

By Joanne Webster

Contributing Writer

BOSWELL — “The people of this town are rising up,” a Boswell business owner told members of the town council during a heated meeting Tuesday evening at city hall.

Approximately 40 citizens filled the council chambers voicing their continued displeasure with what they report to be “excessive city police harrasment.”

The topic has been boiling since the fall, after numerous business owners in Boswell told the council that their business was “drying up,” and attributed the loss of business to citizens fear of “harassment by the police.”

Tuesday night, a restaurant owner said he had lost as many as 21 Friday night customers, who said they decided it wasn’t worth coming to town for fear of being stopped by police. One citizen said some teens on a work assignment for a relative were stopped four times in a weekend.

Another business owner said his employees were “stopped repeatedly,” and that numerous travelers, angry at the way they were treated by Boswell officers, would no longer trade in the town.

Some citizens said the town had employed officers with questionable backgrounds. Some questioned why officers routinely “just disappeared” in the middle of the night with the citizens not knowing why they quit.

Another citizen questioned why the council would continue trying to run an aggressive police department with city accounts running a negative balance.

Officer Brian Gordon was called into Tuesday night’s executive session for approximately 50 minutes, during which time citizens could hear members of the council speaking with raised voices inside.

After returning to open session, the decorum grew more raucous, and Mayor Buck Eastwood called for the meeting to be adjourned.

“No! No!,” yelled several citizens. “You’re going to hear us,” several said.

The meeting ended with heated conduct, which included profane language on both sides and adjournment became necessary.

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