Meeting Notes – Oct. 5, 2021

The LaFayette Rotary Club met on Tuesday, October 5, 2021. Rotarian TR Clark (left) was responsible for the program. Fellow Rotarian Chris Busby (right) helped TR to obtain Daniel Wyatt (center) of the Lee-Russell Council of Governments as our speaker. Daniel spoke on the development Johnny Ray Rail Trail, which would cover three counties: Lee, Chambers, and Russell. The trail would basically follow the abandoned rails staring in Opelika (around Morris Avenue Intermediate School on Hwy 431) to LaFayette to Five Points and ending in downtown Roanoke. The trail would be open to pedestrians, horses, skate boards and bikes.

This has been an ongoing effort over the last 20 years. The Council received a technical assistance grant from the National Park Service, which is good for two years and will help with the planning. Among the advantages of creating this trail is making the areas through which the trail runs attractive to homebuyers and increasing property values. One of the major obstacles to the project is dealing with the 200+ landowners who own the land through which the trail would run. Not everyone is willing to see or donate their land. Having the funds to make those purchases is another obstacle.

Diane Sherriff