town Manager said the budget amendments tonight are internal bookkeeping transfers that make the book ready to close out for the fiscal year. The Town Manager said the finance director has also submitted the budget amendments and information like the year-to-date budget and standing reports. The Town Manager said, in working with the North Carolina League of Municipalities, that the budget amendments are internal bookkeeping amendments that make the budget ready to close on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The Town Manager said that during the May meeting, there were some questions surrounding our financial standing and year-to-date budget to actuals. The Town Manager said that everything is now caught up. The Town Manager said the Finance Director Reagan Day, has also put together this financial summary to inform the board, but the budget amendments are what we are voting on tonight. The Town Manager said

the first page includes a finance overall report. The Town Manager said all the town's accounts and the interest being made in each account is reflected. The Town Manager said the second page reflects the percentage of expenditure throughout the fiscal year. The Town Manager said some may be in deficit, but that is because we assumed safer on the revenue side. The Town Manager said the third page reflects a total summary. The Town Manager said we are still well in the surplus and still in the black on this. The Town Manager said these budget amendments are for things within our system. The Town Manager said that no funds get transferred, but these amendments would help with internal clean-up. The Town Manager said that the finance director also forecasted June spending due to the town's spending freeze. The Town Manager said June will only have emergency spending and the finance director has already built out what will be spent out of June. The Town Manager said the last page reflects grant funding. The Town Manager said that this will help with what money will get tracked into what project. The Town Manager asked if the board has any questions.

Mayor Black called for a motion to approve the budget amendments. Commissioner Locklear motioned to approve the budget amendments. Commissioner Laws seconded. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Commissioner Conner asked the Town Manager if the Town of Ranlo was still on the Unit Assistance List. The Town Manager said that the town found out last week that going into the next fiscal year, the Town of Ranlo will continue to be on the Unit Assistance List. The Town Manager said that the good news is that the Town is trending in the right direction. The Town Manager said the Town has had two or three strong years in what the Local Government Commission (LGC) looks for. The Town Manager said that the LGC looks for growth in the fund balance, and Mr. Blanton focused on this. The Town Manager said one of his big focuses is growth in the fund balance as well. The Town Manager said that the LGC is looking for a little bit longer. The Town Manager said he has a call scheduled with an expert on this matter in the future.

### **XIII. Consideration and Approval of the FY2024-2025 Budget and Fee Schedule**

The Town Manager said that in May, he presented the balance proposed and prepared in accordance with North Carolina General Statute 159-11 proposed budget. The Town Manager said he would not go too in-depth because the board has had several meetings going into the budget season. The Town Manager said the proposed budget has been sent to the Gaston Gazette and is available on the website and in the town hall. The Town Manager said the budget includes keeping the tax rate the same as last fiscal year. The Town Manager said he is proud of the Department Heads, the finance director, Ms. Christou, and all who have worked diligently to prepare this budget for you tonight. The



Town Manager said he is proud to present this as it is his first balanced budget. The Town Manager said we are looking for a vote tonight and he is happy to answer all questions.

Mayor Black asked if there were any questions from the board.

Mayor Black called for a motion to approve the FY 2024-2025 Budget and Fee Schedule.

Commissioner Laws motioned to approve the FY 2024-2025 Budget and Fee Schedule.

Commissioner Morton seconded. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

#### **XIV. Ratification of the Town of Ranlo Stormwater Management Plan**

The Town Manager said the Storm Water Management Plan is a five-year permit and the last and final step for the NCDEQ and is the town's municipal stormwater separate system MS4 system. The Town Manager said he had a meeting with the head of MS4 Storm Water and nailed down the last items. The Town Manager said the stormwater management plan is before the board tonight and includes information about stormwater permitting. The Town Manager said that the good news is that he used to do this for Mecklenburg County. The Town Manager said the town has fifty permit requirements that the town will need to meet. The Town Manager said that no real action is required. The Town Manager said he needs Mayor Black to sign the plan and the town will send it up to the state so the plan will be live in July.

#### **XV. Town Manager's Report**

The Town Manager said that the town was able to attend Warlick Academy's graduation ceremony and he would like to congratulate the graduates and thank the administration for involving us. The Town Manager said we were able to get lunch for the kids and presented some pictures of the event. The Town Manager said there were around thirty to thirty-one graduates. The Town Manager said, as Commissioner Conner mentioned, the town is excited about the future collaboration with Warlick Academy.

The Town Manager said that the town also had its senior bingo event and thanked Commissioner Locklear who informed him of the event. The Town Manager said the headcount was north of forty participants. The Town Manager said it was a great opportunity to spend time with some of Ranlo's senior citizens.

The Town Manager said that there is an upcoming Blood Drive that will occur at the Ranlo Lodge. The Town Manager said the Blood Drive is on June 17<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-5:00 P.M. The Town Manager said he encourages all to attend, and all donors will receive a fifteen-dollar e-gift card for donating.

The Town Manager said the Police Department has received another grant that enables the town to welcome another K-9 officer. The Town Manager said this is such fantastic news. The Town Manager thanked the Chief, Assistant Chief, Pam Moore, and everybody involved in that application process.

The Town Manager said that this year, the Fourth of July lands on a Thursday. The Town Manager asked if the Board of Commissioners would consider closing the town hall on the fifth.

Commissioner Locklear asked the Town Manager if that would be a paid holiday for the staff and if this had been done in the past. The Town Manager said yes, it would be a paid holiday. The Town Manager said he had been told that this was done in the past. Commissioner Locklear asked how many paid holidays the staff get. The Town Manager said he does not know off the top of his head. Commissioner Locklear asked the Town Manager if the fifth is included in those calculations. The Town Manager said that the fourth is.

Commissioner Conner asked the Town Manager if any activities would be done here in Ranlo. The Town Manager said that the July Celebration is on the 20<sup>th</sup> and is reflected on the town's calendar. The Town Manager said that he has been told that the town's July celebration is scheduled later to allow people to travel.

Commissioner Conner made a motion for the staff to be given Thursday and Friday off in recognition of the Fourth of July. Commissioner Locklear seconded. The motion passed with a 4-0 vote.

Chief Lunsford said the police department responded to 524 events in the month of May which included 8 arrests, 48 citations, 7 warning citations, 14 domestics and 3 shootings. Chief Lunsford said on June 22nd from 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. an event will be held to install car seats at the fire department and a drive through if anyone needs a car seat check and not out of date at the fire department.

Chief Lunsford said that National Night Out, met on Tuesday. Chief Lunsford said the event will occur on August the 6th from 5:00-9:00 P.M. like it is every year. Chief Lunsford said we keep trying to build it and hopes to get our helicopter back, and include the Marine Corps, the Air Force, the National Guard, and a fly over. Commissioner Locklear said we have the chili and slaw figured out.

Commissioner Conners asked if car seats will be given out. Chief Lunsford said he was looking into the prospect Commissioner Conner said the safety meetings hand out 15-25 for car seats or sell them. Chief Lunsford said that Officer Kuntzman has sent out to them Grey Code, the National Advocacy Center, Crisis Agency, so hopefully, we will have some to give away. Chief Lunsford said that the department had car seats to give previously and it was a big deal to the police department and to people. Commissioner Conner said she would look to the agency to get some saved.

**XVI. Comments from the Mayor**

**Mayor Black said he went to an MPO meeting to and they have money issued to get a commuter train in this region and it looks like it will be put in the past three years. Charlotte to kings mountain and over to Cherryville.**

**Mayor Black said he was glad to see that and hopes it will alleviate some of the traffic burdens and a super fast train from charlotte to atlanta. I asked a question concerning the bridge and they did not get back to me. The bridge may need to be included to get the commuter line, especially when on the interstate.**

**Mayor Black said we would like to thank Ephie for joining the board. No other comments were entertained.**

**Locklear Law 4-0**

**XVII. Adoption of the June, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board**

Mayor Black called for a motion to adjourn the June th, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes of the Board. Commissioner Laws seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous 4-0 vote.

ATTESTED TO:

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Mayor Lynn Black

Antonia M. Christou | LEAD FOR NORTH CAROLINA FELLOW

Recorder and transcriber of the minutes for the Monthly June 2024 Meeting.