

ADJOURNED MEETING CITY COUNCIL  
November 23, 2015

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in an adjourned session on Monday, November 23, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. in the Raymond I. Allen Room at City Hall. Mayor G.R Michael presided and the following Councilmembers were present, to wit: Bill Aldridge, Troy E. Alexander, Martha Sue Hall, Martha E. Hughes, Dexter Townsend and Chris Whitley. Absent, Councilmember Benton Dry.

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The City Council held a meeting with the members of the Economic Development Task Force and Business Development Task Force

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Mayor Michael brought the meeting to order.

Mayor Michael thanked the members of the Economic Development Task Force and Business Development Task Force for all their hard work and interest in the City. He stated that the City Manager will have a status report on each task force and their recommendations and Economic Development Director Mark Donham will review economic development priorities for 2015.

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The City Manager gave background information on each task force:

**Economic Development Task Force** was assembled in 2013 facilitated by Crystal Morphis of Creative Consulting developing recommendations and priorities with four top priority actions developed as 1) Engage a professional firm to lead the City through a branding process, 2) Provide City funding to Stanly County EDC to become a partner in Economic Development and seek leadership role in their organization, 3) Expand the City's Planning and Community Development Department to include tasks related to Economic Development, 4) Advocate for a new position at EDC to support existing businesses.

**Business Development Task Force** was created in 2014 and facilitated by Jim Prosser, Bob Henderson and other staff with Centralina Council of Governments. The City Manager gave their recommendations and a status report as follows: 1) Single Point of contact with staff training and coordination, 2) Review utility policies and recommend changes to address concerns including cost and timing of deposits and refunds, 3) Form consolidation & fillable online forms, 4) Develop improved system to track applications including method to share notes, changes to application, update submittals, and provide

information to others working on the application. 5) Consider adoption of NC Building Rehab Code, 6) Study impact of adopting Minimum Commercial Maintenance Code, and 7) Develop customer feedback system for those in the development process.

Mr. Ferris reviewed with Council, the customer feedback questions and responses by customers. The task force also asked that the City 1) provide a zoning map as requested, 2) update zoning map online, 3) develop zoning table of uses, 4) develop informational flyer, 5) develop inventory of vacant buildings, and 6) consider a Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

In conclusion, Mr. Ferris stated that the City has made a concentrated effort to respect the work and the recommendations of both task force groups and staff has had a positive attitude about both efforts and understands the goal of improving the economy of Albemarle and we are here to make a difference.

Mr. Ferris stated that Economic Development Director Mark Donham will discuss the City's economic development strategy and initiatives.

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Economic Development Director Mark Donham came before Council and gave a presentation presenting the Economic Development 2015 priorities program results. Mr. Donham stated that Council met January 6, 2015 to determine the top five priorities which were 1) Downtown Development, 2) The Corporate Park, 3) The Wiscassett Baseball Park, 4) Branding/Advertising/Marketing, and 5) Economic Development.

Mr. Donham talked about two residential downtown projects being the Central School Senior Apartments to provide new activity downtown as new residents shop and family visits and Historic Hotel Albemarle having 18 apartments on the upper levels and retail space on the street level.

Mr. Donham reviewed an example of a Corporate Center and Speculative Building designed in Monroe, NC when he was there. It was noted that NC is a major draw for industry and business. He also stated in a corporate center development, it must be a quality park, with a reasonably-priced product with utilities, roads, and a speculative building to tour or view. The build-out cost for a large site would be around \$7,600,000 with the County and City splitting the cost at \$3.8 million each. Splitting the cost in half with a break down of the land at \$1.4 million, utilities and road at \$1.6 million, and the spec building at \$800,000 each for the City and County.

Mr. Donham stated that the following groups made up the City/County Economic Development Team:

Stanly County EDC  
Albemarle Downtown Development  
ElectriCities  
Chamber of Commerce  
Local Banks  
Local Industries  
Developers  
Realtors  
Others to locate and retain industry

Mr. Donham stated that the Economic Development Team provided information to companies interested and showed sites and buildings. There were 38 visits over a 1.5 year period of which 18 visits were to two manufacturing facilities, 14 retail visits, and 6 local businesses and industries including Triton, Goodman Machine Shop local auto sales, potential meat processor, local church community development, and one still in process that is confidential.

Mr. Donham stated future marketing includes City's new brand, an upgraded website, materials for presentations, direct mail, response packages, and to visit prospective industries. The City works with allies as Economic Development Partnership of NC, Department of Commerce, Charlotte Regional Partnership, ElectriCities, Stanly County EDC, Stanly County Chamber of Commerce, and Stanly County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Mr. Donham stated that there are 40 manufacturers located here and he has contacted 36 of them and site visited 25 of them. He has met with these local industries to learn about their processes, find local links and suggest relationships, suggest Stanly Community College training or new small business, he suggests the Small Business Center to create a business plan.

Mr. Donham stated that the City has started an industry retention program recognizing two industries per quarter, videos are prepared for those industries by Stanly Community College, newspaper coverage of each, exhibits of each industry at City Hall, City Council tour of each industry chosen and work with regional media.

Mr. Donham stated that the economy has improved and small businesses are starting to reopen with empty stores getting filled. The Shops at Olive Place has built quality retail space with the developer, Mr. Kilpatrick investing around \$9.7 million there in Hobby Lobby, TJ Maxx, Ross and others still to come. Medical expansions included Carolinas Medical Center; total expansion commitment over several years will be an investment of \$70 million with \$9.7 million total so far this year. Also, Spring Arbor, Novant, and CMS Urgent Care invested \$2 million this year.

Mr. Donham reviewed other priorities as the Wiscasset Baseball Park with \$3 million total committed by City grants. This park will benefit local businesses with sales from tournament visitors to hotels, restaurants, retail and sales taxes. It also benefits local sports teams.

Questions were answered at this time and responses were made from the audience.

Mayor Michael stated that if anyone has any suggestions to please contact Council or staff. He also thanked both task forces for participating and helping with the process and that Council may call on them in the future.

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Mayor Michael recessed the meeting to allow the task force members to disperse and asked that Council stay a few minutes to cover a couple of business items and for a closed session.

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Mayor Michael brought the meeting back to order and asked Council what vehicle they would like to ride in for the Christmas parade. Mayor Pro Tem Alexander will be the parade Grand Marshal.

It was the consensus of Council that the Public Works Department furnish a truck for them to ride in for the parade.

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Mayor Michael stated that the Landmark Group needs an answer by the end of December concerning upgrades to the audio/visual for the auditorium at the Central School project. City staff will be meeting with Technical Innovations, who installed the audio/visual for the Council Chambers and the Community Room at City Hall.

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Mayor Michael stated that the governor has officially released an official announcement concerning the PARTF grants and the City will be receiving \$130,492.00 with the City matching those funds.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the City Council adjourned to a closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a) (5) - Real Estate Negotiations.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Hughes, 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) (5) - Real Estate Negotiations and there was nothing to report at this time.

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Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned until Monday December 7 at 7:00 p.m. for a regularly scheduled meeting.