

REGULAR MEETING CITY COUNCIL

November 17, 2014

The City Council of the City of Albemarle met in a regular session on Monday, November 17, 2014, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall. Mayor Ronnie Michael presided, and the following Councilmembers were present to-wit: Troy E. Alexander, Bill Aldridge, Benton Dry II, Martha Sue Hall, Martha E. Hughes, Dexter Townsend, and Christopher Whitley. Absent, none.

Mayor Michael called the meeting to order.

The Mayor presented the North Carolina League of Municipalities Retirement Resolutions:

Teresa A. Efird-7 years and 8 months of service
Pennie D. Rabon-13 years and 6 months of service
Nelson L. Barringer-27 years and 6 months of service
Robert E. Lefler- 28 years and 8 months of service

The Mayor presented a Retirement Certificate to Police Captain Lyndon P. Howell- 28.33 years of service.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hughes, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved November 3 adjourned session, November 3 closed session I, November 3 regular session, November 3 closed session II, and November 10 closed session as submitted and November 10 adjourned session as amended.

The Mayor and City Council received a presentation concerning the Wiscassett Mills Athletic Complex Master Plan. Mr. Jeff Ashbaugh of Benesch/Site Solutions was present and had the master plan for the proposed Wiscassett Mills Athletic Complex.

Parks and Recreation Director Toby Thorpe came before Council and introduced Mr. Jeff Ashbaugh of Benesch/Site Solutions. Mr. Ashbaugh gave a project overview and site history of the final plan including vehicular access, pedestrian access, rail, and existing facilities, existing utilities, and zoning and surrounding land use surrounding the property. He further spoke of the setbacks required along Salisbury Avenue, the hydrology, soils, landform, and vegetation with a site analysis summary with constraints and opportunities.

Mr. Ashbaugh stated public input sessions through three public meetings were held at different locations in June, October, and November 2014. He reviewed the recreation needs assessment survey showing percentage of local demand for parks, open space, and recreational facilities. He reviewed the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan proposal depicting two 300 foot ball fields, four 225 foot ball fields, play area, skate park, restrooms, press boxes, concessions, bleachers for each field, and shelter areas.

Mr. Ashbaugh reviewed with Council the budget estimate without natural turf fields in the amount of \$7,720,124.88. There would be an additional cost of \$2,000,000.00 for artificial turf for 6 fields. Each component of the budget was itemized with the cost and breakdown of each.

Mr. Ashbaugh answered any questions that Council had.

Mayor Michael stated that City staff may decide to do some of the items in house.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved Wiscasset Mills Athletic Complex Master Plan and for staff to move forward in determining the phases of the plan.

Chris Lambert, Stanly County Convention and Visitors Bureau, came before Council to report the potential economic impact the Wiscasset Mills Athletic Complex will provide to Albemarle and Stanly County. He gave an overview of how the Stanly County Convention and Visitors Bureau is involved with the City to help fund an athletic complex. Both organizations decided that an impact would be useful to determine how beneficial this complex would be. Using different tools and formulas, the CVB was able to determine an estimated economic impact for the City and the County.

Based on 20 children per event, 240 spectators per event, \$204 per day spent, and using either 12 or 30 tournaments each year to arrive at the dollar economic impact per year. 12 tournaments = \$587,529 and 30 tournaments = \$1,468,800 revenue per year.

Mr. Lambert answered any questions that Council had.

Mr. Rusty Starnes, Colonel, Central Piedmont Search and Rescue came before City Council to request the use of a bay and a room for file storage at the former Fire Station One for Central Piedmont Search and Rescue.

Mr. Starnes stated that their funds are low and they mainly work from donations and grants only. He stated their organization is exempt under section 501 (c) (3). Using one bay at the fire station and a small office space for files will be sufficient.

Mr. Starnes answered any questions that Council had.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Dry, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved leasing a bay and one office behind the day room at the old Fire Station #1 to Central Piedmont Search and Rescue with a one year lease agreement and then going to a month to month lease and utilities can be negotiated if need be at any time.

Mr. Joe Calloway, Jr. came before City Council to request that City Council petition the North Carolina General Assembly to deannex a 16 acre tract on Kemp Road.

Mr. Calloway came forward and stated that his son would like to construct a house on this property and does not want to live inside the City. It was noted that the City cannot do this; it requires an act of a local bill by the General Assembly. The City Manager had advised Mr. Calloway that he should start with the City Council to initiate this process. This property was annexed into the City by a petition of Joe Calloway, Jr. and Teresa Calloway on November 17, 1997 as part of a 22.98 acre tract. The remainder of this tract which fronts on Kemp Road has been subdivided and developed by the Calloway family. Mr. Calloway stated that his son will only build a house and barn and have horses on this 16 acre tract.

Mayor Michael asked Mr. Calloway if he is aware that by this property not being in the City, he would pay double for his water and sewer rates have no trash pickup, and no Police or Fire services. By not having City taxes being outside of the City, he will still only break even having to pay extra for trash pickup and water and sewer services. The City Manager stated that he will probably have to pay more for a fire insurance policy being outside of the City limits.

Councilmember Dry asked Mr. Calloway if he would like to take some time and think this over and come back before Council at a later time. Mr. Calloway stated that with this information he will take some time and investigate this further and determine if we would like to continue with the process of de-annexation.

Mayor Michael noted that the monthly administrative reports were in the agenda package. Mayor Michael asked that the City Manager check into the number of terminations in the Planning and Community Development Department reported on the Human Resource report.

The Mayor and City Council reviewed the revised PARTF Budget and Match Request for 2015 Cycle. Revised cost estimates for the 2015 NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Application are to be submitted in January.

Parks and Recreation Director Toby Thorpe came before Council and stated in order to strengthen the application, it was suggested by our regional Recreation Resources Service consultant that we add two new recreation elements to the re-application. These elements are additions of an ADA-accessible trail within the park of one-quarter mile (1,500 feet), and two ADA-accessible outdoor corn hole courts adjacent to the proposed picnic shelter. City staff would install these elements. The proposed additions would increase the total project amount by \$8,405, of which the City's match would be \$4,203.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Townsend, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved resubmitting the PARTF application for the 2015 NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund Application in January 2015 and adding the ADA-accessible trail within the park of one-quarter mile (1,500 feet), and two ADA-accessible outdoor corn hole courts increasing the total project amount by \$8,405, of which the city's match would be \$4,203.

The Mayor and City Council discussed the establishment of a Fundraising Committee for the Wiscasset Mills Athletic Complex. At the direction of City Council, Parks and Recreation Director Thorpe has contacted a number of individuals to serve on a committee that will be charged with the responsibility of raising private sector funds in support of the Wiscasset Mills Athletic Complex.

City Council received a list of individuals willing to serve on the

fundraising committee as follows:

Tamara Singletary Uwharrie Bank
Jeff Plyler Pfeiffer University, Youth Baseball Parent and Coach
Brett Speight First Citizens Bank, Youth Softball Parent and Coach
Sam Swaringen Tolt Solutions Computer Services Youth Softball Parent
Lori Dennis Youth Softball Parent and Coach
Shawn Baldwin Parks & Recreation Advisory Board Member and Youth
Baseball Parent
Dana McDow Youth Baseball Parent
Benton Dry Dun Rite Cleaners, Albemarle City Council Member
Richard Almond

Upon a motion by Councilmember Hall, seconded by Councilmember Hughes, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved having a Fundraising Committee and approval of the fundraising list presented for the Wiscassett Mills Athletic Complex.

The Mayor and City Council considered a bid award for the 152 Surplus Transformers to Solomon Corporation in the amount of \$2.70 per KVa as a credit to be applied towards future transformer purchases.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Townsend, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved a bid award for the 152 Surplus Transformers to Solomon Corporation in the amount of \$2.70 per KVa as a credit to be applied towards future transformer purchases.

The Mayor and City Council considered a request of Ms. Peggy Dennis concerning an adjustment of sewer charges on her utility billing. Ms. Dennis is requesting an adjustment on her sewer charge because she says she returned home and found her lawn soaked where someone turned her water on outside and left it running. It was noted that City staff does not have the ability to make an adjustment unless there is a leak and a subsequent repair. In this case, the water would not have gone through the sewer system, so an adjustment for the sewer would be reasonable if City Council so chooses. Ms. Dennis typically only uses the minimum amount of water and sewer, therefore the sewer adjustment off the minimum (\$8.62) would be \$53.86.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Hall, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved an adjustment of \$53.86 off of Peggy Dennis' sewer charges on her utility billing which will be credited to her account.

The Mayor and City Council considered approval of revised agreements with North Carolina Department of Transportation for the sidewalk projects on Leonard Avenue and South First/South Second Streets. Agreements for these projects were previously approved by City Council. However, after the legislature passed a law to amend the E-Verify requirements, NCDOT had to amend their agreements that were based on the previous statute. The only change to these agreements and the ones previously approved by Council is this E-Verify portion and the date of the agreement.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Townsend, seconded by Councilmember Alexander, and unanimously carried, the City Council approved revised agreements with North Carolina Department of Transportation for the sidewalk projects on Leonard Avenue and South First/South Second Streets after amending E-Verify requirement.

The Mayor and City Council discussed results of the visit to Winston Salem regarding their Building Inspections Program. Councilmember Hughes had requested this item be place on the agenda this evening to discuss any action that may need to be taken. Mayor Michael stated that the County is also looking at this. He also stated we may need to consider buying one building downtown at a time and renovating it, selling it, and then moving forward to the next purchase and so on.

Mayor Michael stated that ADDC Director Shannon Johnson is looking at incentives across the country that we also may consider doing.

Councilmember Hughes asked that Council get back together with the County and revisit this issue in February 2015.

The Mayor and City Council received information concerning the 2015 Schedule for Stanly County COG and Liaison Meetings.

The City Manager handed out a copy of a letter from Dr. Steven F. Underwood Sanford, NC to Ms. Kerry Morrow, Statewide Plan Engineer for Strategic

Transportation Corridors with NCDOT concerning the consideration of NC Hwy 24-27 into the Strategic Transportation Corridors Plan.

Council requested an email be sent to the State endorsing Dr. Underwood's comments and Council asking our representatives to stay behind this issue.

Councilmember Hughes asked that this be placed on the City website, newspaper, and local radio station. Councilmember Whitley stated that at the last RPO meeting there were comments concerning this issue during the comment period. He asked that a cover letter with a copy of the resolution be sent to our legislators again.

The City Manager stated that each Councilmember may want to email Ms. Kerry Morrow at NCDOT.

Councilmember Whitley stated that at his last RPO meeting, on the agenda was a presentation by COG of them taking veterans, seniors, and temporary disabled to places they need to go to help support services needed. He stated that it would be nice to have this presentation at one of our Council meetings.

Mayor Michael stated that if they could not come and make the presentation, Councilmember Whitley can get the information and give to Council and the media.

Councilmember Hall stated that she had received a scam phone call at her home where they were pretending to be an IRS representative. She stated that she called NC Attorney General Roy Cooper's office and later talked to him in person today concerning this. His office called her back within 30 minutes of leaving her message. She does not feel any of her identity has been stolen. She brought 2 documents Identity Fraud – Protect Yourself and Scams and Fraud that she received from the NC Department of Justice for Council review and Councilmember Hall and Councilmember Hughes requested this information be placed on the City website.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Whitley, seconded by Councilmember Hughes and unanimously carried, the City Council adjourned to a closed session pursuant to NCGS 143.318-11(a) 4, 5 and 6 - to discuss Real Estate, Economic Development and Personnel.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Dry, seconded by Councilmember Hall and unanimously carried, the City Council reconvened to open session. Mayor Michael announced a closed session was held pursuant to NCGS 143.318-11(a) 4, 5 and 6 - to discuss Real Estate, Economic Development and Personnel.

Upon a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Townsend and unanimously carried, approved that the position of City Manager be offered to Assistant City Manager Michael J. Ferris as of December 20, 2014 replacing Raymond Allen at retirement in the amount of \$108,000 per year.

Upon a motion by Councilmember Alexander, seconded by Councilmember Dry and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned until Tuesday, November 25 for an adjourned session discussing the Pay Plan Study at 6 pm at City Hall.