

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL  
February 10, 2015

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Tuesday, February 10, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room of the City Hall. Mayor Michael presided and the following Councilmembers were present, to wit: Troy E. Alexander, Bill Aldridge, Benton Dry, Martha Sue Hall, Martha E. Hughes, Dexter Townsend and Chris Whitley. Absent, none.

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The Mayor and the City Council held a Fiscal Year 2015/2016 Planning and Budgeting Work Session in the Conference Room of the City Hall with the following Departments presenting: Parks and Recreation, Planning and Community Development, Police, Economic Development, Human Resources, and Information Systems.

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Parks and Recreation Director Toby Thorpe came before Council and reviewed FY 2014-15 initiatives and milestones for Parks, Programs, and how they are paying for these initiatives.

PARKS

Appearance work at Rock Creek Park and Hearne Park  
Removal of high dive boards and platforms  
Planned relocation of Ingram ball field lights to Albemarle Soccer Complex  
Master Plan for Wiscasset Mills Athletic Complex  
Additions at Morehead Park  
Picnic Shelter addition at Rock Creek Park

PROGRAMS

Adjust program offerings  
Tennis to expand beyond a summer-only program  
Eliminated low participation programs, others being evaluated  
Hosted one district baseball tournament and one state tournament  
Partnered with organizations that share this mission on various events

Paying for It

Grants  
Sponsorship

Generate appropriate revenue – look at current fees and resale items to public

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Councilmember Whitley came into the meeting at this time.

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Mr. Thorpe reviewed with Council 2015-16 budget initiatives and principles for Parks, Programs and how they are paying for these. Also, he reviewed immediate needs for the 2014-15 capital, technology, and staff development priorities as:

- Morehead Renovation Project
- Fundraising for Wiscasset Mills Project
- Vehicle replacements
- Improved interacting with new website being launched
- Implement credit/debit card acceptance at Niven Center and EEWC
- Pay Plan/Merit Plan
- Better Utilization of Part-Time Staff

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Councilmember Aldridge came into the meeting at this time.

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Mayor Michael handed out a memo from City Attorney David Beaver and a right of entry and easement agreement for constructing sidewalks for the use of the general public for pedestrian traffic in the Leonard Avenue and US 52 South communities.

Mr. Beaver in his memo gave a bear bones budget of \$36,300 as the minimum budget to be set to complete the Leonard Avenue and US 52 South sidewalk projects if right of way was needed from all 60 property owners.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved the budget of \$36,300 as the minimum budget to be set to complete the Leonard Avenue and US 52 South sidewalk projects per City Attorney David Beaver.

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Mayor Michael stated that Council needs to make a decision concerning the proposal of personnel policies of the Pay Plan revisions in order for staff to know how to complete their upcoming budgets.

Mayor Michael asked Council to consider the residency policy of the Pay Plan highlighted in red and he needed a consensus from Council if possible.

Councilmember Townsend stated that he feels this wording may limit people resources if left as.

City Council requested information form other municipalities regarding residency requirements.

Mayor Michael asked Council to consider the wording to be a candidate for nomination or election to office under the City Charter; any currently elected official at the time of adoption of this policy shall be grandfathered from enforcement of this section. It was the consensus of Council to remove this section from the Personnel Policies.

Mayor Michael stated that in the Pay Plan and whether to place all of the various positions I, II, and III in the same grade or leave as is and each have a separate pay grade.

It was the consensus of Council to leave positions I, II, and III each in a separate pay grade.

Mayor Michael stated that in the Pay Plan and the Police Captain Division Commander, Fire Battalion Chief and a Police Shift Captain to leave all of these in either 26 or 27 pay grade but make them the same or equal or leave as is.

It was the consensus of Council to make the Police Captain Division Commander, Fire Battalion Chief and a Police Shift Captain all the same grade of 27.

Mayor Michael stated that in the Pay Plan, the second level of command on rotating shifts is a Fire Captain and Police Sergeant. Do we want to leave them both a grade 23 since they are both second in command.

It was the consensus of Council to make the Fire Captain and Police Sergeant, a level 23 because they are both second in command.

The Mayor said the Fire Engineer position and Police Officer III are comparable as they are both senior non-command employees. It was the consensus of the City Council that both these positions be grade 20.

Mayor Michael asked Council to make the minor tweaks needed by consensus tonight and if the City Manager or Human Resource Director Robert Whitley has any questions, they can bring that issue back before Council.

Mayor Michael stated that when the pay plan is implemented between a third and a half of City employees will not see a salary adjustment. He suggested when implemented, that the City also give a COLA in the fiscal year 2015/2016 if possible so that everyone will see something.

City Council reviewed various options for implementation and COLA options for the next year, becoming effective the first pay period in July, 2015.

It was the consensus of City Council to move forward in implementing the salary study pay recommendations with the changes made above and include 1% for each year of service in the position to address compression and a 1% COLA to take effect the first pay period in July, 2015 if the City Manager can make this work in the budget.

He asked that Human Resource Director Robert Whitley report back to Council at the budget work session on Thursday, February 12 with the cost of the implementation and changes by City Council.

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Planning and Community Development Director Keith Wolf came before Council and gave a brief summary of responsibilities for his department.

Mr. Wolf listed some of the activities requiring adding additional staff time this year as electronic documentation and tracking of applications, Central School Project, small area plan, designation of landmarks by Historic Resources Commission, implementing changes to better support new business development, enhancing staff capabilities through continuing education and certification, and activities involving new shopping center on Leonard Avenue.

Mr. Wolf stated that he supports the Pay Plan implementation including merit raises. The proposed new personnel policies will aid in hiring the most qualified applicants. He also stated that his department is reviewing sign ordinance at this time.

Mr. Wolf asked that Council consider one or both options below concerning the Albemarle Community Appearance Commission.

1. Suspend and place the Commission on hiatus at least temporarily.
2. Seek to fill seats on this Commission with people recommended in section 21.51 and appropriate some funding for the Commission in the budget so that the powers and duties can be realized.

Councilmember Hall requested that Mr. Wolf bring back to the budget work session on Thursday evening, the Community Appearance Commission's membership and attendance information for Council review before making a decision.

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Police Chief Halliburton came before Council and stated that concerning the 2015-16 Police Department budget priorities he would like to:

- 1) Take one records clerk position and create a much needed Position being an evidence custodian.
- 2) Retain the Gang Coordinator Position (salary + benefits \$56,530) the current grant will end 6/30/2015.

Police Chief Halliburton spoke about the Police Department's organizational restructuring. Council reviewed documentation of the records officers and their dispatching over 24 hour period and their detailed call reporting including the cost of overtime. The Chief's proposal is that he restructure the department to have a records division whose duties do not change but the operational hours do.

Chief stated that he would like to take three of his records personnel and place them on rotating shifts that covers the hours of 6 am to 9 pm on Monday through Friday and 9 am to 6 pm on Saturday and Sunday. This change of schedule will result in a drastic reduction of overtime and the number of hours needed to cover a person taking time off, with there then being more than one person covering a shift. One of the greatest benefits of this is allowing me to create a much needed position within the department of an evidence custodian.

Upon questioning, Council asked that Chief Halliburton return to the Thursday evening budget work session to continue the conversation of a records clerk becoming an evidence custodian position and the closing of the building to the public in the evening hours.

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Economic Development Director Mark Donham came before City Council to discuss budget considerations for 2015-16. He is continuing to work on the following:

- Development of the Corporate Center
- Albemarle Historic Hotel - DFI Feasibility Analysis
- Private Investment
- Brand – North Star
- Retail Strategies – Roosevelt Ingram Park, shops at Olive Place, etc;
- Redevelopment of the Downtown
- Albemarle Industry Recognition Program
- NC Building Reuse Incentive Program
- Working with existing industries
- Feasibility Study on City Annex as a museum

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Councilmember Hall stated that Bethany Woods, former Britthaven of Piedmont will be celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> year in 2015. This was originally a state facility beginning as Piedmont.

Mayor Michael asked that the City Manager and Economic Development Director Mark Donham create a resolution for this to be presented to Bethany Woods at its regular meeting on Monday, February 16. Ms. Hall gave her information to Mark Donham to create this resolution.

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Human Resource Director Robert Whitley came before Council concerning medical insurance and performance evaluations. He stated that the trend across the country is a 7.5-8% medical insurance increase. Our consultants are always hard at work on this and we are hoping they will be able to negotiate as low as a 3% increase.

Mr. Whitley stated that concerning the Affordable Health Care Act there should be a 3.5% tax which will be around \$80,000 to our plan this year. Also, he stated that a bid insurance plan is based on BC/BS's renewal rate. The City continues to look at self-funding options for the future.

Mr. Whitley stated that several groups will present their performance evaluation systems for the City to evaluate. The goal is to have a vendor selected

as to begin implementation of a new performance evaluation system and process for the upcoming fiscal year.

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IS Director Owen Squires came before Council and stated that as an organization we have to balance projects that are driven by capital spending, cost of operations, and expenses. He stated that he could not be more please with IS's new support staff, Nhia LY and Heath LuQuire. Add to that a breadth of knowledge that Michael Devlin brings to the workforce.

Mr. Squires covered some of the **near-term projects affecting different departments as:**

- Summation360 Project (credit card acceptance, multiple funds, multiple locations.
- Communication/Web platform upgrades
- Phone/Voice upgrades
- Munis/Tyler Technologies Financial Suite
- Public Housing software
- New/updated requirements for Public Records requests
- Security of all systems and procedures
- Planning for off-site business community

Mr. Squires also covered continued cost of operations projects for 2015-16.

**Infrastructure-related projects and their costs for 2015-16 as:**

- Replace virtual-server hosts
- Migration of our server platform
- Adding storage capacity
- Migration of security
- Redundant paths for internet connection
- Core data switch platform replacement
- Security
- Systems Division to prepare SCADA Environment
- Public Utilities and other depts. – expansion of City-specific GIS data/integration

Mr. Squires also reviewed projects that will continue for 2015-16.

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Mayor Michael thanked Council on making decisions on the Pay Plan and the City Manager will bring back any issue if need be.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Townsend, and unanimously carried, the City Council adjourned to a closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) 3, 4 and 5 to consult with the City Attorney, economic development, and real estate.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hughes, seconded by Councilmember Alexander and unanimously carried, the City Council reconvened to open session. Mayor Michael announced that a closed session was held pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) 3, 4 and 5 to consult with the City Attorney, economic development, and real estate and reported that the law suit of Tony Wray Stewart vs. Luna, Lefler, et al has been dismissed and there was nothing else to report at this time.

Councilmember Hall and Councilmember Hughes attended a lecture at the NLC meeting concerning solar energy. The company in Austin, Texas stated they would come in and do a presentation for Council if so decided.

The Mayor stated that at the last Power Agency #1 meeting, they are reevaluating the power plant and the possibility of refinancing this. We were under the impression that the rates would drop around 17% in 2016 and he is thinking that there may be a possibility that this will not occur if they reevaluate the Power Plant. How drastic would this affect the City, since we gave a rate quote to the possible incoming of Project Comet. Our rates in this group are rated 3<sup>rd</sup> in the list compared to other cities and the Mayor would like to know why we are rated that high.

Mayor Michael stated that we will get a report from Public Utilities Director Michael Leonas when he returns from his trip.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned until Thursday, February 12 at 6:00 pm in the Executive Conference Room of City Hall for a City Council Budget Work Session.